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Wright-Locke Farm is free and open to all, everyday.

Visit, volunteer, and enjoy
your local farm!





WRIGHT-LOCKE
FARM WINCHESTER, MA

Farm News

November 2017

A Message from the President

It has been almost ten years since I was invited to join a new board in town, the Wright-Locke Farm Conservancy. It was a thrilling idea that many fought for in purchasing the farm. But it needed a path forward. In ten years, we have created something amazing through the tremendous support of our wonderful Winchester community.

How did we get so far? Creative thinking, hard work, and the incredible support of so many, plus a second generous \$100K grant from the Cummings Foundation.

We have rebuilt a 379-year-old farm into a vibrant community farm that sells its bountiful crops at three farmers markets, a CSA, and an on-site farm stand. We have built a thriving education program that serves thousands of youths and adults. Our electronic newsletter reaches thousands and invites them to events such as our free Family Farm Night that draws up to 1,200 concertgoers on Thursday nights in June and July.

If you have not visited the farm, promise me that you will. It is open 7 days a week, even during the winter when our programs shut down. Visit our goats and chickens. Enjoy the fresh air and the beautiful farmscape. Nurture your soul.

Hope to see you around the farm.

Sally Quinn
President
squinn@wlfarm.org



Celebrating the \$100K grant from the Cummings Foundation!

What is Farm Education? By Kimberly Kneeland

There is no question that the farm has witnessed massive change over its 380 years, but until recently, that change was focused on making regular farm operations more efficient. The last five years have seen a different kind of change. While we still take pride in tilling fields and growing produce, we have added Farm Education into the mix. Were they here now, the Wright and Locke families might be confused to learn that a huge part of our mission is to educate the public about food and agriculture.

In the 1800s, when the Locke family owned the farm, an overwhelming portion (over 50%) of Americans relied on agriculture for their livelihoods and an even greater portion had some direct connection to it—they lived amongst farms, raised chickens for eggs, or grew their own fruits and vegetables to cook and preserve. Today, less than 2% of the population manage over 900 million acres of farmland and fewer and fewer people have any connection whatsoever to agriculture and the source of their food.

Modern agriculture has morphed into an industry with practices that are compromising our people, animals, land, and water. The future of our health, as well as the planet's, depends on changing our approach towards agriculture. That will require the combined efforts of consumers, producers, and external factors such as regulation and financing. But if consumers do not understand the most basic aspects of agriculture, how can they make the best choices for themselves and the planet?

Enter: Farm Education. We provide opportunities for people of all ages to connect with the outdoors and the source of their food through experience-based learning. Our youth education programs offer children a unique hands-on experience on a historic work-

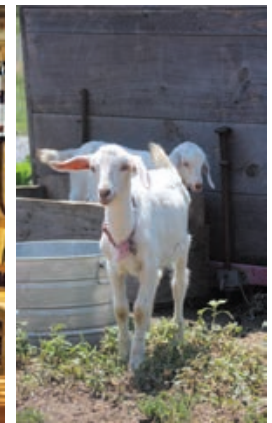
Continued on page 5



Crowd enjoying Family Farm Night



Summer Solstice volunteers



Baby goats!

A Full Year of Fun in Half the Time By Amy Rindskopf

Ask folks about events at Wright-Locke Farm and the first thing they usually mention is Family Farm Night. Nothing says summer better than the free outdoor concert series, full of sunshine, music for young and old, and of course, popsicles.

But there are other wonderful events at the farm throughout our short season—we start in May with Spring Fling: our celebration of Mother’s Day which combines our seedling plant sale with the always popular Name-A-Chicken contest and a traveling petting zoo. Before the end of June, we mark the return of long days with the Summer Solstice Cocktail Party. This year, we added the interesting and informative monthly Speaker Series, featuring local educators and community activists speaking about issues that affect us all, such as genetically-engineered crops, food as medicine, agroforestry, and health benefits of renewable energy. (One talk co-sponsored with the Winchester Farmers Market and the League of Women Voters was moved to the Winchester Town Hall because we expected more people than the barn could seat.)

In late summer, we enjoy great local food with new friends and old at our Farm-to-Table Suppers. Come fall, we celebrate with the Equinox Cocktails and then wrap things up with the Volunteer Thank You Party in early November. Then all the benches are put away, the lanterns taken down, the lights unplugged, and the barn closed for the cold winter months. After six months of wonderful community activities at the farm, we shutter our doors.

