



# *Grow with Us!*

The Woodstock Foundation, Inc.  
Billings Farm & Museum

• 2022 REPORT •





2022 was a year of opportunity at Billings Farm & Museum. Guests, staff, and volunteers engaged with each other and the site in new ways.

The invitation to ***Grow With Us*** infused the programming across the site, fostering connections with guests between art, food, farming, and history.

You'll find highlights in the stories that follow.

## Message from the President & Executive Director

**B**illings Farm & Museum grew in so many ways in 2022, thanks to the creativity and positive impact of people coming together – staff, guests, contributors, volunteers, partners, and our community. In planning for 2022 – our 40<sup>th</sup> season – we built upon the organization’s strength and resilience coming out of the pandemic. With the inauguration of the Billings Farmstead Gardens, we enhanced the beauty of the site while creating exciting, new educational spaces. We increased the number of youth camp and adult workshop offerings. We engaged the community in cultural endeavors, expanding the reach of Billings Farm to new audiences. We hosted authentic 19<sup>th</sup>-century band and chamber music concerts, as well as the first annual TEDxHartlandHill, a day of conversation featuring local and nationally-known speakers. On site, the addition of solar panels on the Heifer Barn contributed to our mission of sustainability, and new maintenance facilities led to a more efficient operation.

As the year unfolded, we were gratified by the response to our programmatic experiences and educational offerings: **2022 was the second-most visited year in the history of Billings Farm & Museum.** We welcomed more than 69,000 guests, and *member visits increased nearly 25% over the previous year.* We are extremely grateful for the ongoing support of our members, friends, and business partners, whose generosity helped sustain us in 2022, and with whom we look forward to partnering and growing in the years to come.

Late in the year, as we neared the close of the 2022 season, we were saddened to learn of the passing of David Donath, President Emeritus of the Woodstock Foundation and retired Executive Director of Billings Farm & Museum. For more than three decades, David shaped and honed the dimensions of the visitor experience at the Farm & Museum. His work was foundational, and as a result, we celebrate an enduring legacy rooted in the land, the structures, the stories we share, and the high standards we keep.

In tribute to his memory and to the continued vibrancy of our mission, we invite you to *Grow With Us* as we look ahead to a bright future.

*David M. Simmons*  
*President, Woodstock Foundation*  
*Executive Director, Billings Farm & Museum*



Guests enter the Farmstead Gardens for the first time, led by the garden’s designer, Ben Pauly of the Woodstock Inn & Resort, and Christine Scales, Director of Education & Interpretation at Billings Farm & Museum.

## 2022 YEAR IN REVIEW

<b>69,209</b>	<b>Total Guests</b>
<b>1,250</b>	<b>School / Youth Group Visitors</b>
<b>1,082</b>	<b>Members</b>
<b>140</b>	<b>Winter &amp; Summer Campers</b>
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<b>14</b>	<b>Adult Ed Workshops</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Seasonal &amp; Farm Events</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Woodstock Vermont Film Series Weekends</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Billings After Hours Events</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Classical Music Concerts</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>TEDx Event</b>



## BILLINGS FARM & MUSEUM

### MISSION

*Inspiring and engaging generations through shared stories of Vermont's rural culture and our continued practice of responsible agriculture.*

The centerpiece of the Woodstock Foundation is Billings Farm & Museum, an operating dairy farm that continues a 150-year tradition of agricultural excellence. As the premier gateway for interpreting Vermont's rural culture and agrarian heritage, Billings Farm offers diverse, interactive programs that focus on rural life, work, and land stewardship as reflected in the traditions and values of 19<sup>th</sup>-century farm families. We also showcase the progressive improvements advanced by Frederick Billings during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Farm & Museum features the farm of the historic Billings estate and serves as the agricultural counterpart to Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park.

