



# Sunfield Annual Report 2009

School Report,  
Academic Year 2009–2010



Rooted in the Earth, reaching for the sky.



# A Waldorf school and community education on a working farm



This spring, our students delighted in witnessing the birth of five baby goats; they have greatly enjoyed milking and tending to the goats daily.

## Our Mission

The mission of Sunfield Education Association is to provide programs in education and sustainable land stewardship that engage the hands, awaken the mind, and nurture connections between the earth and its inhabitants.

Sunfield offers educational programs for all phases of life that enliven understanding through activity, recognize connections, harmonize academics with artistic and social activity, and kindle wonder. Sunfield educators honor the individual spirit and recognize the developmental needs of each student they teach.

Our biodynamic farming principles are a model of sustainable agriculture. We strive to enrich and replenish the soils, nourish a diversity of crops and animals, and work to restore ecosystems to their natural state. The fields, forest, and wetlands of Sunfield serve as a learning environment that demonstrates a healthy balance between nature and humanity and allows participants to serve as stewards of the land.

→ Read more about how we are fulfilling our mission at [www.sunfieldfarm.org](http://www.sunfieldfarm.org).

## Waldorf Education

Waldorf education is an independent and inclusive form of education based on the insight and teaching of the early twentieth-century Austrian philosopher and scientist Rudolf Steiner. Honoring all spiritual and cultural traditions and embracing the diversity of humanity, Waldorf education is currently the fastest-growing independent school movement in the world. We are excited to be part of this important movement toward more holistic education for our children.

# Making a difference for people of all ages in our local community and beyond

## From Our Board and Administration

During this past year of economic challenges for so many around the globe, we too faced our share of financial challenges. But careful budgeting, the generous support of our donors, and the great amount of expertise and volunteer time donated by our dedicated faculty, staff, board members, school families, and other community members served to sustain our ability to provide Sunfield's unique school and farm experience to the community. Throughout the year, we made significant improvements in all areas: our school, our farm, and our community education programs. We express to each and every one of you our deepest gratitude.

As in all the years since our inception, our 2009–2010 school year was blessed with the presence of exuberant children, who eagerly anticipated coming to school. These joyful children fully immersed themselves in the rich artistry of the Waldorf curriculum, nurtured their growing friendships with one another, and spent plenty of time outdoors each day, romping through the meadows and woodlands of Sunfield Farm. They enjoyed getting their hands and knees dirty while planting garlic or digging up carrots, and they relished daily visits to the barn to feed and water their dear friends: the sheep, goats, cows, and chickens. The thriving children are the best testimonial to the success of our school program.

Keeping to the original vision of our founders, we reached out to the greater Jefferson County community with our continued offering of educational programs in sustainable land stewardship. Many who are not students at Sunfield Waldorf School were able to participate in these programs. A total of 328 children from Jefferson County public schools participated in our farm-based education programs coordinated by volunteers and, in the interest of our vision, offered gratis while we seek funding. At-risk teens fulfilled community service requirements through the local juvenile services program by working one Saturday per month on Sunfield Farm.

While on the farm, these teens learned about food production, sustainable land practices, and animal husbandry; within Sunfield's open atmosphere of acceptance, they were respected as growing and learning young adults.

Sunfield depends on volunteerism to successfully carry out our mission, and thanks to parent and community leadership and involvement, many projects were completed and several fundraising events were held in 2009. In February, a benefit concert of classical music entertained a full house at the Unitarian

Church and raised \$800 in donations. Our second annual Fields of Plenty fundraiser held in April brought in \$64,000 in pledges. A new Web site, designed and developed by a high school volunteer, was launched in June. Our first annual Magical Pumpkin Patch—organized by a parent volunteer—drew a great deal of public interest throughout the month of October. Many people bought raffle tickets for a quilt that was made by one of our faculty members and raffled on Halloween. The Pumpkin Patch and quilt raffle, along with our Winter Craft Faire and Bake Sale held in December, brought in a total of over \$3,000.

Volunteer work parties held throughout the year contributed to improvements on the land, including the building of a pump house and cob oven, the planting of trees along the eastern property line, and the completion of the farmhouse in which our new farmers now reside. The year culminated with our Annual Giving campaign, which raised over \$14,000 through contributions from Sunfield Waldorf School family members.

Throughout the school year we shared community events, including seasonal festivals, Grandparents Day, and our all-school potluck dinner and square dance; all were well attended and allowed us to enjoy each other and reflect on our accomplishments together.

