



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Dear Community Members,

2023 was a big year for Goosefoot in terms of organizational and administrative transitions, beginning with Sandy Whiting's retirement after 10 years leading Goosefoot and my own hire as Executive Director in February. Since then, we've had other retirements, transitions and new hires which are described in our report. What's remarkable is how smoothly these transitions have gone. While there's been some steep learning curves, we've hardly skipped a beat given the exceptional quality of the staff who've been at Goosefoot for years, the caliber of those joining the staff, and the dedication of our top-notch Board.

One of the most significant milestones for Goosefoot in 2023 was receiving our official letter of designation as a Type 1 Supporting Organization from the IRS. From the outside, this may not seem like a huge change, but this new status does mean we must rigorously adhere to a specific set of rules laid out by the IRS. These regulations shine a light on how carefully we balance our charitable purposes while maintaining our various for-profit entities. As I have learned over these past months, this is a dynamic and complex dance that includes juggling multiple priorities simultaneously.

We also worked to overhaul and develop new systems internally to move towards greater efficiency and clearer processes. For example, we revamped how our financials are structured to better reflect our charitable purposes in light of our new IRS designation. We have also established new policies and parameters for tenant leases. After waiving rents and Common Area Maintenance fees for our tenants during COVID, we now need to make sure we have enough reserves to undertake the many capital improvements and maintenance projects our aging buildings require. This can sometimes feel like a tight rope act given the multitude of different demands, but we are finding our balance one step at a time.

Another major highlight was the lightning speed with which Island Roots Housing (also known as the Goosefoot Housing Group) moved this past year towards developing multi-family workforce housing in Langley. In addition to applying for several major government grants, Island Roots Housing secured more than \$2 million in pledges and gifts from individuals in our incredibly generous community (perhaps you were one of them?).

I could name many other steps forward, such as our concerted efforts to become more anti-racist, our work on food systems, the installation of the Goose's refrigeration system, and the increased attendance at our street dances and art shows. But I encourage you to peruse the following pages to learn about those and much more.

For now, please know none of this would be possible without all of you, our cherished community. Because of the amazing work so many of you are doing to better our island home, we are able to address areas of need that Goosefoot is uniquely set up to do. We truly look forward to serving our community even more effectively and meaningfully in 2024. And whatever you do, don't forget to shop at the Goose!

In Gratitude,

Elise Miller, Executive Director

***Goosefoot works together with the South Whidbey community to create essential solutions. We address community needs, connect neighbors, grow local businesses, and preserve great places.***

## Inside Goosefoot

### A Year of Change

Goosefoot weathered a lot of change in 2023. The retirements of Executive Director Sandy Whiting and Facilities Manager Fredde Butterworth marked the end of an era. Facilities & Maintenance assistant Stephan Ross also moved on to new opportunities. We welcomed new staff members Elise Miller as Executive Director, Larry Shorey as Facilities & Property Manager, Julie Grubbs as Staff Accountant, and Tom Rider as Facilities & Maintenance Assistant. We also said farewell to board members Patrick Kennedy, Chris Salomone and Clyde Shavers, and welcomed Mitch Wright. Staff continues to grow to meet Goosefoot's expanding role in the community, and we look forward to the expertise more board members will bring in 2024.



*Retiring Executive Director Sandy Whiting was our 2023 Mardi Gras Monarch*

### Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

The Anti-Racism Task Force meets monthly to educate the board and staff of Goosefoot on anti-racism practices, as well as evaluating programs and properties for improvements we can make to increase access and equity. Anti-racism readings have been added to our monthly newsletter to share with our community, and made accessible on the Goosefoot website. Additionally, a staff and board member teamed up to evaluate the Bayview properties against the checklist for ADA Standards for Accessible Design. A plan was created to improve access for community members with a variety of different needs, and improvements will be made as Goosefoot properties receive updates and repairs.

## Addressing Community Needs

### Island Roots Housing

2023 was a year of major steps forward for Goosefoot's affordable housing work. The Goosefoot Housing Group incorporated as Island Roots Housing, which continues to be supported by Goosefoot.

Island Roots Housing (IRH) selected Environmental Works, a firm focused on community-centered design, as their architectural partner. The development on 2nd and DeBruyn—named Generations Place—will be Langley's first multi-family rental property in 30 years. The project will consist of 14 affordable two- and three-bedroom apartments for households with children and local workers.

