

## Camphill Village Kimberton Hills

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Edited by Bernadette Kovaleski  
and Rachel Martin Swartz

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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

**March 22** Wine and Dine Talkfest, Birchrunville Café

**April 24-26** The Sound of Music, Rose Hall

**July 27** Fourth Annual Camphill Classic, Springford Country Club

**October 6** Camphill Benefit Concert, Jazz at Lincoln Center

For tickets or information, call 610.935.8660 or [rachel@camphillkimberton.org](mailto:rachel@camphillkimberton.org)

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# Camp Hill Village Kimberton Hills

## 2008 Annual Report and Newsletter

Before writing this note to you, our friends and supporters, I read what I wrote last year. To my surprise I noticed that in the second sentence I mentioned how we seemed to be weathering the financial storm. It's hard to believe that I thought 2007 was a difficult financial year. Now here we all are, a year later, ruminating on 2008. To my great happiness I am pleased to report that I can again share that we seem to have weathered the financial storm.

Of course, it took tremendous continued support from all of you. And great efforts on our part to keep our outlook positive as we hoped that the Café would thrive, the Camp Hill Classic Golf Tournament would attract golfers and sponsors, we'd fill up the seats at our annual Kimberton Inn Dinner, and all the other events would be successful.

So it's with heartfelt feelings that I thank all of you for remaining steadfast in your willingness to drop in for lunch and wander around a golf course. We continue to be on sound fiscal footing which has enabled us to address the issues that occur during one year in the life of a village.

People come and go; buildings need repairs and updating; the gardens and dairy require constant attention; general efforts to keep everyone not only healthy but with full opportunity go on and expand. Lots has happened including the great fun of being awarded The Best Place to Hear Live Music in Chester County.

Now we're entering a year which looks even more difficult financially. But we're firm of spirit. We're remaining upbeat, cheerful, and enthusiastic and expect to expand our place as a beacon of hope...and positivity. So come on over and visit us for an upbeat energy recharge. And share this recharge by bringing your family and friends. The musicians are tuning their instruments; the Café kitchen is cooking away; the golf club is preparing the course; the bakery is bagging cookies; and, new this year, they're getting ready for you to stand around and chat with old and new friends at the Kimberton Hills Food and Wine Talkfest.

But most importantly, we like to see you. We value your friendship. Just come and visit to say hello. Our door is always open. And thank you. We can't do it without you. Thank you for your support, for your generosity, and for just being you...our friend. We look forward to seeing you often.

Steve Smolinsky  
Board President







Sabine Bertsche  
Aug. 13, 1925 - Nov. 30, 2008

Each year, the long term coworkers of Kimberton Hills gather around the Christmas Tree in Rose Hall on January 1st and describe the past year in the community, often quite intimately and personally. This listening space reveals changes that need to be made by individuals and/or the organization and community. For the year of 2008, sincere gratitude has echoed again and again.

☞ Eva has been to India. Fundraising made it possible, with the help of our Soltane friends and the many who came to eat Indian food at our Café and watch breathtaking Indian dancing. Eva has lived here over 30 years, and now her worldview has expanded significantly.

☞ Mike has moved to a new and quieter house. His ability to handle changes and peacefully take part in village activities has increased.

☞ Joe has learned to weave, as have Charlene and Ben. Gaby continues to make and offer for sale her “chair mats.” Watch out for her irresistible sales technique!

☞ After being here for seventeen months, Jeffrey has begun accepting invitations for meals to houses other than his own, which widens his village horizons.

☞ Andy celebrated his 50th birthday with a bash in the Café.

☞ In October, the village rang as our orchestra performed a Brahms concert. The final Brahms Lullaby, sung exquisitely by Sarah and accompanied by the bell choir, was simply celestial.

☞ We accompanied the final weeks of Sabine’s time on earth respectfully and lovingly. She relaxed, glowed, and gratefully accepted the visits and care of many.

Things inward and outward have happened. We learn. It is the quiet new steps, the new abilities, the journeys ... that make us who we are and that keep our community alive to its mission and significance.

The community expects all kinds of changes to happen, within and without. Challenges are significantly transformed into increased idealism and practical work when we are supported by the people with whom we work and by you, our friends and supporters.

Diedra Heitzman  
Executive Director  
Village Coordinator

*“...the new cafe is a bright and cheerful place for people to gather and enjoy each other’s company. While there are many admirable aspects of your project, we were particularly impressed that you chose to use sustainable and environmentally friendly building materials in the construction of the Cafe. We were also pleased to learn that you were able to save \$10,000 by ‘reusing’ the previous cement floor. Every penny helps!”*

*-- Anne Murry Hileman, Senior Program Officer, Connelly Foundation*



## First a volunteer, now a friend by Sue Weicheld

When I visit Kimberton Hills, I feel rejuvenated and relaxed. Stress rolls off my shoulders. It must be due to the wonderful sense of community in the village. When I became unemployed in the spring, I contacted Diedra Heitzman and Rachel Martin Swartz to volunteer a few hours a week. (I knew about Kimberton Hills because my dear sister-in-law, Sue, lives in the village and our family is a member of Sankanac CSA). They thought it might be a good fit for me to volunteer at Serena House. They were right. It has been a privilege to spend time with Eleanor and Herbert and the residents of Serena House.



