

LIFE AT CAMPHILL

INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to have this chance to become mutually acquainted. We have put together some information that we hope will give you a flavor of life at Camphill Village Minnesota.

HISTORY

The Camphill way of life has developed out of the belief that each person, with or without handicaps, is a unique spiritual being entitled to lead a full and purposeful life in freedom and dignity. Our task is to create and sustain a community where people work and care for each other to foster social, cultural and agricultural renewal. We wish to create the special conditions in which all of us can learn to live with our limitations rather than suffer from them, and to discover, develop and realize our abilities to the fullest extent.

Camphill Village Minnesota is one of ten Camphill communities in North America, and one of 105 worldwide. In its work with developmentally disabled adults, Camphill takes its guiding principles from Anthroposophy, developed by Dr. Rudolf Steiner, (1861-1925) Austrian educator and philosopher. Inspired by this philosophy, Dr. Karl Koenig, a Viennese pediatrician, with a small group of young medical students and artists, started the first Camphill community in Scotland in 1939. In 1961 Camphill came to America.

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A COWORKER

Camphill staff are referred to as co-workers. They are a vital part of our community and experience the joys and challenges of CVM as they give of themselves physically, mentally and emotionally.

Co-workers are open and receptive to helping and contributing to the Village in **any way** possible. For many this means becoming involved with activities and events that are brand new to them.

Co-workers need to be physically and emotionally healthy. Life is demanding and full. Flexibility, openness and a serious willingness to work with the community are very important.

SPIRITUAL LIFE

Fostering a mood of reverence and gratitude is an essential part of Camphill life. This is done through attention to details in the homes, the gathering around the dinner table and through the rhythm of daily life. We celebrate the seasonal and Christian festivals of the year with songs, stories, plays and other activities that are prepared together in the community. It is important that co-workers support these cultural and spiritual activities. If a person feels that he or she cannot attend a certain activity, then support can be given by house-sitting, cooking, or child care so that others may attend. On Sundays, there are special non-denominational gathering or services in the main hall. People sometimes attend a church of their choice in the vicinity.

GEOGRAPHY

Camphill is located on a 470-acre working farm in Central Minnesota. There are two small towns (population 3,000 each) within 10 miles and larger towns a bit beyond. We are located where the northern forests meet the prairies, the home of much wildlife. Minnesota is known as "The land of 10,000 lakes" and we enjoy the water's beauty every day. The major city near us is Minneapolis (where you will arrive if you come by plane) and it is about two hours away by car.

CLIMATE

We are quite far north and the winters can be rather harsh but bring with them also a beauty and serenity that we have come to enjoy and appreciate. We have a well-deserved reputation for long, cold winters. From November to March, the temperature can be from 40 F to -40 F. Fall and spring are often short

seasons and summers can range from cool (60 F - 70 F) to very hot (over 90 F).

RECREATION

It is the land of winter sports: skiing, sledding, ice fishing, ice skating, snow shoeing. In summer one can swim and fish in nearby lakes and river. The neighboring town has a movie theatre which is popular year round for everyone. The nearby towns also have public libraries and CVM has a small library of its own. St. John's and St. Benedict's Universities are not far away and they have strong arts programs offering exhibits, drama and music.

CLOTHING

Much of our work and social life is spent outdoors. People should bring clothing which is appropriate for our lifestyle and climate. A warm winter coat, winter boots, hat, gloves, long underwear (at times winter temperatures drop down to -30' F & below!) and rain boots are a necessity. We are not in a financial position to supply those items for short-term co-workers.

ORGANIZATION AND DAILY SCHEDULE

The village has a strong agricultural component made up of farming and gardening. Craft work includes weaving, woodwork, doll-making and handwork as well as a bakery that provides for the needs of the village and sells in the surrounding area.

There are about 50 people at CVM living in seven village homes. We live in family-style houses of 8-12 people, some of whom have disabilities. We have people of all ages -- from babies to "seniors". Because we are an "adult village", our special needs people are all older than 18. Most are in their 30's and 40's. All co-workers have their own room. Everybody who comes becomes a part of their "house family," helping with the household tasks -- cooking, cleaning, washing dishes, bathing and caring for those who need it, helping with children.

As a co-worker, you will probably find yourself doing many things you never imagined. You may be helping to run a workshop, escorting people on a nature walk to a nearby lake, cooking a meal for 12 people, harvesting or picking up hay bales. Variety is definitely an important "spice" at CVM. We try to create situations where the community's needs can be met and a co-worker can also gain some expertise in an area -- such as weaving or gardening. Whenever possible, we try and find out what a co-worker would like to do and match that with our needs.