*The Woodstock Foundation, Inc. promotes conservation, sustainable land use, and heritage as values that are essential to culture, community, and the human spirit.*





# Introducing the Farmstead Gardens

## Get Your Hands Dirty & Grow Some Food

Billings Farm's education gardens more than doubled in size in 2022 with the opening of the **Farmstead Gardens**. The expansion created more space for raising heirloom varieties from the farm's past, and established an outdoor classroom where guests of all ages could explore modern gardening techniques. The Heirloom Garden, Pollinator Garden, Herb Garden, Victory Garden, Permaculture Garden, and the Chef's and Pizza Gardens demonstrate the breadth of garden styles guests could start at home. A stump classroom, picnic tables, and scenic views make the new gardens a magical destination. The Farmstead Gardens were established with help from a generous grant from the SpringRiver Private Foundation Trust.

## GARDEN FACTS



**8,000** Square Feet

**216** Heirloom & Modern Varieties Planted

**7** Distinct Education Gardens

Members of the Woodstock Inn & Resort and Billings Farm leadership celebrated the partnership to establish the Farmstead Gardens at a ribbon cutting ceremony in June.



# Sowing the Seeds of the Future

With expanded gardens, the installation of solar panels, and a focus on opportunities to prepare future farmers, Billings Farm sowed the seeds for future connections between the public, farms, food, and sustainability.

## Investing in the Next Generation

As farm life and food production have become increasingly distant from our daily lives, Billings Farm has created opportunities for young people to connect to farming in concrete ways. Through the annual farm camps, including **Junior Farmer Camp**, **Winter Wonders Camp**, **Billings Bookworms**, and **Farm Discovery Camp**, 140 campers learned through hands-on farm activities about where food comes from, how we sustain our land, and how young people can get involved.







**ABOVE:** A young 4-H member responded to the judge's questions during the Youth Invitational Dairy Show.  
**LEFT:** Junior Farmer campers enjoyed meeting the chickens.

In line with Frederick Billings' vision to create a farm where other farmers could come to learn, the annual **Youth Invitational Dairy Show** provided prospective farmers with the chance to hone their skills and knowledge. The Dairy Show roared back to life in 2022 with a record 19 participants ages 5–17. In addition to supporting a learning environment where young farmers could show their animals and engage with the public, this year's show offered scholarship awards to support participants' pursuit of farming and animal care.

## Sustainability Shines

Billings Farm took steps to improve its own sustainability by adding solar panels to the Heifer Barn. This is the beginning of a longer-term initiative to evaluate opportunities to reduce the organization's environmental impacts.



**Solar Modules Installed on the Heifer Barn, which sustainably generate 10% of Billings Farm's energy use**

# Branching Out to New Audiences

With a purposeful focus on expanding our audience, Billings Farm launched a series of evening events for adults under the banner of **Billings After Hours**. The events were both fun and educational – mixing in farm ambassadors, watercolor stylings, professional cooking techniques, fiber arts, yoga, interactive butter making, and accessible lessons on using fresh, seasonal ingredients in fantastic farm-to-table meals.

## Good Clean Fun for Adults

**Moos & Brews & Cocktails Too!** featured local breweries and distilleries along with opportunities to meet our cows and our farmers. Over the course of two evenings, nearly 500 guests sipped adult beverages, chatted with Billings Farm educators, listened to live music, and enjoyed the early evening beauty of the farm.



A guest got up close with a heifer at Moos & Brews & Cocktails Too!



Margaret Dwyer displays her sunflower paintings.

## An Artistic Approach to Storytelling

Billings Farm welcomed **Artist-in-Residence Margaret Dwyer**, who shared her talent for watercolor and other artistic media with guests throughout the season. She took inspiration from the gardens, the history, and the people of Billings Farm to create an incredible solo exhibition, which graced the walls of Billings Farm's Historic Barn from September to October. Dwyer also offered several well-attended watercolor workshops focused on capturing the seasonal colors of summer and fall.



Putting finishing touches on hand-made gnocchi at a Date Night Cooking Class.

