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POTOMAC VEGETABLE FARMS  
www.potomacvegetablefarms.com  
pvfnewsletter@gmail.com

## Accommodation

by Chip Planck

As in much of America, a tradition in our county is for several of the western, more rural towns, from the county seat of Leesburg to those of just a few hundred people, to have their own Fourth of July fireworks.

For our first few years, the practice in our nearby village of Hillsboro was a classic potluck of shared food, with long-time townspeople serving home-made ice cream to all. The feeling was of an extended family picnic before everyone settled on their blankets for the modest show.

Eventually, though, crowds and culture forced a shift. More people began coming but bringing only a token contribution; food ran out. (It was not grasped that a potluck offering must be large enough to feed one's family the total volume of various foods that family would eat, not just the portion of that item. One casserole, one bag of potato chips, would not stretch to feed the multitude.)

The answer was a simple shift to bring your own food, with a donation or charge for the still traditional ice cream. The volunteer fire department, on hand in case of Roman Candle disasters, gave tours of its shiny trucks to little kids.

This adjustment worked for a few more years, until the crowds of travelers just dropping by---Hillsboro is on a major east-west road---did not arrive even with their own food. A local men's club was engaged to sell barbecue and potato salad, and a Blue Grass band was hired to play thru the meal. The larger, less personal gathering was still cheerful and substantially local. The town fathers of Hillsboro, with an expanding agenda of cultural events and traffic calming steps, had a growing audience to serenade.

A thoughtful evolution.



art courtesy of hana newcomb

Rachel standing beneath the welcome sign she painted for the Vienna CSA zone.



# Recently Delicious with Clarké Lunara

*I spoke with Clarké Lunara, a community member and Garden Sprout coordinator in Wheatland, about the deliciousness in her life. The following conversation has been edited and condensed. Enjoy! -Oscar*

**Oscar: What are some delicious things you're enjoying right now?**

Clarké: In terms of mouth-wise, things I can eat, mulberries (which I love), raspberries (slowly but surely) and lemon-balm infused water, a tasty, available-in-the-garden delicious beverage. I've been finding myself really drawn to that. Ooo, and the potluck after the opening Summer Series session, there was a delicious saag with chard from that farm that Katherine made. It blew my mind! I want her to share the recipe. Physically, expanding the idea of deliciousness, quick rain showers have been such a treat. It suddenly cools everything off. Anticipating the rain, the sudden downpour and then poof it's gone. Sprinklers and water play have generally been joyful. Barefoot moments with fluffy grass.

These delicious things bring me joy, connection, laughter and playfulness. I'm smiling as I say this, thinking about these moments. When people and place combine to make it all so sweet.

**O: I know you spend a lot of time in the garden by the farm stand. Can you speak about that interesting structure in the middle of that space?**

CL: Yes! Ha, that is what the Garden Sprouts [the children who participate in the outdoor daycare program we host in the garden] call "The Turtle Dome," and it's made of bamboo and wire. Squash and gourds have and are growing on it, which provides shade cover. You'll see Tennessee Dancing gourds, long-neck gourds, short-neck gourds. I don't even know all the names. When they're dry, we use them as fairy houses, maracas and drums. It's a magical structure that houses our home base; we gather there, the kids have cubbies. It's where the bandages live when we need something from the first aid kit. There have been countless variations of what has provided shade; there was an upcycled parachute, some thorny plants and now there's burlap. It changes year to year and season to season, depending on the resources.

**O: Is it true that there's delicious fruit in the garden?**

CL: Absolutely. The Sprouts are MUNCHING on the MULBERRIES. The other facilitators and I like to call them "baby bears" because they are so quick to notice when the fruit is ripe. They'll crawl under the trees, into the branches, wherever they can find the

berries, the autumn olives, anything delicious. They'll even shake the branches to share with the other baby bears. We're so lucky to have berry season the entire season of Sprouts. Maybe a berry will become our mascot. Big Berry Energy around here.

