

Fun Vacation Time at Heartbeet

Summer 2008 was time filled with welcoming back old friends and making new ones.
Thanks to all of you who came and blessed us with your gifts!



Susan Whiteshield:

"I have been waiting a long time to come here to see you (Hannah); you are such a good friend. I love it here, I love everyone! Thank you for having me everyone is so good to me here."

Susan and I have been friends through my early childhood years in Camphill Kimberton Hills. It was an honor and privilege to be able to welcome Sue as a vacationer and friend. We spent happy days exploring the beauty of Vermont, Ben and Jerry's, and Burlington. Sue loved making new friends and we only saw tears on her last day— Sue we hope to see you again next summer!

- Hannah Schwartz

Mission:

Heartbeet Lifesharing is an initiative that recognizes the importance of interweaving the social and agricultural realms for the healing and renewing of our society and the earth. We fully acknowledge and live out of the understanding that every human being is unique and unrepeatable. In light of this insight, our mission is to offer both a vacation and respite program and a permanent residential program for developmentally disabled individuals that focus not on a person's disability but rather on his or her capacities. With a holistic approach, we offer a diversity of fun-filled activities that improve personal and social abilities. It is essential to our program that we are located on a beautiful, organic / biodynamic farm that not only provides us with high quality food but also gives us the opportunity to offer land oriented activities.



As Heartbeet is an unfolding organization, we have added a new commitment to our mission that includes a farm based education program. Children / school groups of all ages are invited to experiences a land oriented program led by individuals with special abilities (with assistance).

Donations

Heartbeet Lifesharing • 218 Town Farm Rd • Hardwick, VT 05843 • E-Mail: Hannah@heartbeet.org
Phone: (802) 472-3285 • 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

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The New House Will Open In December—It is really happening with your help!

I would like to take this moment to express my overwhelming gratitude as I look up the hill and see the third Heartbeet community home being built—the sound of construction underway brings moments of amazement to all of us at Heartbeet who are now in the midst of welcoming nine new community members. A dedicated crew of builders has been hard at work framing and finishing what was left to do after the Huntington building company delivered our second home. With many people's help, it is now standing in full reality on the hill just up from Kaspar House. A new driveway leads you into the upper fields where the house stands, looking down over the farm like a guardian. Thanks to Jonathan's intimate knowledge of our property, this house is beautifully tucked into the landscape in such a way that it feels like it belongs, and the views of the farm

and surrounding hills are breathtaking.

Nature's transition from summer to fall is synchronistic with Heartbeet's strong shift into a new stage of development. This third house is an essential step on our way to becoming a sustainable lifesharing community. We are already experiencing the potential of the new community members (they are living in a rented cottage in Craftsbury until the house is ready).



As many of you know, it was only last January that we confirmed the construction of this third community home. It is truly another Heartbeet miracle that we were able to raise the initial \$100,000 by July (thank you again to all who made that happen!). We have had ongoing successful fundraising but are still in need of an additional \$150,000 to close the campaign successfully. Heartbeet will celebrate your commitment both this December 6th with a ribbon cutting party, and again in mid-summer for those of you from farther away. Please

join us in our effort to complete our third therapeutic, extended family household by making a donation towards our final goal. In these uncertain economic conditions we are so grateful to those who are willing to invest in our effort to make the world a better and safer place.

Heartbeet is growing in members, in depth of program, and in its integration with the local community. Thank you for joining us in community building!

Hannah Schwartz, Executive Director



***For alternative ways of donating
please check our website.
www.heartbeet.org***

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Martin Koch / German Service Volunteer

*a challenging place where you will **find answers**...*

Heartbeet was not what I expected. I was not anticipating the intimacy that comes with sharing daily life—living so closely with others. It was a big change for me, very different from the more ordinary life I led in Germany. I was deeply touched by the beauty of the farm and nature at and around Heartbeet. It was wonderful to plant a garden and see it grow into the food that you eat—truly a natural lifestyle!

I learned the most from my new special friends that accepted me for who I am. I was constantly in self-reflection, where you can see yourself with all your weaknesses and other things that could be improved! During the year I became more and more aware that we all have weaknesses and that we need to be accepted ourselves and others. I have always considered myself patient but Sean taught me that I still have to work hard and that in the end his smile warmed my heart and was worth every moment of frustration. It is not always easy – but I realized how much I have learned already about myself and others at the end of the year. I hope I will think often about the **lessons of life** I have learned and keep them in my heart. For the people in Heartbeet I hope the same and wish them the best on their path of life and growing. For all the other people who are reading this, I hope you also may find the beauty of celebrating differences and learn from them!



