

Camphill Village Kimberton Hills

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www.camphillkimberton.org

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Camphill Café Open
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11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Our mission is to build community with individuals who have special needs in a physically, socially and spiritually therapeutic environment. In valuing persons of all abilities, we seek to foster a spirit of living that is sustainable, productive and beautiful. As we are stewards of one another, we also nurture and improve the land through sustainable agriculture and raising environmental awareness.



Upcoming Events

April 25 Second Annual Wine and Dine Talkfest, Birchrunville Store Café

May 7-9 *Singing Crow - a tale from the Brandywine*, Rose Hall

For tickets or information on these events, contact 610-935-8660 or
development@camphillkimberton.org

Help us conserve resources! Would you like to receive future newsletters and other announcements via e-mail? Send your information to bernadette@camphillkimberton.org and you will be added to the list. Thank you!



Camp Hill Village Kimberton Hills

2009 Annual Report and Newsletter

As I usually do when asked to write something like this, I pulled out what I've written in previous years. To no surprise, I noticed that in the previous several letters I talked about the financial environment...and how, with your dedicated support, we managed to weather the storm of the economy. I am pleased to report that we've again held our own.

I think this is a testament to the many people who share our story and support the great work that goes on at Kimberton Hills. We thank you all.

Our events continue to draw supportive crowds of people. We've had many wonderful programs of music and theater in Rose Hall; our First Birchrunville Store Café Wine and Dine Talkfest was a success; the triennial Camphill Concert in New York City garnered your support; we again welcomed many friends to the top of the hill during our summer outdoor music festival; and many of you came to our annual Kimberton Inn Dinner.

The life of the village ebbs and flows as do all things. We've weathered a few untimely passings as well as snowstorms that seemed to never end. There have been some of the usual cantankerous conversations among people living together, and one of the cows looked at me rather nastily the other day.

But, all in all, it's been a pretty good year in the life of Kimberton Hills. So come on by and visit. Have lunch, buy some bread and cookies to take home, visit the animals...but avoid that cow I mentioned (come to think of it, maybe it was a bull), listen to some music, or just come on over and walk around and enjoy the land and the people.

We treasure each and every one of you. We'd like to see and hear from you more often. Our door is always open, so drop in anytime. We thank you for your understanding, your compassion, your interest and your support. We thank you for being our friend — part of the community of not only Camp Hill Village Kimberton Hills but also of the worldwide Camp Hill community. We value your friendship and generosity. Thanks.

Steve Smolinsky
Board President





Books could be written about the past year in Kimberton Hills. Some would be biographical: John Gardner, Kate Wright and Cynthia Wallace; some would be human interest: young people taking on responsibilities in realms they never dreamed of; Todd recovering from the accident that led to the death of his work horse, Pet; the Crow (non-avian variety) family's gentle, thorough integration into the life at Oberlin house; the miracle of Herb's returned eyesight and those who made it possible; and the day Volunteers who help and learn—either through community service, internships, or changes of life circumstances. We could write about practical issues like our award winning dairy accomplishing a major transition while keeping customers and cows happy, and Thomas Roemer's heroic offer to manage the dairy. Perhaps we could write a navigational book about gardening under water (over 54 inches of rain last year), or a tour guide for those from near and afar who visit (a group of Taiwanese teachers came to learn about Camphill work). Or we could offer entertaining articles about the continuing rise of the Kimberton Hills musical – the Sound of Music brought four audiences to their feet for ovations – or the latest wedding (Mimi Coleman and John Tower)! We could introduce our three new Board members: Joseph Bright, Esq., Jean Flood, M.D., Robert Hecht, Esq., and their expertise and enthusiasm. However, there will soon be a 50th edition of the *Lilipoh* magazine which will include articles about all the Camphills in North America, including Kimberton Hills.

Camphill has been in North America for 50 years – Kimberton Hills is almost 38 years old. Recently we learned that the University of Toronto's Quality of Life Study, commissioned by the Camphill Association of North America, found *the quality of life for people with disabilities in Kimberton Hills to be of a very high standard—and that people with disabilities here have a, “meaningful degree of control over their lives,”* and many opportunities for making choices. The study showed that our community scored significantly higher than the University's evaluations of four standard other options for people with disabilities: large and small congregate settings (institutions and group homes), independent living, and family living. This is confirming news!

Onward, 2010 will see us continuing to focus on our land—including the CSA, the herb garden and the forests – developing craft products and sales venues, finding new people to live with us, and becoming ever more sustainable.

We are able to do our work because others place their confidence in us—by contributing, volunteering, and helping us in countless ways. Thank you for confirming that Kimberton Hills is needed and helpful in the world!

Diedra Heitzman
Executive Director



THE VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

People with diverse backgrounds, skills, and personal goals join our community for a day, a year, or a lifetime. The common thread that brings us all here is a desire to do service. Each volunteer brings strengths and abilities, and each contributes to the personal growth of others.

