

# Introducing Board member Susan Shaffer....



*Heartbeet's Board of Directors has been growing! There are now 14 members, and in the next few newsletters we look forward to introducing those who have recently joined to support and further Heartbeet's next decade.*

It is said that as parents our job is to provide our children with roots and wings. But as a parent of a disabled child, I've often felt that my child's wings have been slightly clipped. We've tried to prepare him to be as independent as possible, but the truth is that Jared will need assistance throughout his adulthood.

Knowing this has been a great concern. Who will care for him as we age? Who will fight for him? Who will be his advocate when we are gone?

My mission was to find Jared a place as safe and loving as the home in which he was raised. A place where he could establish roots, and continue to grow and thrive.

And so my search began...I googled, I interviewed, I researched and finally I found Heartbeet.

From the moment I saw the beautiful grounds and met all the community members, I knew that this was the right place for my son. Jared knew it was the right place for him, too.

Heartbeet is his home...where cows and other farm animals are waiting to be cared for by him, where he wakes up every morning knowing he's needed, he's wanted and he's important.

A few months ago, I was asked to sit as a Board Member to represent the parents and families of Heartbeet. I was honored to be asked and hope to bring my years of advocating for Jared and years of business experience to continue to make Heartbeet the special and secure place it is for our family, and to make sure it is an option for other families in the future.

### 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.



Wool felting made at Heartbeet

### Donations

Heartbeet Lifesharing • 218 Town Farm Rd • Hardwick, VT 05843 • E-Mail: [Hannah@heartbeet.org](mailto:Hannah@heartbeet.org)  
Phone: (802) 472-3285 • Website: [www.heartbeet.org](http://www.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, Land Design, Equipment Fund, or Workshop and Storage Building.*

# Heartbeet Lifesharing Newsletter

[www.heartbeet.org](http://www.heartbeet.org)

SPRING 2010 • Heartbeet Lifesharing • 218 Town Farm Rd • Hardwick, VT 05843

## Celebrating 10 Years at Heartbeet!

Dear Friends of Heartbeet,

Wow! Ten years at Heartbeet. It is hard to believe that this year's spring brings with it not only the beauty of new life (almost four weeks earlier than usual) but also the celebration of Heartbeet's tenth anniversary. They say that time flies when you are having fun; well, in the case of Heartbeet this has certainly been true, along with a lot of hard work. I can still remember standing ankle deep in snow with Jonathan ten winters ago, peering through the windows of the old farm house with longing to build community. As the snow melted and we continued to visit the farm for hopeful negotiations with the owner, we felt ever more certain that this was the right location for our dreams of a therapeutic farm.



What has been accomplished these last ten years? The short answer is: the imagination of a community in Hardwick, Vermont was articulated, the money was generously given or lent to purchase the land, two more children were born in the farm house, special friends joined the community, the house was renovated, the garden was established, two new beautiful extended family houses were built to welcome many new friends, the old barn was taken down, and a new post and beam barn was built out of wood that had been logged on our land. Heartbeet went from a family of four to a community of three fully established homes with thirty amazing community members.

When we arrived at 218 Town Farm Road in 2000 the farm had not been used for 30 years. The first year was spent clearing pastures, plowing for a garden, cleaning out and repairing the barn so it could welcome our first cow, goats and pig, buying farm equipment for clearing and caring for the fields, putting in the first permanent fencing, and renovating the farm house so that we could welcome our first friends with special needs. Not a restful year, but one we look back on fondly as it was filled with the miracles of creating an organization out of nothing but sheer perseverance and a lot of support. From the beginning we recognized the link between health and diet; it inspired us to see the importance of the rhythm that farm life brings with it, and the benefit of eating vegetables from our own garden and meat and dairy provided by our own animals. Food processing and storage continue to be a source of learning and enthusiasm.