As we look ahead in 2010, we envision continued growth in our student body, and stability in our staff and resources. Our Adjusted Tuition Program has made a Sunfield education more accessible to all. We have plans to further develop our community education programs, which will enable more school-age children from Jefferson County and beyond to experience Sunfield's 81 acres of fields, forests, and wetlands. In September 2010, our current pre-K through grade six Waldorf school program will expand to include grade seven, and we will have a full pre-K through grade eight program in the 2011–2012 school year.

We thank you for your contributions: each of you is an integral part of Sunfield's abundance, and we are truly grateful for your continued support and generosity.

**Mike Garling**  
President, Board of Directors

**Jake Meyer**  
Organizational Director

# Sunfield Waldorf School

Where the rhythms of farm life enrich holistic, academic education

The 2009–2010 school year brought an abundance of learning experiences to the students of Sunfield Waldorf School. In 2009, our school was accredited by the American Waldorf School Association: we can now proudly include the trademark title “Waldorf” in our name. We had three combined grade-school classes that spanned first through sixth grades, two preschool/kindergarten classes, and a parent-toddler class.

The preschoolers and kindergarteners at Sunfield are able to experience nature and the changing seasons through their daily explorations in the fields and forests of the farm. The grade school classes also take every opportunity to utilize the 81-acre campus for their learning experiences.

In Mr. Rampa Tinling’s combined first/second-grade class of 17 children, the nature stories that were used to learn reading and writing were brought to life through the children’s regular woodland excursions.

Ms. Beth Ann O’Dell’s combined third/fourth-grade class of 16 students scouted out the hidden corners of the property and mapped the boundaries and features of Sunfield Farm for their block on local geography. During the year, the class focused on the stories and cultural traditions of the ancient Hebrew people; their studies culminated with a play about the story of Moses, beautifully staged in the hall of the local Chimacum Grange.

Our fifth/sixth-grade class of nine students embarked on an intriguing cultural journey with their class teacher, Ms. Helen Curry. Their learning explorations took them into the ancient cultures of India, Persia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece. A broad understanding of these historical epochs was gained through singing, celebrating traditional festivals, and experiencing aspects of the original language. The highlight of the year came when the class joined fifth-grade students from eight other Waldorf schools in the region to become athletes in the Olympiad. Every student participated in the five athletic events of the Pentathlon: running, long jumping, wrestling, and discus and javelin throwing.

Each day, at 11:00 AM, Sunfield Farm becomes a hive of activity as all our grade school students leave their classrooms to share in farm chores alongside teachers and farmers. During this 45-minute period, goats are milked; eggs are collected, washed, and candled; sheep are fed and led; calves are brushed and gentled; and the gardens are tended. This spring, the arrival of baby goats delighted the children, and many had the opportunity to observe the birth. The goats are now nursed and cared for by the children. There are few schools where children may be found sitting in blissful silence with baby goats snuggled on their laps as they learn about cultural life in ancient Greece!

➔ To read more about our Waldorf school on a farm, please visit [www.sunfieldfarm.org/our-school](http://www.sunfieldfarm.org/our-school).



The kindergarten children explore the fields, forests, and wetlands on their daily walks.



Following their studies of sound in physical science, our fifth/sixth-grade students made strumsticks with Andy Mackie, a local advocate of music education for all children.



In May, the fifth/sixth-grade class joined other Waldorf schools to become athletes in the Olympiad, an event unique to Waldorf schools. Here students wait their turn to run in the 50-yard dash, one of the five events of the Pentathlon.



## Sunfield Farm

Sunfield Farm experienced an abundance of growth in 2009 with the work accomplished by Farmer Willie Reid, three farm apprentices, and some dedicated volunteers. Several new tracts of land were opened up and placed into production. Our Community Supported Agriculture program served 26 members. Produce was also sold at the Port Townsend Farmers' Market and the Queen Anne Farmers' Market in Seattle.

Much effort was focused on building up the soil through bringing in organic manure and creating biodynamic compost heaps. In addition to a large variety of vegetables,

the farm grew flowers, including tulips, and established plantings of strawberries and raspberries.

In the spring of 2009, the Dexter cows each gave birth to a heifer calf, increasing the herd that is required for soil fertility. The cows are raised on a rotational grazing system.

