

# Heartbeat Lifesharing Newsletter

www.heartbeat.org

FALL 2012 • Heartbeat Lifesharing • 218 Town Farm Rd • Hardwick, VT 05843

## Summer Patience

Dear Friends of Heartbeat,

What a summer! It has not all been easy, and the new house is only starting as I write this letter. Weather came in perfect waves of warmth and water, supporting a bumper crop of hay—the earliest we ever finished our first cut and the first second cut of hay ever in the history of Heartbeat. The hayloft smells of summer promises that will feed our farm animals all winter and we are infinitely grateful as we start an extraordinarily generous harvest season; the beets are huge! This summer we also welcomed our first bees onto the farm, and with attentive care from Tony they are thriving.



Laying the septic for all future HB buildings!

Along with all these gifts and summer fun, however, came struggles with the final permits connected to our fourth house construction. Our attention could not fully turn to the Community Hall because we needed to focus all our energy on ensuring the reality of our new house. We learned a lot and taught a lot, and with a mid-September construction start, our newest home will be ready for move-in sometime in March. Just a few weeks ago our faithful excavators Gary and Tim Bellavance were back with their big machines preparing the septic (which will also serve the new Hall and future homes) with the hope that we would be ready for



Annie J & Chris with a monster beet!

them to move up the hill to the new house site for the foundation, and sure enough the timing is just right!

Despite the challenges of the summer we had amazing highlights and moments of pure joy—one of

our board members, Katy, and her husband Ibrahim welcomed a beautiful baby boy, Adam. Renna's graduation from high school came with a bash and was celebrated with joy by the whole community. We all traveled to Sarah Mahan's new home down the road in Calais to enjoy a beautiful wedding with her, Nick, and beautiful little Willa—good food, deep friendship, and amazing cake!

We have had to stall the Hall to pull in and focus our energies on the farm and fourth house, but this pulling together has brought our community closer in creative solutions. Sequoya will stay down the road with family, coming to Heartbeat as a day participant; Sam will join König House; Max is patiently waiting, and all are ready to move into their new home (along with two storage units full of donated furniture) as soon as it is ready. We are deeply grateful to all of you who have contributed to bringing the new house to fruition and for your encouragement over the summer during moments of uncertainty.

This winter we will shift to planning the Hall so that its reality can burst forth with spring enthusiasm. Now more than ever we need to create a center in which our community can come together both for cultural events and practical gatherings like our Monday morning community meetings. And so with the first matching gift of \$50,000 we are excited and ready to launch the campaign for our \$500,000 Community Hall. I invite you to join Heartbeat in this momentous next step of our growth—when your donation dollars will be matched one for one by this leadership gift!

With grateful thanks,

Hannah Schwartz,  
Executive Director



Josiah welcomes Adam to Heartbeat.



Fourth house foundation pouring has begun!



Sarah & Nick wed, joined by Nick's daughter Willa.

# Heartbeat Hosts Spring CANA Meeting

by Shelley Burt

What a celebration when Heartbeat Lifesharing, the newest "official" member of the Camphill Association of North America (CANA), hosted its first Camphill Association meeting this past May! Camphill friends and coworkers from across North America began converging on the little town of Hardwick, Vermont and



Seneca & Eric.

Heartbeat's 150-acre home on Wednesday night. The day before an Association meeting is always reserved for those who are committed to living the ideals of the Camphill Community to come together in a spirit of reflection and renewal, especially meaningful this year as Thursday was Ascension Day, and Heartbeat's own Seneca was formally welcomed into the Camphill Community. To celebrate the festival, Heartbeat offered a memorable reading of a play by Karl König.

The Association meeting officially convened with a joyful gathering in the loft of the big barn – a chance for Heartbeat to introduce Vermont's only Camphill village to fellow Camphill members, many of whom were visiting this community for the first time. The entire Heartbeat community welcomed CANA participants with the Heartbeat song and a poem performed in American Sign Language. Hannah then introduced Annie Jackson and Ann Blanchard, who spoke with intensity and humor about their experience at Heartbeat and the meaning that "community" holds for them, while Chris Stuhlmann followed with one of his poems. Jonathan concluded the morning meeting with his warm account of the search for land in Vermont, his

and Hannah's encounter with the couple who ultimately deeded the land to them, and moving tales of the commitment it took in the early days to create the reality of Heartbeat from an initial dream - a wonderful founding story.