IRH continues to work closely with the community to fill a need in the housing gap while ensuring Generations Place aligns with the City of Langley's needs and neighborhood aesthetics. More than twenty volunteers are helping to move this herculean effort forward, 58 local donors have contributed over \$2 million, and public agencies have committed \$1.1 million. Groundbreaking will hopefully begin in late 2024. Learn more at [islandrootshousing.org](http://islandrootshousing.org).



*Community members attended a public meeting to hear about the Generations Place project and have input on the design.*

### Essential Needs Fundraiser

Goosefoot and the Whidbey Community Foundation (WCF)'s continued partnership on a community-wide fundraiser raised more than \$109,000. The Opportunity Council uses the Essential Needs fund to provide assistance to households struggling to meet basic needs like child care, utilities, or transportation. With a starting match of \$50,000 (\$25,000 each from Goosefoot and WCF), individuals donated directly or through the Goose Community Grocer's Round Up program to support our most vulnerable community members.

## Round Up for Charity

Thanks to our generous and caring community, the Goose Community Grocer's Round Up program surpassed \$100,000 for the first time. The funds went to 10 local nonprofits. The Round Up program enables shoppers to donate to Whidbey Island charities by rounding up their purchase at the register to the nearest dollar.



## Connecting Neighbors

### Hub Gallery Art Shows

The community continued to gather and celebrate the arts in the Hub Gallery of the Bayview Cash Store. Seven art shows graced our walls, a mix of solo and group exhibits. Of note, our second annual *Art for All* show—featuring work priced at \$100 or less—brought in \$2,000 for some of the more than 50 participating artists.

### Dance With Us!

Mardi Gras returned to Bayview Hall on February 21, 2023 with a full house and more costume contest entries than ever. Our highly successful Summer Street Dances remain the must-do summer activity for our community, where birthdays are now regularly celebrated—even a family reunion was held! There's nothing like standing in the middle of a street dance experiencing the expressions of joy on the faces of dancers and music lovers. It's one of the staff's favorite sights!



*Locals young and old gain a deep appreciation for music and community at the Summer Street Dances.*

## Growing Local Businesses

### Agricultural Resources Committee / Island County (ARCIC)

Founded in 2022 with a focus on Whidbey, ARCIC expanded this year to include the agricultural community of Camano Island. A mission was established—*ARCIC advocates, educates, and builds connections to support Island County's farmers, ranchers, food processors, and other agricultural entities*—and a workplan was put into place. A grant received from the Western Washington Food Partnership Program is providing ARCIC with technical assistance for a feasibility study regarding meat processing facilities on Whidbey. Committee members provided input representing the agricultural community into the Economic Development Council's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) and has set the stage for participating in Island County's update of its Comprehensive Plan. Learn more at [agresourcesic.org](http://agresourcesic.org).

### Whidbey Kitchen Update

Progress continues on our multi-year endeavor to develop a shared commercial kitchen to assist farmers and food entrepreneurs in making value-added food products. An architect was hired to develop a feasibility study for the new location at Bayview Center, which included a floorplan design, costs estimates, and a full set of drawings. In addition to being ready to apply for a building permit from Island County, Goosefoot applied for funding to pay for remodel and upgrade costs. Learn more at [whidbeykitchen.org](http://whidbeykitchen.org).

### Young Professionals Week

In its second year, Young Professionals Week offered community building opportunities for an often-neglected demographic—the 18-45 year old business owner or worker. Social activities included yoga and pottery hand-building, while networking breakfasts and lunch-and-learns offered professional development options. A Farm to Restaurant potluck gave our local farmers and restaurant owners/managers the chance to build connections that have lasted well into the year.

## Preserving Great Places

### A New Home for Whidbey Island Kayaking

After a decade of residency, Bob Bowling Rustics retired and vacated the property behind the Goose Grocer on Bayview Road. Thus began the hard work of the facilities team, especially the Ross brothers, of cleaning and preparing a large warehouse for a new tenant. Once it was spruced up and necessary repairs completed, this unique property was the perfect fit for Whidbey Island Kayaking. To add an interesting twist, when the newest tenant at Bayview Center tried to get mail delivered, it was discovered that this building had the same address as the property across the street. We were surprised by how long and complicated the process was to get a new property number.



*The property at 5781 Bayview Road required extensive cleaning and repairs before Whidbey Island Kayaking could join the Bayview family.*

### The Impacts of Success

When the Bayview Cash Store was constructed, the initial septic system was designed only for one restaurant in the current Whidbey Doughnuts space. Over the years, Bayview Garden expanded, the Star Store came and went, and the Taproom became a cornerstone. The old septic system was tested every year, and recently it was determined the amount and content of untreated wastewater was negatively impacting the whole system. A new tank was installed in the summer, tucked into a back corner where it won't disturb the farmers market but can continue to serve our two restaurants and Bayview Garden (the Flower House Café is on its own system) before discharging effluent as cleanly as possible into the drainfield.