The free-range organically fed chickens, reared by the school children, are all laying well. The unusually silky locks of fleece from the Cotswold sheep are shorn twice a year; the fleece is used by the students in their handwork classes to make felt and to spin and weave.

The dairy goat program provides an excellent learning opportunity for the older grades classes who have the responsibility of milking. Several students are 4H members and work with the goats and sheep throughout the summer to prepare them for showing at the Jefferson County Fair.

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*We are pleased to welcome our new farmers, Verity and Neil Howe, who are now living on-site in the Sunfield farmhouse. Read their biographies at [www.sunfieldfarm.org/about-us/faculty-and-staff](http://www.sunfieldfarm.org/about-us/faculty-and-staff).*

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## Community Education

The work we do through our Visiting School Program and our Youth Program (described below) is accomplished through the efforts of dedicated volunteers, our farmers, and our AmeriCorps volunteer. Sunfield relies solely on outside donations and grants to accomplish this work.

The children and teens in these programs are also part of our Student-to-Student Farm-to-Food Bank project. Their work on the farm helps us provide food to malnourished and undernourished families in the county through local food banks.

### Visiting School Program

During the 2009–2010 school year, our Visiting School Program grew from its enthusiastic beginnings in the previous year: in 2010 we hosted 19 school groups with a total of 328 children from public schools in Jefferson County. These students, ranging in age from preschool through fifth grade, participated in our farm-based education programs—planting, weeding, mulching, harvesting, shoveling cow manure, helping with animal chores, and visiting our Magical Pumpkin Patch. In all sorts of wind and weather they worked alongside Sunfield students, learning from them how to make compost, how to feed baby goats and milk the does, and how to care for chickens and collect eggs. They also enjoyed long walks to our wonderful woods and wetlands.

The visiting children left with many good memories and a real feel for what life on a farm can be like. Many of the children were able to return once or twice and see the farm in different seasons and conditions. The children's enthusiasm has been joyfully expressed by one child's comment, "This is the best day of my life!"

### Youth Program

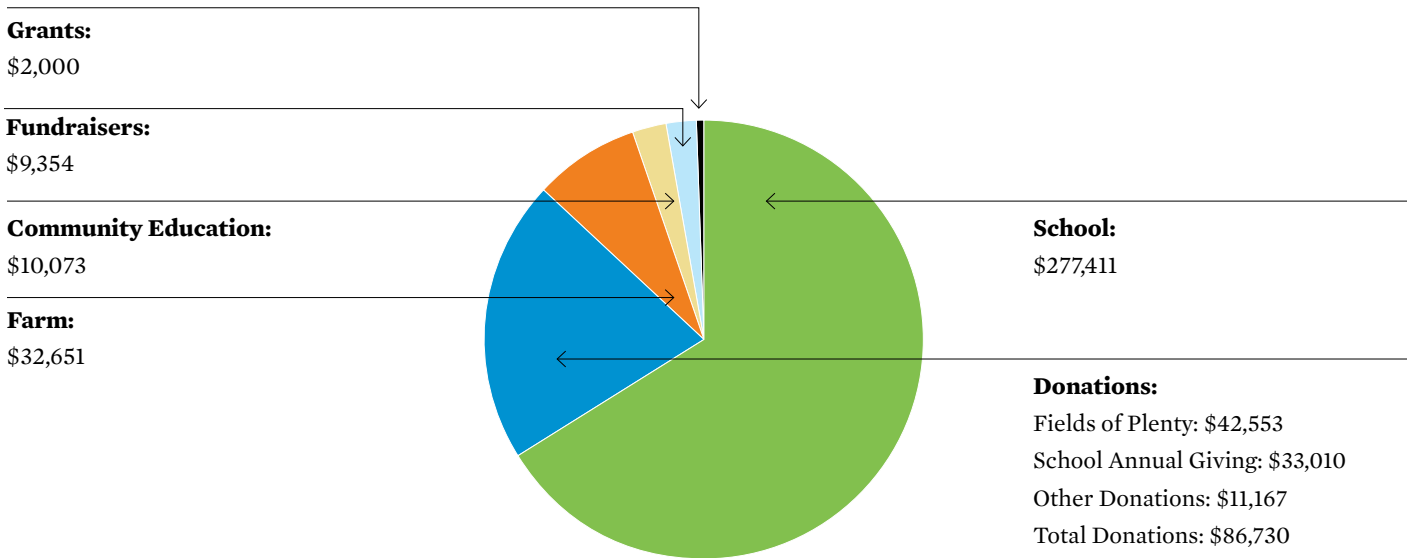
This past year, we provided monthly community service work for youth from Jefferson County Juvenile Services and volunteer opportunities for youth residents of Gray Wolf Ranch, a residential recovery program in nearby Port Townsend. The youth were able to interact with the animals and accomplished a variety of tasks. The Juvenile Services Coordinator, who supervises our monthly visitors, noted, "I was impressed that a currently suspended eighth grader at a local school recalled

