

Calypso Farm
and
Ecology Center
Annual Report
2006



Calypso Farm and Ecology Center
PO Box 106
Ester, AK 99725

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
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Ester, AK



Contact us at (907) 451-0691 or at susan@calypsofarm.org
Please visit us at www.calypsofarm.org

Calypso Staff and Board of Directors

Thanks to extensive planning and development which took place in 2005, the 2006 Staff and Board of Directors had a very smooth and productive year.

The year-round staff used a new format for organizing and tracking monthly responsibilities and found the method very effective. Staff members were able to track their own responsibilities while staying in touch with the work of other staff members. Seasonal staff members did a wonderful job and brought energy and creativity to the farm.

The Board of Directors completed their first full year following the board development process. The ten person board met monthly and did a great job working out procedural issues and defining board member roles and responsibilities. Additionally, several Board Advisory Committees have been formed and are functioning to support the board, including: Technology, Board Development, Education, CSA and Community Outreach/Social Justice.



Susan



Tom



Megan



Christie



Soula Gean Gianakopoulos
Born 10/25/06
to Christie and George

Year-Round Staff

Susan Willsrud - Farm Director

Tom Zimmer - Ecology Center Director

Christie Shell - EATinG Director & CSA Coordinator

Megan Phillips - Youth Programs Coordinator

Seasonal Staff

Katie DiCristina - Farm Apprentice

Renee Bertsch - EATinG Supervisor



Katie



Renee



Board Meeting and eating

Board of Directors

Stephenie Bennett (Secretary) - Community Outreach

Dan Darrow - Technology

Russ Deforest (Treasurer) - Finance

Joan Hornig - Social Justice / Diversity

Kevin Maxwell - Infrastructure

Jose Rueter (President) - Board Development

Christie Shell - Staff Liaison

David Valentine - Farm/CSA

Michael Wald - Education

Susan Willsrud (Vice President) - Fundraising

Fundraising

Calypso continues to take a diversified approach to fundraising. We believe that a strong financial base is supported by a variety of income sources. We create an annual fundraising plan with specific goals and strategies for each income source. We enact the plan and track the results throughout the year.

The following income sources supported Calypso's work in 2006. Values are rounded to the nearest \$1,000:

Earned Income - \$64,000

CSA, Flowers, Value-Added Products, Workshops, Field Trips

Foundation Grants - \$17,000

Elihu Charitable Trust, Curtis-Meares Foundation

Major Donors - \$6,000

\$100 - \$2,000 annual donation from 18 individuals/families

Membership - \$14,000

\$5 - \$100 annual donation from more than 400 individuals/families

Special Appeals - \$4,000

\$10 - \$250 donations from more than 30 individuals/families to support the Schoolyard Garden Initiative

Special Events - \$20,000

6th Annual Benefit Dinner and Auction

Local Business Sponsorships - 5,000

\$100 - \$2,000 workshop, field trip and event sponsorships

In Kind Support:

Volunteers - over 300 individuals, 2,500 hours

Materials, Supplies and Services - building, farm and field trip supplies, auction items, services and more. The estimated value of in-kind goods and services donated in 2006 exceeds \$50,000

Financial Report

Income

Earned Income	64,000
Grants	17,000
Donors	24,000
Sponsorships	5,000
Special Events	20,000

Total Income \$130,000

Expense

Payroll	75,000
Utilities	4,000
Supplies	18,000
Printing	3,000
Postage	1,000
Lease/Rents	3,000
Insurance	6,000
Contract Services	3,000
Technology	2,000
Travel	2,000

Total Expenses \$117,000

Reserve \$13,000



Schoolyard Garden Initiative



Fence building at U-Park

The Schoolyard Garden Initiative is a network of schoolyard gardens which function as outdoor learning environments during the school year and production gardens during the summer months. There are currently three schools with active gardens and three schools in the planning phase.



Garden at EKCS

The Living Classroom Manual - An Ecological Approach to School Garden-Based Education in Alaska

The first edition of the *Living Classroom Manual* was completed in 2006. This manual is a resource guide for teachers. The manual was created based on recommendations from a Teacher Advisory Group and will be updated every two years based on teacher input. The manual is available free of charge to teachers in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District and for a fee to homeschool parents and members of the community.

The Living Classroom Manual

An Ecological Approach to



School Garden-Based Education in Alaska

Correlated to Alaska Grade Level
Expectations and Standards
Compiled by Calypso Farm and Ecology
Center
Fall 2006

- At University Park Elementary School, parent and teachers built a moose fence around the garden. The student gardening club enthusiastically worked in their school garden during the fall of 2006. The students harvested vegetables for the Food Bank and spent a day creating compost piles. Additionally, each class participated in a math-based lesson in the garden facilitated by members of the Calypso staff.

