

The entryway to the Sunflower Community Garden

"GIVE A MAN A FISH, YOU FEED HIM FOR A DAY;
TEACH A MAN TO FISH AND YOU FEED HIM FOR A
LIFETIME."

-MAIMONIDES

The Dailey Project

Midwestern transplants procure gardens of community and education in Ogden, UT

Dan Dailey is a transplant to the Western United States. He grew up in Detroit, Michigan, an area of the country focused more on industry than agriculture. Dan's memories from childhood revolve more around hunting and fishing than farming. He can clearly recall his early childhood contact with farm animals as a traveling petting zoo that visited his elementary school. Those animals did not appear healthy, but mangy and underfed. His interest in farming and procurement of the land did not come from his upbringing. Like most farmers, his love of the land is inherent, and his knowledge is self-taught through reading, trial, and error. Dan Dailey means to share the knowledge he has accrued over his lifetime with a new generation of urban farmers, to plant seeds and aspirations that will permeate generations on the Wasatch Front, and to provide spaces for educational opportunities that are alive with creativity and wonder.

Dan attended Northwood University in Midland, Michigan, where he met his lovely wife, Suzy, and graduated with a Bachelors in Marketing and Management. He then began his career as a corporate banker, suit, tie, and the whole nine yards. There came a point, however, when that life became unfulfilling. He entered the small business community in 1991 with the Grounds for Coffee on Harrison Boulevard in Ogden, Utah. He dropped the suit and tie for espresso and an embroidered apron. He abandoned corporate associates for young adults that needed a job and a mentor, which is what he has provided, even if unintentionally.

In 1999, Dan and Suzy bought a piece of property near Causey Reservoir in Ogden Valley. The property was the first step in the development of this dream of sustainability. Dan had been reading about straw bale construction and eco-friendly design. He built a small, energy efficient shed on this property that fit the model of his research and reading on the subject. The



Dan Dailey working on the compost heap.

shed is complete with a loft to sleep in, a wood burning stove for heat, solar panels, and an outhouse. Dan has also introduced a colony of honey bees to his property, a fire pit for gatherings, and a rope swing near the river.

The lot behind Grounds for Coffee was abandoned and a bit of a wreck. Dan and Suzy decided to plan and procure the Sunflower Community Garden, which came to fruition in the growing season of 2010, complete with installations from local artists, a composting program, and a whole lot of love. This was the first project for the public that the Daileys launched, outside of the gathering place created with Grounds for Coffee, of course. The garden has been a huge success. Gardening classes are offered by the Daileys and local farmers, to teach the community how to work the land themselves. Free compost is available by the bucketful. Garden plots are offered for \$25 per season. 9 plots are reserved for local non-profit organizations, demonstrating the Daileys' commitment to strengthening the community. Along the public sidewalks and the parking strip outside the front entrance to the coffee shop, public herb gardens have been planted. Passers-by are welcome to pick and enjoy fresh strawberries, flowers, and herbs. Not your everyday walk in the city.



*Community event at the Sunflower Community Garden
where children made their own chia pets.*

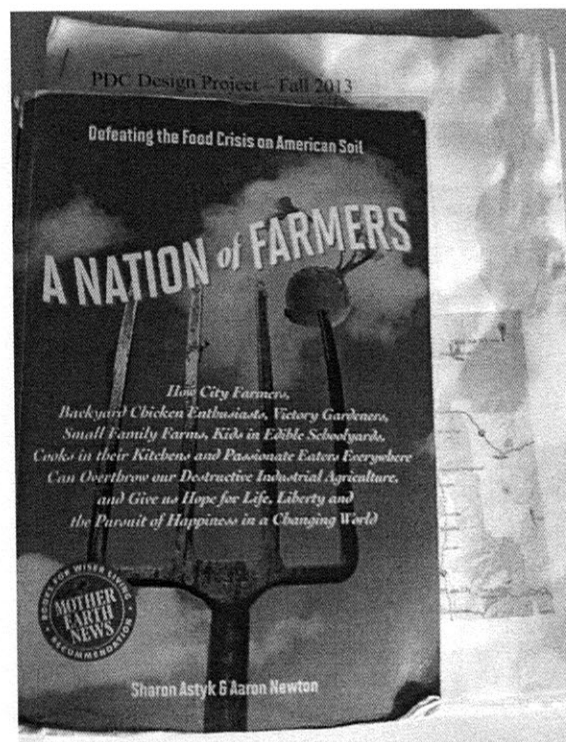
Community gardens offer more than just vegetables. Gardening Matters, a nonprofit establishment in Minnesota, put together a helpful resource on the benefits of community including reduced carbon emissions, municipal savings and increased property values due to beautification, and reduced crime rates. Community gardens offers an opportunity for gardeners to grow fresh, organic produce on their own. This act alone “reduces

