

Heartbeet Lifesharing
218 Town Farm Road
Hardwick, VT 05843



Mission:

Heartbeet is a vibrant lifesharing community that includes adults with developmental disabilities and interweaves the social and agricultural realms for the healing and renewing of our society and the earth. Community members live and work together in beautiful extended family households, forming a mutually supportive environment that enables each individual to discover and develop his or her unique abilities and potential.

Donations

Heartbeet Lifesharing · 218 Town Farm Rd · Hardwick, VT 05843
E-Mail: hannah@heartbeet.org
Phone: 802-472-5598 · website: heartbeet.org

Creative Donations

Corporate Donations can be supported through business matching grants. If you are giving a donation to Heartbeet, check with your business or corporation to see if they would be willing to match it. If you are thinking of giving money but would like to give it over time, we can organize a pledge donation.

Heartbeet is registered as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation and its Primary purpose is serving individuals with developmental disabilities. We are a youthful organization with significant capital expenses, so your support is greatly appreciated and can be directed towards the following areas of need; General Operations, Building Improvements, Equipment Fund, or the Campaign for renovations of White Pine (the old farmhouse).



Heartbeet Lifesharing Newsletter



www.heartbeet.org

APRIL 2008 · Heartbeet Lifesharing · 218 Town Farm Rd. · Hardwick, VT 05843

Dear Friends of Heartbeet,

I am writing to ask for support as Heartbeet steps into a very critical time, jumping into its third major capital campaign and phase three of its development plan. With a third house on the horizon we are looking at a new level of sustainability. As you know, Rachel, Jonathan, and I carry Heartbeet as the core team. We love our one year volunteers but we need more long term carrying members to support the growth, work and practical needs of the community and its members.

Over the last year we have been meeting as a core team to develop a strategic plan for Heartbeet. We were able to meet on Fridays to lay out what it would take to truly establish a successful and strong community that will last into the future. Jed Williamson, a board member and previous president of Sterling College, joined us for mentoring during one of our final sessions.

In our meetings we created a footprint for the next five years and a brush stroke of the next ten. We know that we need to build two new houses (allowing for six new Companions with special needs, and two new core families to join us), renovate the barn to create a center for our land based therapeutic programs, and build a modest community center that will allow us to host cultural events such as plays, festivals, music and services. We envision four houses, a farm and community center, with thirteen to fifteen residents, four long term families, three long term single staff, and a strong base of short term volunteers. Imagine the magic that will unfold with this growth!

The land itself can maintain and support this size community. We need this third house to happen! It is a sustainability issue for the community, to ensure that all the effort that has already gone in can come to fruition. Jonathan, Rachel and I need long term coworkers to join us; that brings us to Eric and Seneca, our new couple (see page – for more on Seneca and Eric). They are cosmopolitan, educated, have all the other qualities that we are looking for and, are interested in moving to us this summer. They are amazing people with many skills that will complement what is already happening at Heartbeet. They have two sons, and are deeply connected to the mission of community and empowering people with disabilities.

All of us at Heartbeet have been working hard for the last year to bring together the many layers that it takes to make a community home unfold.



“The land itself can maintain and support this size community. We need this third house to happen. It is a sustainability issue for the community, to ensure that all the effort that has already gone in can come to fruition.”



Kai (potential new child of Heartbeet) has already made friends with Jasper.

Heartbeet Lifesharing

continued from front page

The total cost of the new house is \$450,000; we are hoping that we can begin building this summer. For us to move ahead we need to have raised \$100,000 by May 31, 2008 so that we can sign contracts with Huntington, the building company that is waiting to begin its construction. The rest of the campaign can build as we build. House designs are confirmed, permits are in place and we recognize this new house as the right step towards Heartbeet's fulfillment of its intentions to expand and sustain a lifesharing community. Let's build this house and grow Heartbeet's capacity to do great work!

Jonathan, Rachel and I are giving all that we can. We want Heartbeet to be a presence in the future, and after careful consideration know that this step is what it will take to ensure that intention. Please consider a gift this month to help us make this new house happen!

With sincere gratitude and hope,



Hannah Schwartz
Executive Director



Proposed third house



The felting workshop is hard at work.

Kiley Miller

By Rachel Schwartz



Kiley Miller is a graduate of Beaver Run and currently in the transition program at Beaver Farm in Pennsylvania. He has been coming to Heartbeet for summer and work camps for the last three years. In February he came to Heartbeet not as a camper, but as a young man looking for a place in which to unfold his adult life. He was warmly welcomed by everyone, including Parker, Thomas, Sean, and Connor, four of his old classmates and friends from Beaver Run. His arrival was a joyful reunion.