- At Pearl Creek Elementary School, the garden committee worked hard to determine a garden site, create a garden design and raise funds to cover garden start-up costs. Their huge effort culminated in ground breaking during the summer of 2006. They ripped sod, tilled and planted a cover crop in their new garden!. Additionally, students and teachers participated in a school-wide compost pile building effort. They will plant a simple garden for the 2007 summer while focusing on moose fence construction. The EATinG program will maintain a CSA program at Pearl Creek beginning in the summer of 2008.



Garden creation at Pearl Creek School

- At the Effie Kokrine Charter School, 12 Middle and High School aged students worked in the garden during the summer months (students worked as little as a week and as long as the entire summer). Additionally, classrooms of students assisted with the building of the moose fence and with some fall harvest activities.

- At Wood River Elementary School, the principal and staff have expressed interest in being a part of the Schoolyard Garden Initiative. They plan to form a Garden Committee in 2007.

- At Hunter Elementary and Barnette Charter School, members of the staff have expressed interest in being part of the Schoolyard Garden Initiative and remain in contact with Calypso on the issue.

Employing Alaskan Teens in Gardening



Student Gardeners

The EATinG program continues to be a successful method for maintaining school gardens while providing youth with gardening employment opportunities.

Two school gardens were maintained by the EATinG program in 2006: Pearl Creek Elementary and the Effie Kokrine Charter School.



Student Garden at EKCS



Student Gardeners

In the Student Gardeners' words:

"My favorite part was learning how to grow things. Now I have a hobby that will last me the rest of my life: planting stuff. It makes me happy."

"I don't feel like I waste my time at the garden. I can see what I've done. I like being here all around."

- The EATinG program employed twelve students over the summer season. For the first time, the program was made available to middle school students as well as high school students. Some students worked as little as one week, most worked four to five weeks and two students worked the entire season.



Proud Harvest



Student Gardener being interviewed by APRN

- The EATinG CSA produced 20 shares for 14 weeks from the University Park and Effie Kokrine school gardens. Though the season yielded smaller harvests in 2006, the majority of the shareholders were pleased with the shares and would like to continue participating in the program.

- EATinG is poised to expand into the other elementary schools participating in the Schoolyard Garden Initiative as the gardens develop. EATinG is set to operate at Pearl Creek Elementary in 2008.



Pearl Creek School Garden Site

Field Trips



Fall Field Trips

More than 1450 elementary and middle school students visited Calypso in 2006 for farm-based field trips focused on farming and the boreal forest ecosystem. Field trip topics offered this year included:

- o Life on the Farm
- o Seeds and Planting
- o Environmental Education
- o Honey Bees
- o Pizza Making
- o Natural Dyeing

This spring and summer, students visiting the farm enjoyed planting seeds, solo hiking in the spruce forest, feeding the animals, and uncovering signs of the season on forest scavenger hunts. Calypso also brought the farm to school through spring traveling field trips focused on farm animals and seeds.



Spring Field Trips

Calypso's fall field trip program included a Natural Dyeing field trip, during which students used garden-grown indigo and marigolds to produce brilliant blue and yellow bandanas. The pizza making field trip focused on local foods offered students the opportunity to harvest vegetables, mix pizza dough, and make goat cheese before creating their own personalized vegetable pizza.



Students at work on the Farm

- Forty-two classes from public and private schools across the Fairbanks North Star Borough visited Calypso in 2006. In our inaugural year of summer field trips, day care centers, summer camps, youth organizations, preschools, and families scheduled field trips focused on the garden and forest.



Gardener exploration

- More than 30 individuals volunteered 325 hours for field trips this year! Volunteers facilitated stations around the farm in the garden, spruce forest, birch forest, animal barn, and pizza making area.

Both new and returning teachers consistently commented on the high quality of the field trip program. Teachers wrote:



Natural dyeing

"All the activities were developmentally appropriate, well thought out and well organized, and presented in an engaging and effective way. You guys know how to work with kids. The activities are unique and give some of the kids experiences they wouldn't otherwise have. The activities mesh well with our botany curriculum too."

"Giving children the chance to get involved with more than just looking on the garden tours was great! I would not change a thing. You have mastered the skills of organizing groups of children. Thank you very much!"



Spring Field Trips

Community Outreach



Tom giving a Farm Tour at the Open House

Farm to Fairbanks Project

The Farm to Fairbanks project is bringing food into downtown Fairbanks through a weekly farm stand featuring Calypso produce. The farm stand is in the Fairbanks Native Association's Head Start parking lot on 2nd and Noble. Produce at the stand is available for purchase with cash, senior coupons, WIC coupons or food stamps.

