

Bonnell Project

Programming Highlights - through Q3 2014

Mission: Provide space and support for community members to work on passion projects

In Brief

- We are a charitable organization that has served Jefferson County since 2008
- We have supported hundreds of community members of all ages to create and participate in projects they are passionate about (projects listed below)
- We are designed to be volunteer operated with a lean, overhead-only, expenses and have historically been financially self-sufficient and sustainable
- We have made an incalculable contribution to the Fairfield youth culture (arts, music, entrepreneurship) and education specifically in the lives of people between the ages of 18 and 35



Siblings Orion, Akeisha, & Jaden of Organic Matters, hosted @ the Bonnell Project 3rd St. property.

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The Arbor Bar & Gardens restaurant, hosted @ the Bonnell Project downtown property.

1. List of Hosted Projects

Selection of projects that community members created and participated in within our space:

1.1 Music and the Arts projects

Studio and incubation space provided to community members for art projects

The Beauty Shop (performance venue)

A volunteer run, all ages, substance-free venue space geared towards local young musicians.

- Debut performances from many local artist/bands
- Site of annual music festival (Sweat Power) featuring young Iowan artists
- Community theater
 - play produced, performed, directed by local young people
 - Burlesque troupe performance (proceeds donated to the Battered Women's Shelter of Ottumwa and BBP)
- Independent touring musicians from out of state as well as many young musicians from Des Moines and Ames (hundreds of performances)
- Site of live Guinness Book of World Record breaking by Lane Weaver for longest freestyle rap (10.5 hours of continuous rapping)
- First Friday (after Art Walk) dance party

Beauty Shop (Art Gallery)

An art gallery exhibiting work from young, local, artists

- Debut art shows of young, local, artist at every art walk (commonly sold out of all work presented)
- Monthly rotated art gallery
- Rotating wall mural, painted over every 3 months, featuring local artists

Recording Studio

A custom built recording studio with multiple recording rooms

- Several records recorded
- People were mentored on working equipment
- Studio time available as part of a co-op

Studio Space

Modifiable "artist box" studio space

- Hosted many local artists: painters, printers, seamstresses, photographers, etc.

Soapbox Speakeasy

Monthly spoken word and musical performances

- features local poets, writers and performers
- now presents at Paradiso to packed audiences

Beauty Shop Art Co-Op

Local crafters collaborated on sharing workshop and retail space

Beauty Shop Music Residency (described in Project Case Study section)
community-supported music residency program

- talented musicians come from outside the community for a month
- put on two performances and two workshops
- resident receive room and board
- they get to focus on songwriting and recording
- had opportunities to collaborate with local artists and musicians

FAIRfest HQ

Office for annual festival organized by KRUU radio, celebrate the best of Fairfield and Iowa:

- featuring national, regional and local music
- artisan food, top speakers, speciality vendors and cultural leaders
- emphasis on sustainable solutions, creative expression, economic fairness and community empowerment

CMS Ceramics

Fully functional art ceramics studio and workshop

- Run by master ceramicist
- Harvested local Fairfield, IA clay made into ceramics
- Supplied ceramic ware to local restaurants (Earth and Water teahouse and Binghamon's)
- Work featured in fine-art installations
- Products created and sold at festivals

1.2 Community Business/Entrepreneurship projects

Participants receive incubation status and support to get their hosted projects off the ground.

Ryker MMA

Best mixed martial arts gym Fairfield has ever had, also provides health and fitness training

- Boxing, Kickboxing, and Juijitsu instruction as well as health and fitness training
- Supports amature and professional fighters and boxers,
- People drive from out of town to attend

Fairfield Aikikai School of Aikido

Club of people who get together to practice Aikido

- Separate Adult and Children's classes (a couple dozen children)

Beauty Shop Cafe & Lounge

Volunteer run coffee shop and lounge, became an after-school hang out

- Locally made pastries, chocolates, goodies
- Barista, register, and shop management training for volunteers (several FHS students)

Organic Matters Kitchen

Two young brothers create and family owned organic food company

- Incubated as a hosted project
- Operates out of our certified commercial kitchen
- Produces several organic and vegan products
- Supplies products to Everybody's Whole Foods, Hy-Vee and Farmer's Markets

Connie's Creations

Fairfielder, Connie, creates gourmet salsas and jams

- Harvests and buys local produce
- Performs value-add processing in our certified commercial kitchen
- Supplies products to Everybody's Whole Foods, Hy-Vee and Farmer's Markets