**O: Yes! Berries are the best. Can you share about the beloved wine berry?**

CL: One of my yearly traditions is to make a wine berry spritzer. I've tried it with wild yeast and elderflowers, another with citric acid to give it a little extra fizz and storage value. I've made it solo, made it with the kids. The lovely thing about wine berries is that they really shine and find their stride in mid-June, when it's undeniably, authentically summer and there's no going back. Juneteenth is also mid-June. One of the most consistent colors of Juneteenth is red. There's lots of discourse about what the colors should be. Some folks say red and blue, signifying the Texas flag - the last state where individuals who were being enslaved were finally told the news of the 13th amendment. So some folks celebrate Juneteenth with those colors in their minds and hearts. Others think of the African diaspora, calling in red, green, black, and yellow. Others think of red as a symbol for blood and how the blood lost, the lives lost, in some ways, birthed and brought forth individuals who were free. The sacrifices of so many enslaved African individuals brought to America. Their tenacity, their spirit and their commitment to not have their lives be broken in every way lead to the freedom and joys some of us are able to enjoy today. All that to say, there's a consistent recognizing of RED as a Juneteenth color, so it's a beautiful serendipity that the wine berries are glowing red as we're celebrating freedom, liberation, and joy together.



Bok choy, a Chinese cabbage, is great for stir-fry.



# Three Things I Love About Our Wheatland Farm Stand



The Wheatland Farm Stand by the late Bobbie Wilhelm, a local artist who shared the painting with Mary years ago.

by Mary Torres

I have been working at the PVF stand in Wheatland for 8 years now. I first visited the stand in 2015 to buy some goodies and fell in love! I became the co-manager of the Wheatland stand in 2023, and this year I am the manager. I honestly really enjoy what I do for the farm and I am so happy to be working in such a great community.

First - I love the location of the stand. Perched atop a hill, we get great crosswinds which are a blessing on hot days. The Root to Rise garden is right next to the stand. In the warm months, there is a child care group there. Hearing the laughter and happy little voices drifting over to the stand brings a smile to my face.

When I get a minute and no one is there, I enjoy wandering around inside it and admiring all of the different plants and flowers that are growing there. Next time you find yourself at the Wheatland stand, I highly recommend taking a stroll through the garden.

Second - Our farm stands are places where folks from all walks of life can have direct access to fresh, local, healthy foods that were grown with love. I am so happy to be a part of bringing that to everyone. My favorite day at the stand is Thursdays. I like coming in to stack after stack of crates - a bounty of gorgeous produce. The variety of items we offer is incredible. Working at the stand has introduced me to so many new and unique vegetables, especially greens. I've learned so

much over the years, what sticks out to me the most is how to use every part of the vegetable. Carrot top saute - who would have thought?

Third - I love the interactions I have with customers whether it be someone who is stopping by for the first time, or someone who has been a member of the CSA long before I started working here. We talk about food and share recipes with each other every week. Over the years I have gotten to know and love many customers, and I look forward to seeing them every year when we open the stand up again. I feel that the stand is more than a place of business - it is a gathering place where we share stories and form friendships. To me, it is a very special place.





A customer selecting vegetables in the Vienna CSA area.



#### Miles Lane, he/him/his

- Gemini (I know)
- o! (Worked here 0.125 years)
- My sticker would say ask me about rowing (something I know lots about!)
- I'm looking forward to growing tomatoes this season! I've heard great things about these tomatoes.
- Recently I've been obsessed with

highlight clips of the giro d'Italia (Italy's version of the Tour de France)!!!

- I would be an open face hummus, sun dried tomato, extra virgin olive oil, arugula, poppy seed sandwich because I like to think I'm open, I'm plant-based, and I can be experienced at all times of the day.

#### Meredith Graves, she/her

I've been around part-time about three years now, starting earlier this year than other years, which means I got to learn about drip tape. So cool! I'm looking forward to seeing strawflowers growing in the fields, the sunflowers growing by the stand (if that happened), and a hopefully robust growing patch of okra!



photo courtesy of susan maneechai

Meredith, on the right, with Rachel celebrating 24 bunches of flowers to kick-off the 2024 flower season.

#### Marcos, he/him

- Sun Sign: Cancer
- How many of the 25 years of the CSA have you been around PVF? o
- Ask me about what football team is the best in history
- What/how are you looking forward to growing this season? Tomatoes
- Is there a piece of media that you're obsessed with right now? House of the Dragon