

In reflecting on my time at Heartbeet in Vermont, I have learned a lot for my life, like caring for other people, cooking for large groups, cleaning, crafting, gardening, working in the barn, and holding many things in my consciousness. It is fun to learn by doing. You are never alone at Heartbeet; you always have someone to share you feelings and thoughts with.

All the people at the farm, and almost everyone else that I met in Vermont, are full of alternative and sustainable ideas. This made me feel very comfortable. I have to close with how much I enjoyed the wonderful, yummy organic food that we had the opportunity to cook and eat at Heartbeet.

## Umedjon

I remember my first day at Heartbeet, October 8, 2006. It was last day of the conference. I was welcomed with great love. Everyone in conference was interested in me, I saw many beautiful faces, and I had nice talks. I'd never had this kind of attention. I knew only little about Heartbeet, but I was really excited to be here, but on the other hand I was afraid. I was afraid having a different culture and I was afraid whether or not I would be able to survive in anthroposophical community, being Muslim. The first couple month it was hard for me to settle down in Heartbeet. I was not used to eat vegetarian food and pork (a meat that I was not asked to eat but it was hard because I love meat); it was one of the differences between our cultures. Life was different. Things about Heartbeet that stood out immediately was the way in which Hannah, Jonathon and Rachel and other coworkers worked to incorporate me into their community. Heartbeet gave me a new, beautiful world, and people who work here showed me a new way of life. It was resident, however, who I feel I learned the most from. They showed me hope. It's the simple pleasures of life that provide me with the most valuable lessons. The early morning conversation with Connor over breakfast, watching Eric show off his basketball moves and being surrounded by a warm environment that is always full of songs. This is not to say that community life is idyllic, it is struggle to bring a household of more than 13 together to accomplish a day's tasks. It is in these daily struggles that the most obvious benefits of community life come to light. The experience of the loving community that surrounds me each day at Heartbeet will surely color my future.

## Andrea Barring

What can I say about Andrea? She is a gift to wherever she is, to whomever she encounters. She brought laughter and singing, joy and light into our community. She loves life and celebration, therefore every chance she gets becomes a moment to rejoice. Heartbeet was a home for Andrea for eight months as she transitioned from Triform to Camphill Copake, so you can imagine the challenge of picking just one moment to share, but here it is... Andrea chose to participate in the food shopping trip that happened every Tuesday morning at Hannaford's supermarket. I had the joy of taking her for the first time. After we had been in the store for some time she noticed Mike, the general manager, and went straight to him. After introducing herself, she was adamant that the store needed some changes. She told him that there were not enough free food samples and that the lack of live music left a lot to be desired. Mike willingly participated in Andrea's vision. He had the bakery cut up samples and then invited Andrea to sing with him. In less than ten minutes the staff at Hannaford's was gathered around sweet samples and singing. This is just one example of Andrea's capacity to form community. We trust that her gifts will continue to shine out into the world!

## Gaby Beraton

Gary came back from Kimberton Hills for another vacation at Heartbeet. Gaby's vacation highlights included hiking, riding on a boat over Lake Champlain, and shopping at the mall. Her week-long stay was filled with warmth and friendship, visiting with the farm animals, helping in the gardens, and wetting her feet in the pond. She is a great friend to have, and we look forward to seeing her again!

Heartbeet Lifesharing  
218 Town Farm Road  
Hardwick, VT 05843

## 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: Heartbeeth@aol.com  
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

NOVEMBER 2006 • Heartbeet Lifesharing • 218 Town Farm Rd. • Hardwick, VT 05843

Dear Friends,

Summer is a time for outdoor work at Heartbeet. We are held captive by the magic of the garden growth, busy with weeding, hoeing, mulching, and harvesting. Our agricultural endeavors have grown with the community---we recently expanded the garden and moved it into the field beyond the creek. And more fields are being hayed to meet the demands of the ever-growing animal population on the farm. We are also already preparing for colder days, harvesting the firewood for this coming winter. Heartbeet is a beehive of activity: lawn mowers running, hay-wagons being brought in, people in the garden, cows mooing, and the laughter of children drifting on the warm summer breeze.

We are also working hard this summer to upgrade the farm house, a much needed home within the community. It is crucially important that White Pine, our beloved first house, receive the attention and care that it deserves for its age. Built over one hundred years ago, it is enchanting but also presents all the challenges of an old building. We have gone ahead and put on a new roof and installed all new windows. Next, we look forward to re-siding the outside walls and finishing the basement to include a laundry room and boot room space. We have spent \$32,000, and must now turn to friends like you to help us raise the \$45,000 needed to finish the project of upgrading this cherished older building, home to Rachel, Ann, Parker, and Sarah.

Heartbeet continues to deepen its capacities to offer a rich home and social life with meaningful therapeutic work for all our residents. Everyone here is infinitely grateful to all of our community's supporters. Your financial contributions (and company matching grant where offered) are deeply appreciated and so important for strengthening our ability to fulfill our mission into the future. We continue to extend a warm welcome for you to come and experience firsthand the vibrant community life at Heartbeet.

