

Rural Revitalization Initiative Newsletter

Des Moines Municipal Schools

Fall 2009

OPEN HOUSE AT SCHOOL

OPEN HOUSE is an every-day event at Des Moines Schools; it's the way we think. On September 25th, however, OPEN HOUSE meant something bigger and better. The school's doors were open wide, parents visited with teachers, there was an ice cream social after school, special guests were there, and there was Lady Demons volleyball. If you were there, you understood that our schools are a most prized asset. Teachers displayed information about their classrooms, curriculum, and learning activities. So did organizations and health services providers. Myra Newkirk guided tours of the schools. Ashley Warner's presentation was about a new parent/teacher organization. Dr. Holloway came from the Public Education Department and Rep. Dennis Rosch spent the evening with his Des Moines Schools District constituents. Tena Hoyle and Theresa Lewellan came from ASCD (Association for Supervision & Curriculum Development); their cameras came too. Much of our OPEN HOUSE was filmed. Most important, school district families and community members came. It was business as usual; a lot of visiting, loving and caring for children in this community, and absolute support for education professionals who work here. They did it well — opened the door to school so we could show others the value we place on good education.

SINCERE APPRECIATION to Mr. Ray Churchman for the "extra" he gives to our school, its children, and their families. A special nod for his work with ASCD projects, school health/nutrition projects, and great planning/organization for September's OPEN HOUSE.



FOR-SURE PARTNERS: ASCD AND DM SCHOOLS

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development is, no doubt, an elite professional organization in American Education. It supports best practices in teaching and administration, curriculum development, and educational reform. It represents a whole nation of schools and it has a special partnership with Des Moines Municipal Schools. The relationship began as a healthy schools project. Mr. Churchman was looking for a grant that would provide a healthy afternoon snack for our kids who had long rides home and late athletic practices. The District was chosen to be one of eleven schools across the US and Canada for the ASCD Healthy School Community Report Card pilot project. It was a timely project, since the school-based health center was organizing to promote wellness policy and provide health services. A team of teachers, parents, community members and a school administrator traveled to Alexandria, VA, to begin a strategic planning process for the project. Soon after, the school district received funding for the "Fruit Wizard Program" and started its strategies for success with the Healthy School Community Report Card. PE classes continued to do fitness testing, nutrition education was aligned with daily instruction and operations. A second trip was to New Orleans. Then, early in 2008, the Health Bureau of the Public Education Department decided that all New Mexico schools should use the ASCD Report Card. Nurse Nancy and Mr. Churchman were important in the training process for other school districts. Much discussion has been about the healthy schools initiative and its alignment with the Rural Revitalization Initiative. Des Moines District was honored to be one of four school districts selected to be featured in an ASCD film; that's just what happened at OPEN HOUSE. School officials, teachers, and community representatives were interviewed for the impressive film.

Join a workgroup!

Current Workgroups of the RRI...

- ◆ Beautification
- ◆ Economic Development
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Welcoming

Seasonal Flu Vaccine

October 22nd Des Moines School-Based Health Center

Coming Soon... H1N1 Vaccine

October 21: RRI Beautification Workgroup 6:00 PM

The Beautification Workgroup focuses on projects that add to the beauty of our communities. Volunteers are needed. Anyone interested is welcome. For more information, contact Pam Sorensen, 278-2489.

FOCUS: CAPULIN VOLCANO NATIONAL MONUMENT

In quarterly newsletters, it is our intent to focus on community assets. We can best honor the past and celebrate the future with this assets-based approach to community development.

On **January 16, 1891**, Capulin Mountain was "... withdrawn from settlement, entry or other disposition under any of the public land laws, until such time as Congress may see fit to take action touching the same or until otherwise ordered by competent authority. . . ." That early, it was clear that there was something special about the site.

On **August 9, 1916** President Woodrow Wilson set Capulin aside as a National Monument to preserve "... A striking example of recent extinct volcanoes especially geologic interest. . . ."

Public Law 87-635, 87th Congress, **September 5, 1962**, amended the proclamation to "... preserve the scenic and scientific integrity of Capulin Mountain National Monument . . .because of the significance of Capulin Volcano."

On **December 31, 1987**, Congress changed the Monument's name from "Capulin Mountain National Monument" to "Capulin Volcano National Monument", by Public Law 100-225.

Through the years, National Park Service administrators and staff have assured that the Volcano and its surroundings provide education and vacation experiences for thousands of guests in our community. We have been served by specialists from other places and local employees with pride and commitment.

Educational field trips for Des Moines students, across the grade levels, have enhanced the science and social studies curriculums. Groups of students have attended orientation talks by rangers and have viewed films and resources at the monument. They have enjoyed walks and specific studies. Over the years, Des Moines secondary schools have been well represented at local, regional, and state science fairs with Capulin Volcano projects and research. Teachers have benefited from training projects, instructional resources, classroom visits from rangers, and help to plan valuable field trips. Many parents have made the trips to Capulin with classes and teachers in support of their students.

Of course, students and teachers from area schools have experienced the monument, too. The site has great stories to tell about history and science of the past. It tells of the present too, wonderful lessons in social studies and earth/environmental sciences. For those of us who live in these special communities, we are reminded of its dominance and beauty every day. What a site! What an asset!

For related information, call Capulin Volcano National Monument at 278-2201.



NOTICE. . . .



Economic Development Workgroup Have you had a great business idea? Do you want to go into business for yourself? The Economic Development Workgroup might be able to help. The group is part of the RRI Steering Committee and wants to help individuals interested in started or expanding a business. If you're not sure where to start, maybe we can make the first contacts on the way to getting started. This committee will focus on three area: 1) Ways to improve infrastructure within the Des Moines School Community; 2) Work on ideas for new businesses or services in the area; 3) Offer assistance to those who want to create a new business or expand an existing one. If interested or looking for help with an idea, please contact Justin Bennett at 278-2167 for further information.

. . . . **WELCOME!** To **Lori Coon**, new Executive Director at the Mandala Center. The Center strives consistently to provide activities for local residents and visitors to the community. Lori will be our direct link to those worthwhile experiences.

. . . . **THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!** To **Dr. Jim Holloway**, NM Public Education Dept, Rural Education Bureau, for his presence at our school's OPEN HOUSE activities and for his day-to-day support for small

school districts. . . . To **Avery Christy**, reporter for the Union County Leader, who attended and reported on the OPEN HOUSE and has covered many other school and community activities for the newspaper To **Tim Keller** for interesting and positive school/community articles in the *Trinidad Chronicle* and his recently published article in the periodical, *Western Horseman*. His story and photos about kids who grow up with horses/rodeo and successes of the Sierra Grande Horse Association was a special look at families and a lifestyle in our communities.