exposure to chemical fertilizers and pesticides.” (“Multiple Benefits of Community Gardening” pg. 2) Gardening can also provide physical activity and stress reduction. Community gardens offer a chance to educate youth on the importance of growing food. “Community gardens can serve as an outdoor classroom where youth can learn valuable skills, like those involving practical math, communication, responsibility and cooperation. They also provide the

opportunity to learn about the importance of community, stewardship and environmental responsibility." ("Multiple Benefits of Community Gardening" pg. 4) It seems that what is growing in the Sunflower Community Garden is more than just vegetables, and it shows.

Dan has always talked with his baristas about the things he has read and learned about farming and sustainable building, among other things. He read books like Michael Pollan's *Omnivore's Dilemma*, and *In Defense of Food*, Barbara Kingsolver's *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle*, *Bioshelter Market Garden: A Permaculture Farm* by Darrell Frey, *Plowing with Pigs* by Oscar H. Will III and Karen K. Will, and William F. Engdahl's *Seeds of Destruction: The Hidden Agenda of Genetic Manipulation*.

The book that was his primary inspiration, however, is *A Nation of Farmers* by Sharon Astyk and Aaron Newton. Dan learned of this book while listening to USU's own KUER, the Doug Fabrizio Show entitled "RadioWest." Dan heard a broadcast of Fabrizio's on the book and he immediately went out, bought it, read it, and reread it. Dan offered his copy of the book and the master plan for his next contribution to the greater community of Ogden, and its youth, for the purpose of this paper. The book is dog eared and the plans wear coffee stains, which represents how much thought and attention Dailey has paid to this venture. These are his companions on the road to what lies ahead, the "Dancing Moose Farm."

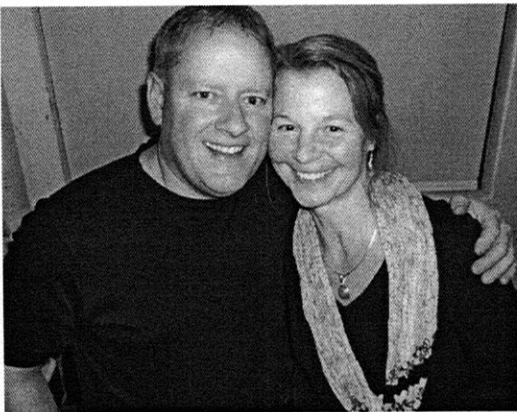


Dog eared inspiration

Originally, Dan and Suzy were working to open a farm-to-table restaurant at the site of a standing restaurant near the property they own in Ogden Valley. In researching the definition of the farm-to-table movement, the best description of what it means came from an olive oil company, Herdade de Vale de Arca, that reads, "Farm-to-Table (or farm-to-fork) refers to, in

the food safety field, the stages of the production of food: harvesting, storage, processing, packaging, sales, and consumption. Farm-to-Table also refers to a movement concerned with producing food locally and delivering that food to local consumers.” (“Farm to Table, The Movement.”) Farm-to-table establishments may operate in different ways, but share similar motivations due to the unsustainable practices of factory farming, the poisonous chemical fertilizers and pesticides, the vanishing family farms, poor flavor, use of genetically modified organisms (GMO’s) without public notice, and the list goes on and on.

Boulder, Utah boasts one such farm-to-table establishment, Hell’s Backbone Grill, that served as a source of great inspiration for Dan and Suzy. This establishment is run by two friends, Jen Castle and Blake Spalding, dedicated to bringing the community delicious, fresh, organic foods grown under a no harm philosophy. The farm sits on 6 acres and uses only environmentally friendly pest and weed control methods, organic farming practices, and ensures that no activity conducted in the process of farming will upset the natural balance of the earth it sits on. The Daileys have visited Hell’s Backbone Grill in the town of Boulder, Utah



Dan and Suzy Dailey

many times over the past few years and grew very fond of the owners and the idea of the farm-to-table movement.