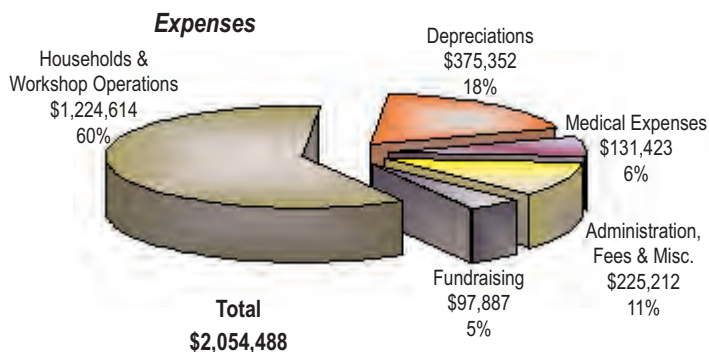
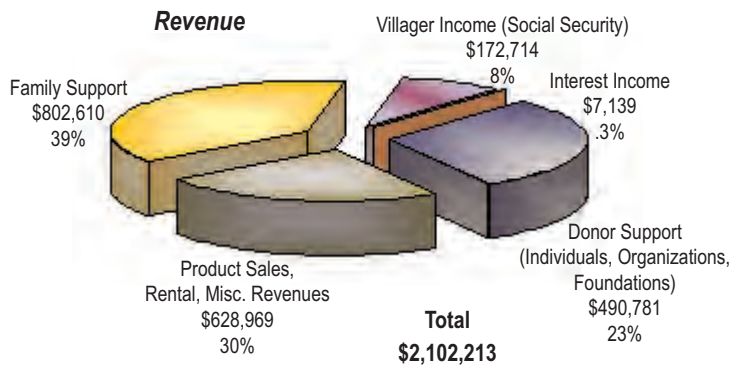
Eleanor is one of the best village spokespeople. She told me about the Monday morning village gatherings, the Sunday morning church services, the concerts and other events held at Rose Hall, the handmade items in the craft shop, and the hours the café is open. She taught me how to work with fresh and dry herbs from the community garden and helped me with dinner ideas for my family. She just celebrated her 86th birthday! She is a gracious, caring lady, and has become a dear friend.

When I first started volunteering, I helped Herbert write letters to his friends. After writing a few letters, we found out we had several things in common: the Philadelphia Phillies, politics (especially Barack Obama), interest in the United States and world financial crises, sports and the residents of Kimberton Hills. He has a great sense of humor, is sharp, kind, and also has become a dear friend.

Karen Arthur and Debra Falkenberg run Serena House with a gentle calmness and strength. The Serena House villagers go for walks, contribute to the household meals and the village community, visit with friends, participate in group meetings, attend concerts, and go to special plays and dinners outside the village. Their lives are active, engaging, and ever changing.

Although my life is changing, with the start of a new job, I will not stop volunteering at Kimberton Hills. Eleanor, Herbert, Karen, Debra, and dear Sue are an important part of my life. With Karen's help I will reschedule my visits to evenings and weekends. Volunteering at Kimberton Hills opened my eyes to the joys, challenges and daily activities in the lives of all the residents of this unique village.

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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 2008. 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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## Strength in partnerships

by Rachel Martin Swartz

The sweet scent of baking bread greets you before the bakery even comes into view. You then note the steady smoke rising from the newly built wood fire stove and realize that a new and special enterprise is happening at Camphill Kimberton, and it is called Sweetwater Bakery.

The partnership between Sweetwater and CVKH became official in September 2007. But the story began 18 months prior.

Saul and Jolynn Schwartz, business partners and bakers, along with their four children, ages 11 to two, lived in a small town in southwest Virginia, where they ran a successful bakery. Although they had lived there for ten years, “We were always a little bit not at ease,” muses Saul. Both Saul and Jolynn were transplants from the north and wanted to move closer to family and were considering Waldorf education for their children. Jolynn was a student at Kimberton Waldorf School and, as they say, “the rest is history.” During the initial trip to the area, serendipity seemed to be their guide. On a tour of Kimberton Waldorf School, someone mentioned that CVKH was in need of a baker; in their search for a house, they found a “fixer-upper” along French Creek, right beside Camphill Kimberton’s Hyacinth House, the Kretschmer-Rasch household.

