

Lifeside Farms Fall Newsletter

October 2016

*Lifeside Farms and the Care Farm program are doing great,!
You are receiving this because you are, or have been involved in our programs in some way.
Thank you and enjoy our periodic newsletter!*

Art and Soul Harvest Show!

As we have mentioned before we have been offering monthly drop-in Art classes with our wonderful partner Art & Soul Expressive arts; and now our participants are ready to show off the fruits of their labor!

We are excited to invite you to join us Friday, **October 21st** from **5:30-7:30** for a showing of our Art and Soul participants' work! Stop by for some delicious appetizers, meet the artists and enjoy their beautiful work. It's a great chance to get a feel for the program and what we do. The show will be at the **CRYJ office, at the South end of the KM building.**

We would love to see you there!



Job readiness and vocational programs up and running

In our last newsletter we shared our excitement about being able to provide vocational programs. This summer, we were able to serve roughly half a dozen clients with the job readiness program on the farm, and have even started a client in an art studio setting!

Our Job Readiness programs are custom made to assess and increase participants' job readiness skills: hard skills like using tools and performing certain tasks and soft skills such as communication, team work and accountability. The farm has proven to be an environment where we can assess a very large set of skills with a variety of situations. We have felt encouraged that this will meet a great (niche) need in the community, especially for those struggling to make the leap to paid employment and traditional VR services.

We have recently hired a new member of our team, Stacy Shull, to support our participants in the Job Readiness training, and especially with the steps into work experiences, job search and job coaching. You will be hearing more from Stacy and our new Vocational programs in the coming months.

Lifeside Farms Program Wins the Montana Exemplary Program Award

We were surprised to receive a phone call from our local Waiver Case management team that they had nominated us for the Exemplary Program Award; what an honor! The award was presented during the bi-annual Montana Senior and Long term care conference in Billings on September 14th. Kris Carlson, our mentor and leader at A Plus Health Care was there to accept the award on behalf of A Plus Health care and the Care Farm team. Thank you Waiver team and thank you State of Montana!

Academic review of the Care Farm program by the University of Montana

In a previous newsletter we mentioned that Keith Anderson, professor at the University of Montana, led an academic review of our program. We felt honored and grateful and are excited to present you a summary of the research. [Click here to read the summary](#). A more thorough article is expected to be published shortly.

Care farming invited to speak as an 'Unusual Suspect' in Adult Day world

Our 2017 has been a year of recognition for our program. We won two exciting awards and are getting calls and emails from all over the US and Canada from people who want to replicate our program. Although the recognition feels great, we are mostly humbled by it. This felt particularly so when Maarten was asked to be a key note speaker at the Annual conference for the National Association of Adult Day Services of America (NADSA). In this elite and inspiring group of adult day service providers from all over the nation, we learned as much as we came to share, but attendees loved hearing our story; and many came up afterwards wanting to start similar programs of their own. One of the things we learned is that day programs are being pushed to become more community based, maximize independence for the participants and allow for "dignity in risk". So we are right on track☺!

To our surprise, our program has also been admitted as part of a symposium for the renowned international conference of the Geriatric Association of America where a coalition of universities from Europe and the US reflect on Care Farm programs for older adults and those living with Dementia and Alzheimer's. Unfortunately are not able to attend ourselves, but Keith Anderson from the University of Montana will represent.

Care Farm Documentary Premieres to a Full House

Sanne Hijlkema's Documentary, *The Country Side of Care*, premiered on August 17th at the FVCC Theater. Every seat was filled as Sanne introduced her film and explained how she came in contact with Maarten during a summer visit to the Flathead and became intrigued by the Flathead's innovative Care Farm Program; and specifically why farmers decide to offer such programs. Along the, Sanne was intrigued by the stories of the farmers and their participants and put together a very touching film about our program. And as far as we know, also put forward one of the first English spoken documentary on the topic. Following the film, lively conversation was accompanied by homemade cookies, lemonade, tea and coffee in the foyer. Viewers (many of which were actually in the film!) were invited to provide comments and tips for further potential viewings.

Since then, the documentary has been shown at the NADSA conference in Indianapolis that Maarten attended and a few more showings are on the books here in Montana. Sanne has been working with organizations in the US and abroad to promote the film and has already gotten accepted into a Film Festival. If you are interest in seeing or showing the film, please visit <https://www.facebook.com/carefarmdocumentary/>.

3rd Annual Care Farm Challenge a HUGE Success!

July 30th dawned clear and warm, promising yet another perfect day for the Care Farm Challenge at Les Keller's Centennial Farm. Les' crew of Care Farm Participants had been working hard in the weeks leading up to the big day to fix up and add to the obstacle course and create this year's unique stone medals.



Volunteers showed up early and eager to help on the day of the race, as did the 60 participants! As starting time neared a long line began to form, but nobody seemed to mind waiting as we staggered starters one by one; there was plenty to talk and joke about, including bragging rights for those returning for the third year. It was truly a competitive, enthusiastic and sportsmanlike group of athletes. This year we also welcomed youth from the Child Development Center and it was fun to see them participate with grins and fierce determination; most insisting on running the course multiple times.

A few new obstacles added variety and helped the course run smoother, and the new, improved and longer zip line was, as always, a favorite attraction. Les, known for his ingenious solutions, rigged the zip line with a wooden crank powered by a hand drill to bring the chair back to the start each time, increasing the speed with which we could move people through it.

Worn out, hot and happy, everyone enjoyed the delicious bbq and cool drinks post-race. Due to the generosity of so many donors through our Give Local Fundraiser along with local sponsors we were able to yet again offer this unique, fun activity free of charge. The outpouring of support from our community has been amazing and we want to thank you all for helping make it possible!



Volunteer Opportunities

We are always looking for volunteers to help facilitate our Care Farm activities. We typically need help transporting participants to and from the farm. Volunteers have the option to stay at the farm and take part in the activities (including lunch), or they can drop participants off and pick them up again at the end of the day. There are other volunteer opportunities as well, like helping out at the farm with our participants, and with special activities like the Care Farm Challenge, so if you or someone you know are interested, please get in touch so we can coordinate with you.



Thank you for all that you do; and your support for our program!

Lifeside Farms Staff

Rachel Grant, Ida Fischer, Stacy Shull and Maarten Fischer

For more information, please visit www.flatheadcarefarming.wordpress.com