Antioch Farm Welcomes All Ages

The Antioch Farm is a lovely place to be and its existence gives me confidence the college will be successful. I have volunteered each year since 2013. The garden grows. My family has grown. This year, 6 family members comprising 3 generations, joined VWP. It is comforting to have an activity that can accommodate all family members. Unlike my teenage daughter, the little child's (and soon children's) help with most projects won't be significant for several years. However, my 2 year old loves the farm, thank goodness, and she can join the adults and truly work. She prefers harvesting and taste-testing veggies! My older daughter enjoys harvesting too, especially when it requires sharp tools. They both enjoy observing the animals. And regardless of heat, humidity, pests, or precipitation, the farm is a peaceful place to be. Given the increasing ubiquity of technology, I am grateful for the opportunity to work on the farm, surrounded by life, more likely to be distracted by a butterfly than a buzzing smart phone.

Yunus Brevik '03

One reason I return every year to give back to the place where all of us volunteers received our vital undergraduate educations, is the PEOPLE! And, more than any one person could ever imagine, we accomplish things that are really noticeable on the balance sheet - by working cooperatively.

For example, a 2 year old working with us at the farm carried small garlics to the sorting table. I being 90, sat down a lot more than others while sorting and tying. Neither of us broke stride, and the work flowed on as new workers showed up. It felt good - digging up garlic and leaving a tidy planting bed. Working out in the fresh air, often with the same people for years, in some cases decades, who return again each year to help OUR college! This kind of dedication is activism at its BEST!

Mary Bowman, '49
Painting and Gardening

Hot humid weather greeted me on my first VWP at Antioch. Seeking to work in air conditioned comfort, I volunteered to paint. First, though, I would have to put in my time outdoors weeding the North Hall garden. It was not an easy task to dig out the deep roots of dandelions while balancing on one foot in order to protect the delicate cosmos! However, soon the efforts of the gardeners produced a weed-free but barren looking area. Diana Corbin, ’68 and several others went off to purchase beautiful perennials and herbs. I was showed how to use a shovel and despite the cement like ground, we soon had it ready for planting.

Satisfied with my gardening efforts, I felt deserving of joining Margaret Eccles, ’66 in painting the stairways in Birch North Hall. I took two selfies after doing nearly two days of this job and was thrilled to see and hear the audience response. I knew there were funny parts in the play, but… the Antioch audience howled with laughter! I had a comedy, Wonderful! I flew home to NYC energized and happy. Thank you crazy Antiochians who don’t know when to stop working!

Robin Rice, ’64

Volunteers Script, Direct, & Act!

By day, volunteers Beth Richards, ’06 and Angel Martinez and I worked outside sweating in the relentless sun - gardening, weeding, and repairing the South Hall porch. By night, Beth agreed to direct and Angel to act in my play JOSEOWULF. These two intrepid volunteers dove into rehearsals, they did not hold back. They experimented, listened, tried things out - opened themselves up. Beth worked her director’s magic. I was thrilled. I was nervous. The play had won awards, but I had never seen it staged.

On Cabaret Horace night, yours truly, the playwright, got to see and hear the audience response. I knew there were funny parts in the play, but… the Antioch audience howled with laughter! I had a comedy, Wonderful! I flew home to NYC energized and happy. Thank you crazy Antiochians who don’t know when to stop working!

Robin Rice, ’64

Flying in a small plane is not the most common way to get to an Antioch work week and a 40th reunion, but Ken Chambers, my husband, has been a pilot since his teenage years and he’s always up for a flying adventure. And he wanted to see Yellow Springs, the place I’ve been applauding all these years.

Our first day we departed from our home airport near Monterey, California for Albuquerque, New Mexico. Crossing the southern Sierras afforded beautiful views of Mt. Whitney to the north, high alpine lakes, then on to lots of deserts. Our next stop was Bentonville, Arkansas, the hometown of Sam Walton and birthplace of Wal-Mart.

The downtown museum sung his praises and made it sound like he was a savior for helping the little people have an affordable and fantastic lifestyle. Never knew paying people less than a living wage was something to brag about!

We also visited the architecturally beautiful Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, funded by the Waltons. The flight out of northwest Arkansas was pretty with many lakes, hills and forests below. After flying above fluffy clouds in smooth air for a couple of hours we began our descent, fields of green and picturesque farmhouses were everywhere. This was the Ohio we had come back to see! On the approach to Springfield airport we spotted the spires of Main Building. Having the luxury of our own plane we circled once around the campus for a bird’s eye view from above. In no time we were on the ground and moved in and working to prepare the campus for reunion. Great stories were shared by all, wonderful meals were provided, and the dorms were a blast from the past. It felt like going to Antioch all over again, only this time we were all grown up! The weekend reunion was filled with great talks and company and we were ready to support Antioch as it is being revived.

Shannon Edwards, ’78

Assisting at the Antioch Review

My primary task at the REVIEW, was to enter information into the electronic database of authors who had mailed in their literary submissions, in order to whittle down a huge backlog of large manila envelopes containing articles, short stories, and poetry from all over the world. I also prepared selected submissions to give to outside reviewers who help editor Robert Fegarty determine the lucky pieces that will appear in future issues.

The best part of my experience was working with office manager Cynthia Dunlevy, who is a great role model of efficiency and is also a lot of fun and talking with Robert Fegarty, who is always interesting and is currently celebrating two milestones in 2018 - the REVIEW’s 75th anniversary and 40 years as its editor! I felt honored to be in such fine company.

Kathy Huff, ’67

Restoring Pennell Decking, Victories, & Horace Mann

So, Pennell - I got hooked into working on it after breakfast that Thursday morning by Jim Spangler, ’74, who drives a pickup and has been doing campus fix-up work for years and who impressed me right away as someone who wanted a job done well. When he said it was staining a deck, I was pleased as there’s nothing like being a given a job where the results are plain to see. What I didn’t realize was just how large the decking was that encircled the building! Nonetheless, I was given my 5-gallon pail, and a brush and told to cover as much as I could. It wasn’t until hours later - after doing nearly two sides of the building - that I learned the correct way to use a brush so that your strokes were even and flowed perfectly from the inside to the outside edge! Ah well, at my next work week I’ll be a pro.

Working with other volunteers who were painting the lower parts of the deck, I came away with a profound sense of just how true the phrase - “We’re a 168-year-old startup” really is. It’s all about diving in and knowing that no job is too small not to have real meaning and value to the re-building of this storied college. I took two selfies that day; one with “my” finished deck in the background. The second was in front of the Horace Mann statue. I positioned myself so the words “be ashamed to dies until you have won some victory for humanity” could be seen behind me. Painting a deck. A victory for humanity? No. But at the end of the day, I felt that in a small way, I had helped make it possible for future Antiochians to have a place to go that welcomed them to think and plan their own victories.

Alan Siege, ’78

There are Many Ways to Donate to Antioch College!

Tractor donated by Jim Spangler, ’74

Goodbye Tracie!

Our fabulous volunteer coordinator, Tracie Ugamoto, has moved to Japan with her hubby. Best wishes from all the volunteers!