

# THE CULTIVATOR

SEASON 23

NEWS OF THE WALTHAM FARMERS' MARKET

2013

## Free Concerts at the Waltham Farmers' Market

**June 15: Second Line Social Aid & Pleasure Society Brass Band.** New Orleans-style street band.

**June 22: Dave Birkin and the Hot Shots.** Jump blues, swing, R&B and jazz.

**June 29: Gerry Beaudoin.** Jazz trio.

**July 13: Afrika Gente.** Latin jazz.

**July 20: Moody Street String Band.** Celtic, Scots and Yankee music.

**August 3: Mike Williams & Friends.** Blues and jazz.

**August 10: Steve Taddeo and His Swing Senders.** Big Band.

**August 17: The Solstice Sackbuts.** Medieval and Renaissance music.

*All concerts begin at 11 a.m. Rain dates TBA.*

Sponsored by **Watertown Savings Bank, The Elephant Walk, Waltham Cultural Council, Doctors Express, RevoluSun and European Wax Center.** Please support our sponsors!



*Barbara Rietscha of Stow Greenhouses stands in front of a tangle of sweet peas, one of the flowers she uses in her "tussie-mussies."*

## 2013 Vendors

**Beads My Way**, jewelry • **Burnshirt Valley Farm/Caledonia Farm**, meat, eggs, mushrooms • **Country Desserts**, pastries, pies • **John Crookes Photography** • **Culinary Cruisers**, kombucha, ice pops, donuts • **Deborah's Kitchen**, fruit spreads, relishes • **Dick's Market Garden**, produce • **Donna Dee's Watch City Soaps** • **Suzette Durso**, cards, books • **Fat Boyfriend Bakery** • **Fior D'Italia**, pasta, cheese, sauces • **Green City Growers**, raised-bed gardens • **MGreenstein Designs**, jewelry • **Harriet's Bakery**, gluten-free pastries • **Hearth Artisan Bread** • **Heaven's Harvest Farm**, organic produce • **A Hundred Ravens**, yarns • **Java Beans Roasterie** • **Kefi's Kitchen**, food truck • **The Knitting Mills**, clothing • **Mykl's Coffee Company** • **Nagog Hill Farm**, produce • **Nonni's Farm**, produce • **Pie on the Fly**, pie cones • **Roma's Bakery**, Italian bread, pastries • **Shayna Made Bags** • **Smith's Country Cheese**, cheese, eggs, hamburger • **Soluna Garden Farm**, herbs, tea, spices • **Spring Brook Farm**, produce, eggs, vinegar • **Stow Greenhouses**, cut flowers • **Sweet Lydia's**, marshmallow treats • **Turtle Creek Winery** • **Victory Bags** • **Vishal's Sauces** • **Waltham Fields Community Farm**, produce • **The Warren Farm & Sugarhouse**, maple syrup products • **Winitzer Design**, découpage • **Wombwraps**, clothes • **Zoll Cellars Winery**

PARTICIPANTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

## Lilies of the Assabet Valley

When Barb Rietscha and her husband Dave Buchholz were about to turn 50, they decided to change their lives. She was a homemaker raising three children and he was in high-tech development.

They were living in Stow, Massachusetts, not far from where Fred and Nancy Green had started a business fresh out of Cornell University's floriculture program in 1978, growing cut pompon chrysanthemums for the Boston wholesale flower market. During the early years the Greens grew nearly every cut flower imaginable before discovering what became their passion and a specialty: hybrid lilies.

By 2010, the Greens were ready to retire from the business and the Buchholzes, whose prior growing experience consisted only of backyard landscaping, were ready to take it over. After a three-month transition, when the two couples worked side by side, the Buchholzes took over the business in December.

Dave's background in technology and Barb's chemistry training and

M.B.A. have helped them build the business. Their goal is to "take one step and do it well," says Barb.

What was originally a set of wooden greenhouses has since been replaced with a 36,000 square foot modern, state-of-the-art, highly automated glass-covered facility. The wood-fired steam boiler—the lilies need to be at 58 degrees—uses wood chips "recycled" from landscapers and others who don't need the wood. Soil is composted. Although the concern is not officially organic, they try to use natural and sustainable methods whenever possible. For instance, Dave has recently started steaming the soil as a weed-killing treatment.