## Elevating Home Cooking & Fiber Arts Traditions

Billings Farm's resident experts guided guests to utilize farm products in creative ways in **Billings After Hours** course offerings. In three chef-led **Date Night Cooking Classes**, pairs of guests prepared delicious three-course meals, using recipes that showcased local, seasonal ingredients in cuisines from around the world.

Billings Farm's fiber arts educators led two multi-part **Fiber Arts Workshops**, including an Introduction to Dyeing and Felting and an Introduction to Hand-Quilting, sharing their knowledge to make these traditional crafts more accessible.

# Nurturing Our Growth Through Collaboration

Billings Farm & Museum's work to carry out its mission was strengthened by partnerships in 2022. New collaborations also provided opportunities to nurture the organization's growth.

## Two Sites – One Story

Interpreting the land and the history of Billings Farm is a complementary effort with the **Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park**. The two organizations worked together on multiple initiatives to engage guests and provide them with opportunities to explore the full story of the sites. During the winter, Park Rangers talked with guests about the land and the wildlife at the Billings Farm **Torchlight Snowshoe** events, while Billings Farm educators shared the history of the Billings family. In the summer, Billings Farm staff joined National Park guests at the Park's **Summer Soirée** and co-led sessions of the **Farm & Forest Book Club**, hosted both at the National Park and at Billings Farm.



TEDx organizer Deborah Greene welcomed the audience.



Guests enjoyed the Torchlight Snowshoe event.



## Providing a Forum for Community

**TEDxHartlandHill** debuted at Billings Farm & Museum, bringing TED's trademark Ideas Worth Spreading to the Town of Woodstock. The TEDx event gathered a dynamic and diverse group of people from the local community and beyond to share ideas and inspire change while honoring the history of Woodstock. The speakers covered a wide range of topics, such as building peaceful communities, embracing sustainable living, and celebrating innovation and art all under the overarching theme, "Community – Home, Heart, and Hearth."

## Common Bonds

The **Woodstock Inn & Resort** and Billings Farm teamed up in numerous ways to educate the public. In addition to designing and building the Farmstead Gardens together with the Resort, Billings Farm featured the creative talent of the Inn's Master Gardener, Ben Pauly, in a sold-out **Billings Backyard Workshop: Natural Holiday Decorations**. The two organizations also collaborated on a video highlighting the story behind Billings Farm cheeses and showcasing their use as the key ingredient in the Woodstock Inn's celebrated fondue.



A string trio performed in the Visitor Center Theater.

## Cultural Arts

The mesmerizing sounds of strings graced the Visitor Center Theater in a set of two **Music at the Museum** chamber music concerts. For over fifteen years, organizers David Green and Margaret Edwards of Barnard, Vermont have brought distinctive cultural events and impressive musical talent to the heart of Woodstock. These concerts helped engage the community by featuring music to inspire connections to each other and our world.

2022 AT THE FARM

# FARM FAVORITES

- Draft Animal Day
- Baby Farm Animal Celebration
- Sheep Shearing & Herding



# SPRING



# FALL



# BURSTING COLORS

- Harvest Celebration
- Moos & Brews & Cocktails Too!
- A Family Halloween





## BLOOMS & SUNSHINE

Sunflower Sunday  
Antique Tractor Day  
Market on the Green  
Watercolor Workshops



# SUMMER



## WINTER WONDERLAND

Christmas on the Farm  
Torchlight Snowshoe  
Sleigh Rides  
Fiber Arts Workshops



# WINTER

# Our Staff & Volunteers

We are deeply appreciative of the staff and volunteers who came together to make 2022 an extraordinary and memorable year.