But imagine if instead of closing down, we simply moved inside for the colder months. The Speaker Series could continue throughout the year. We could host concerts when snow is on the ground, and delicious Farm Suppers full of soups, overwintered vegetables or early spring greens. Picture snowshoeing at the farm followed by hot cider or cocoa in the Education Center. Gardens need to be planned before they can be planted: how about group discussions of the best plants for New England’s terrain, held indoors during the cool spring weather before the ground has fully thawed?

An Education Center will expand our event options. A second indoor space would mean we could run adult events at the same time as children’s programs, be they cooking classes, gardening workshops, or book groups. The view of the farm from inside the new Education Center would help tie all of these events to the land—land that is both protected from development and also enjoyed to its full potential. The learning and sharing could continue, the community enjoying the farm would grow, and a wonderful resource for the area would be fully and actively used.

Here’s looking forward to a whole year-round of wonderful farm events!



Connor Siedman presenting at the Speaker Series in August



Summer Solstice Cocktails in the 1827 Barn

Invest in the Farm's Future



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've preserved the land. Now, we look to secure the future of our historic buildings and the safety of our livestock.

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 one-time capital improvements.

On the farm this year we resided and painted the Ice House and refurbished the parking lot and walkways. Currently, we are

working on replacing and repairing the Squash House windows and updating our compost system. Up next? Repairing the walls of the farmhouse after this year's extensive electrical work, and insulating the farmhouse.

Your support will preserve this wonderful Winchester asset for generations to come. Please give as generously as you can and make your gift now to support Wright-Locke Farm. Please fill out the reply form below and send it in today.

Interested in providing a substantial pledge to the Cultivate the Future campaign? Have a look at our website or contact us directly at Cultivate@wlfarm.org.

Donate online at WLFarm.org/donate

Yes! I will invest in the future of Wright Locke Farm with my donation

\$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1000 \$2500 \$5000 Other \$ _____

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I would like to:

- Become a Farm Friend and enjoy early registration for children's education programs (\$125) Join email list

Please make your check payable to Wright-Locke Farm Conservancy, Inc.
and mail with this form to:

Wright-Locke Farm Conservancy, Inc., P.O. Box 813, Winchester, MA 01890

Wright-Locke Farm Conservancy, Inc is a registered 501(c)(3) corporation
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Thank you for your support!

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to all the donors who generously support Wright-Locke Farm!

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Farm Education (cont.)

ing farm. All programs include activities related to agriculture, healthy eating, the environment, or natural science while using the fields, pastures, barns, and wooded trails as our living classroom. But it's not just children. Teens and adults often need just as much guidance to improve their diets and expand their knowledge. Our workshops are a great way to learn practical skills related to healthy living, small-scale "backyard" agriculture, and the wonders of nature. Our education programs have been extremely successful and people are always asking for more!

We are passionate about growing so that we can offer an even larger variety of programs and reach a broader audience. At present, however, we are limited by the farm's infrastructure. We lack heated facilities and have only seven months to accommodate our entire year of programming, resulting in a crazy

dance among staff as we set up and break down. With only one large gathering space, we cannot hold simultaneous programs; without an on-site commercial kitchen, it is difficult to carry out the vital cooking education needed to encourage healthier lifestyles. A year-round education center will allow us to better serve our ever-growing community and Cultivate the Future.



(Left to Right) Picking in the Education Garden; Liz Davis & Yumi Yae feeding baby goats.

What's New? Cummings Foundation Grant — Farm Upgrades — Speaker Series



(Left to Right) Archie McIntyre & Sally Quinn celebrating the Cummings Foundation grant; proud master carpenters; Molly Anderson presenting at the Speaker Series in July.



Every year we try to go above and beyond to serve the community that loves this Farm. And while everyone can always count on our organic veggies and flowers, great workshops, and other farm staples, there have been some great new developments. Spring brought with it exciting news – we were the fortunate recipients (for the second time) of a Cummings Foundation grant for \$100,000 for our education programming. It was a great way to start off the year!

During the Spring, we also worked hard to improve the safety of the farm landscape for our visitors. This effort, overseen by Bob Johnson and Nathan Rome, included a ramp, stairs and railings at the entrance to the farmstead and the 1827 Barn, as well as a packed stone covering for our busy parking lot and pathway to the farmstead.

June 21st marked the first session of our 2017 Speaker Series which became a huge success with large crowds gathering in the barn to listen to presentations on a variety of topics. We

had experts come from all over the Northeast to present about nutrition, GMOs, agroforestry, the health benefits of alternative energy sources, and the importance of food in primary care. We kept these sessions open and free to all in an effort to encourage more conversation about these important issues. This series has been inspiring and we were pleased to see the great number of interested attendees at each talk. We plan to continue and expand this series next season. Let's keep the discussion flowing!