Today, along with three full-time employees, three college students, nine high school students and two salespeople, Barb and Dave grow over 100 different varieties and produce over 500,000 stems of cut lilies each year. They are one of the only lily producers in the Northeast and the only one growing premium lilies. They grow the lilies year-round, ►

◀ getting shipments of bulbs from Holland and South America twice a year and staggering the plantings.

They own 14 acres of land but currently only have two under cultivation, in addition to the greenhouse. Among the flowers they grow besides lilies are hydrangeas, peonies, sweet peas, sunflowers, lisianthus, celosia, gomphrena, marigolds, statice, zinnias, calla lilies, lupine, nigella, daisies, black-eyed Susans, sea holly, tuberose, asters and dahlias.

This year, Barb plans to create “tussie-mussies,” or nose-gays, to bring to markets. This Victorian tradition used the symbolism of various flowers to send a message to the recipient, though Barb says hers have “no meaning whatsoever!”

Although most of their business is wholesale, Barb also does 12 farmers’ markets as well as selling through farm stands. She’s been coming to Waltham since 2010. Although markets are more labor-intensive than wholesale work, the profit margin is much higher, so there is an incentive to sell direct. She also provides lilies for customers buying on-line through White Flower Farm and through her own website ([www.stowgreenhouses.com](http://www.stowgreenhouses.com)).

Stow also has a CSA, or community-supported agriculture, where shares of a harvest are pre-sold and delivered weekly. In Stow’s case the first share is delivered in a Mason jar and subsequent weeks all the customer needs to do is bring back the jar for the next bouquet. It’s emblematic of the beautiful products, sophisticated marketing and farm flavor that make Stow Greenhouses innovative and successful. 🌸



*The one-acre Stow greenhouse contains rows of lilies at varying stages of growth.*

## Market News

The 23rd market season runs every Saturday, **9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.**, (PLEASE NOTE NEW HOURS) rain or shine, from **June 15 to November 9**, in the Sovereign Bank parking lot at 1 Moody Street.

WFM will be partnering with Dr. Frank Mangan from the UMass Stockbridge School of Agriculture this year to bring special crops to the market that are popular among Guatemalans and Salvadorans, many of whom shop at our market.

Professor Mangan has arranged for two crops, *chipilin* and *hierba mora*, to be grown specifically for our market by Pleasant Valley Gardens in Methuen. The fresh greens will be sold by one of our regular vendors and part of the sales will directly benefit WFM. They should be

available starting in mid-July.

In 2011, a Jones Partnership Fund grant was awarded to the Waltham Farmers’ Market to allow SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as “food stamps”) customers to use their benefits at all eligible farmers and food vendors at the Market.

In 2012, WFM began a very successful program of **matching SNAP purchases** with market tokens up to \$10 per customer per week, resulting in \$1,091 additional purchases free to those shoppers and also boosting farmers’ sales. In 2013, the market will continue to match SNAP/EBT sales up to \$10 per week per customer using a second Jones Partnership Fund grant.

To enable **token sales for debit/credit** customers, the market adds a \$1 token handling fee for each purchase of tokens using debit/credit cards.

The Market Committee is sad to share the news of the death of **Gene Burkart**, one of our long-time supporters and the husband of former committee member Sue Burkart. Gene’s work for peace and justice in Waltham will not be forgotten.

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**THE CULTIVATOR**, a publication of the **Waltham Farmers’ Market**  
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Jennifer Rose, *editor*

## 2012 Season Thank You’s

Thank you to our wonderful **vendors**, who make the market what it is. Thanks to the many performers, who add yet another incentive to attend the market. Thanks to our concert sponsors, **Watertown Savings Bank, Waltham Cultural Council, The Elephant Walk and Waltham Patch**. Thanks to the **Jones Partnership Fund** for their support of the SNAP/EBT and credit/debit card program. Thanks to **Lou Karger and Northland Development Corporation**, who generously host the market. Thanks to our market master, **Leo Keightley**, and to **Jim O’Brien**, who helps set up the market. Thanks to **Mass Farmers’ Markets**, for insurance. Finally, thanks to our **loyal customers**, who have kept the market going strong for so many years!

—**Martha Creedon, Elisse Ghitleman, Claire Kozower, Jennifer Rose, Marc Rudnick, Scott Shurr and Dan Taylor, Market committee**