## Staff in Action



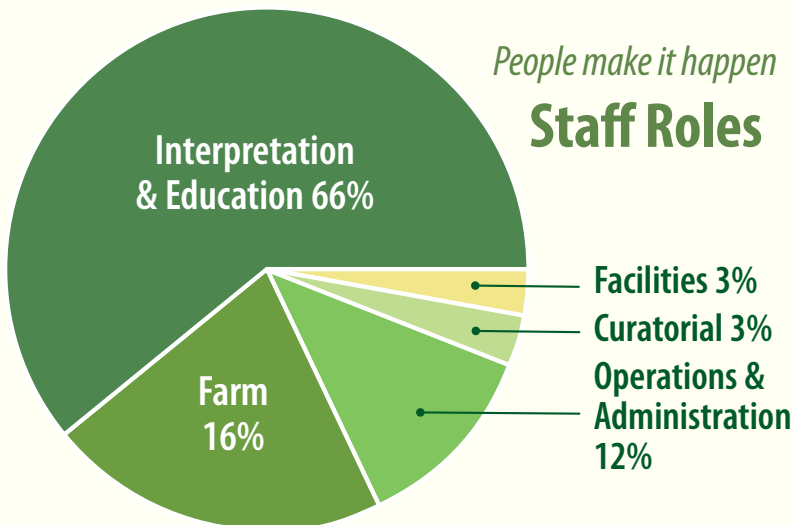
Farren Stainton staffing holiday candle dipping.



Ralph Lancaster introducing a cow to guests.



Nancy Katz explaining Wassail traditions.



“We’ve been here three times and it’s always a fun day. The staff are friendly and attentive. They make a point of talking to you one-on-one and each time we go we learn something new.”

*Grant Davis, Guest*



## Volunteer Profiles



For **Nancy Kobert** and **Sharon Willard**, volunteering at Billings Farm was a way for them to be part of the community and put down their roots in a new home. Like their friendship, the experience made them feel valued and appreciated. In turn, their 20 hours of volunteer service were appreciated by staff and guests at Billings Farm.

**1,981**  
**VOLUNTEER**  
**HOURS DONATED**



**Kathy Reynolds**, along with our staff and other volunteers, helped greet over 100 bus tours as they arrived at Billings Farm in the fall. Kathy was an expert lobby greeter and pumpkin bowler at special events, welcoming over 1,000 people on the busiest days. Kathy enjoyed making guests feel welcomed because she felt welcomed by the Billings Farm staff.



**Caitlyn Cooney** spent over 30 hours with the Archives team, helping digitize the Billings Family Archives. These extensive archives were made available to researchers and interested members of the public on an online platform called Preservicea.

## Our Partners



### Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park

The Woodstock Foundation operates in partnership with the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, which was created by a gift to the American people from Laurance S. and Mary F. Rockefeller. Billings Farm & Museum provides an information desk, as well as parking and other facilities. The Foundation also holds and manages a fund for preserving the Park's historic resources.



### The Woodstock Inn & Resort

In a major bequest from the estate of Laurance S. Rockefeller, ownership of the Woodstock Inn & Resort was gifted to the Woodstock Foundation in 2008 to support the Foundation's charitable purposes. The Inn will continue to serve as an anchor for the preservation and economic vitality of Woodstock village and its significance as a cultural heritage tourism destination.



**W**e were saddened to learn of the passing of David Donath at his home in Groton, Vermont on Friday, Nov. 25, 2022. Donath was President Emeritus of the Woodstock Foundation and served as President for 33 years from 1985 to 2018. The Woodstock Foundation, Billings Farm & Museum, the community of Woodstock, State of Vermont, and indeed the historical profession, owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to David for his life's work as scholar, mentor, visionary, and friend. For more than three decades serving as Executive Director of Billings Farm & Museum and as President of the Woodstock Foundation, David was largely responsible for creating the Farm & Museum as we know it today, and he was instrumental in helping establish Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park. We are forever grateful for David's role in shaping these enduring legacies that, entwined with the mission of the Woodstock Foundation, "are essential to culture, community, and the human spirit."



**BILLINGS**  
FARM & MUSEUM

69 Old River Road  
P.O. Box 489  
Woodstock, VT  
[billingsfarm.org](http://billingsfarm.org)