I recently experienced a confirmation of just how far we have come over the last ten years when the warmth of the day drew me out onto the porch of Kaspar House after a long afternoon in the office. What surrounded me left me deeply touched by just how strong our community has become. The daffodils blooming on the hillside with their heads tilted to the sun confirmed the warmth of the day almost gone by. Children were playing soccer in the





newly greened field. Voices drifted down from König House, the new house just up the hill. People were conversing on the road on the way home at the end of a workday, and Kei was out jogging for his first run of the season. In the distance, chores were ending and the call of letting the cows out was carried on the breeze. This bustle of activity was an indication of meaningful community life for thirty people.

With a strong foundation established, we are taking on the process of looking ahead and creating ways of working appropriate to an organization of our age and size. We have added a full time administrator, grown our board of directors (look for



introductions over the next three newsletters) and are internally working on strategic planning with a view to the next ten years.

Heartbeet has ahead of it the struggle to discern its optimal size: too many lifesharing households might lead to an institution or overly bureaucratic culture, yet too few could make the entire community vulnerable to the loss of even one key co-worker. This question will be addressed by the board of directors' retreat in October, as we build a full picture of the next decade. What we already know is that we will be building a fourth house, to be ready in 2012. For us to be able to build this home responsibly we have to answer bigger questions. We can no longer choose our house site without a full land design. This includes considering where the fifth house will go, as well as an eventual community center, learning what the septic possibilities are, knowing where roads belong, and where workshop and storage sheds can be built if needed. We will be creating a land design and working with local zoning regulations to create an overall picture of the possibilities within the scope of our 150 acres.

These first steps in preparing for the fourth house will require a minimum of \$60,000. I invite you all to support Heartbeet as it continues its journey of growth, expanding to meet its mission and vision. As we take these steps, many new families are hopeful that their child or sibling will be able to join Heartbeet.

We look forward to bringing you the footprint for the next ten years as we step forward with confidence. Thank you so much for giving us the courage to continue the unfolding of this community - and for all the unfailing support in reaching this first ten year milestone!!

Many, many thanks!!!

*Hannah Schwartz*

Hannah Schwartz  
Executive Director

For alternative ways of donating please check our website:  
[www.heartbeet.org](http://www.heartbeet.org)



## Annie's New Job

Interview with Annie Jackson by Rachel Schwartz



When Annie Jackson moved into White Pine House at Heartbeet Lifesharing on March 5, 2009, she told us about some dreams and goals she had for herself. Annie's self-esteem and health were significantly compromised by severe obesity and she wanted help getting healthy. She wanted to find meaningful work and to learn new skills. She wanted to write lots of poetry. She wanted to rekindle her romance with Chris Stuhlmann, who was an old beau from Connecticut. And finally, Annie dreamed of having a job in the local community.

Over the last year Annie has blown us all away by the enthusiasm, hard work and discipline with which she has pursued her goals, and her accomplishments far exceed even her own expectations. In one year Annie has lost almost 100 lbs. and currently looks and feels gorgeous. She is a whiz at house cleaning, gets up at 5:30 AM two mornings a

week to milk the cows, has learned to love getting her hands dirty in the garden and makes her housemates breakfast on Saturdays – yum. Annie learned to knit over the winter and each scarf she makes just gets prettier (thanks for all your support Marci!). Annie has been able to spend lots of time with her boyfriend Chris, watching movies, going out to dinner, watching sunsets and just hanging out writing poetry or chatting. Their giggles and fun are contagious. Finally, Annie is now working for the Cellars at Jasper Hill, wrapping cheese each Friday morning for a couple of hours. When asked what she is looking for in a job Annie said, "I want to have



fun and reach the adult in me. I want to connect with the community and represent Heartbeet." The work requires attention to detail from the moment she dons the white cheese coat and hairnet and scrubs her hands. "The smell is strong but I like it. I love the cheese snacks we get and I like how I work for it." At this point Annie needs support with some of the folding but does a fantastic job with her part in wrapping the cheeses and said, "Having a friend to support me is inspiring." Everyone at the Cellars is kind and friendly and Emily, who trained Annie, has been awesome. Annie isn't

doing this for the money but because she feels "good about doing stuff for other people." However, the paycheck she'll be getting is already earmarked for taking Chris out to dinner. Annie's mom (recently relocated to the area with her husband Peter Limon), all of us at Heartbeet, and Annie herself could not wish for a better partnership – thanks Jasper Hill!