While on their visits, the Daileys pulled weeds in the freezing rain, dug up potatoes, collected eggs from the chickens, and loved it. For dinner, they would dine on exactly what they had harvested from the

Earth that day. Hell’s Backbone Grill accepts the contribution of WWOOFers, farm workers willing to trade their hands in the soil for lodging, education, and meals. This offers a chance for anyone interested in learning the art of organic farming a chance to experience and absorb it first hand.

The Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture studied 16 commonly found produce items and found that each one traveled an average of 1,500 miles to reach the produce section of the grocery market, not to mention the other items that were imported from other

countries. "We found that locally grown produce traveled an average 56 miles from farm to point of sale; the average distance was 1,494 miles – nearly 27 times farther – if those items had come from conventional sources within the continental United States. Another perspective on this comparison is that the locally grown food spent about an hour in transport (assuming an average truck speed of 55 miles per hour) compared to 27 hours for the conventional produce." (Pirog, "Checking the food odometer")

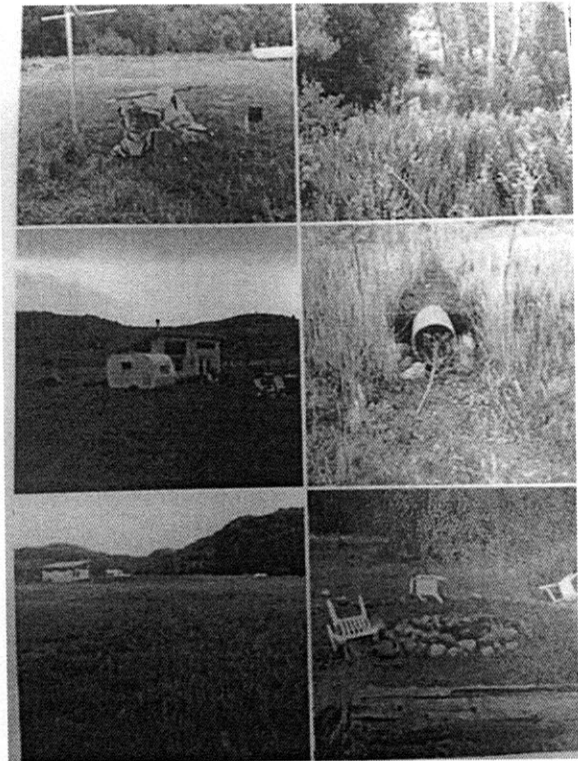
The idea of investing in and utilizing as many local things as possible is not new for the Daileys. Aside from all of their other activities, Suzy Dailey heads up the Ogden chapter of Local First Utah, a non profit organization in Utah aimed at educating people on all matters of buying local and its effects on the community. These two individuals, on their own, are dedicated to the causes that speak to them. Together, they have made amazing strides in perpetuating an educational opportunity for anyone that comes into contact with them.

In Dan's copy of *A Nation of Farmers*, he has underlined, starred, dog eared, and highlighted the passages that speak to him. Not many pages go by without one such mark. An interesting statistic cited, and underlined, in the book reads "In 1900 roughly 38% of the population of the United States was actively involved in growing food. By 1950 that number had been reduced to just more than 12%. Today less than 2% of the American population does that work." (Astyk,Newton, pg.17) This passage illustrates the gaping hole between today's generations understanding of where their food comes from and how it ends up on their plate. It is alarming. Enter the culmination of the Daileys' passions and efforts here, "The Dancing Moose Farm."

On the very first page of the preface in Dan's copy of *A Nation of Farmers*, the underlining begins with this quote from Clayton Brascoupe, "You know, when you farm, your hands are dirty at the end of the day, but your hands are clean." It continues on through the Introduction (Astyk,Newton pg. xii) to bring in the idea of those humans that have stood for something they believed in and resisted the pressures of the social norms, those that took part in "reimagining their society" (Astyk,Newton pg. xii) to reflect their hopes and put down the untruths they were being told. The next words underlined are "re-envision our society."

(Asty,Newton pg. xii) That is what the Dancing Moose Farm means to do through permaculture education, creative learning techniques and community building aimed at the next generation.