2017 Speaker Series Presenters (clockwise from top left): Molly Anderson, Renee Barrile, Marydale Debor, Timothy Griffin, Jonathan Buonocore, and Connor Stedman

What's Next?

An interview with Executive Director Archie McIntyre By Joyce Westner

Why do we need another building? We've been here a number of years, growing food, educating kids, hosting public and private events. We've had lots of successes and we want to build on them, but we're limited to operating them in our unheated 1827 barn. Inclement weather restricts our ability to do programs that further our mission. For almost half the year we shut down the operations; for instance, nothing goes on here during winter school vacations.

What would you do in a heated building? Two things: expand our programming to a year-round schedule, and strengthen our financial model by generating year-round revenue. We could reduce the strain on facilities even as we bring a larger community in to more diverse programs. And we need a commercial kitchen—right now our jams and prepared foods are cooked in offsite certified kitchens. But we could do so much more with our produce. And while St. Eulalia's rents us their kitchen for classes, we are at the mercy of their schedule and it isn't really a space meant for teaching cooking.

Does closing for the winter affect your staff? Right now we train new employees each spring and they move on to full-time work elsewhere in the fall. The new Education Center will mean we can hire staff to work year-round. We'll still rely heavily on our volunteers who provide valued contributions but we would have continuity among professional staff, including educators, a facilities manager, event staff, and others.

I hear you're thinking about a program for people with serious health problems. We're talking about a program for those going through chemotherapy where they learn to cook food that actually tastes good to their altered taste buds. And the education center could be a place of support, both emotional and physical—what could be more compelling?

So it's not just a kitchen? Yes, the center will have five components. In addition to the kitchen, it will have a gathering room for our speaker series year-round, perhaps music performances and exhibits. A small classroom space to which students can retreat in bad weather and where indoor classes like botanical art could be taught. The basement and second floor can host future

needs—welding classes, perhaps? An agriculture lab? And finally staff offices. We could even host small weddings.

What about parking? We'll upgrade the grassy lot to accommodate 200 attendees, but will still have overflow parking at Mullen Field and at St. Eulalia's.

What's wrong with the yellow house? It's been vacant for 30 years, the cost of making it habitable is significant, and it still wouldn't work as an education center. There is also the misconception that this house is historic, but it was actually built in the 1960s.

When do you need the money? Right now our annual operating costs (from earnings and donations) is around \$500K. This center will allow us to grow our revenue initially by 40% to \$700K.



CULTIVATE THE FUTURE

The \$4.8 million fundraiser is well underway—so far we've secured funds and commitments for \$1.5 million and hope to raise the balance by the time the design and permitting are finished at the end of 2018. We do not plan to finance it.

Who will own the building? The Wright-Locke Land Trust, which owns the 12 acres purchased from the town. (The Wright-Locke Farm Conservancy continues to lease the farm fields from the town.) The education center is the logical conclusion of saving the land and putting it to work for our environmental stewardship. In perpetuity.

The Education Center Will Provide:



Classroom spaces for:

- youth and adult programs,
- indoor activities during inclement weather
- teen leadership training!
- seed research!
- early education programs!

Commercial teaching kitchen for:

- youth and adult cooking classes
- meal prep
- farm products
- learning traditional recipes!
- junior chef classes!
- canning farm produce: tomato sauce? dilly beans? raspberry syrup? pickles!



Community gathering space for 80-200 guests:

- speakers and presentations
- live concerts or dance performances
- dinners
- jazz combos!
- dance classes!
- farm & food conference!
- choral concerts!
- winter harvest dinner!

Farm-to-table dining room for:

- public and private meals
- small meetings
- senior lunches!
- kombucha brewing!
- seasonal herb tasting!
- support groups!



Community room for:

- collaborative projects
- entrepreneurship research
- local organization meetings
- develop a Winchester food plan!
- winter yoga!
- graduate student presentations!
- garden planning workshops!
- book discussion groups!



Outdoor terraces for enjoying views of the farm landscape

Gallery space for painting, sculpture, fabric, photography and other exhibits

Historic farm artifact collection space

Farm offices, public restrooms, storage areas, other back-of-the-house facilities



Counterclockwise, from the top: Doyle family collecting eggs; Peter Craig & Taka Yae harvesting collard greens; Sheep!; Mary & Vince Farrell helping Bob Johnson paint the Ice House; Jesse Syswerda in the farm stand; Lizzie Reynolds with the flower CSA shares; Sally Quinn at the Winchester Farmers Market.