Annie is currently in the process of dreaming up her goals for next year. None of us has any doubt that she will continue to develop her talents and gifts and inspire all of us with the knowledge that we can accomplish more than we think if we put our head, heart and hands to it!



## Maple Sugaring with Aunt Jane

from a day when Chris and I helped

by Anne Jackson

When you think about maple sugaring you start to think about the bright silver machines that make this sweet clear maple syrup that you clear off of the foam off of the sap that makes the syrup look more like maple syrup. It's like drinking this thick maple syrup to make your mouth so sweet you are so eager to have more. One machine holds this sap. You want to see a bright silver machine holding this sap that travels to this other big silver machine. When you make maple syrup you need to stack plenty of wood to make this maple syrup to be plenty hot when you make maple syrup that everybody loves so much!



## Seneca Gonzalez Introduces Papermaking



It can be a challenging process to come up with an idea for a program and then carry this idea into practical work. There is so much to consider: first, to receive the inspiration and articulate it to others, and then to imagine all that will be needed, including the space and how the actual tasks will be divided up. Each category brings so much more to consider. I had been thinking and day-dreaming for months on how to incorporate my own creative talents in a new program at Heartbeet. It soon became clear that art was to be the focus of the activity, and I started to attend GRACE Arts, a studio in Hardwick that offers space and supplies for free artistic expression; Heartbeet community members had been regulars at their Tuesday sessions for years.



Little did I realize then that the destiny for my new Papermaking Program was already being set in motion. I attended GRACE for around six months and was truly inspired by the work there. I also realized that in order for me to teach I needed an activity that could be both free and structured. Then Rachel asked one day in passing, "How about papermaking? I saw some beautiful hand-made paper the other day." I knew that was it, the freedom and structure that I needed, and I was instantly inspired!

I started perusing art magazines and looking online to see how others were going about it. I became familiar with words like 'Mold' and 'Deckle', 'Slurry' and 'Pulp'. I would need to build the Molds and Deckles, which are the screen and frames that are used to catch the paper pulp. This was going to be a lot of work, and I was excited about the challenge. The following Tuesday, Carol, one of the employees at GRACE, overheard me talking about the process and mentioned, "You know I used to be a papermaker in my previous life, before I became a painter." During our five minute conversation Carol generously decided she wanted to donate all her equipment to Heartbeet. I was shocked by her goodness and felt that it seemed too easy! That was a destiny moment for me and at the same time a confirmation of rightness for Heartbeet. I knew I was headed in the right direction.



Now, four months later, we're having so much fun. We are still in the experimental phase, figuring out what works, what looks beautiful, and the best way to do some things, trying only to use materials from Heartbeet and using little if any non-organic matter. Discovering each others' talents and matching them to tasks that can be developed over time is one of the most gratifying parts of the process. Look for a follow-up in the next issue featuring our budding papermaking experts.

Bringing together human, water, plant and mineral elements and ending up with a beautifully structured piece of paper is my idea of the perfect activity for each individual to express themselves!

Blessing to you during this springtime,  
Seneca



## An Office Manager Comes to Heartbeet



Greetings from greening northern Vermont! As the newest face on the farm, and for many the voice you'll hear when you call Heartbeet, I am happy to introduce myself to you. My name is Ingrid Nuse, and I have come on board as Heartbeet's office manager as of March 1. As I mapped out how I've come to Heartbeet, the thought that arose from that picture was, "How could I have ended up anywhere else right now?" Herewith a brief synopsis of some of the stepping stones en route to this place.

Languages and cultures, farming and baking, education and the outdoors are abiding passions for me, and I've had the good fortune to pursue them in many ways. From milking goats in northern Norway; emerging as the lone survivor on an Alpine mountaineering expedition; teaching English as a second language in Switzerland; to a year in Austria as a Camphill volunteer while living and baking on a biodynamic farm, travel and experiencing other cultures have opened inner and outer vistas for me.