The Gardens Seasonal Kitchen

Restaurant on the square catering to all

- Uses local produce and dairy suppliers in Farm to Restaurant program
- employs 13 people
- Sells Fairfield's own Shakti Kombucha
- Fresh daily baked goods by in-house baker

The Arbor Bar

Successor to The Beauty Shop venue space, this time for a slightly older crowd +Beer

- Features live performances including showcases of local young musicians
- Dance parties featuring local young djs and other various weekly events

Ideal Energy

Fairfield's hottest Solar Panel installers

- Operated out of our incubation warehouse space during critical start-up period
- Achieved over \$1Mil in sales already in 2014
- Now employs over 10 people full time

Big Will's Metal Recycling

Successor to Ideal Energy in our incubated warehouse space

- Metal scrapping and recycling business start-up
- Project founded by newly returned Fairfield youth, now father/family man

Microlending/Mentoring club

Supports entrepreneurs with necessary resources for launching a new business

- Supplied start-up funds and mentoring for Beauty Shop Cafe and Lounge
- Supplied start-up funds for Boom Fitness
- Provided business start-up mentoring Binghamon's Reggae Kitchen
- Provided business mentoring for Recording Studio

ArtHouse Vintage

Vintage clothing store and storehouse run by three young women

- Sold clothes at store location and online at ebay.com
- Used local photographers and models for product pictures

Noah's Rock'n Raw Chocolates

Raw Chocolate company founded by Fairfield native, Noah Loin

- Used our incubated food business space and commercial kitchen
- Supplies several food stores in Fairfield and Manhattan area
- Featured on Fox News

Startup Weekend

Weekend workshop to start a business

- Open invite to local entrepreneurs and business
- Pitch ideas, form groups, hash out next steps
- a couple businesses started out of this weekend

Illuminated Art

A premium decorative candle company

- small manufacturer with whole casting operation
- operates out of our incubated studio space

Freerange Wingo

local soap maker and young mother

- began making and selling soaps out of our incubated studio space

Nandi Dysinski's fashion and alterations

custom alterations and re-fashioned clothes

- young local women opened shop in our incubated studio space

FTW Consulting

Organizational Development consulting

- used incubated office space, contracted with local companies
- found full time employment

Urban Village Collective

Retail Co-op of Local artists and artisans

- Locally produced art, crafts, and plants

Naturewise Community Garden

Community garden in place of old St. Mary's church that was razed

- provides half of all production to Lord's Cupboard

- other half of production goes to farmer's market, value-add, and volunteers

Trees Forever (fruit tree sale)

Spring fruit tree sale with native varieties

- Sold over a 500 fruit trees- Pear, Apple, Persimmon, etc.
- Also sold rain barrels

Annual Makers Market

Market for makers every Holiday season

- Local artists set up stalls
- People stop in for Christmas shopping
- Artists do fairly well each time

1.3 Community projects

Sometimes our spaces fill more of a general community need and are used by groups of people

Community Kitchen

Collaborated with Local Foods Coordinator to create a certified kitchen

- bagel and bread businesses
- later, Connie's and Organic Matters

Many Shades of Sisterhood

Shares sustainability skills and promotes livelihoods through an entrepreneurial spirit

- skill workshops, promotes livelihood opportunities

The Rectory Cohousing Community (experiment in community living)

People come together to learn how to live together

- housing for project participants and participant volunteers
- participants learn and practice conflict resolution and group decision making skills

Mixed-Use Studio Space (dance, yoga, martial arts)

Mixed-Use space used for dance, yoga and martial arts classes

- Fairfield's Burlesque troupe practiced here for a couple years

Dance Church

All ages dance party on Sunday morning at 11am

- open to everyone in the community, young and old
- people would gather and dance for a couple hours, water was supplied

St. Mary's Lounge

Open community space with books, games, and computers

- open to the public

- groups met frequently in this space

Community Giving Circle

A structured approach to community in which people gather to share and help each other

- met in the St. Mary's Lounge until group decided they wanted to meet over dinner

Fairfield Healing Collective

Group of body workers and healers got together and created a community space

- weekly open mics, pot lucks, and art space
- members also met to provide free healing services to people in need

Permaculture design & community garden

Community gardens

- Asparagus, Raspberries, and Strawberries all planted

Dog park

Gated area for dogs to meet and play

Children's art class

Weekly art classes for children

Camping

Areas for pitching a tent used for Ragbrai and FAIRfest for out of town visitors

1.4 Educational

a significant goal of our non-profit is to provide educational experiences to community members

