

called "Music From the Center," he said. "From 1975 to 1977 I was working at the KLCC booth which started, like most of us, in Community Village."

In 1977, because of Black's association with KLCC and access to local musicians, the fair asked him to be the stage manager.

'The mainstage is the party stage, where people can really shake a leg!'
— David Paul Black



David Paul Black

"A couple years into the '80s I became the overall coordinator, which entailed everything! I was the coordinator, the MC, the manager, the booking person, the budget person," Black said. In that capacity, he got to decide how much money to spend on entertainment and who gets it. He estimates he has overseen the spending of a quarter of a million dollars bringing entertainment to the fair. "The mainstage is the party stage," he said. "It's where people can really shake a leg!"

Black estimates that KLCC's broadcasts from the fair reach a third of Oregon's population, many listening "in their hammock or in their backyard, if they don't want to interface with the activity of being out on the path and living it live."

He has gone on to work closely with the Eugene Celebration and Springfield Filbert Festival as a result of his fair connections. ■

Alice's Wonderland

The OCF community garden grows with the fair. ■ By Martha Calhoon

Most Oregon Country Fair regulars are familiar with such twists and turns on the Oregon Country Fair path as the Community Village, Chela Mela Meadow and Energy Park. But one little-known corner of the OCF wonderland, the community garden, has become an integral part of fair operation in recent years.

Run by a crew of nine volunteers, the garden is an all-organic garden on an adjacent plot of land now called Alice's Wonderland. Because the land was purchased from Veneta resident Alice Fuller in 2001, the name was an obvious choice. It was already a rich garden under Fuller's care and ownership, so OCF General Manager Leslie Scott says the plot of land with its 20 x 100-foot greenhouse seemed like the perfect place to continue growing food after the fair bought it. Now, produce from the garden goes to create free meals for the volunteers before, during and after the fair.

The garden crew is currently cultivating basil, beets, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, chard, kale, snow peas, snap peas, strawberries, lettuce, zucchini, summer squash, pole beans, culinary herbs, tea herbs and recently added blueberries. Establishing garlic and leek plants is a goal for garden workers in the coming seasons. Fruit trees, raspberries, marionberries, grapes and rhubarb also remain from Fuller's original garden, which she cultivated into her 80s.

Garden workers have to focus on early market crops that will be ready by early to mid-June when the Pre-Fair Kitchen opens. Volunteer chefs then prepare nightly meals for fair staff including anything from stir-fried kale to "big, fat green salads," Scott says.

Apart from feeding the staff, the garden fulfills the fair's goal as an educational operation. The fair-sponsored teen camp, Culture Jam, is held every August on Alice's Wonderland. Youth from the camp also participate in maintaining the garden, learning about ecology and sustainability in the process. "Some kids go home from the Culture Jam saying that they want to start growing their own food and eating more vegetables," Scott says, satisfied. ■



Dylana, a garden crew volunteer, does some weeding on a beautiful Sunday afternoon before the fair.

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