Although there are variations from house to house, the general schedule for week days is as follows:

Rise: 6:30 - 7:00
Farm chores: Milking, etc.
Breakfast: 7:30 or 7:45
Morning circles:
(scripture reading, short verse or song)
Work: 9:00 - 11:45
Dinner: noon
Rest: 1:00 - 2:00
Work: 2:00 - 4:30
Milking, supper preparations, meetings, house chores
Supper: 6:00 or 6:30
Evening Activities
Concerts, outings, meetings, talks, etc.

If a co-worker wishes to go away for a day, weekend or longer periods of time, this can usually be arranged if adequate coverage of his or her responsibilities is available. Co-workers at CVM for at least 12 months get three weeks vacation.

TELEVISION/RADIOS

There are no TV's in the houses because we feel that TV and computer games are generally not positive influences for children or adults. There is one TV and VCR in the village which can be used by anyone during non-working hours on a sign-out basis. People use radios and CD players in their rooms but music is not used as "background" in the homes nor in the workplace.

FINANCES

No one receives a salary, but food, lodging and other miscellaneous needs are met by the community. All co-workers receive \$100.00 per month pocket money. Financial obligations like loans, debts and dependents remain the responsibility of the coworker. American coworkers with student loans may qualify for deferment of payments by applying as an AmeriCorps Service Volunteer. Our experience has been that those with human or social service degrees have been able to successfully negotiate deferment and/or forgiveness of their loan debt when loan officers understand the commitment they have made to a Camphill community. We encourage you to contact your loan officer to explore the possibilities.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

We provide health insurance coverage for co-workers and families who are here for more than six months. We do not have dental insurance and dental expenses are paid only for those co-workers who are here more than a year. We also have a workers' compensation policy which provides coverage for any co-worker who is injured while working at CVM.

Medical Certification of a recent examination, signed by a licensed M.D., including a statement that the applicant is free from any communicable disease, is required before joining Camphill Village Minnesota.

Likewise, Dental Certification of a recent examination and completion of all necessary treatment is also required before joining CVM.

CAMPHILL STRUCTURE

Camphill is governed by consensus. Responsibility is divided among many people. Most decisions are made by various groups which meet on a regular basis. The groups include:

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|-------------|----------------------|
| Care Group | Administration Group |
| Full Circle | Overview Group |
| Land Group | Housekeepers |
| Craft Group | Community Members |

TRAINING

Because we are a foster care facility, co-workers are required to have a certain number of training hours. You will be expected to attend some classes or workshops. There is also an orientation course to help you become integrated into Camphill and to answer questions you may have.

VISA REQUIREMENTS

A proper visa is required for individuals coming from abroad. The two options that we use are B-1 (Visitor's Visa) or the J-1 (Cultural Exchange Visa). When we know an individual will be coming to CVM, we decide which visa would be appropriate and complete the papers needed.

SCHOOLING

We recognize that the education of our children is often one of the most important aspects of family life and do all we can to facilitate this process.

The educational needs of our children are met in different ways. We have had various homeschooling situations -- usually following the Waldorf school curriculum -- ranging from preschool to high school. A number of children go to either public school or parochial school in the surrounding towns. We are located 10 miles from Long Prairie and Sauk Centre. Children have attended schools in both towns and the bus picks them up at the village.

In Long Prairie:

Long Prairie Public Schools - 320-732-2194
St. Mary's School (Catholic) - 320-732-3478
Trinity Lutheran School - 320-732-2238

In Sauk Centre:

Sauk Centre Public Schools - 320-352-6521
Holy Family (Catholic) - 320-352-6535

There are a number of colleges and universities within a two hour radius of the village. We could send this information to those who would be interested.

DRIVING AND AUTOMOBILE INFORMATION

Before a co-worker who comes to CVM can drive a car they must:

1. Already have a valid Drivers License.
2. Obtain a Minnesota driver's license. This entails taking a written and driving test administered by the state. This is required by our insurance company.
3. Pass an in-village driving test.
4. Pass a winter snow and ice driving test (as appropriate).

Each village house has a car which is available for day to day needs. For short term co-workers, cars are not available for long trips (vacations). We do not encourage co-workers to have their own cars, but for some people, this is a necessity. The village will pay for gas for these cars and the individuals must pay for insurance and maintenance.

NOTE: If you are a resident of the U.S. and have a license from another state, you must give up that license to get one from Minnesota. If you are a licensed driver from another country, or on an International license, you will be allowed to retain your current license, in addition to your Minnesota license.

DRINKING & SMOKING

The drinking age in Minnesota is 21. Because of the kind of community we are, we ask that legal drinking of alcoholic beverages be "low profile", i.e. that alcohol not be stored in public areas of the house and not be used at large community-wide parties or gatherings. If you are under 21, even if you can legally drink in your country, you may not drink in Minnesota. Illegal drugs of any sort, of course, are not allowed. Smoking is not allowed in any of the buildings, in the cars, nor in the farm yards.

We hope you have found this useful. Perhaps you have other questions or concerns. If so, contact Phil Drake at CVMN@rea-alp.com.