My formal education includes a B.A. in German from McGill University, an M.A. in Teaching English as a Second Language from the School for International Training (Brattleboro, VT) and a certificate in Administration and Community Development from Sunbridge College. For twelve years I was a technology and enrichment teacher in Morrisville and Stowe, VT public schools; later tutor and admissions director at the former Green Mountain Waldorf School. More recently I owned and ran small baking and cleaning businesses, and prior to my hiring at Heartbeet I was the customer service manager for a Vermont natural toy company.

Closer to my Vermont home in Lamoille County, where I did most of my growing up, the former Green Mountain Waldorf School was our family's introduction to anthroposophy when my daughter Liana joined Morning Garden in 1995. From the compelling desire to explore what undergirded my observations and experiences there, Foundation Studies in anthroposophy and the Sunbridge College Administration and Community Development program followed. As admissions director at GMWS, I met Hannah with young Renna in tow, and Jonathan made a strong impression on me in bringing the voice of experience to our local biodynamic study group.

My husband Eric and I live half an hour down the road from Heartbeet in Johnson with my mother and our 17 year old daughter Liana, who is a junior at the Lake Champlain Waldorf School. My four adult stepchildren and two grandchildren live in NYC and Vermont.

A decade ago Heartbeet opened its doors. My family and I were invited with our cider press to Heartbeet's first Michaelmas festival and -- albeit sporadically -- we have continued to be drawn to its seasonal festivals, conferences, and Christmas Eve singing to the animals. Each time upon leaving I have wondered ... "how can I become more involved here... what could I bring to Heartbeet?" As I was looking for my next step, Heartbeet was developing a job description for an administrative support position. Upon reviewing it and meeting with Hannah and Jonathan, it appeared to be a great fit, and it is with much delight that I have joined the Heartbeet community.

These first months have brought a re-shaping of office space in Kaspar House, with Hannah, Rachel and me sharing the main office, and Jonathan's office now moved to the other side of the weavery. I have spent my time thus far becoming acquainted with processes and people, through phone calls, emails, meetings, meals, workshop visits, study evenings and the wonderful fun of uploading photos of our activities to Heartbeet's Facebook page. Over time I look forward to meeting face-to-face with the many families and friends who form the web of Heartbeet's extended community!

Open House & Family Day at Heartbeet  
~ Saturday, June 26, 2010 from 3-8 p.m. All invited! ~  
Go to [www.heartbeet.org](http://www.heartbeet.org) for more information



# The New Barn Nears Completion!



Our friends at White Pine House used to wake up to the farm crew tromping into their basement with clanging buckets, as they transferred the morning milk to the fridge and washed and set containers on racks to dry. Not only that, but the less alert household members coming downstairs in their socks on their way out would run the risk of stepping on remnants of manure!



Thank you, Copake Glass Workshop and Karl & Helen Wolf for our beautiful window!

These days as the final battens are going up on the new barn, and the last of the beautifying touches are taking place, including installation of the stained glass window and final outside painting, the wake-up call has become the gentle lowing of contented cows being ushered out to pasture. Now all the milk processing has moved out of the old farmhouse and into the barn's heated milk house. Augustina had the honor of delivering the first calf to be born in the new barn in mid-April.

An eventful journey has accompanied this achievement. There was the time the farm truck was pulling a trailer full of Heartbeet's timber to Huntington to be custom cut for the barn, when suddenly - pop! bang! and the smell of smoke and burning rubber filled the air. Pulling over into the nearest farmyard, the crew discovered that the trailer shaft had bent and the tire was rubbing on the fender, with the aforementioned results. As good fortune would have it, the farmer offered to drive the timber plus all six people over, and after moving all the logs to his dump truck, the mission was successfully accomplished -- with huge thanks to this kind hearted farmer! Otherwise, the hurdles were mostly more minor ones, such as the repeated drip, drip down Ann's neck when milking the cow under the tarped-over, but somewhat leaky, red barn.



First calf born in the new barn.