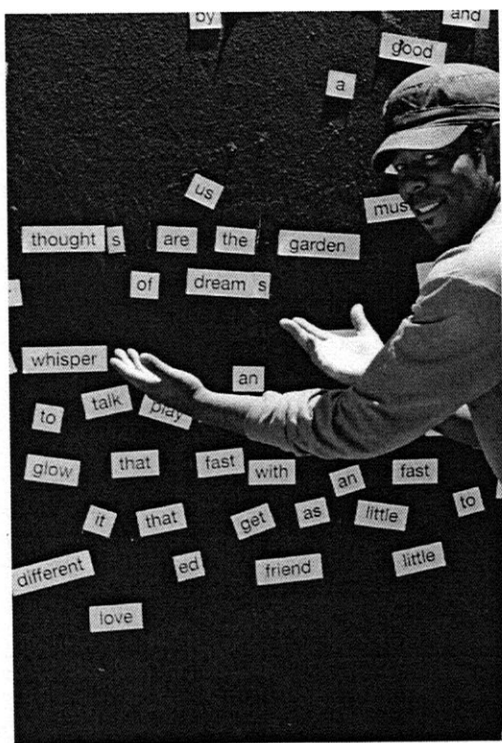
As long as I've known Dan Dailey, he has been looking for his niche in working with at risk youth. Local child welfare employees that frequent his shop have approached him on many occasions to participate in mentoring programs. His baristas, usually in their early 20's, stay for years and look to Dan and Suzy for support and mentorship. Nothing has really stuck, except the Daileys' relationship with the youth that have worked for them. The Dancing Moose Farm provides the opportunity Dan and Suzy have been looking for outside of simply employing people. Partnering with The Nurture the Creative Mind Foundation, Carbon Architects, and local Permaculture designer, Josh Jones, the Daileys' mean to create the living, creative Dancing Moose farm and a non-profit ecology center for youth called The Huntsville Arts and Ecology Center.



Site of the Dailey property, future home of the Dancing Moose Farm. Straw bale structure visible near yellow trailer.

The hope for the Dancing Moose Farm is to develop a complete, sustainable permaculture farm. Permaculture, as defined in *A Nation of Farmers*, "is a contraction of "permanent agriculture" and "permanent culture," and is defined by author Toby Hemenway as, "a set of techniques and principles for designing sustainable human settlements."" (Asty,Newton pg. 291, reference 285) Permaculture is based on ecology and humanity at its core. The three fundamental principles of the Dancing Moose Farm, and of permaculture, according to Dailey, are care of people, care of the land, and sharing of any excess.

Geoff Lawton founded the Permaculture Research Institute. His expansion on the subject of permaculture includes “the conscious design and maintenance of agriculturally productive ecosystems which have the diversity, stability, and resilience of natural ecosystems. It is the harmonious integration of landscape and people — providing their food, energy, shelter, and other material and non-material needs in a sustainable way.” (“Permaculture Research Institute: About Permaculture and the Permaculture Research Institute”) Josh Jones, permaculture advisor on the project, worked with Geoff Lawton. Josh Jones is an Ogden, Utah local. His profile on the Worldwide Permaculture Network talks about the installation in Huntsville, where he will be working with Dan, exhibiting his excitement at the opportunity to share his knowledge of these holistic techniques.



Amir Jackson, founder of Nurture the Creative Mind Foundation. The quote in the picture reads “thoughts are the garden of dreams.”

Another contributor to the Dancing Moose Farm is Amir Jackson, founder of the Nurture the Creative Mind Foundation in Ogden, Utah. Amir specializes in creating artistic, educational opportunities for youth. The first project that Dan and Amir will be spearheading together is dubbed “Learn to Play.” The focus of this program will be to remove kids from the city, and their phones and other electronic devices, and remind them, even teach them, how to play. Its shocking that this kind of program even needs to exist; however, it is a truth relevant to our day and age.

Without the time and energy spent on farming and working the land, human hands have fallen idle. The inspiration for this project comes from the documentary titled “Play Again.” This documentary explores the costs of raising a generation divorced from nature. It is eye-opening. A very poignant part of the film discusses the relationship between the current generation and the land, “What they do not value they will not protect, and what they do not protect, they will lose.” (“Charles Jordan, Play Again.”) Dan and Amir mean to mitigate these effects in their corner of the world by teaching at

risk, Ogden youth to play...again. The youth are not permitted to bring any electrical devices, they must play. This opens worlds of opportunities, such as a relationship with nature and an introduction to urban farming.

