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## A Message From the Executive Director

Eight years into its new era as a community resource, Wright-Locke Farm is hitting its stride. Our education program is operating at full capacity, agricultural operations are producing lots of healthy, organic crops, volunteers contribute in diverse and engaging ways, and new visitors discover the farm every week. For an organization that is so young, this is indeed an accomplishment for our community to take pride in.

We cannot overstate the generosity of our hundreds of volunteers and donors who give their time, talents, and financial support to the many farm endeavors. Because of your contributions, Wright-Locke Farm has blossomed into an engaging place to build community, learn, and grow.

Looking to the future, we are exploring the creation of a year-round Education Center to expand opportunities for learning about nutrition, agriculture, and the environment while ensuring our organization's financial stability. We have developed schematic drawings for this new building and will be sharing the details of this exciting opportunity in the coming months.

With your support, we'll continue to strengthen the Farm as a community resource for all. As always, please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or offers of assistance.

Sincerely,  
Archie McIntyre,  
Executive Director  
amcintyre@wlfarm.org  
(781-760-1017)



Young Farmers enjoying the bounty of their harvest

## The Youngest Farmers

While many kids use their after school hours for lessons, sports, homework or playing, three local farm volunteers can't get enough of weeding, goat-tending, harvesting—or any other tasks Farmer Adrienne can throw at them.

Josh Schindelman, Taka Yae, and Ina Baird show up after school and tackle the work with the maturity of their teen-age—and adult—counterparts. Children are always welcome to volunteer with their parents, but these kids do it solo (as do volunteers over 12). “The three of them really want to work,” says Adrienne, “and they bring such good cheer and attitude. It works.”

Like a lot of kids, they started out in our farm education programs but they wanted to come back and dig in. So if you wander by you're likely to see 11-year-old Josh sorting colorful dried beans and packing them into bags for sale, or Ina ripping up the last of the cannellini bean plants after harvest time.

Taka got his start last fall when he watched the crew piling fallen leaves on top of garlic plants to winter them over—the crew light-heartedly turned the work into a leaf-throwing fight and Adrienne invited Taka to join in. “And she asked if I wanted to come back in the spring,” says Taka. “Today I collected 35 eggs the chickens hid near the goats.”

Continued on page 7



Mary Lou Ferriero & Kent Porter-Hamann take a break from arranging bouquets (L), Christine Brown clipping in the fields (R), Ruth Trimachi leads a workshop (below)

## Flower Program is in Full Bloom by Joyce Westner

Colorful flowers turning to brilliant artistic arrangements—if that’s your idea of a flower volunteer’s job, think again—there’s mud involved, weeds, heavy lifting, buzzing pollinators, dead leaves to strip, not to mention vases to wash. And yet the volunteers keep showing up.

The farm has sold flowers since starting agricultural operations in 2012, but this year saw a new era of floral program growth after Ruth Trimarchi offered to grow additional varieties for the farm. She quickly got into the farm spirit (and a job as Flower Operations Manager)—and what was a very small segment of the farm’s daily harvest is now a thriving and beautiful part of what draws people in.

Yes, we are all about people—as in customers at the farm stand and farmers markets, and also our enthusiastic and talented group of volunteers. People are what make Wright-Locke a vibrant place. In addition to arranging bouquets, the flower volunteers start seedlings in the greenhouse during frozen February, weed and water the beds, and move a lot of compost, mulch and soil uphill—to terraced beds on the slope behind the farm stand. Bill Fischer and Carol Siegel, for instance, who drive in from Somerville, have been volunteering together at the Farm for several years and you

can spot them doing a lot of the heavy lifting.

There are more than 30 hard-working field volunteers, including a dozen flower cutters and arrangers who set a high bar for floral artistry. Several are retired professionals or award-winning amateurs who, each morning in the squash barn, soak and snip and clean and trim and create up to 136 arrangements every week. They’re sold at Winchester, Arlington and Lexington farmers markets and at our own farm stand. Special orders are also available for events.



