

MONTANA LIFE

'Everybody was just having a ball'

DREAM/From C1

water-skiing. They were pushing to get that set up," Gibson said.

But nothing happened until Disabled Sports USA, a nationwide organization with whom DREAM is affiliated, began offering grants for groups that wanted to provide summer recreation opportunities.

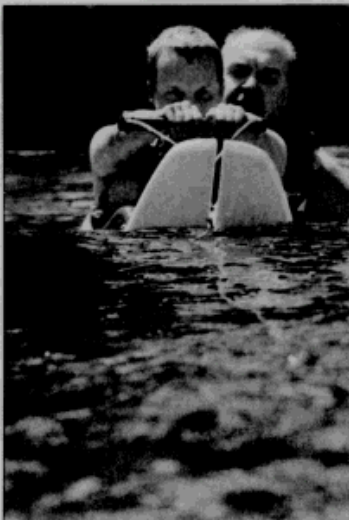
"They have been giving a little bit of a push to get some more summer programs," Gibson said. "Once they offered that grant, we kind of said, 'Well, let's go for it.'"

Of the 70-plus organizations that belong to Disabled Sports USA, Gibson estimates about two-thirds are winter programs only. He suspects this is because there are more opportunities for disabled people in the summer than there are in the winter.

In the Flathead, for example, people can participate in therapy on horseback programs, kids with certain disabilities can play Little League baseball — and even more kids will be able to play baseball and soccer on the newly completed Miracle Field at Kalispell's Kid-sports Complex.

Those kinds of opportunities largely don't exist when the snow begins to fall, Gibson said.

"In the winter, it becomes a lot more limited because you can't get outdoors," he said. "Especially here in the Flathead, we don't have a lot



MICHAEL JONES keeps his eyes focused before taking off on Echo Lake while volunteer David Oberst gives him a few final tips.

of organized activities for disabilities" unless a person is connected through a school district, Flathead Industries or other organization.

"That's probably why DREAM, which started as a group that built trails and benches in parks for people with disabilities when it was incorporated

in 1988, gradually shifted its focus to provide skiing opportunities on Big Mountain each winter.

It's also why the organization will try to further expand its summer recreation opportunities.

"Our goal is to be doing stuff that isn't like organized sports, like hiking and boating," Gibson said.

DREAM secured the grant from Disabled Sports USA, which covered \$1,500 of a \$2,300 specialized water ski.

The ski is about as broad as a snowboard or a narrow surf board, DREAM volunteer Rob Fajt explained. Narrower outrigger skis on either side help balance the ski, which also has a basket for a person to sit in.

"You're able to get people up really easy, and they don't have to use as much balance and coordination to get planing on the water," Fajt said.

"The world for these kids is so small and to do things like this just opens up their world and it's worth every minute of it," volunteer Lynette Jarvis said.

Those who weren't skiing paddled kayaks while awaiting their turn behind the boat.

"People helping people doing amazing stuff," Mike Thompson, who made his house available for the program to use, said. "It's a fun thing to be a part of."

Gibson said it was a successful first venture into summer recreation and bodes well for next summer, when DREAM will try to offer more activities.

"We had a ball yesterday. Everybody was just having a ball," he said. For further information about DREAM, visit www.dreamadaptive.org, e-mail dreamadaptive@yahoo.com or call 862-1817.

Arts in the Park slated

The Hockaday Museum of Art's 41st Annual Arts in the Park, Kalispell's premier arts, crafts, and music festival, will be held July 24 to 26 at Depot Park in Kalispell.

Daily admission is \$3, with children 6 and

under, free. A weekend pass button is \$5 button and is good for unlimited admission to the festival all three days.

Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday. Contact the Hockaday at 755-5268.

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ROUNDUP

Learn about food preserving

Essential Stuff Project (ESP) will discuss various methods of food preservation at 7 p.m. Wednesday, July 22, at Clementine's, 265 Bridge St., in Bigfork. Fran Wade will talk about making and using a solar dryer for preserving fruits, berries and vegetables; preserving meats with cures, salt brine and jerking; and give a general overview of canning, pickling and jam making.

Bring your ideas and favorite preserving methods, and join in a discussion of putting food up without refrigeration.

The event is free and open to the public, but donations are welcome. Coffee and tea are provided, desserts, beer and wine are available for purchase. Visit essentialstuff.org, or contact Edd Black-

ler (ed@essentialstuff.org, 837-5196) or Fran Wade (tashina@16@yahoo.com, 837-1002) for more information.

Schwan's funds to go to Shriners

Part of the proceeds from a Schwan's fundraiser during Heritage Days weekend in Columbia Falls will benefit Shriners Hospitals. Schwan's will be in the Glacier Bank parking lot from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, July 25, selling frozen food and dairy products.

The goal is to sell \$3,000 in Schwan's products. Of that amount, 20 percent will be donated to Shriners Hospitals. The special that day is three 10- and a half inch pizzas and a half gallon of ice cream for \$18.

Individual ice cream

novelties will also be sold, with all the proceeds going to Shriners Hospitals.

Call Cliff at 253-0152 for more information.

Food pantry receives grant

The Northwest Montana Veterans Food Pantry recently received a grant from the Diocese of Helena's "Aid to the Needy" program. This year the Diocese was able to provide \$41,000 in assistance to organizations and projects that provide direct services to people in need.

"In these hard economic times that we are all facing, remembering to support the less fortunate individuals in our community will help these families and individuals to meet their daily essential needs," Linda Erickson of

the veterans food pantry said in a press release. The pantry will use the money to purchase much-needed food items for local veterans and their families.

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