Kiley is shy at first and it is sometimes hard to know what is going on inside. We quickly learned that he does not miss a thing. He is very bright and full of humor and insight. As he grew more comfortable and trusting, the questions and joking came more frequently. Kiley fit right into the daily rhythms at Heartbeet, helping out when needed with making butter or drying dishes. Cooking Community Lunch in a local church, attending Global Campus and art class in Hardwick, all stimulated Kiley's social nature and he was often heard giggling away with one of his friends. It was increasingly clear over the course of his trial stay that Heartbeet is a community in which Kiley could develop and unfold his potential and the many gifts that he brings. He does not usually express himself strongly, but after his visit to Heartbeet, folks at Beaver Farm have heard loud and clear that he really wants to move to Heartbeet. Hannah, Jonathan and I ran into him during a recent visit to Pennsylvania and he was full of recognition and joy at seeing us outside the context of Heartbeet. Kiley clearly wants to live at Heartbeet



Kei and Connor make friends

Profiles

Brittany Garafola

By Rachel Schwartz



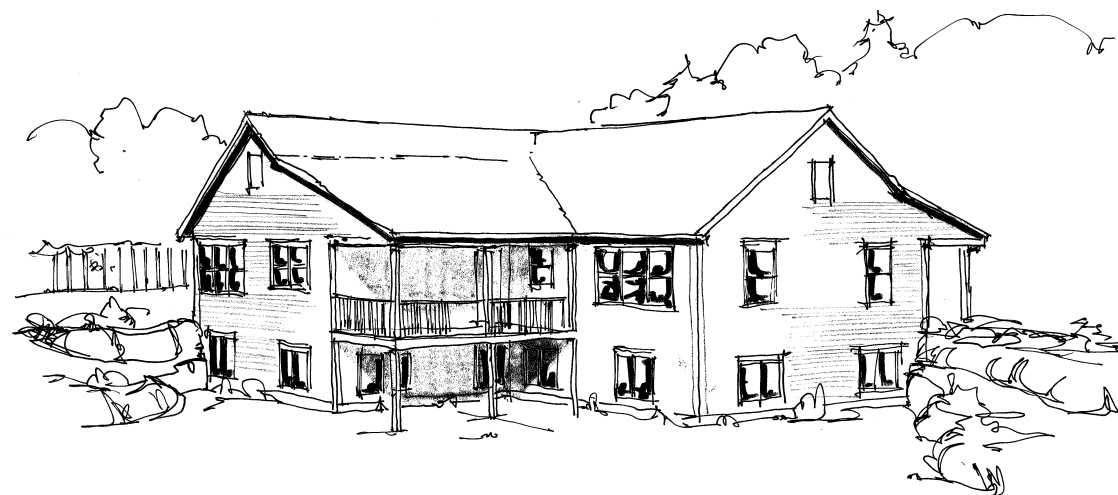
Brittany is a 21-year-old Vermonter who has the warmth of heart that it takes to build true community. She recently graduated from high school and has been looking for her next step. When she and her family came to visit Heartbeet it was clear to everyone that this would be a wonderful match and her recent trial visit confirmed our initial feeling. Brittany fit right into the hustle and bustle of community life and thoroughly enjoyed the many joyful experiences that Heartbeet has to offer (milking a cow, felting, sledding). She is full of laughter and kindness, always eager to make new friends and for the next adventure. We are excited by the idea of being part of Brittany's life as she begins her journey into adulthood.

Kei Shimizu

By Hannah Schwartz

Kei is a well traveled and cosmopolitan young man, filled with enthusiasm for life. On his first visit to Heartbeet he enjoyed helping to make lasagna and was clearly taken in by the warm social environment. He was quick to make friends, check that our clocks were correct, and to see if we had updated information on current music trends. His mother, Patty Cuyler, is co-director of Village Harmony, the umbrella for an incredible range of choral music, world music, and harmony singing activities based in Vermont. Having spent many a day on the road, in rehearsals, and attending concerts, Kei brings a longstanding knowledge and love of culture and music wherever he goes. During the first few days of his trial visit he put his snare drum set together and gave us a resounding performance to everyone's great pleasure. Kei will graduate from a local high school in June and will be ready for his next step.

Architectural renderings of the third house by Jay Caroli of the Cushman Design Group, Stowe, Vermont



Householders for the Third House: Their Path to Heartbeet

The following snapshot of Eric and Seneca’s story reveals the journey of the heart that has led them to our community.