Events moved swiftly: “During that trip we had an exploratory meeting with Kimberton Hills’ admissions personnel and Felicity, who was running the bakery. Upon our return to Virginia, we put a bid on the house, interior sight unseen, and it was ours!” A partnership was an intriguing prospect but the Schwartz’s were hesitant. They had always run their own business. For the next year, Saul spent most of his weeks working on the house and volunteering at the bakery. Jolynn and the children were back in Virginia, preparing for the upcoming move.

The conversation continued throughout the year until, with Sebastian and Lael’s encouragement, Saul and Jolynn decided to enter into partnership negotiations. Sweetwater Bakery officially moved to Kimberton Hills in September 2007. It provides a workshop for the adults with disabilities, pays a rental fee and a



percentage of gross profits. In return, the Village built a wood fire stove, provides a work crew and released the running of the bakery into their capable hands.



Seventeen months later, Saul concurs, “Although it has been a new experience, working with a crew of which some are adults with special needs, it is working for us. We can financially support ourselves, we can walk to work if we choose, and the children can be part of the daily routine.”

A typical weekly output is 300 bags of cookies and 600 loaves of bread, with an additional 175 every other week for a large community, Shantiyoga, outside D.C. All that said, running a bakery is seasonal. “This is our slow season. Summer and fall are our busiest because we supply the four local CSA’s and sell at the Phoenixville Farmer’s market. At Christmas we push the limit, baking 400 to 450 bags of cookies per week. The crew will say, ‘what, MORE cookies.’”

“Our largest customers are Kimberton Whole Foods, the Village, Shantiyoga, and Beaver Run.” Sweetwater Bakery has also been successful in growing its retail base. It now sells to Weaver’s Way co-op in Mount Airy and throughout the late fall until early spring to Farm to City in Lancaster. Locally, you can purchase or sample the four varieties of Sweetwater bread and cookies at the Artisan Café and Gateway Pharmacy in Phoenixville, Lionville Pharmacy, and Pearl’s market in Eagle. Special orders are welcomed at 610.935.1060.

Another viable partnership is with local dairy farmers Ken and Susan Miller. Although their dairy was producing at maximum capacity, it was still difficult to make ends meet. Through conversation, the Miller’s learned that our cheese-making facility was not currently in use. Three years into the partnership, the Birchrunville Cheese label is a gourmet, highly regarded cheese. It is a profitable enterprise, augmenting the Miller’s dairy income and providing CVKH with rent revenue and a percentage of the gross income.

*It is through partnerships and supportive friendships such as these that individuals, families and our communities are revitalized and strengthened.*



# Discovering India: Kimberton to Sadhana Village

by Madeleine Banulski



*Note: Eva Herz, a 30-year resident of Kimberton Hills, was chosen to join a group from Camphill Soltane, who were planning a trip to India. Eva asked Madeleine Banulski, a former service volunteer, to come along. The*

*trip was made possible by contributions from the Camphill Foundation's East West Fund, private donations, and a fundraising dinner with an Indian theme.*

On October 25, after about 24 hours of travel, our contingent of Camphill ambassadors finally arrived in Sadhana Village, India. The Kimberton Hills group included myself, Eva Herz, and my mother, Annette. Silvia Tal, Mercedes Riofrio, Pam Smith and Robin Buckner came from Camphill Soltane. The trip lasted nearly a month but was a constant whirlwind of brilliantly colored saris, calmly chewing cows and water buffalo, the smells of roasting exotic herbs and the sounds of worship in the wee hours of the morning.

Sadhana Village is a strong force for change within its quite rural village. With a permanent coworker staff of only three women and a patchwork of German volunteers, they care for thirty-two "special friends," split among four households. As well as their work with adults with special needs, they provide supportive education for children and have funded dam and irrigation projects to enhance local agriculture. In a society where women have not traditionally taken leadership roles, Sadhana is home to a women's group that addresses issues like empowerment and domestic violence and also provides micro lending to start small businesses. India is a country with deep cultural roots that have helped to sustain it through the changing winds of history, yet it struggles to let go of old gender and caste prejudices.

Our group was very lucky to spend our first four days in India celebrating the Hindu festival of light, Divali. Each evening the entire village would dress in their best and meet by candlelight to share prayers, sacred songs and a meal. Since Divali is a celebration of the harvest we shared songs from across the many cultures represented at the gathering.

We were able to merge into the daily life of the village, greeting each morning with a small mug of sweet and spicy chai tea, made creamy with buffalo milk. Each meal was very different from home but always brimming with spices. Luckily our housemother,

Mangalata, turned down the level of traditional Indian hot pepper to let our American stomachs adjust. We found that everyone we met was warm and welcoming.

I feel grateful for the opportunity to have experienced India. It was incredibly humbling to experience a culture so different from our own but also to make such human connections with the people that we met there. I also appreciated



Eva's willingness to immediately make friends with her ready smiles and laughter. The everyday activities of sharing food, working side by side, sharing pictures of family and singing helped to forge connections across barriers of language and culture.

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