The community tour highlighted the future sites of the fourth home, now under construction, and the Community Hall, envisioned as a welcoming building that will be visitors' first view of Heartbeat. Friday evening was a highlight of the weekend's program – a well organized World Café which took up the Association theme of the year: "New Ways of Keeping & Maintaining Camphill's Principles and Ideals." Four thematic "stations" were organized in Kaspar House, and participants rotated between them every 20 minutes, gathering with new colleagues at each station to ponder (quickly!) the challenging questions the CANA Executive Committee had prepared.

The final meeting of the weekend, on Saturday morning, was a reminder of just how much Heartbeat's much-anticipated and desired Community Hall will be welcome. In a room filled to capacity with Camphill coworkers and board members who travelled from Vancouver, California, Minnesota, Ontario, Pennsylvania, New York and even Hawaii to attend, the 2012 Annual Meeting of the Camphill Association elected its new trustees and officers and announced the yearly theme for 2013: "Understanding and Strengthening Associative Working in the Region."



Kerryann Hunt of the Hudson initiative, Ann B & Hannah.

## A Few Heartbeat Highlights . . .



Left: Farm crew pals, Jared & Thomas.



Right: Connor on his new bike!  
Below: snack time for Max & Tony.



# Heartbeat Conference Shift by Rachel Schwartz



Connor anticipates Rachel's baby.

As many of you know, my husband Raphael and I are expecting our first child in November of this year. With a baby on the way and Raphael in a demanding medical residency, I realized that I would not be able to carry the responsibilities for this coming conference as I have been doing since the beginning (10 years/20 conferences ago!). The conferences will also need to evolve to meet the needs of youth into the future. I am officially handing over all responsibilities to a group of people at Heartbeat who feel inspired to help carry these gatherings into the future. This group consists of Jonathan, Hannah, Seneca, Eric, and Annie Volmer. Jonathan and Eric will focus on finances, the whole group will help form content and the agenda and will work with presenters, and Annie will cover much of the practical administration part. All the wonderful people who have carried these conferences so faithfully will continue to support the group at Heartbeat as they take on these new elements of the work. I will of course remain in a supportive/mentor role! Though different, this last May conference was as magical and powerful as the first small gathering in October 2002. It seems such events are needed and relevant more than ever, and I look forward to taking part as they evolve.

## A Shared Adventure by Julie Henderson

When Jonathan offered me a ride to Spring Valley, NY to see the recent performance of "The Guardian of the Threshold," Rudolf Steiner's third Mystery Drama, I gratefully accepted. Little did I know what was in store for us en route! I climbed into the Heartbeat camper van Friday mid-afternoon, joining Jonathan, Andy, Eric, Ann B and Jared, for what promised to be an entertaining ride.



Eric & Julie in a calmer travel moment.

The trip went along well for the first few hours. It was just outside Hartford, CT that we got the first clue – two dashboard warning lights – that our plans to arrive in Spring Valley for dinner might go awry.

Andy diagnosed alternator trouble while Eric made dinner. We returned to the road, Andy cheerfully nervous at the prospect of losing battery power. Our own "Drama" then began to unfold – erroneous directions from the police, a detour that turned into a shortcut, dimming headlights, the miracle of smartphone technology, a few u-turns, a closing auto



Mystery Drama squared!

parts store, and, ultimately, failing headlights just as we reached Auto Zone. Not just any Auto Zone, but a hub store large enough to have the right alternator, a Toyota repair book that included 1974 model camper vans, a complete tool kit, and everything else Andy needed to replace an alternator under the parking lot lights. The young assistant manager even offered his own tools and stayed to help long after the store had closed.

Two hours later, close to midnight, the job was done. Weary but grateful, we headed down the road. When a police car pulled us over after crossing the Tappan Zee Bridge, five minutes from our destination, all we could do was laugh. I guess our bouncing camper van with VT plates looked out of place at that time of night, but we were soon on our way again. Tired and extremely thankful, we finally reached the Threefold Educational Center almost 12 hours after the van had departed Hardwick.

What would have been an ordeal for most people was taken in stride by the Heartbeat crew. I am grateful to have been in such company, where humor and flexibility predominated; each new twist and turn was viewed with interest and amusement, and each new challenge met with calm and competence. Along with Ann and Jared, I never worried, knowing we were in good hands.

The Saturday performance of the Mystery Drama was amazing. Next year they will perform the fourth drama, "The Souls' Awakening," and I've already got the date on my calendar. Maybe I'll even be lucky enough to travel with Heartbeat!

## More Heartbeat Highlights . . .

White Pine Women! Jess, Sara, Annie J, Marika.



Eric & Thomas working on a farm project.