*Key Mechanical teams work quickly to install a row of cases before the Goose opens for the day.*

### The Goose Grocer Refrigeration Upgrade

The largest capital improvement project of 2023 was the installation of a new refrigeration system at the Goose Community Grocer. The new coolant system had to be installed before the old one could be taken offline, which led to a cascade of other fixes: a wider delivery door on the dock, roof repairs, and the installation of new ducts just below the ceiling inside the store. Then in the fall, the fridges and freezers within the store were replaced row by row with more efficient (and may we say sharper-looking) cool cases. Staff can now monitor temperatures remotely, and the temperature in the store is more stable. The next step is installing a transfer station so that a whole-store generator can be used when faced with one of Whidbey's inevitable power outages, leading to less food waste and more access for our community. The Goose also got a little sprucing up during the summer—did you notice the new paint striping in the parking lot?

### A Sustainable Future

With an eye to maintaining the properties which we steward, we completed an extensive analysis of our tenant lease contracts, terms, and rental rates. Tenants received new contracts with standardized language and terms, to ensure everyone understood responsibilities and expectations, and to help maintain the historic properties. A more responsible balance of tenant needs and Goosefoot obligations will ensure the health of the properties long after any of us are gone, while still fulfilling our mission to grow local businesses.

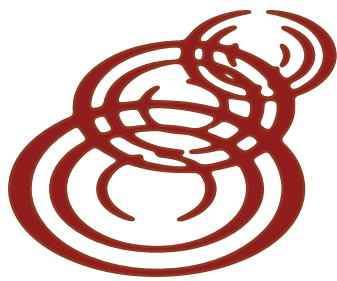
#### Goosefoot Board Members

Leigh Bloom  
Kevin Dunham  
Bob Gentz  
Karen Larsen Gordon  
Betsy Hofius  
Candace Jordan

Pam Leloup  
Ted Ravetz  
Jean Singer  
Marcia Wiley  
Mitch Wright

#### Goosefoot Staff

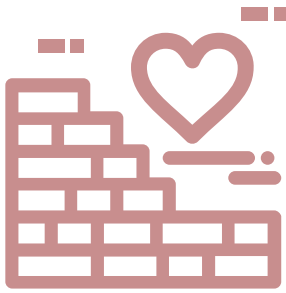
Mariah Beard  
Julie Grubbs  
Rose Hughes  
Elise Miller  
Marian Myszkowski  
Sami Postma  
Tom Rider  
Rachman Ross  
Larry Shorey



goosefoot

2023

BY THE NUMBERS

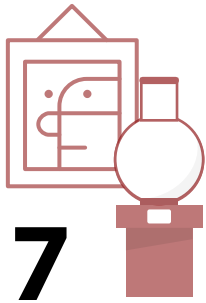


**\$2 MILLION**  
local pledges & gifts to  
Island Roots Housing  
**\$1.1 MILLION**  
contributed by  
public agencies



**\$109K RAISED**  
with the Whidbey Community  
Foundation for Essential Needs

**\$100,077**  
in monthly roundups at the  
Goose to 10 nonprofits

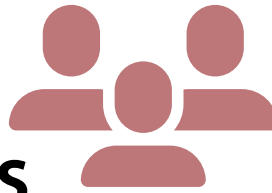


**7**  
**ART SHOWS**

120 ARTISTS

\$2K in sales  
in *Art for All* show

**4 NEW  
STAFF  
MEMBERS**



**& 1 NEW BOARD  
MEMBER**

**\$2.3 MILLION**  
new refrigeration  
installation at the  
Goose



**MORE  
ATTENDEES  
THAN EVER!**  
**7 STREET DANCES**  
1K+ attendees | locals & visitors



**20+ ORGS**  
collaborated for  
Whidbey Earth &  
Ocean Month

**35 FARMS**  
in the  
Whidbey Farm  
Stand Brochure



**13 NONPROFITS**  
made ornaments for  
the Giving Tree  
**\$2,147**  
distributed from  
ornament purchases



**25 BUSINESS  
WORKSHOPS**  
233 registrations  
online & in person



**38 workshops**  
**available on YouTube**  
1,030 views | 112.6 hrs watch time



**24**  
**ANTI-RACISM  
READINGS**  
shared in our  
newsletters