Ryan Wood-Beauchamp / Americorps

Spending a year at Heartbeet allowed me to learn that social therapy does not solely consist in taking care of other people. More fundamentally, it was about transforming my approach to relationships in general: not only my relationships to others but also my relationship to my own self. Heartbeet has pushed me to move beyond my instinct to reject, whether it is rejecting the behavior of other people that is challenging to me, or parts of my own self that can be difficult for me to accept. Through working with the emotional needs of the residents and my own emotional needs, I've learned simply that rejection is ineffective. By rejecting, I become locked in conflict, and I'm left powerless to actually help someone who is in need of help. I now aspire to grow beyond my impulse to self-assuredly demand change out of others—no matter how much I believe that they're 'wrong'—but rather to act from a place of acceptance rather than rejection. I've learned that in conflict, my own calling is not to tell others why they're wrong and how they need to change, but rather to love and to accept them and myself in spite of our shortcomings.

To live openly with other people is a beautiful and intense experience, and Heartbeet has given me the incredible opportunity to live with others and to practice loving unconditionally. To accept the difficult parts of myself without resisting them, to work with the difficult parts of others without fighting against them: these were new and powerful experiences that have transformed the way that I approach relationships, and I will always be grateful to Heartbeet for allowing me to grow in this way.



Sean and Garth



Sean knows how to have fun!



Newly Painted



Garth Stillwater

Finding my relationship to community

What an inspiring, enlivening, uplifting experience it has been for me to work at Heartbeet Lifesharing. I am in my third year working here as a full-time, non-residential coworker, one-on-one aid with Sean Barnum and am looking forward to ongoing relationship. In the process, I have been brought to my knees in humility lifted up on heart-wings of song, torn by grief, filled with joy, confronted by extraordinary challenges, bathed in the presence of purity.

My position at Heartbeet, and with Sean in particular, has been blessed with a great measure of freedom. No formula was given to meet Sean's needs or my ability to be part of the Heartbeet community, yet I found a warm crucible of sincere care holding all of us through care group conversations. It has been a process of opening my heart, clarifying my mind, and engaging my will in a living way. The wonder of the non-verbal song-and-feeling-filled Sean, as well as the beauty and diversity of the Heartbeet landscape and community has been an incredible forge for the refining of my being. I have had the honor of watching Sean and this whole community grow and transform.

I have found my work to be delightful as I uncover the depths of being within myself that find and meet on some mysterious and joyful level the depths within Sean—without the common trappings of conversation or explanation. It is also delightful that I have been able to facilitate this process of deep connection with the young co-workers who have worked with and learned to love Sean and I have witnessed them receive the gifts of delight that come through him. For example, a simple act, like brushing Sean's teeth, can be like a sacrament honoring a divine mystery that has been placed so humbly in our midst. The basic elements of life—breathing and feeling—in the depths of the heart become as conscious as the mind and the body (usually so much in control) learn to relax, open and wait on a greater, deeper power that finds a way to communicate, to move, and to understand.....in joy!

The greatest learning for me in my time at Heartbeet has been to take all the challenges as opportunities for myself to grow. I give thanks for all those who love and support Heartbeet, for Hannah, Jonathan, and Rachel, to Sean and his parents, for Eric and Seneca and their children, and for all the residents and coworkers (past and present) and their families for the gifts of love and care they are.

- Garth Stillwater / Sean's friend and community support

Marlene and Johannes...Our Journey through Heartbeet...

After finishing school and internships we decided to take the first step together and go to Heartbeet. As a couple we lived in White Pine House, the smaller household, and built a great team with Rachel, Parker and Ann. We learned what it meant to keep a household; cooking, cleaning, gardening and especially caring for the other members.

Both of us loved to extend our creative skills –whether it was in the felting workshop, knitting dream catchers, or carving wooden bowls, Heartbeet provided time, space and inspiration.

To work and live in this healthy surrounding and beautiful landscape in the middle of nature filled us with joy and thankfulness. Behind the daily work everybody is doing there is so much meaning and sense, it felt so good to be a needed part of the whole.

To meet community life and to live in an alternative lifestyle was so empowering. It gave us strength, hope and trust in the future. Everything that we learned, all the experiences we had and all the skills we gained, gave us a foundation for our dream to build a common home and family together.



Finding Home - Tess Beck (Chris's Mom)

It is a blessing that we found Heartbeet Lifesharing for our son Christopher to join. For several years now it has been clear that he needed to live in a more nurturing and supportive environment than the busy urban scene of New Haven, Connecticut. But finding that place was the tricky part. After a thorough search we were still struggling to find the right place. We had seen many settings none of which said "home" to us, though many were amazing places. The search just needed to go on it seemed, and I was beginning to think that nowhere would be perfect for Christopher.

But when we came up to visit Heartbeet, we all just knew right away, "This is it; it's a perfect match."