Interested in learning more about volunteering at Camphill Kimberton? E-mail Mimi Coleman at mimi@camphillkimberton.org.

There are so many things in life that you "have" to do. Volunteering at Camphill Village is something that I really want to do; something that I honestly enjoy.

I have given a lot of thought to why I feel so happy when I am driving into the village. In part, I am looking forward to the adventure of the day. (Will today be the day I master the art of spinning?) Or what unexpected culinary delight will I be eating at lunch? (Have you ever had a delicious plate of stinging nettles?)

But if I am to be totally honest, it's the people I have gotten to know. They are kind, clever, funny and charming. They make me feel good about myself, and I was supposed to be helping them! Without a doubt, I can't think of a better way to spend a day.

-- Mary Ann Ninnis, day volunteer



Being around the dairy, orchard, and greenhouses and seeing everything involved in those areas has been an incredible learning experience. Working alongside villagers, volunteers, and Camphill residents has been a great way to meet new people while contributing to meaningful work in the community.

I'm excited for the warmer weather and all of the activities that will happen this spring and summer at Camphill.

-- Brint Nicolai, day volunteer

Living at Camphill as a Service Volunteer has challenged me beyond my perceived capabilities. I never imagined I could be comfortable providing personal care or maintain my composure in the face of two deaths within my household. It is a community that lives a compact life—dealing daily with conflict, resolution, forgiveness, challenges, and utter joy. Working here has opened my eyes to the essentials of life and shown me that living cooperatively in community is not only an ideal possibility but a viable reality.

-- Jessica Sabo, service volunteer



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Without the local and international community that supports our Village with the gifts of time, personal commitment and finances, we would be without our life-sustaining buttresses.

Thank you everyone.

We have, with many pairs of eyes, been most diligent in recognizing all our special friends and donors who contributed throughout the calendar year 2009. We apologize if we have inadvertently omitted or misspelled anyone's name. Please call the Development Office at 610-935-8660 if you find any such mistakes and we will gladly correct them in our upcoming newsletter.



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Katie's home by Abigail Wright



Catharine Elizabeth Wright had been a villager in Kimberton Hills for 25 years before she suddenly passed away the morning of July 26, 2009. Stories about Kate come to everyone's lips—perhaps no one living in Kimberton Hills has made a stronger impression on so many people. No one could have anticipated that Kate would have left us so soon. Her vibrancy and health were obvious. As we lovingly said farewell and thanks to Kate during the next days, her connection to the people and of course all the land and animals of Kimberton Hills was significantly in our hearts. The following are the words of Kate's sister, Abigail, as she reflects on the impact Camphill had on her sister's life.

Our sister Katie had no future.

When she was three her doctor declared her “brain-damaged.” Katie was the kind of kid who would flap her arms like a deranged bird and converse in code: “Basil Rathbone is a big, big bubble!” In a small New Jersey town in the 1960s, there was no place for an oddball like her. She was destined to live with relatives the rest of her life, or in a group home for the mentally retarded. Wherever she went she would be stared at, misunderstood, and mistreated. We all fell into despair. “That’s the way it is,” our mother said. “The wolves are going to get her and there’s nothing we can do about it.”



Three months after our parents died in 1984, my sister began a new life as a resident of Camphill Village Kimberton Hills. This spectacular chance at a normal adulthood was clearly an angelic intervention; otherwise, we thought, how could such an opportunity exist? Because Kimberton is a farm, Katie's life took on the structure of the seasons. Some days were ordinary and filled with hard work, other days focused on celebrations that mark the passage of time.

Katie thrived. At last she could freely express her love for screwball comedy, surreal conversations, and imitating Madonna's Boy-Toy period.

The problem of “special care” is one of today's most closeted issues. Hidden in virtually every family there's a brother or mother or cousin who may have Alzheimer's, or be physically handicapped, mentally handicapped, mentally ill, or perhaps just incapable of adjusting to society. Seen as non-productive in our materialist culture, their fate is to become a burden on their loved ones, however cherished they may be. Though vulnerable, they are offered little protection. I know from experience that families struggling to care for these outsiders suffer from isolation, dreadful uncertainty, and fear.

The good news is that there is great healing at Kimberton. Because the work of the community is genuinely productive – for instance, growing food – all its members have dignity and a sense of their own worth. It enabled Kate to become an equal member of our family – not dependent, not codependent, but interdependent, with a life distinctly her own.

One time Katie took me to visit the barnyard, one of her favorite places. An enormous bull approached and I retreated in terror, but Katie put her arm through the fence and stroked the beast, talking to him about the cow who had died the week before. He began to moan, weeping from his eyes and nose. Katie took out a wadded-up tissue and gently tried to wipe him dry. Their conversation was funny, no doubt, but I realized: our sister's life has become a miracle for all to witness, all to share.

And now, she is a memory. For the thousands of people whose lives intersected with hers, that one word “Katie” conjures up the charming, unpredictable, wild card that she was. She died this summer in the middle of the night, without a hint of warning, leaving us speechless. At Kimberton the comforting rituals of death unfolded as Katie was put to rest. This is what I remember of that final day: a ferocious thunderstorm, a wandering goat at the funeral service, naked babies playing in the water fountain, the loving faces of her community. And our sister, forever at home.



