

FIELD NOTES FROM THE FARM – OCTOBER 2021

OPENING LETTER

Fall has arrived with its calm beauty of color and change, its encouragement to preserve life through harvest, and the refreshing coolness of the air that allows for clear thought and deep breaths of gratitude. Here in Maine, we are allowed to recognize and appreciate fall as the tiny, gradual changes in nature are so apparent and beautiful. My hope is that we are all able, in the coming weeks, to look around and recognize the smallest changes or parts of our personal worlds, appreciate them, and hold them close.

VOLUNTEERS IN THE FIELD

Recognizing volunteers – The evolution of IAW continues with the help of a gazillion small blessings which many of us never notice. For instance, there is the deliciously rich soil of IAW which was cared for by generations and now helps provide our community, our wildlife, and our insects with fresh vegetables and colorful flowers. We have the endurance of old timbers, assembled with the strength and determination of souls' unknown to us, which are now our barn and Inn. And then, there are the endless number of thoughts and ideas, held within each of us, that are being created for the benefit of IAW. Some will be shared and will grow, and some will fall to the earth and be forgotten, much like an oak leaf in autumn.

There are also little miracles at IAW that some are fortunate enough to know about. The volunteer that I have chosen to highlight in this issue is both a blessing and a miracle for anyone who meets her. This young woman's name is Katie Henderson. She is an Honorary Board Member of IAW and was recently here, with her family. On a gorgeous mid-September day, I was given the opportunity to spend an hour with her, get to know her a bit, ask her some questions and will now relay what I learned.

Katie Henderson came to know IAW through Sherry Flint (no surprise). They came to know one another when Katie was a very wee child. It seems that when Katie was



born, she was born with an attitude – a brilliantly bright attitude that was recognized, held onto, and has been given as a gift to IAW.

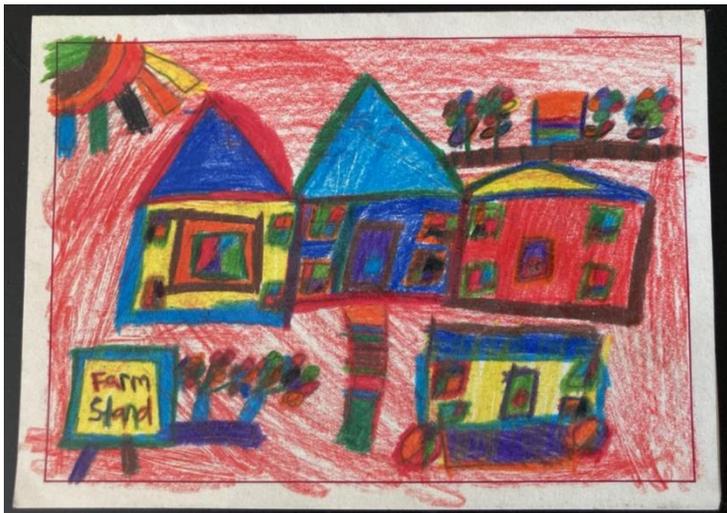
Katie was also born with a complex genetic condition called Prader-Willi Syndrome (PWS). Katie's life may have been different than some of ours but her gorgeous smile and outlook on life is beyond happy and positive!! Katie seems very practical in her thinking when challenged with a life issue or situation that would make most people crumble in a pool of sadness. Katie's tears are shared when the world shows her a rainbow or gorgeous bed of flowers. She can be overwhelmed with the beauty found in life.

Katie has always been one of IAW's "biggest cheerleaders". She remembers coming to see the farm when it was for sale and said that buying it would be "a

great idea"! With a sweet smile, her words of encouragement were, "It's always been Sherry's dream and she needs to keep with her dream."



Katie's life, family and friends keep her moving between Colorado, Tennessee, and Maine. When in Maine she spends a good amount of time at IAW and is always ready and available to help however she can. She has been helpful during Lunch with the Bunches, our Open Mic Nights, stringing lights in the barn and having constructive, supportive conversations with the community at IAW. Katie is known to be "loyal beyond measure".



Some of Katie's other talents include artwork, horses and horseback riding. The picture above is a self-portrait that Katie created a few years ago and recently Katie promised

to design a note card for IAW. That card is now complete, with colors that exemplify Katie's positive personality.

After sharing only one hour of one day, I want to thank Katie for her spirit, her willingness to share, and her love for "Aunt Sherry" and IAW. She is a tiny miracle that I look forward to recognizing and embracing again!!

WHERE THE SEED IS PLANTED

A seed from the past – The past is usually recognized as "history" only after it has been recorded and verified. The actual time it takes to collect, organize, and produce such information in a format that is interesting might be a task we easily overlook. There are people at IAW who work tirelessly to keep the historical records of the Chapman Farm as well as the newer history of IAW accurate for community members to enjoy. These records are kept in binders that can be found in the front room of the farmhouse. We encourage any who are interested to learn a bit about the life that has occurred on these thirty acres. The knowledge from our past gives direction for our future. It is with gratitude that we recognize those who are responsible for helping us on this journey.

Seeds of today – The front porch of the farmhouse at IAW is a mess!! There is furniture, stacked on furniture, stacked on boxes that are stacked on furniture!!! There are vases,



umbrellas, tools, and books stuffed amongst the stacks. If you walk into the house, you might think that no one occupies any space except the kitchen – and that seems a bit messy too! What is going on!?! Is this a seed of today??? Should we really thank the volunteers who made that mess!?!? The answer is "YES!" and we all must hold on and be patient as we wait for the seed to grow – and blossom!!!