Especially memorable was the workday when about 30 parents, Hardwick community members and neighbors showed up with their tools. In the space of just one day these wonderful volunteers sided the entire barn and laid down three quarters of the second story floor!

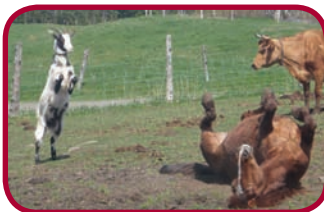
In the end, the barn's increased space and light, the well-designed layout, and the structural integrity have all contributed to a wonderful sense of well-being for animals and caregivers alike. Reaching this point has only been achieved through the abundant generosity of many. Heartbeet's gratitude goes out to all the donors who gave financially, to the carpenters, to the electrician who donated his labor, to the workday participants who contributed their sweat equity, and for the enthusiasm of so many for this beautiful structure which now blesses our farm.



Annie in our spiffy milk room.

With the demolition of the old barn, our machinery and tools have been temporarily housed in the new barn. Sights are now set on construction this summer of a farm workshop and storage building. This 36'x 90' structure will be tucked into the barnyard hillside and will contain a heated workshop for woodworking, mechanical work, and maintenance needs. The remaining building space will protect tools and farm equipment from the elements. Once the machinery finds its permanent home in the new storage building, the last of the barn's finish work can be completed.

Together, the barn, workshop and storage facility should meet the building needs of Heartbeet's farm organism well into the future. With their successful completion, they support the core of Heartbeet's land stewardship efforts, and our thanks extend to one and all who have been part of bringing this (ad)venture to fruition!



# What is a Planned Residential Development (PRD)? by Nancy Kish

A Planned Residential Development (PRD) is created to "allow for innovative and flexible design and development that will promote the most appropriate use of land." (Hardwick Unified Development Bylaws, Article 5, Section 5.4 (A). Specifically, the purpose of such a plan is to provide cost-effective housing, cluster residences to preserve and maintain open space, protect natural features and allow for the efficient use of land. Town zoning laws require a certain number of acres for every residential dwelling. This number varies according to the district in which a property is set. In the case of Heartbeet Lifesharing, the property is located in what is called the Forest Reserve (FR) district. As its name implies, properties in the FR district are largely wooded areas and as such this district has the highest requirement for acreage per dwelling unit at 25 acres. What this means is that for every house built, there must be 25 acres of land. In addition, buildings must meet a setback requirement of 50 feet from each property line.

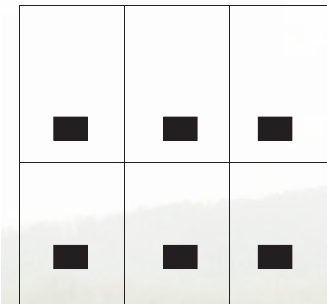


Image 1

Therefore, if a property owner such as Heartbeet Lifesharing has 150 acres, they may construct up to 6 houses. Without a PRD, the development could look something like Image 1. Each residence is constructed on its own 25 acre lot. Open land for agricultural use or recreation is greatly compromised.

With a PRD in place, the land owner could cluster the houses on smaller lots accompanied by an agreement to keep the remaining land open and undeveloped. In that case, the development would look more like Image 2. This allows the houses to share common road access and maximizes the preservation of open land. Of course this drawing (not to scale) only illustrates one of many possibilities.



Image 2

In order to obtain a PRD, a property owner must apply to the Hardwick Development Review Board. An application is filed showing the requested modifications and is reviewed by the Board in a public hearing. In order to be approved, the PRD application must be consistent with the Hardwick Town Plan and other municipal regulations, represent an effective development, and meet all other criteria outlined in the Bylaws. The Board has a good deal of flexibility in granting PRDs, but there are minimum standards outlined. The overall intent is the preservation of open space while maintaining the integrity of the Development Bylaws.

Nancy Kish served as the Hardwick Town Zoning Administrator for eight years and provided administrative support to Heartbeet before Ingrid was hired. She now owns and operates Agape Hill Farm, an interactive llama farm in Hardwick.