Arranger Lillian Cohen wins the prize for “most senior” (she won’t tell her age). When she lived on Pepper Hill she visited the farm and met volunteer Nina McIntyre who was arranging flowers. Having been a garden club president, and retired from her Lilies and Buds flower business (Lillian’s late husband’s name was Bud), she jumped right in, eventually inviting her neighbor Mary Farrell to join her. Yes, Lillian modestly admits she’s won prizes and ribbons; several times her pieces have been displayed at the Museum of Fine Arts’ “Art in Bloom”. Lillian brings her own scissors to her volunteer gig. “I can’t stop arranging,” she says. “It’s a labor of love.”

Ruth points out another appeal of local organically grown flowers—not only do they last over a week, but their environmental footprint is far smaller than flowers grown abroad

Continued on page 5

# Invest in the Farm's Future



Squash House, constructed ca. 1915



Young farmers show the fruits of their labors

They said it couldn't be done. But you made it happen: 12.5 acres of Wright Locke Farm is now preserved as public open space—forever. Thanks to the generosity of our community, we have preserved the land. Now, we look to continue restoring our historic buildings and investing in our agricultural infrastructure.

The Farm's financial model is self-sustaining. This year, we have covered our operating expenses through program and agriculture revenue. So, 100% of your donation will go towards capital improvements.

We began to secure our unique and historic Squash House with a new roof in 2010. Now it is time to replace the 34 deteriorated windows. We also need to replace our compost pile with a structured and aerated composting system.

Your support of Wright-Locke Farm will continue to improve this new asset to Winchester. Please give as generously as you can. Make your tax-deductible gift now to support Wright-Locke Farm. Please fill out the reply form below and send it today, or donate online at [WLFarm.org/donate](http://WLFarm.org/donate).

**Donate online at [WLFarm.org/donate](http://WLFarm.org/donate)**

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Please make checks payable to Wright-Locke Farm Conservancy, Inc. and mail to:

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Thank you for your support!

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## Flower Program (continued from 2)

like the 75% of cut flowers sold in the U.S. today. One customer said she brought an arrangement to a hospitalized friend and the medical staff commented on it. “They thought it was delightfully different from the store bought ones,” she says. The honey bees appreciate them too.

The whole operation is highly organized, with Ruth using spreadsheets to track all details ranging from which varieties produced the best flowers (she’s planning to grow more bells of Ireland and snapdragons next year), to how many little tea sacks she needs. Yes, the flower crew dries and packages chamomile and mint leaves to sell as locally made tea bags.

Volunteers are out early and work for an hour, or a morning, some a few times a year, and others nearly every day. They include “a psychotherapist, a computer techie, and others, and amazing connections are made. The farm rises or falls on our volunteers,” says Ruth. “And,” she adds, “it’s a great way to start your day, with beauty, peace and grace.”

## What’s New?

### Farm Ed Programs Fill Up Fast



Farm Ed youth about the power of sunlight in the 1827 barn

We are honored that our farm ed programs are so popular—so popular, in fact, that summer programs fill up in January. We are working on a plan to increase our capacity so more children can participate in our ed programs. This plan may include the construction of a year-round educational facility where the boarded-up yellow house now stands.



### Farm Stand Café Up and Running



Marina Makushkina and Farmstand Manager Kim Kneeland

In 2016 we gave our farmstand a facelift and opened for regular operating hours. There you can sip coffee, iced tea, or fresh pressed juice and enjoy a snack at the outdoor patio with café-style seating and free WiFi. In addition to selling our own farm’s eggs, honey and produce, we offer floral arrangements, ever-popular popsicles, and many other local products for sale. While winter farm stand hours are limited to egg sales on Wednesdays from 9–12 noon, we look forward to welcoming you back on a daily basis when the weather warms up.

# Hundreds of Volunteers and Donors Pitch in

## An interview with Board President Sally Quinn

### Who manages Wright-Locke Farm?

In 2011 The Wright-Locke Farm Conservancy entered into a long-term lease with the Town of Winchester for a portion of the farm (the growing fields and buildings) entrusting the care of the historic farmhouse, 1827 barn, Ice House, farmstand, and the squash house to a very small staff and a large number of volunteers. The Conservancy has invested over \$80,000 a year to maintain and upgrade the historic landscape, growing fields, and buildings.

### Where does the \$80,000 come from each year—that's a lot of vegetables.

We wish! Vegetable and flower sales plus farm events and education programs all provide the operating budget, but donations pay to fix and upgrade everything else. The buildings were in rough shape when we took over but we have repaired all the exteriors except the squash house and the ice house.