# Volunteer Welcom



Our 2012-13 volunteers & coworkers are all here!  
Clare, Marika, Dominik, Steven, Samuel & Jess behind;  
Ashley, Tony, & Marci in front.

## Loved, Cared For, Held

by Daichi Hirata

How do I really describe my life and work at Heartbeat? This is a question no doubt many of us volunteers struggle with when we meet others not familiar with Heartbeat or Camphill. What do we really do? What do we actually experience?

One may say we are entrusted to help support Friends with special needs, yet if the description of our task and experience ends there I think we are guilty of great dishonesty. The most significant aspects of my experience at Heartbeat have less to do with what I did but what I ended up receiving... in far greater abundance, I was loved, cared for, held. What is incredible is that the catalysts for this wonderful work are our Friends.

Rarely have I come across what I experienced at Heartbeat. Almost every day, often multiple times a day, I was re-

mindful that I am loved so much. This always had such a profound impact on my day and I often thought what if I could do the same for others. To love without condition, to say to another how much they are loved, takes so much courage. Yet, if such words and gestures are so essential to us, why doesn't courage come more naturally and easily to me? I didn't really figure out that answer during the time I was at Heartbeat, but I was shown by my house brothers Max, Parker, and Kei, and house sister Annie, HOW I SHOULD BE MORE COURAGEOUS, and the kind of person I should strive to be.

As I depart from Heartbeat, I leave with a heavy heart and awe for what I experienced the past eight months. I was supported and the community served me. How lucky I am to have been able to call such a warm, thriving, and inspiring place my home! To all you—and I mean every one of you—loyal lovers, passionate carers, dedicated holders of Heartbeat, thank you, thank you from the bottom of my heart. I will carry you in my heart as I continue my journey, and I feel the utmost responsibility to uphold and share with others the incredible lessons you have shared with me.



Daichi (r) and sister Lisa.

*The next step in Daichi's journey upon leaving Heartbeat was a 4-1/2 month kayaking adventure from Seattle north along the Inside Passage with his younger sister! They successfully navigated their way and completed their expedition in early August.*

## A Paradigm Shift

by Marcianna Beyer

This year has been a journey that has inspired me to grow in significant ways. Practicing non-violent communication with myself and the people around me has played a huge part in opening many of the doors I have kept tightly shut throughout my life. Sean has inspired me take initiative with my joy in singing and to sing more often! And I have started taking the time to fulfill my desire to learn how to play the guitar. This has been a big part of forming a new paradigm through which I relate to myself and the world around me in a more compassionate and appreciative manner. This is allowing me to be increasingly in touch with the beauty in the world and those around me that I have often felt so separate from because of my tendency to be critical of myself. I find a profound joy in music that enables me to feel more connected to myself, more confident in my relationships, and have more clarity about my purpose and how to achieve it.

I have found deep inspiration in the friendships and work I have continued here, and those new ones I have started. They have each offered me so many opportunities to meet each other, learn, grow, reflect, and connect. Upon my return as a second year volunteer I have stepped into working on the farm as an apprentice and I have taken on greater responsibilities in the house. I am very excited to be building my knowledge and skills within my roles in the community! I am incredibly grateful for the immense amount I am learning. This year's journey has held many challenges that have borne many incredible fruits that will keep on giving.



Seneca, Julianna, Connor & Marci blessing the new house site.

# Names and Farewells

## Holy Culture Shock

by Kaylin Wilson

It is raining and I'm wet. And yet it's warm enough to be wearing shorts under my golden yellow rain coat. How glorious it is to be walking up a hill in a summer downpour. I have truly been afforded the luxury of experiencing the seasons. And I know that I am not alone in these thoughts. Sean clearly feels the same way. He may not be able to look at me and converse on the beauty around him but he makes his thoughts known. It's in the look in his eyes, the smile on his face, the way he flaps his arms, the sounds of unadulterated joy that spring from his lips.

So how do I reflect on this year at Heartbeet, all of these lovely moments that pass that we are given the time and space to appreciate? It's a blue jay feather and a note on your dresser at the end of the day, it's hand-me-down clothes, a kiss on the forehead, or a good meal in the company of 15 others, it's living and loving life every day.

(I look up and my companion has stopped walking 20 feet back. He is looking at me and clearly requesting something. I look at him and smile, he smiles back, and I say one of our catch phrases, "I'm waiting for you" in a singsong voice and he barrels up the hill after me.)

It seems almost impossible to put this into words because it is about the mood, the feelings, the food. But here are some words...

