



# Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center

## Summer 2009 News

Volume 5, Issue 1

### BAMA WORKS SUPPORTS CAMP EXPLORE

A generous grant from Bama Works, the charitable foundation of the Dave Matthews Band, enabled the Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center to offer Camp Explore to the children of recent refugees this August. The International Rescue Committee helped bring our group together: children from Kenya, China, and Afghanistan, including Somalian and Tibetan refugees. The International Rescue Committee ([www.theirc.org](http://www.theirc.org)) serves families from war-torn areas and runs an office in Charlottesville.

The Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center organized Camp Explore with the purpose of introducing the children to the natural world of their new country, bringing them new learning experiences on the Rivanna River through art and science projects.



Taking samples from the Rivanna River

Teacher James Walsh staffed the camp along with Executive Director Alexandria Searls, TESL instructor Sarah Hemenway, and high school mentors Cathy Merritt and Wazhma Yousafi. Wazhma came to this country from Afghanistan.

The camp lasted two weeks and brought eleven children ages 9 to 11 the opportunity to learn about the environment and develop new skills. Journaling, hiking, and nature study were part of the everyday activities. Other activities included painting on wood, pottery, sculpture, field games, swimming,



Journaling in two languages

kayaking, carpentry, and a cooking competition using locally grown foods. Guest instructors included teacher Eileen Merritt, who led outdoor activities developed by Joseph Cornell, the renowned naturalist educator.

The Bama Works funded Camp Explore was the Center's first day camp—a major milestone. Our previous weeks of Camp Explore have involved serving other camp organizations who arrive for our activities with their own counselors. The Bama Works camp marks a new phase in our development as an organization, arranging complete staffing, food, and transportation.



Painting North American species on wood

*continued from PAGE 1, "Camp Explore"*



Batula sketching by the Rivanna



Enjoying the river

## A BUSY SUMMER AS OUR OUTREACH GROWS

It was a very active season for the Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center as new groups participated in our programs in addition to the schools and groups we regularly serve. The Boys and Girls Club of Orange started a Lewis & Clark club this summer and made several visits to learn history and develop the skills of exploration. We had another activity-packed June and July with the City of Charlottesville Parks and Recreation programs for children of all ages, and we welcomed the Piedmont YMCA, the University of Virginia, the Cub Scouts, and groups from Warrenton and Waynesboro. We also provided programs for the elderly, for achievement groups, such as Young Women Leaders, and for the mentally and physically challenged through Camp Challenge and the public schools. We ended the season with our own two week Camp Explore, a wonderful experience for all involved (see pictures above). We will make every effort to have a second Camp Explore next year in collaboration with the International Rescue Committee, provided we get the necessary funding.



Boys and Girls Club of Orange on the Trails



The Piedmont YMCA makes maps of the Center

In addition to the weekday summer camp programs, LCEC was open beginning in May on weekends at the Keelboat Barn in Darden Towe Park. Our public hours were expanded to 10-4 on Saturdays and 12-4 on Sundays. We have received many out-of-state visitors, particularly from people whose home states were visited by Lewis and Clark. Interns Carol Tran and Katherine Hoffman helped make it all happen.

Our new blog [www.lewisandclarkexploratorycenter.blogspot.com](http://www.lewisandclarkexploratorycenter.blogspot.com) lists our weekend events. The weekend hours will be kept through October.

## VDOT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM GRANTS LCEC \$150,000 FOR HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBILITY

With support from the County of Albemarle, the City of Charlottesville, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization, the Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center applied for handicapped accessibility funds through the Virginia Department of Transportation's Enhancement Programs. Our request was fully funded, highlighting the commitment of our community partners to creating the new Lewis and Clark Exploratory Center. This grant brings our total funds raised to nearly one million dollars, with \$1,300,000 as the construction goal.

## New Board Members Welcomed at Annual Meeting

LCEC held its Annual Meeting at Monticello's Jefferson Library this past June, welcoming four new Board members and honoring special service to the Center. Monticello information specialist Eric Johnson, attorney Valerie L'Herrou, University of Virginia engineering professor Arthur W. Lichtenberger, and St. Anne's Belfield teacher Mia Santos all joined the Board and were introduced to a full audience of Center supporters. Hugh Gildea was honored for his exceptional donation of a bullboat exhibition, including a bullboat replica and related historical displays. Board member Roger Stein was awarded LCEC's "Prairie Dog" award for his outstanding volunteer work at the Center. Guest speaker Dr. Ken Wallenborn kicked off the event with his impressive photography of the Lewis and Clark Trail.



Finding the prairie dog

## NEWS FLASHES!

- LCEC was honored to attend the dedication of the Sacajawea plaque on West Main Street in June. Sacajawea's Shoshone descendants led the dedication, which was hosted by the Monacan Nation and the City of Charlottesville in a very moving ceremony. We participated through Roger Stein's role as a panel member—and by our Executive Director cooking a big batch of buffalo chili for the City Space reception.
- Board member and retired dairy farmer Bill Speiden grew a Three Sisters Garden (corn, beans, and squash) at the Center this summer to honor Native American agriculture.
- A Better Living Foundation grant made possible a special boatmaking workshop for teens
- Our River Celebration and Fish Fry was a lot of fun in April—with many silent auction items such as boating excursions and a nature journaling workshop. Next year's get-together is in the works.
- Thanks to National Park Service funding, the Keelboat now has signs aboard that tell the story of the Expedition's travels on the Missouri.

- New programs at Barn include geocaching, topo mapping using clay, nail and string art, artist trading cards, and pottery.



Geocaching: a treasure hunt that teaches mapping skills

**MISSION:** Located on the banks of the Rivanna River, the Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center is a hands-on center focusing on the historic expedition as a gateway for learning about exploration, transportation, science, the natural environment, and native cultures.

LCEC is a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation. We welcome your tax deductible contributions.

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## PRANA FUND AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAM SLATED FOR FALL

In late 2008 the Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center was the grateful recipient of the Prana Fund Award with the mission of teaching children about the environment through art. The Prana Fund in the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation awarded the Center \$25,000 towards this mission, with the possibility of an additional \$25,000 if the first is matched.

2009 has been spent preparing for the series of afterschool programs that will begin in the fall and continue in the spring of 2010 at eight locations as the fulfillment of our Prana Fund grant. Animal and plant species and watersheds and ecosystems will be explored while children discover new avenues of painting, sculpture, printmaking, pottery, and drawing. Mentors will work with children on both indoor and outdoor projects designed to inspire a love of nature and of art. We are thrilled to have had the opportunity to develop this afterschool series, and look forward to working in the schools and community centers in the following months. The summer already had us painting, map-making and creating clay landscapes to teach about the watershed.



Kadiya at Camp Explore

### Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center

President:  
Anne Hemenway  
Vice-President:  
Chris McLean  
Secretary:  
Bill Speiden  
Treasurer:  
Malou Stark  
Executive Director:  
Alexandria Searls

Open to the public  
Saturdays 10-4  
Sunday 12-4  
May through October  
at the Keelboat Barn,  
DardenTowe Park.  
Groups scheduled by  
appointment through-  
out the week and year.  
Call (434) 979-2425 for  
a list of activities and  
for more information.