We also wired the barns and installed smoke and burglar alarms—which means I sometimes get a 3 a.m. call from the alarm company when a bird flies through the barn.

### Is maintaining history expensive?

New roofs alone cost over \$20,000 for these large buildings. Add to that new gutters and soffits, a fresh coat of paint, plus \$60,000 worth of new clapboard siding for the 1827 barn to replace rotted wood. Besides funding these upgrades to historic buildings so town funds don't need to be expended, we also used donations to increase parking and pave a wider driveway for the many farm visitors—a thousand people a week attend our free Family Farm Nights.

### It's such a big space—Who does your landscaping?

We're lucky to have many strong and dedicated volunteers who keep the trails to Whipple Hill Conservation Area clear for walkers, cut the grass, and rake the leaves. We pay to plow the snow instead of expecting the town to do it. Our capable farm staff and volunteers manage the growing fields.

### Any upgrades for the animals?

We installed better fencing and coyote protection for the sheep, goats, and chickens. Last year half the chickens were

killed by predators but this year we only lost one thanks to the new fence funded by donors.

### How has the Conservancy improved the barns and other facilities?

We built sinks and brought water into the barns for vegetable washing and outside for farm education students. We built the greenhouse so we can raise seedlings in winter and have produce ready to sell in the spring. We added two accessible restrooms and cleaned up the inside of every building, organizing a century's worth of stuff and saving historic artifacts—hopefully to be shown in a museum-style exhibition space in the future.

Another major addition to the farm this year was the transformation of the old garage into a full-fledged farmstand where visitors can purchase our own Wright-Locke produce

and floral arrangements, as well as locally sourced maple syrup, yogurt, juice, coffee, and other treats. The Werner Carlson patio we built next to it has become a community gathering place for visitors to linger.

### What other contributions might our community be surprised to know about?

Volunteers from Winchester and surrounding communities pitch in and help out in really diverse ways. Boy Scout Sean Rasku-Casas organized his fellow scouts, family and friends to buy and plant blueberry bushes—and they built the netting frames to keep the birds from stealing the berries. St. Eulalia's Parish donates the use of their parking lot for farm nights and leases us their kitchen for cooking classes. Our entire chicken program was conceived of by a group of 12-year-olds and is still run by volunteer "chicken families" who take care of the chickens on a weekly basis. Conservancy board members, including me, are all volunteers. These examples are just a few of the many ways so many help out. It's clear the community feels privileged to care for this wonderful town asset in time, labor, and financial support. The transformation of Wright-Locke Farm from a private farm to a public asset has been an exciting process to be a part of. The depth of our community's commitment to fuel this transformation has consistently exceeded my wildest expectations.



Young volunteers and farm staff show off spring harvest



## Ways to Volunteer at the Farm

Cut flowers from the fields and create arrangements for sale at market.

Work in the fields planting, weeding, harvesting, or preparing produce for market.

Assist with fundraising, public relations, photo management, database administration or other organizational support.

Join our raspberry picking team to pick berries for processing into jam.

Perform mechanical, carpentry, and other sundry repairs to our farm equipment and historic structures.

Staff the farmstand or raspberry picking operations.

Rake, water, and mow the landscape.

Lend a hand at our public events.

Develop an historic artifact display program.

Sign up for a week of chicken care this winter.

And more! If you have an idea, we'd love to hear it. Please contact Archie to find out how to get involved at [amcintyre@wlfarm.org](mailto:amcintyre@wlfarm.org) or 781-760-1017.



## The Youngest Farmers (cont.)

While third-grader Ina learned tasks in her mom's garden, Josh experiments in his own gardens—yes, more than one. "I have three gardens and a greenhouse," he says. "An 8 x 16 vegetable garden, an 8 x 8 squash and pumpkin garden, and this year I added an 8 x 20 potato garden."

When asked what brings them to the farm when most kids might be playing with their devices, Ina says, "When I saw my friend Taka here, I thought it looked like fun." She adds, "I'd rather be outside—I want to be a farmer."



Taka (L) prepares chamomile blossoms to dry for herbal tea for sale at the farmstand, Ina (center) hauls fresh cut flowers and Josh (R) tackles weeds in the fields.