I found out about Heartbeet on the AmeriCorps website and two days later I came for a visit and loved it. Great things were happening on that farm in Vermont and I wanted to be a part of it. And as it turns out I came

here to learn but found out I already knew everything I needed to know to live this life. It was a process of unearthing those qualities and having the support needed to become vulnerable and change the whole way I viewed the world. A year of sober spirituality is quite a juxtaposition to a lifetime of self-indulgent tendencies.

So there I was in my "Heartbeet is heaven on earth" mindset... and then I moved here. Holy culture shock, paired with a general naiveté about my violent language and a

lack of tofu, those first few months were tuff. But I had come knowing it would be the hardest thing I had ever done, so I had prepped myself for the struggle and I never lost faith. There was an endless wealth of support and knowledge at my disposal. This made even the struggles beautiful.

However, the best part is knowing that I gave as much as I received. Because that is how community works; you can only get what you give. So if this has been the best experience of my life, then it is only because I opened myself, and engaged it, and learned from it, and made it that much better for everyone else around me.

(And now we sit in a meadow on the top of the hill sharing our snack and watching the clouds pull out of the mountains. How easily they seem to move through life and how easily we seem to go with them.)

So now it comes to a close and what is left? I have found a calling, something to believe in, a home, myself. Now that I have my foundation at Heartbeet, it is time to work on the foundation I have started to lay with my fiancé. We are moving down the road and we will trailblaze a new relationship with our community. We often ask ourselves how long before we come back knocking on Heartbeet's door. Whatever we do from here on out will be infused with Heartbeet. We are lucky enough to have started our relationship in the support of community and to have that as a resource in the years to come.

Thank you Sean for teaching me how to play music. Thank you Connor for holding my hand and making me laugh. Thank you Lindsey for teaching me patience. Thank you Thomas for all the kisses. Thank you Heartbeet. See you soon!



Sean & Kaylin.



Marci & Clare.



Ashley & Marika at Community Lunch.



Parker preps for Community Lunch.



Chris presenting at Family Day.



Britt trains Steven in the housecleaning routine.

## Introducing Sam by Barry & Nancy Lefkowitz



Sam flies at Family Day!

When our son, Sam, was in the eleventh grade, we felt that the school he was in at the time was just not meeting his needs. We had heard so many great things about the various Camphill programs that we took a look, liked what we saw, and enrolled Sam at Beaver Run. From the start, it was a natural fit. Sam loved being given jobs to do and being a part of the active community that is Beaver Run. To a person, the staff was warm, caring and engaged, and Sam blossomed in ways he never had before. As Sam was about to start twelfth grade and his last year at Beaver Run, we knew that he would soon need a similar community where he could be fulfilled for the rest of his life. We spoke with many of the people who know Sam at Beaver Run, and they recommended Heartbeet.

In June of 2011, we attended a Heartbeet open house with Sam. He immediately fell in love, and we did too! Everyone was so kind and welcoming. Sam thrilled in being able to get his hands dirty. He thrives on working with animals, mucking out stalls, and all the other work involved with living on a farm. The sense of family and community at Heartbeet was so strong, we felt as if Sam and the rest of our family belonged instantly, and we knew Sam had found his home. It means the world to us that Sam has found a loving, nurturing environment where he can continue to grow and be fulfilled as an active member of the community. We can't wait until this fall when Sam will move to Heartbeet and we start a new and exciting chapter in our lives!

## Update on Sequoya by Sue Cheyenne

Sequoya graduated in June from Triform/Camphill in Hudson, NY. A great celebration it was to see my handsome son supported by his family, aunts, uncles, and cousins, being honored for all his hard work and growth at Triform. This marked the completion of his time in the apprenticeship program. Sequoya had a long list of thank yous to all who have helped him along the way at Triform.

His love of painting was acknowledged by his art teacher, Laura Summer, who is a gifted painter in her own right. He constructed many birdhouses for his final project which will be put up at Triform.

Sequoya is eager to join the Heartbeet community this fall and to be of assistance in the construction of the fourth house – his new home.



Sequoya's Triform graduation.

## Max – One Year Later by Amy Gleicher



Mutual adoration between Mom & Max.

It is one year since Max became a member of the Heartbeet family. He was welcomed with tremendous love and immediately folded into the rhythms of Heartbeet. Max wakes up each day eager to work with the animals in the barn. He helps prepare family meals, participates in sports, goes to music concerts and hangs out with his friends. Max has a full life and we -- his parents, brothers and sister -- are blessed to be included in this life. We are strengthened by the merging of our lives with Max's. This year we celebrated Passover with the entire Heartbeet community, an example of their inclusiveness with us and with the larger world.