A Nation of Farmers directs the readers attention to Cuba to define urban farming. Cuba experienced trade embargoes resulting in a nation cut off from the rest of the world, which resulted in hunger for the citizens of Havana. The salvation for this isolation and the subsequent starvation boiled down to urban farming. Planting gardens in their yards, working with their neighbors to cooperatively plant crops, and raising small farm animals on their property became a way of life. "By 1994 hundreds of Havana residents were involved in food production." (Astyk and Newton pg. 278) The world at large is at risk of experiencing the same shortages of food that Cuba experienced; however, such shortages probably will not be the result of trade embargoes; but drought, climate change, and loss of opportunity. "As other urban areas around the world begin to grapple with intertwined increases of food and fuel costs, cities are likely to need flexibility and adaptability. In all likelihood some combination of the tools used by Cuba to address their famine will be needed in most of the world's cities." (Astyk and Newton pg. 279)

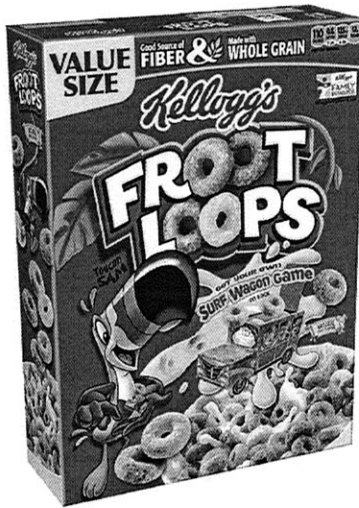
Urban farming is not abnormal to a lot of the world's countries, even our own. The book provides statistics for the rates of urban farming in places like Hong Kong, Moscow, and China. "Urban farming is a norm -there are 200 million urban farmers world-wide, and they produce food and income for 700 million people." (Astyk and Newton pg. 279) The United States has historically participated in urban farming and, in fact, we are only a mere two generation removed from our nation being required to practice urban farming and those gardens were called victory gardens! "In 1943, 44% of all vegetables eaten in the US were produced in home Victory Gardens, and 20 million American families worked in gardens, in addition to the one-fifth of the population living on farms." (Astyk and Newton pg. 58) These are the lessons and the values Dan Dailey is looking to instill in the youth of Ogden through this farm and the non-profit he and his wife are creating.

The dedication that Dan, Suzy, Amir, and Josh show for their passions in life is inspiring. The operation at Hell's Backbone Grill could be the status quo instead of a speciality. The need for farming is imperative. The root of the issue lies in what we are putting in our bodies, into our children's bodies. Micheal Pollan's *In Defense of Food, An Eater's Manifesto* outlines what has gone awry with the food industry and the industrialization of our food, our livestock, and our lives. Some farms are now themselves called factories. Some of the foods we eat are genetically modified for durability during travel, since the food travels so far to reach our plates. Pollan references all the fad foods, the low-fat this and the sugar-free that, all of those hyphenated foods that have really brought us nothing but trouble with our body's natural rhythms and digestive functions. Pollan hypothesizes that "What we need now, it seems to me, is to create a broader, more ecological-and more cultural-view of food." (Pollan, pg. 102)



World War II Victory Garden Poster

The first place we can look, we can also dig our hands in... the dirt. Chemical fertilizers became prevalent in the 1950's and employ nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium, "the big three macronutrients." (Pollan, pg. 114) Yes, these three nutrients can assist in the growing of plants, vegetables and fruits; however, plants also need the other things naturally found in the dirt, the microbes, the mycorrhizal fungi, the squiggly earthworms, the natural rhythms of the soil and the ecosystem. These things cannot be sprayed on from nitrogen fertilizers derived from fossil fuels. Its like trying to squeeze blood from a turnip. It can't be done.



Package of popular kids' cereal, Fruit Loops, boasting fiber and whole grains, with natural flavors.

The over processed foods that come in neat cardboard boxes with colorful pictures and animated mascots do a poor job at impersonating the natural world they claim to come from. The trouble with the processing of once nutrient rich foods is that the very process “depletes them of many nutrients, a few of which are then added back: B vitamins in refined flour, vitamins and minerals in breakfast cereal and bread. Fortifying processed foods with missing nutrients is surely better than leaving them out, but food science can add back only the small handful of nutrients that

food science recognizes as important today.” (Pollan, pg. 115) It is impossible to truly understand and absolutely know what is taken out through food processing, the sunshine, the energy of the farmer that procured the original specimens, the dirt, the rain, the thing that cannot be recreated in a laboratory or in a factory. That is what is missing from the food.