Recording Studio

Community Recording Studio

- Several people learned how to work all the hardware and make recordings

Electronics Lab

Equipment for doing electronics work with a mentor available on hand

CMS Ceramics

Ceramics workshops for children and adults: pottery, sculpting, instrument workshops

Weekly Learning Tribe group

Students came together to learn about topics they deemed with collectively interesting

Bonnell University

Supported community members in alternative or supplemental college education

- Workshops and study space, mentoring and life coaching with Wisetrax process

Non-Violent Communication Skills workshop

An approach to communication that is not based on judgement, shame threat or violence

Emotional Literacy workshop

Helping people become more connected to their emotional body

Four Gateways Life Coaching workshop

A coaching methodology based on Jungian archetypes

Weekly Organizational Development Community of Practice group

Group that got together to learn and apply tools and theories of organizational development

Fruit tree planting and care workshop

As part of the fruit tree sale a dozen tree were planted at BU property as part of a workshop

Thermal Composting Workshop

Attendees were taught how to start, maintain and test a thermal compost pile

WiseTrax life coaching process

Coaches meet participants and take them through a process that facilitates clarity in life goals

2. Case Study of a single project

The Beauty Shop Music Residency Project

Summary of the project

1. Young, local woman created a music residency program
2. For over a year musicians came to Fairfield and became a resident for a month
3. The BBP and FF community supported the living expenses of the visiting artist
4. Music Residents put on 2 workshops and 2 performances for the community
5. They collaborated with local artists and musicians to produce original work
6. Many of them fell in love with Fairfield, continue to visit and refer others to the community

Example of ONE music resident, Nicholas Naioti (resident in September 2012)

- Nicholas Naioti, originating from MO, was residing in Nashville, TN at the time
- During his residency he co-wrote and directed an original rock musical, "Curse of the Space Demon" with Fairfield native, Dom Rabalais, and performed it with local cast of 20
- Nicholas lived in the Rectory with other project participants, collaborating on music and art projects, cementing his love of the Fairfield community
- After departing from his music residency he returned in 2013 to open a restaurant in the Bonnell Building (one of our incubated business project spaces)
- His restaurant, "The Gardens Seasonal Kitchen" is alive today and doing well
- The Gardens Seasonal Kitchen
 - Uses local produce and dairy suppliers in JeffCo's Farm to Restaurant program
 - It employs 13 people
 - Sells locally made products (eg, Shakti Kombucha, Rock'n Chocolates, et. al)
 - Fresh daily baked goods by in-house baker
 - Hosts after parties for community events, reunions, and wedding dinners
 - Serves as a frequent filming location for MUM's David Lynch's Masters in Film
 - Venue space in the back continues to serve as a debut space for local musicians
- From Fairfield, Nicholas organizes music festivals and books touring performances
- Nicholas created a music festival "Gathering of the Dudes" that brought together his favorite friends and bands from MO and TN. Stellar attendance, the love Fairfield
- Early 2014, Nicholas buys a home in Fairfield - "I love this community, it's my home."
- In May of 2014 he expanded 'The Gardens' for more seating and opened the "Arbar Bar"
- Nicholas continues to put on and promote shows in the Arbar Bar, including album and band debuts for local artist/performers
- Nicholas also contributes a radio show to KRUU 100.1FM, Fairfield's community radio

"Some words." - Nicholas Naioti

The Story

Taylor Ross, mid 20s, grew up in Fairfield. Taylor and her sister became involved with the Beauty Shop and began performing there at open mics. Soon they both started helping in booking shows. Through booking shows and beginning to tour Taylor began to meet a bunch of interesting and talented musicians. Musicians who were interested in Fairfield but didn't have an easy way to experience Fairfield unless they were on tour.

Taylor decided to launch a music residency project with the intention that these amazing and talented musician can come to Fairfield and do an exchange: The community of Fairfield would pay for that person's room and board and the artist would put on two performances and two workshops (eg, songwriting, Ableton Live software, integrating live looping, making biodeisel, etc.). During their time the musician would get a chance to experience Fairfield and have more intense focus on their craft, whether songwriting or recording. In addition, this would give the musician opportunities to collaborate with other musicians and artists.