Heartbeet is the community within which Christopher can flourish, one in which his gifts can be recognized, encouraged, and where he can live with complete dignity, surrounded by others who are all doing the same. As soon as I knew Heartbeet existed, and that Heartbeet wanted Christopher there, I swung into full "Mom-Battle" mode. I fought for the funding all spring and most of the summer; everyone wrote letters and made phone calls, and pursued every step in the arduous process, and trusted in the rightness of Chris being at Heartbeet.

He had a wonderful trial visit, sandwiched in just before the changing of the volunteers. He clearly decided that this would be his new home, and spoke so confidently about it to all his family of origin and friends. September came and it was time to make the move; on the way up there to drop him off in his new community setting, my partner, Suzanne was playing the Beatles song, "We're on our way home...." And I turned to look at Christopher in the back seat with his belongings surrounding him, and just knew that it was true. He was on his way home, and now he tells me simply "It is good to be here". Good indeed.



Kara Fitzgerald / Americorps

Food can create a Healthy Community

I came to Heartbeet as a devout vegetarian of 12 years, asking my housemates to alert me when cooking with meat broths. I am drawn to farm settings because being aware of my food consumption has long been a priority for me. My time at Heartbeet has been an important year of growth in many ways. One that I value most is a deepening of my sense of necessity for connectedness to my food sources.



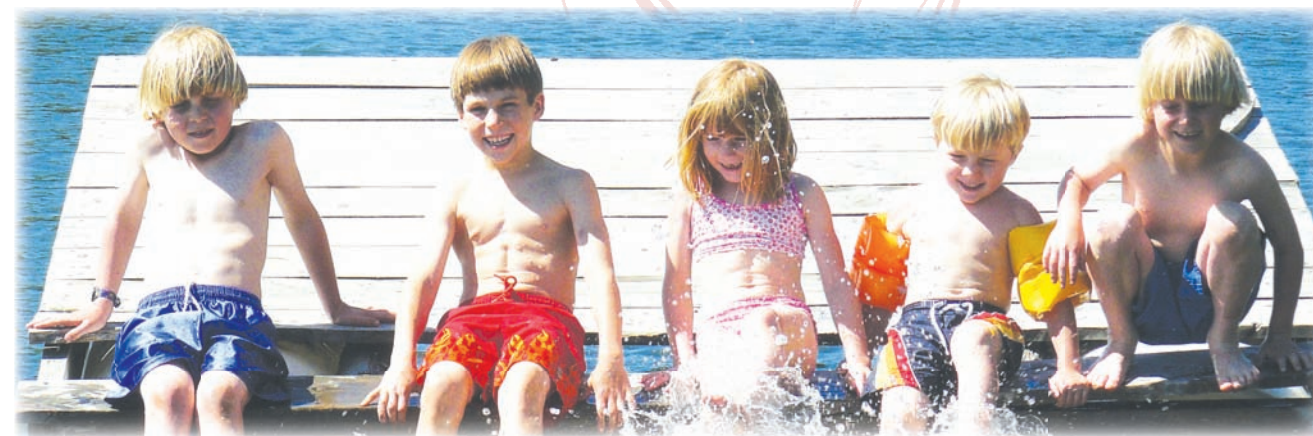
Some of the growth has come from personal education of reading Michael Pollan, Sally Fallon, Wendell Berry, and others, attending local workshops on nutrition, and talking with people about their relationship to food. Heartbeet offered the obvious gifts of fresh farm food, dairy, local meat, and connections to local food sources in the larger community. But I got more than I expected from living at a farm. I developed cravings for eating in season, and mild aversions to eating apples in the winter unless they were frozen as apple sauce from the fall. I also got the privilege of bringing last fall's meat birds to the butcher and watch a reality of our food chain that most meat eaters choose to ignore. That experience opened me up to gradually incorporating our meat products into my diet throughout the year. Mostly, I loved all the fermentation experiments I could run at Heartbeet: fermented veggies, sourdough, flatbreads, kombucha, sodas, fermented dairy products.

Respect and integrity needs to be reintegrated into food production in our society. Food is a powerful medium that can connect individuals in a vibrant, supportive community or alienate us in competitive isolation for unsustainable, non-nutritious food. Thank you to Heartbeet for providing the space, resources, and support to deepen my passion for a meaningful relationship to food!

Ferdinand Fischer

Ferdi was a light in our community throughout his time. His easy going mannerisms and enthusiasm for lifesharing helped us all to see the beauty of our work. He was consistently kind to all and steady in his offerings—He had to leave early from his year, due to illness in his family and was sorely missed but we feel grateful for the time we shared and hope to see more of him in the future.

Thank you Ferdi for being part of this years crew 2007-2008.



2008... A Colorful Year...



Chef Connor



Chris blueberry picking.



Welcome Kei!



Thomas



Tilman apple picking.



Welcome the new crew 2008-2009.

...at Heartbeet Lifesharing!



Welcome Brittany!



Welcoming new nephew.



Connor and Tilman



Thank you to the old crew 2007-2008.