Eric Tidblom, the second of three children, grew up with two siblings with unique needs. His older sister, Ingrid, had spinal meningitis and was deaf by the time Eric was born. He learned and acquired sign language before speech. Kris, his younger brother of two years was diagnosed with narcolepsy at the age of seven. During high school Eric volunteered regularly as an assistant for his mother, who was an elementary special education teacher. Based on these experiences, he developed a natural understanding of people with unique needs. Eric graduated in the top10% of his class at Wayzata High School in 1995. During high school Eric was a member of the Minnesota Olympic Development Soccer Team. In the summer of 1994 he broke his leg, which allowed him to shift his focus on soccer to questions of his future profession. He went on to attend St. John’s University in Minnesota, a place that provided lasting friendships and a solid foundation for his ideals.



During a summer in Alaska Eric met Seneca, his wife and partner of ten years. They moved to Austin, Texas in 1999 to join Eric’s family business, Austin Cottons, specializing in screen-printing and embroidery. As Production Manager/Owner, Eric took a leadership role in the area of human resources, helping to build a successful and sustainable team of employees. Their first son, Wilde-Sage, was born in 2000, followed by their second son, Kai Rivers, in 2003. From an early age, Eric and Seneca were aware that Kai was developing differently, but he was officially diagnosed with autism only at the age of four.

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Seneca grew up in northern California where the beauty of nature inspired an abiding interest in and sense of responsibility towards the earth. She attended college for two years in film and art, and worked in a group home for delinquent teenage boys as the art and garden teacher. She left school in order to pursue her interest in sustainable agriculture, traveling and working up and down the West Coast and in Southeast Asia.

It was really through the birth of their two sons that Eric and Seneca began to take up an active interest in anthroposophy, Waldorf education, and biodynamics. Their son Kai led them to explore the ideals of social therapy as practiced in Camphill communities across the country and around the world, and to pursue innovative options such as curative eurythmy and holistic medicines that have been inspired out of anthroposophy. The more they explored, the more they realized that their destiny was calling them towards community and a life connected to people with special needs. Heartbeet’s mission of renewal for both the earth and social life weaves together two threads that have wound through both their lives from childhood. Now in their thirties, Eric and Seneca are ready to pour their energy and talent into an initiative that they believe in, where they can work towards healing and renewal for their own family, for the earth, and for the many new friends they have met during their visits to Heartbeet over the last two years.

Profiles

Thank You to Sarah Schluep

By Hannah Schwartz

Sarah was Heartbeet’s first two-year Americorp volunteer! It was a mutually beneficial exchange. She brought enthusiasm, fun, interest, friendship and much more. As Sarah wrote in her departing card, “many seeds have been sown and cultured over the last two years. Heartbeet has guided me, trusted me, seen my potential, challenged me and allowed me to challenge. I am blessed to have been led to Heartbeet after college”. We feel blessed that she was led to Heartbeet and chose to stay a second year. Sarah, you will be sorely missed—everyone at Heartbeet looks forward to continued friendship!



Brittany’s Family Finds Heartbeet

By Jeff Predon

My wife Kerryann and I have recently become more serious about finding an alternative living situation for our daughter Brittany now that she has graduated from high school. We have been intrigued over the years by the social integration and community elements of the Camphill model, which we have often heard and read about. Knowing our daughter and her needs, we felt sure that she would thrive in such a setting. We did not think that there was a community model in Vermont, and struggled with the idea of our daughter living in another state at any great distance from us. Through the grace of God, Kerryann happened upon a thread of information that led us to Heartbeet. We were even more amazed to find out that Heartbeet followed the Camphill philosophy and that they were willing and open to meeting Brittany.

When we arrived at Heartbeet we were greeted with warmth and friendly smiles from community members who were involved in various projects around the property and in the houses. It was apparent that everyone had a specific job to do. As we toured the beautiful homes and met the residents and volunteers we began to feel a real sense of love, warmth, and family—everyone had a sense of purpose in their actions. We noticed how the volunteers interacted with each other and the residents, creating an atmosphere of great respect and caring. It was clear to us that this was a community filled with joy and in which definitions and labels could fall away and each individual could shine.

As we spent the day we were also watching how our daughter was reacting to the new surroundings. Brittany was very comfortable and open to seeing everything and meeting everyone. She quickly made many new friends and was very excited about the concept of living independent from us. This was very important for us to witness as we have experienced several respite situations over the years that did not leave us satisfied that her life would be complete and fulfilling. While waiting to eat lunch, Brittany came to me and announced that she wanted to live at Heartbeet. We had never heard such a profound statement by her in the past and we can only imagine that she was feeling the same sense of place and peace that we were.

As we left Heartbeet that day, and I might add that we all wanted to stay longer, we felt that our lives were truly blessed to have met such wonderful people with a beautiful mission. We truly hope that Brittany will find her home at Heartbeet.

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