Presentations

Calypso continued to reach out to the community by offering presentations for service clubs and groups in Fairbanks.

Website

Calypso's website continues to be a valuable tool for reaching people locally and nationally. The website is used extensively by teachers and groups interested in field trips and by prospective employees.

Tabling

Calypso continues to have a presence at numerous community events by hosting tables with information and educational activities for children.

Farm Tours

This year over 350 people participated in group or private tours of the farm. Farm tours are a tangible opportunity to connect Fairbanks community and visitors to the farm.

- The Farm to Fairbanks project set up a farm stand in downtown Fairbanks for 14 weeks during the summer. The stand had a modest number of visitors, which included a large percentage of seniors using senior coupons. Stand patrons were very appreciative to have fresh, locally grown produce available downtown.

- Calypso staff presented to more than 30 community-based groups through our presentation series. These groups included service clubs, the Fairbanks North Star Borough School Board, university and public school groups, and special interest clubs.

- The Calypso website now offers detailed information about all of our educational programs as well as employment opportunities and slide shows of 2006 photos. We have received many inquiries about the organization and educational programs based on our website.

- A range of groups toured the farm this spring and summer, including several gardening clubs, University class groups, and individuals and families.



Downtown farm stand



A local Garden Club tours the Farm

Resource Center

Workshops

In 2006 we partnered with local businesses to promote workshops. The following workshops were offered in 2006:

Garden Planning

sponsored by Gene's Chrysler

All About Seeds

sponsored by the Alaska Coffee Roasting Company

Beginning Organic Gardening

sponsored by Cold Spot Feeds

Know Your Soils

sponsored by The Turtle Club

Composting

sponsored by Rod's Saw Shop

Drip Irrigation

no sponsor

Natural Dyeing

sponsored by Test the Waters

Seed Saving

sponsored by Dentists Biehl and Okano

Wood Fired Bread Oven Building

sponsored by EJ Bartells, University Block, Alaska Railroad, Gene's Chrysler



● Approximately 120 people attended our workshops during 2006. Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive. We had both new and returning participants.

● The Know Your Soils and Composting Workshops were the most popular in 2006.

● Based on participant suggestions, we are developing new workshops to be offered in 2007



2006 Workshop Sponsors

Gene's Chrysler
Alaska Coffee Roasting Co
Cold Spot Feed
The Turtle Club
Rod's Saw Shop
Test the Waters
Biehl and Okano - dentists
EJ Bartells
AK Railroad
University Block

Infrastructure

The farm itself continues to grow and mature alongside all of the educational programs. The programs, people and place all remain interdependent. The following significant developments took place in 2006:



Greenhouse space was expanded

A Wood-Fired Bread Oven was constructed

A New Tool Shed was moved to the field

Rotational grazing pasture was developed

Seasonal employee housing was completed

Recycled building materials for the future office were gathered

Soil health and fertility was improved



Compost pile



Employee Housing under construction

- A greenhouse structure attached to the existing greenhouse was begun in the fall of 2006. The structure will be functional for the 2007 planting season.
- A tool shed structure was successfully moved approximately 4 miles from Carol and Don Meares home to the lower field. The shed provides essential shelter for all of our farm tools and irrigation supplies!
- Calypso continues to work with the Natural Resources Conservation Service on the fencing system for a rotational grazing program at the farm. Corner posts were sunk and fence lines cleared during 2007.
- Two seasonal housing structures were completed. The farm now has two small structures to house seasonal employees. They are each suitable for a single person or couple.
- The last of the building materials donated by Travis and Amy Kulp were brought to the farm in 2006. With those supplies and many other donated materials, the new office structure will be made of largely reused materials.
- We continue to focus on a healthy farm systems by working to foster soil fertility. We continued to use crop rotation and cover cropping in addition to composting. During the 2006 farm season we created approximately 6 tons of finished compost for use in 2007.
- In August we held a Wood Fired Bread Oven Workshop -- seven people participated in the workshop, led by oven builder Quill Chase. The workshop was sponsored by: EJ Bartels, University Block, Gene's Chrysler and the Alaska Railroad.



Bread Oven

Special Events



Fred Brown - Pikes Cook

6th Annual Benefit Dinner and Auction

The Annual Benefit Dinner and Auction took place at Pike's Waterfront Lodge this year. The event was our most successful fundraiser ever!



2006 Open House

Open House

This year's Open House featured hands-on activities for the whole family, a farm stand, garden tours, and pizzas fresh from the wood-fire oven.