The loss of the farm and heirloom vegetables also equates to a loss of biodiversity. According to *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, biodiversity is defined as “biological diversity in an environment as indicated by numbers of different species of plants and animals.” (pg. 71) As we learned from the Irish; however, biodiversity is crucial to survival. The Pacific Biodiversity Institute recognizes monoculture, the absence of biodiversity, as a “contributing factor to the Irish potato famine, the European wine industry collapse in the late 1800’s, and the US Southern corn leaf blight epidemic of 1970.” (“What is Biodiversity?” When all the plants, crops, fruits, what have you, are exactly the same, they are all vulnerable to exactly the same things, like the potato fungus in Ireland. It decimated the island and the human population. It was a catastrophe and could have been avoided, to some extent, through biodiversity.

It is not simply the peace and good feelings that getting your hands dirty can bring that needs a renaissance in this world. It is the nutrients in the foods that we are putting in our bodies and the bodies of our children, it is the community effort of working together for the

greater good, it is the return to the land and the reconnection to the place that affords our existence, that farming can bring. That is what Dan is after, that is what I am after.

If ever there was a relevant work of farm literature, it would be *A Nation of Farmers* and Dan Dailey would be the picture of the farmer painted therein, the modern version of our early predecessors, interested in the land and watching things grow. Dan is a mentor. Dan is a farmer. In my interview with him we talked about how the Dancing Moose Farm got its name, it was some what serendipitous, a happy accident if you will. He told me the story of how he came to acquire the land: "The farm will be named the Dancing Moose Farm because fifteen years ago when I was looking for property in Huntsville, Utah I drove past a field that had two moose that looked like they were playing, chasing each other, and looking goofy as can be. I watched them for what seemed to be a half hour or more and returned back to Grounds for Coffee. Upon my arrival, one of my customers who lived up Huntsville, was in the shop and I told him about the moose and it turned out that they were on his property. I told him I was looking for property to buy and he told me he was selling. Two weeks later we were proud owners of a piece of property. If it wasn't for the moose I would have never made this purchase. Hence the name Dancing Moose Farms!"

If it wasn't for the moose, there would be no Dancing Moose Farm, if it wasn't for the Daileys, my life would be much different. My Grandfather and my Mother offered me my first connection to gardening. Without them, I wouldn't have had any introduction to gardening at all, let alone farming, even though I grew up in the corn belt. These three individuals offered me the chance to get my hands dirty. My mother planted a small garden when I was a child and asked me and my siblings help her. I remember picking the peas and eating them straight from their pods on Indiana summer days. My grandfather found sanctuary in his garden following his time as a paratrooper in World War II. He had the most peaceful gardens I have ever experienced. I remember so many nights the adults talked and the children ran around, innocently catching fireflies on warm summer evenings in those gardens.

Through my research about the Dailey project and my experience in this course, I have procured my own seeds of remembrance for the connection between humans and their food.

I spent hours digging in the dirt in my backyard recently with my youngest son, Henry. We dug and dug, we talked about the worms doing their dirty jobs, the dead leaves of last fall nourishing the ground, and we talked over what kinds of vegetables to plant in our garden. The past fifteen years of my own life, I have known Dan Dailey. We have talked over books he's read and ideas he's had. I've visited his strawbale house in Huntsville, the future site of the Dancing Moose Farm, and I've soaked up the solace that piece of land provides. I've entered into my own realm of understanding about how I want to live my life and what kinds of foods I am willing to put in the bodies of my young boys.

My intentions mirror that of my Grandfather, my Mother, and Dan Dailey, my unsuspecting boss at a coffee shop in Ogden, Utah. Who knew Dan Dailey and I would still know each other fifteen years later, let alone that I would be writing a paper about how he inspired me to live a life closer to the Earth. Dan and Suzy Dailey have mentored me



My Mother, far right, and her siblings in their Father's garden in Lansing, Illinois.

through my twenties and through opening, and closing, a coffee shop of my own in Ogden. They have been a part of my life for fifteen years, which seems impossible. I plan to take my family to Hell's Backbone Grill in Boulder, Utah, so that my children might understand how their food gets to their plate. Our garden is already underway here in the Uintah Basin, shovels are covered in dirt, shoes are stained orange from the soil here. My interest in Michael Pollan is piqued from the two books I have read of his from this course, *In Defense of Food* and *The Botany of Desire*. Dan has loaned me *A Nation of Farmers*, which I look forward to completing. I look forward to taking my two boys to the Dancing Moose Farm where they can see their friends, Dan and Suzy, and we can clean our hands in the dirt.

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