SPROUTINGS AND GROWTH

Building progress & news – Often times the little things are the most important. Staying informed and connected is of utmost importance for many of us. IAW is now happy to have the ability to keep more of us connected. We

have recently installed a working wi-fi connection in the barn! Working together, two of our volunteers, Matt Schumacher and Paige Russell did research on the best options for our barn and with a designated grant from Maine Community Foundation made it all happen. That connection will allow our community to do research, check email, participate in Zoom conferences and much more. We are extraordinarily grateful for this tiny bit of technology as well as the time, effort and generosity that brought it to us.

Many times, it is also the small things that prevent us from being injured. If you are a sewer, you understand how a thimble can protect you from stabbing yourself with a needle and if you are descending a set of stairs, you know that you might want to hold a sturdy rail to prevent a fall as you come down. Well – the stairs that lead you to the second floor of the farmhouse have just been given such a rail. Mike Stevens and John Gallagher



have worked together to secure and make taller the balusters that will hold the original banister in the house. We are thankful for their creativity and the safety they are providing for us all.

The Board has recently approved a landscape plan for the parking lot entrance at IAW. The design was generously donated by Amelia Small who is a landscape designer in Southern Maine. It is these little known but talented souls that help bring the picture of IAW together.

Work continues in the farmhouse. Many of the walls are now patched, painted, and refreshed with the dedication of volunteers, Mary Piasecki, Jason Anthony, Heather Hardy, George Dolengowski, Patty Palmer, Susan Winter, Martha Dodge, Brad Tannebring, and

Ron Bowers. It is because of this hard work that the house is looking uplifted and refreshed!! Thank you to all.

The garden committee and its crew have not only planted, cared for, and harvested produce and plants this season but have also provided healthy food options for those in our greater community. All their work helps to sustain IAW and to promote the mission we strive to accomplish. Many thanks for all the hours of your hard work!

Nourishment for Growth – We give thanks to our friend Laurie Worth and the hospitality she offered while serving “Lunch with the Bunches”. She nourished both our bellies and our souls with delicious food and conversation.

With many supportive donations from the community, the leadership of Tracy Varney and the help of many volunteers, IAW held a second successful Yard Sale this summer! Our thanks to all who created this rewarding event.



In celebration of their 75th year in business, Colby and Gale is giving away \$75,000 in \$1,000 dollar increments to non-profits who are nominated by their employees. We are so grateful to have been recognized by an employee, Dave Putnam, who happened to look at and enjoy our website. He then nominated us to receive a celebratory gift from Colby and Gale. Our thanks go to those who have worked on our website, to Dave Putnam, and to the hard work and dedication of people that maintain a successful business while supporting others in their community!

Sharing of voices is an assumed, and very essential part of being human. We thank Dan Townsend and Sylvia Tavares for leading and encouraging those voices during our Singing Circles under the Locust tree at IAW this past summer.

Inn Along the Way

Other voices were also heard this past summer. With the hard work and dedication of Jody Telfair, Marianne Pinkham, Sherry Flint, Laurie Worth, Sally Johns, Steve Ward, and Bonnie Gerrard, IAW was able to offer a series of four Conversation Circles (see picture below). The discussions dealt with many topics including the changes we encounter in our lives, how they affect us and how to best approach them. Our hope is to transition these conversations to round table Zoom discussions later in the year. We thank all the above people for creating these circles of comfort, communication, and cheer.

CULTIVATING THE FARM

Information & Dates – Our programs meetings and support groups will move to Zoom until such time as the COVID - 19 numbers begin to fall, and the hospitals become less stressed. Please check the “Calendar” on our website www.innalongtheway.org to keep up with any changes that may occur as well as to stay informed about upcoming events.

LUNCH WITH THE BUNCH –
Tues. 11am–1 pm
On hold until further notice

SINGING CIRCLE –
Tues. 1pm
On hold until further notice

WAYS OF GIVING – Simple recognition of IAW is one of the nicest gifts we receive. Just thinking of us as you brush your teeth, planning a quick hike on our trail as you head in or out of Damariscotta or a visit to our website are all perfect ways of giving. Should you look at our website you will be directed to other ways of giving but being “aware” is a fabulous gift.

Our wish list includes –

- A new house vacuum
- A Washer and dryer
- Towel sets that you would want for your loved guests

CLOSING THE BARN DOOR

It was the spring of 2019 when a talented volunteer named Bonnie Gerrard suggested that IAW might consider the creation of a newsletter in recognition of volunteers and their importance at IAW. Her idea and her creation did not fall to the earth like an oak leaf in the autumn months. There was tremendous enthusiasm for such a piece. Her idea took off. About one year later her newsletter evolved into what is now written and known as FIELD NOTES FROM THE FARM. The newsletter is currently written for and by volunteers as well as others who are interested in IAW. Evolution is an ever-changing stream of progress, and it is with that intent that I wish to pass the writing / editing of this informative piece onto someone else. It seems that FIELD NOTES has become a piece of information that many look forward to reading. It has been my hope that this work would have a positive impact and be helpful to the mission of IAW and I believe that it has. I am confident that there will be a person / people who will recognize, hold close, and understand the tiniest morsels of this amazing organization to move FIELD NOTES in a new direction. If you are that person, or you know of someone that may be interested, please call Sherry Flint at 207 751-6261.

“While it may seem small, the ripple effects of small things, is extraordinary.” Matt Bevin

Respectfully submitted.
Alida Zimmerman



Inn Along the Way