Taste Testing at the Open House

Membership Picnic

Everyone had a great time at the annual membership picnic this year! Attendees enjoyed a delicious potluck dinner, live music and an even livelier square dance.



Old-timey Music at the Picnic



Auctioneer - Bob Ritchie

- Over 200 local individuals and businesses donated to the auction, which raised over \$20,000 to support Calypso's education programs. Over 50 volunteers supported the effort and nearly 300 people attended this year's auction! Gene's Chrysler sponsored the event by covering food and organizational costs. Pike's Waterfront Lodge hosted the event by providing the space free of charge. Auctioneer Bob Ritchie brought us from \$18,000 to \$20,000 by offering a last minute matching donation from ABR Inc. Huge thanks to everyone involved!

- More than 260 people attended the 2006 Open House, with 24 volunteers assisting visitors in exploring the farm. The UAF Steel Drum Band played spectacular "Calypso" music which floated across the whole farm. Attendees and volunteers all had a great time!



UAF Steel Drum Band at the Open House

- Approximately 70 Calypso members attended the Membership Picnic this year. The event offered opportunities to explore the farm, socialize, feast on homemade dishes, listen to live old time music and participate in a square dance.



Square dancing at the Membership Picnic

Calypso Farm Production



Fall Cabbage Harvest

Community Shared Agriculture (CSA)

In 2006 we expanded our share options to include vegetable, flower, herb, salad and late season shares.

Value Added Products

In addition to providing extra farm based income, value-added products provide a focus for workshops and a vehicle for community outreach through local Holiday Bazaars.



Flowers

The farm produces a large array of flowers which function to increase diversity on the farm, attract beneficial insects and provide an additional source of earned income.

Plant Sale

Our 2nd Annual Memorial Day Plant Sale was a huge success! We grossed over \$1,500 from 9am to noon. Many patrons enjoyed exploring the farm as well.



Plant Sale

Farm Animals

Farm animals are incorporated in both the farm system and our educational programs. We currently have a small herd of dairy goats and a flock of laying hens.



- In spite of a cold spring and rainy summer, the farm was able to produce a full array of vegetables, herbs and flowers for the CSA. Over 80 families participated in the CSA in 2006. Vegetable and herb shares were available for 16 weeks, flower shares for 11 weeks, and late season shares for eight weeks.



- Extra produce was provided to the Interior Alaska AIDS Association on a weekly basis. The total value of donated produce was approximately \$3,000.

- Value Added Products we created this year included: naturally dyed silk scarves, loose leaf herbal teas, calendula healing salves and dried flower bouquets.

- We provided flower bouquets for flower shares as well as a dozen weddings and special events.



- Four goat kids were born on the farm in the spring. We have kept two does as future milk goats. We currently have a herd of six goats, including the kids.

Volunteers

Volunteers played a huge role in every aspect of Calypso's work in 2006. Over 300 people volunteered a total of over 2,500 hours. Some people assisted in one area, while many volunteers worked on different projects throughout the year. Volunteers played a major role in all of the following areas:

Field Trips



Farm



Auction

Open House



Board of Directors and Associated Committees

Building and Infrastructure



In Memory of our Friends



James "Doug" Bridges was a dedicated Calypso volunteer. Though he worked with us at the farm for only a month before being extended back to Iraq, he touched our lives deeply with his kindness and good humor. A former FFA student from rural

Idaho, Doug had a strong connection to the land and shared many of our dreams for the future. Doug was killed in action on November 4th, while on patrol in Baghdad.

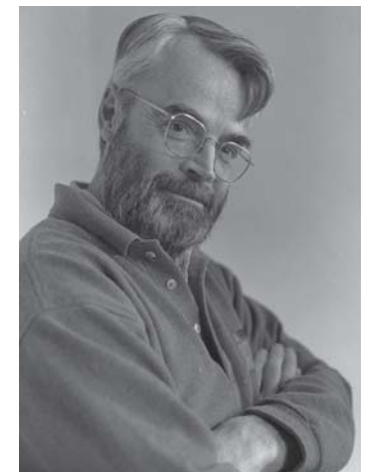


Arlington West Peace Memorial, Santa Barbara Ca. Susan, Tom and family visited this fall to add Doug's name to the memorial



Doug knitting with other soldiers in Iraq

David McGowan was an avid supporter of Calypso who followed the growth and development of our educational programs with enthusiasm. David donated a variety of recycled building items to the cause. Tom had many a lively conversation with David about Calypso's mission and programs. After his death, friends and family donated to Calypso's educational programs in David's name.



1939 - 2006