completely all the tasks he did at Sunfield in detail.... He sensed the value in the work he did and he liked being given the responsibility/opportunity to care for and to nurture other creatures."

### Summer Programs

During the summer of 2009, we offered seven farm-based day camps for children ages three to thirteen. The preschool-age children delighted in the wonders of Sunfield Farm through field and forest explorations. Six- to ten-year-olds joined us for classes that included working with textiles, engaging in pioneering activities, building straw scarecrows, or building a challenge course for the animals. Nine- to twelve-year-olds participated in an educational 4H program that culminated in showing Sunfield's goats and sheep at the Jefferson County Fair.

## Sunfield Education Association Fiscal Year 2009 Income



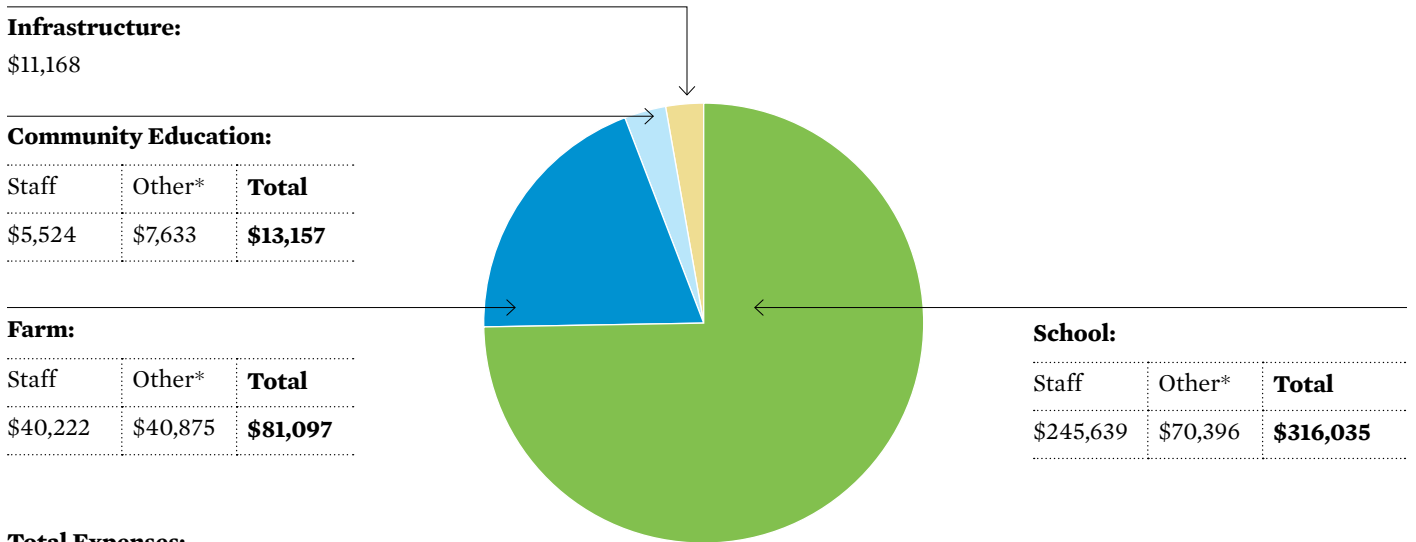
### Total Income:

	Earned*	Other**	Total
2009 Actual	\$320,125	\$99,086	<b>\$419,221</b>

\*Earned = Farm, School, and Community Education

\*\*Other = Donations, Fundraisers, and Grants

## Sunfield Education Association Fiscal Year 2009 Expenses



### Total Expenses:

	Staff	Earned*	Total
2009 Actual	\$291,385	\$130,072	<b>\$421,457</b>

\*Other expenses are all non-payroll operating and administrative costs, including supplies, maintenance, utilities, dues, event costs, insurance, principal and interest payments, professional fees, and taxes.