A vision becomes a reality by Kenneth T. Loesberg, D.M.D

Dr. Kenneth Loesberg, our village dentist, was given the 2009 Community Service Award, presented annually at our Kimberton Inn Dinner. His friendship and dedication to the health and well-being of villagers, most especially his friend, Herb Wolf, was something that the village wanted to recognize publicly. Dr. Loesberg was instrumental in encouraging a reluctant Herb to undergo eye surgery and even offering to drive him to the various appointments. The end result is a new life for Herb, as the return of his sight has brought a return of independence.

I feel very fortunate and grateful to be part of the Camphill community. The ideals that embody the organization are not abstract or just conceptual. This is a place where implementation of compassion is commonplace and everyone is viewed through a prism of respect. It's just the natural thing to do because the village promotes the attributes of kindness and civility. The self-evident truth is that we are all more alike than we are different, so let's celebrate those attributes that bond us together.

The villagers and caregivers, who we see in our dental office, have all been very appreciative. As with any population of patients, they have exhibited a variety of traits – some very open and gregarious, some very shy and nervous, but all very endearing.

One of those patients touched my heart in a particularly special way. I'm not sure I can even explain why, nor do I think it matters. I'm sure you have all met someone with whom you immediately made some kind of connection. It's simple: you liked them and it made you feel good just to be around them. Such was the case with my new friend. His name is Herb Wolf or Herbie as he is affectionately known to everyone at Camphill.

The encounter was transformative for me. His sense of humor – witty, sardonic and painfully truthful is so engaging; we had lots of laughs and it made for great company. His power of retention is truly remarkable and when it came to baseball trivia I found myself totally overmatched by Herb and out of my league. He is a force of nature. He loves spaghetti and ice cream, has a bigger appetite than Pavarotti, and eats faster than Willie Mays running from first to third.

Herb's vision has deteriorated over the years. He loves to listen to the radio and take walks with Debra (Faulkenberg, L.P.N., coworker in Serena House) using his trusty cane. After learning about the etiology which was responsible for his loss of sight, I discussed with Debra the possibility of Herb consulting with a physician. They did, and the determination was made that Herb could be helped, and hopefully there would be significant improvement in his sight.

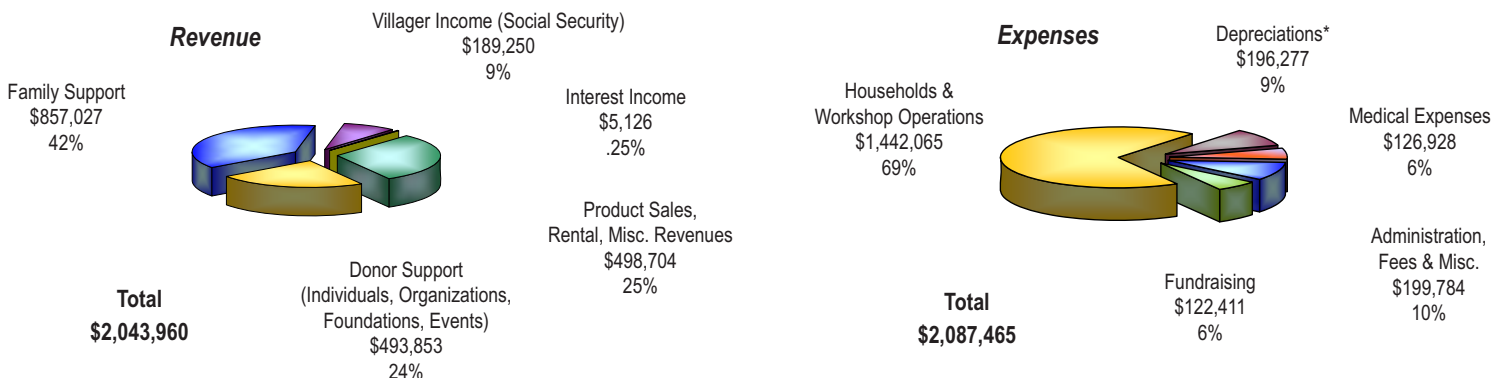
Thanks to the tireless efforts that were made on Herb's behalf at Camphill, I am thrilled to report that the quality of Herb's life has been elevated, and he can now see with his eyes what he already knew in his heart: that he lives in a special place on this planet, surrounded by people who love him.

Herb, you're a lucky guy, and I feel blessed and privileged to be part of that world.



Dr. Loesberg (L) accepting the Community Service Award from Steve Smolinsky, Board President, and friend, Herb Wolf (R) at the Kimberton Inn Cultivation Dinner. The award was a framed, original painting by Herb.

FY '09 Audited Financial Report



*as per our FY09 audit, an additional \$181,784 depreciation funds were used for capital projects