Sincerely,



Hannah G. Schwartz  
Executive Director





# Heartbeet’s Support and Participation in the Hardwick Community Lunch

By Robin Cappuccino, for the HCD

For the past 15 years, members of the greater Hardwick community have been coming together for the Hardwick Community Dinner, held every Thursday from noon to 1:00 PM at the United Church of Hardwick. Sponsored by the Buffalo Mountain Food Co-op, the dinner receives donations of food and assistance from the local community, and transforms it all into a meal for a very diverse and appreciative group of 75 people or so each week. A hugely vital part of the cooking and set-up crew for the past 6 years, has been a lively contingent of cheerful, enthusiastic and hard-working helpers from Heartbeet Lifesharing. Ann Blanchard often starts out mixing up the cake batter, adding the week’s special ingredients, while regaling the rest of the crew with updates on the farm animals and other important news of the day. Parker is our carrot slicer extraordinaire. Washing, topping, slicing or mincing, no problem for Parker, content to chop carrots, the smaller the better, till the job is done. Thomas Cusick is a very willing chopper also, primarily drawn to potatoes. His addition to the mix is to raise everyone’s spirits by dancing joyfully to the rhythm of whatever tunes are being played for the crew whenever there’s a break in the chopping action. We rely on Eric Sondhaus most for his skills at table set-up and setting, although he also makes a great pot of coffee when called upon. Another gift he brings is his general excitement about just about whatever is on the menu for the week. Connor Henesy is a master food processor operator, especially good at interjecting Chicken Dance demonstrations between batches. Making it all possible over the years, who each have been a joy to work with; unflappable, positive, appreciative and supportive of the unique skills and talents that each person brings to the table in making our meal come to fruition. Thanks Heartbeet! What a wonderful gift your skills and talents have been for our dinner and community!



*Editor’s Note: Robin has been an inspiration to all of us at Heartbeet and we are infinitely grateful that he carries the Community Dinner. The young people at Heartbeet have a nickname for him: “Robin Hood”.*



# The Voices of the Young People Who Have Experienced the Heart of Heartbeet

## The adventure of my life...

By Alexander Sommer  
Volunteer 2006-2007

The adventure of my life started last year in September. I packed my bags, jumped in the airplane and flew all the way across the ocean to the United States of America to get to one of the most beautiful places in the world ... “Heartbeet Lifesharing.”

It is really true that this place is just awesome and simply affecting. Even if you have to experience hardship it’s still worth it because each individual within the Community gives a special gift to you and these gifts are going to follow me through my whole life and one can’t find them somewhere else. Waking up in the morning and being totally unhappy? Not at Heartbeet ... here you wake up and the first thing that appears to you in the morning is a smiling face, a funny gesture or just an enormous amount of love from at least one of the guys who are living in our Community. You work with the people with special needs during the day and one thing can be predicted, a laughter causing a feeling of joy or visa versa.

Work becomes life, which makes it very pleasant and enjoyable instead of bringing up the mood of hoping to get to the end of the day. It’s just the other way around. You’re hoping that the moment or the moments last forever, that you can hold this feeling of fulfillment and happiness. Heartbeet is a very loving community and I’m very glad and thankful that I got the chance to live within this organization for one year. Here it doesn’t matter who you are, you’re just being loved.

Coming to an end, I would like to put Heartbeet into one sentence to stimulate some enthusiasm. Think about it and try to take your own message out of it – might be your metamorphosis!



“It’s a place for everyone who can share and care, which today is nothing but rare!”



## There ought to be a million Heartbeets...

By Amy Littlefield  
3 Week Volunteer from Brown University

The word “spirituality” meant very little to me before I came to Hearbeet. Being spiritual, to me, meant being religious. It meant experiencing God in a personal and private way. Now, the word “spirituality” makes me think of the afternoons we all spent planting in the garden, singing together and getting our hands dirty. There was something magical in the air on those afternoons. It makes me think of giant,

continued on page 4

warm dinners that every member of the community has helped, in some way, to create. It makes me think of spontaneous dance parties and conversations with new friends. Hearbeet has taught me that spirituality can be found in the communities we build and the love we bring to them. It can be found in our impulses, in our imaginations, and in the ways we care for each other. At Heartbeet, everyone works together. At Heartbeet, everyone dances together. And everyone is cared for. There ought to be a million Heartbeets!

## Participating in Community Life...

By Samantha Polon

“It is difficult to explain the importance of places like the Heartbeet Community. Words like refreshing, formative, and beautiful are not enough to do the experience justice. Every day in this farm community brings new joys: the birth of a lamb, dancing to a resident’s favorite song, and meals that are communally prepared and eaten. Every day brings new challenges: the physical strain of farm work, the immediate intimacy that comes with entering such a community, and the personal question of a permanent lifestyle change. Every individual is aware of the weight and importance their daily participation has on the community. Each morning one must make the choice to participate in community life. Living is no longer done for one...it is done for many.”



## My memories of Heartbeet...

By Anna Doering



Tired of my old life, high school finished, and thirsty for new experiences, new people, and new culture...a new and different life, and the wish to help other people brought me to Heartbeet.

Eleven months later, I can say it was a good decision. The last 11 months flew by and it was not always easy in the beginning. To start with, it was a challenge to understand the new language and to express my feelings and opinions, but it’s always been rich, never boring, often funny...I never really knew what was coming the next day, the next hour, the next minute. We have to be very flexible and open to what life brings at Heartbeet.

For example, I will never forget how I drank milk straight from a cow, or the time when the pig food fell all over me, or when the car had a flat tire and we had to wait for a long time to get help. I also remember the time when Eric and I laughed so hard, tears were streaming down our faces.

I have learned to hold so much responsibility, solve problems, and make decisions for other people—it was hard, but I feel it prepared me for my future and made me stronger. The people that I have offered care to filled my life with joy and gave me purpose. I was not able to stay angry or frustrated for long; after a smile or hug or hearing others laugh, my stress instantly melted away.

continued on page 5