## Board of Directors

**Mike Garling**  
President and Treasurer

**Bo Bricklemeyer**  
Vice President

**Peggy Whyte**  
Secretary

**Beth Ann O'Dell**  
Board member;  
third/fourth-grade teacher

**Pamela Roberts**  
Board member

## Administrative Staff

**Jake Meyer**  
Organizational Director

**Gail Endres**  
School Director

**Verity and Neil Howe**  
Farmers/Educators

**Margaret Kirk**  
Bookkeeper

**Michele Meyering**  
Administrative Assistant

**Jude Rubin**  
Grant Writer

## Management Council

Responsible for day-to-day  
operational oversight

**Jake Meyer**  
Organizational Director

**Gail Endres**  
School Director

**Beth Ann O'Dell**  
Third/fourth-grade teacher

**Verity and Neil Howe**  
Farmers/Educators

## Others who served on the Board of Directors in 2009

Helen Curry\*

Isolde Perry\*

Eric Jorgensen

Crystie Kisler

Jenn Patterson

Dave Pederson

Randy Sturgis

Habibah Ybarra

**Willie Reid**  
Farm Manager

**Abby Jorgensen**  
School Director

**Kristin Axtman**  
Interim Executive Director

**Molly Stebbins**  
Kindergarten assistant,  
2009–2010; kindergarten  
teacher, 2010–2011

## Faculty

**Helen Curry**  
Fifth/sixth-grade teacher,  
2009–2010;  
sixth/seventh-grade teacher,  
2010–2011

**Beth Ann O'Dell**  
Third/fourth-grade teacher,  
2009–2010;  
fourth/fifth-grade teacher,  
2010–2011

**Rampa Tinling**  
First/second-grade teacher,  
2009–2010

**Monica Van Loon**  
Spanish teacher

**Ruth Mandelbaum-Pope**  
Kindergarten teacher

**Monica Boucher**  
Kindergarten teacher and  
Parent-Toddler class  
facilitator

**Sandra Petranek**  
Kindergarten teacher

## School Assistants

**Molly Stebbins**  
Kindergarten assistant,  
2009–2010; kindergarten  
teacher, 2010–2011

**Jocelyn Hanbey**  
Kindergarten assistant

**Emma White Thunder**  
After-care provider

## Committees

Committees are primarily  
operated by volunteers,  
which includes board  
members, faculty, staff,  
and parents.

**Community Education  
Committee**  
Sylvia Platt, chair

**Development Committee**  
Jake Meyer, chair

**Farm Committee**  
Beth Ann O'Dell, chair

**Finance Committee**  
Eric Jorgensen, chair

**Parent Council**  
Nadia Wolf, chair

**Site Committee**  
Jake Meyer, interim chair

**Volunteer Community  
Education Coordinator**  
**Sylvie Platt**

**Volunteer Webmasters**  
**Jamie Kowalski** and  
**Bette Kowalski**

\*Sunfield founders and board members since 1999; retired from the board in 2009

## Sunfield's Future Vision

Sunfield is working to become a center of cultural life available to all. We look forward to designing and building a sustainable campus that will not only enhance learning and nurture our staff and students, but will also allow us to expand our role as an educational and cultural resource. A hall for community events, lectures, drama, art, and music will be an integral part of our future campus. Our growth will include a retail space for selling farm produce and Waldorf supplies and books. Small workshop spaces where artisans and craftspeople can work on-site—modeling their skills in weaving, blacksmithing, caning, shoemaking, and other crafts—are also included in our vision. Our future campus will provide overnight accommodations and enable us to add a Farm Stay and summer camp programs for visiting schools, community groups, and individuals. While spending time learning and working on the farm, visitors will share meals made with ingredients harvested on the farm.

Our plans are ambitious, but as we look back on our accomplishments, we know that steadfast determination reaps bountiful rewards. Now as we look forward, we are certain that the ongoing creativity, passion, and hard work of the growing Sunfield community will continue to bring our dreams to fruition.

“The need for imagination, a sense of truth,  
and a feeling of responsibility; these are  
the very nerve of education.”

—Rudolf Steiner, founder of Waldorf education and biodynamic farming principles



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Web site: [www.sunfieldfarm.org](http://www.sunfieldfarm.org)

We are located at 111 Sunfield Lane off of Rhody Drive between Circle & Square and Fiesta Jalisco.

Sunfield Education Association is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

Sunfield Waldorf School is a developing member of the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America.