



A Family Story

Dennis and I had both been passionate about the health of the environment even before we first met at Game, Fish & Parks in Denver, Colorado. In 1971, shortly after graduating from Rutgers as a Landscape Architect and fresh out of the Peace Corps, Dennis' love for parks and public lands brought him to Colorado looking for work. His willingness to work at any pay rate and his design portfolio, prompted the Director to create a position for him on the spot. He immediately began the master plan for Lathrop State Park, laid out miles and miles of hiking trails and developed the Colorado Park Sign Manual. Meanwhile, I was on a mission to "save the environment" and landed a job working in the Environmental Resources department at the same government agency. Two years later, fifty of our friends and family hiked one of those trails for two miles to join us in a gorgeous mountain meadow at 10,000 feet where we were married.



*Dennis & Rebecca Beach's wedding, 1972
Golden Gate State Park, CO*

Several years later, with two small babies, we had a growing desire to see our family grow up in a natural, rural environment where I could live out my obsession for growing pure, organic, whole foods. With everything we could cram into an old truck, we migrated the family from zero-population growth Boulder, Colorado in 1978 to the rolling hills and creeks of Woodstock, Kentucky. Dennis provided for our growing family by doing remodeling, construction and basically anything he could to keep us fed, as Landscape Architect jobs were not available in rural Kentucky. In 1981 when a local PTA requested he build a playground,

he undertook the project with characteristic energy and innovation and thus Play Mart was born. Dennis' life-long passions for creative-engineering, construction, energy efficiency, good design and the natural environment are the foundation for what has become Play Mart today.

My interest and college education in early child development, a desire for our children to have a more creative educational environment and spiritual concerns for our children in public schools, led us to choose to homeschool our five bright kids. I incorporated my passions for organic gardening, hiking, biking, nature-exploration, imaginative play, sewing, art, cooking and baking into our children's daily educational routine. Mornings were devoted to book work and afternoons were spent either gardening or in the woods, or helping Dad design, build, install and market playgrounds.

Over thirty years later, five of the seven Beach family members continue to manage the operations of the company and direct the mission, vision and heart of this family-owned and operated company. My desire to instill a love of nature in children while stimulating physical and mental development guided the formation of Play Mart's mission to provide children the opportunity of experiencing a safe, environmentally friendly and creative place in which to play and grow.

Rebecca Beach