Max arrived at Heartbeet a teenager of 19. He is now a young man of 20, physically and emotionally stronger, more independent and more confident. It is a delight to see him thriving so joyously and purposefully.

# A Warm Welcome to Heartbeet's Two New Board Members . . .

## Kristina Michelsen

I am thrilled to have been invited to join the board of Heartbeet Lifesharing. Hannah and Jonathan bought the farm here in Hardwick about the same time I bought my house. Over the years I have come in contact with both Hannah and Jonathan and with other members of the Heartbeet community engaging in various activities here in town.



I have enjoyed conversations with Ann B at the co-op on a regular basis, Parker at GRACE, and various volunteers and Friends dining at Claire's. Everything about these interactions drew me further into the magic that is cultivated at Heartbeet. Most recently I

helped finalize the Northern Rivers Land Trust's acquisition of a conservation easement on a large portion of the Heartbeet property, forever conserving their beautiful piece of the planet.

I look forward to spending more time at Heartbeet and helping any way I can during this exciting period of growth. Heartbeet provides a shining example of intentional community living nestled in the hills of a larger community, capitalizing on its great agricultural potential. What an exciting time for all of us.

## Roger Begelman

Neither my wife nor I have any family with special needs, but we have been involved in Camphill for a long time after being introduced to the organization by Bill and Betsy Herman, who were our neighbors. I have been involved with Camphill now for over 12 years, mostly with the Foundation. When I was appointed Chairman of the Foundation some time ago, I had asked the other Board members to also consider joining the Board of a Camphill place of their choice to get a better understanding of the needs of the communities and to bring that experience back to the Foundation Board. I was involved with the Due Diligence meetings when Heartbeet asked for the loan to build one of the new houses, and I knew where I should be. I went to school in Burlington, Vermont, so the state has long had a special place in my heart. Seeing Heartbeet accomplish so much in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom just made me feel even better about the good work both Heartbeet and the Foundation are doing.



## Friends & Family Day 2012



Clockwise from top left: Britt with her brother Chris & mom; Jess, Sean, Kathleen; Lindsey & brother Jon dance up a storm; Andy & Morten; VT Sen. Jane Kitchel meets Heartbeet; Kei with sister Karen & niece Akiko.

# A Place to Call Home

by Renna Schwartz

Growing up in a community like Heartbeet is the most exciting, loving, difficult, supportive, joyful, complex, beautiful, caring, unique, diverse ... experience. I am finding it very difficult to put into words and describe what my childhood at Heartbeet has been like, and how it will affect me in the future, but I will do my best.

The community I grew up in has shaped me into the person I am today. Imagine a community where "normal" is not really considered part of the dictionary, making everyone the norm. It does not matter what color you are, what kind of family you have, whether you are rich or poor, what style of clothing you like to wear, whether you play the guitar, or the piano, or are not musical. Whether you are an athlete or a tree hugger, whether you prefer cooking to cleaning, whether you enjoy outside work or office work, whether you enjoy working with animals or people, it does not matter. Every person finds a way to contribute, and contributes in all the ways possible for that individual. Because of the philosophies, the work, and the possibilities, Heartbeet Lifesharing has provided me with a unique view on life.



Graduates Renna and friend Claire.

As I leave home for the first time to go to Berea College in KY, I realize "home" for me has many different layers. It is a physical location, the town of Hardwick, the rolling hills of Vermont, a barn, a house, a room. Home is my amazing and loving family, Jasper, Josiah, Lyla, Hannah, and Jonathan. A place that all the people I deeply love and appreciate inhabit and who form a supportive community; a true group of friends and lifetime connections. It is the



More staff kids! L-R Josiah, Jasper, Lyla, Jemma, Zach, August, Wilde, Kai.

joys and difficulties of living with a group of people, the transition and transformation, the love and concern, and the sense of ever belonging. Heartbeet will always be a place to call home, that will never change no matter how far I go out into the world. As I look at what I want to be when I "grow up" I really only know two things: the first is that I want to work with children, and the second is that I will always look for and strive to achieve a sense of community and loving support wherever I may be. It has not always been easy being a staff child, but I would not trade my childhood experiences for all the stars in the sky. It has shown me and will continue to show me what it means to truly appreciate and accept another human being, and it has given me fundamental social skills and a work ethic that I will continue to build on throughout my life.

## 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

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## 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 or Community Hall.*



Give us a year & the hall will be here!