Residents used our incubated studio project space for the duration of their residency. The residents would also have access to other resources within the project: a green room for music videos, a recording studio and practice space. Musicians often did guest appearances on a KRUU radio show.

This project ran for 12 months and had a significant impact. The residents were blown away by the support and opportunity that was provided by the Fairfield community. The program facilitated a rich cultural exchange between Fairfield musicians and artist and those from out of town for the residency. The performances and workshops were well attended.

The Beauty Shop Music Residency Project founder, Taylor Ross, grew a lot through the process of pursuing her passions. Through this project she became deeply engaged member of the Fairfield community and increased the cultural value of all its inhabitants.

The types of experiences this project facilitated is what builds a sense of "home" or "place" for people. To have a dream or a passion and to receive support to pursue it builds genuine loyalty and appreciation not to mention personal development. The visiting musicians, the community people this project affected, and Taylor herself all fell in love with Fairfield a little bit more because of her project.

This project, and others as equally cool, could not have happened without the Bonnell Project.

Our Contribution to Fairfield's Youth Culture

The Bonnell Project is arguably THE single most important and critical non-profit in Jefferson County in terms of supporting youth culture.

The project space we provide through our non-profit has supported hundreds of projects to take place. The majority of projects that community members sought space for were related to music and the arts. By providing that space, the non-profit has become the center of youth cultural in Fairfield where artist, musicians and entrepreneurs come together to share and enjoy and to find inspiration and collaboration.

Youth Culture Project Stats

- 10+ music festivals
- 300+ dances (of different genres) including many after-party dances for Fairfield events
- High occurrence of first-time performers becoming touring musicians
- Dedicated band practice and recording studio space
- 10+ Original albums created on our non-profit property
- 50+ Music videos used project space (from about a dozen different artists/bands)
 - One video on youtube of a local artist has over 3 million views
- Collaboratively produced CD "[Bedrooms and Basements](#)" featuring over 20 local musicians with a CD release performance at the Sondheim theater
- search of "The Beauty Shop Fairfield" on youtube you will find over 1000 videos of performances
- 1 Guinness Book of World Record broken for longest freestyle rap (10.5 hours)
- 1 Original rock musical play
- 1 Modern dance performance
- 1 classic play performance "The American Plan"
- Long-time Burlesque troupe practice space and performance (proceeds always donated to local charities including BBP and Battered Woman's Shelter in Ottumwa)
- 20+ artist have had their artwork featured in gallery space run by other young people
- Several spoken word/poetry performances
- Collaborations between artist and musicians are common place

The Bonnell Project helps support a rich cultural environment that is typically available only in larger cities such as NYC, Chicago, Austin, Portland or San Francisco. There have been many, many times in which young people between 20 and 30 have confided in us that, "If it weren't for the project (the Bonnell Project) they would not be in Fairfield" and they go on to say that it played a critical role in having them want stay here or come back.

Many young people involved in the arts seek out communities that they can draw on for inspiration, support and collaboration. They have created that environment within the space our non-profit provides. As a result many of our participants are young artist of all types choosing to stay in Fairfield vs outside of Iowa.

It is critical that we support this demographic as a community.

Even to people who are not young musicians, having a rich cultural scene is vital to a satisfying community life for most young people. Attending cultural events is as satisfying as performing in them.

One of our long-time participants and recently added non-profit co-director is a 29 year old Fairfield native. He reports that his involvement in the Bonnell Project was a critical factors in deciding whether to stay in Fairfield or not, "The Bonnell Project has been unbelievable transformative for me and many of my friends. I really can't imagine the community without all the rich projects that have come through our space." He has also recently bought a home.

Some perspective

The directors of the non-profit have repeatedly been invited to speak at conferences to present the project to audiences. Most notably, the Midwest Community Development Institute conference hosted in Moline, IL where attendees ranged from City Administrators, Mayors, and community organization Directors. They meet annually to discuss Community Development issues ranging from dealing with antiquated infrastructure to contending with the long documented "brain drain" issues of Iowa. They were very interested to hear how a non-profit had managed to make such a significant impact in creating a community and how so many young people have been involved and affected.

In closing

This non-profit is an extremely rare phenomenon within the realm of community development and charitable organizations. It provides a unique service to the community in the form of Space and Support and has been vital in creating an environment inspiring to young people. This non-profit should be supported by local government in every possible way within the duties and authority of their offices.



Will & Ryder of Big Will's Metal Recycling, hosted @ Bonnell's 3rd St. property