

CAMPBILL VILLAGE MINNESOTA

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Newsletter Spring 2006

CAMPBILL VILLAGE MINNESOTA - 25 YEARS OLD

On November 5, 2005 Camphill Village Minnesota celebrated its 25th anniversary with a festive dinner and a delightful sharing of memories by the early founders. The present community and current Board of Directors wished to express their heart felt gratitude to those individuals, both those living in the community and those making up the ring of supporters, who created and nurtured this community that we know and love today, through its infancy. It was especially important that Hartmut and Gerda von Jeeze could make the trip out from New York State to celebrate with us.



Stained glass window depicting
St. Martin and the beggar.

The celebration took place in St. Martin's Hall at Camphill Village, a building that we dedicated two years ago. The story and image of St. Martin framed much of our evening together. The well-known story of Martin described him as a young soldier riding his horse up to the gates of a city. At the gates he saw a poor man shivering in rags on this cold and bitter day. Moved by the man's poverty and need Martin cut his cloak in half with his sword and gave half to the grateful beggar man. Later that night in sleep Martin was visited by God and told that when he gave his cloak to the beggar he was actually giving comfort and help to God, himself, and not a simple beggar. From the next day onward Martin gave up soldiering and put himself in the service of God.

It is apparent to us that during our 25 years of existence many individuals have come forward and offered their cloaks of warmth, of interest, of hospitality and of love to our dear village community, as Martin had done so long ago. These real deeds of support allowed our village community in central Minnesota to grow in strength and capacity

In the earliest years of the village the persons with special needs gave their hearts and hands to create a true home for themselves and others. We thank and recognize the vital contributions of Vickie Randall, Erick Capps, Danny Goan, Evelyn Keacher, George Burns, Jim Lahti, Greg Kara, Philip Eldahl, and Arnold Ceravsky. Providing essential leadership within the pioneering

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We warmly thank the following individuals and businesses who have contributed to
Camphill Village Minnesota.
May 1 through November 16, 2005

Individuals

Angela Anderson
Mary Barstad
William Beddor
Michael Behr
Harvey Bjerke
Norman Botz
Clarke Brooks
Robert and Betty Burns
W.E. Clemens
Jack and Theresa Cotter
Robert and Anne Cotter
Lorraine Douglass
Thomas Dwight
Mavis Eckes
Jeffrey and Cheri Ellison
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Essler
Tom Farr and Mary Davis
Skip Fitterer
Bessie Flan
Mike Flan and Susan Lawlor
William Gamber
Christine Geiger
Philip and Joan Goan
Stephen and Anne Goddard
Gerald and Ellie Goplen
Timothy Hahn
Robert Hall
Harold Hansen
Merlin and Karen Hanson
Tony Hanson
Donald Helgeson
Bill and Betsy Herman
William Holden
Deborah Howell
Rick Jennissen
Tony and Marlene Jennissen

Lynden Johnson
Douglas and Mary Jones
Jan Kaul
Mary Ellen Kaul
Yumi Kayama
Ronald Kocher
Andrew and Geri Kowalenko
Ruth Krafty
Anthony Kroll
JoAnne Kudrna
Allan Kulzer
Dolores Laliberte
David and Kathleen Mample
William Manning and Ruth Mickelson
Michael and Sheryl March
Alton Marshall
Darryl and Jo Meyer
Rosalyn Meyers
Joyce Montgomery
Mark and Marcia Munson
Kenneth Nash
Leroy and Leila Oliver
Bernice Olson
Gerry Otto
Henry Paetzel
Eugene Poechmann
Debra Pullen
Peter and Linda Quinn
Barbara Rivers
Carol Robson
Bob and Betty Schenk
Katrina Schumacher
Richard Scudder
Morris and Anne Smith
Clifford Steinkraus
Lloyd and Jeanette Tack
Victor Traut
Vern Tschida

Robert and Ileen Waldron
Joyce Wicklund
Rose Yurek

Foundations, corporations & organizations

Albany Knights of Columbus
Ament Pools and Spas
American Express Foundation
American Heritage National Bank
BD Matching Gift Program
Belgrade Knights of Columbus
Camphill Foundation
Community Connection of Sauk Centre
Dairyland Supply, Inc.
Fridley Knights of Columbus
Greater Twin Cities United Way
Greenwald Lion's Club
Kopp Family Foundation
Long Prairie Dental Clinic
Long Prairie Food Center
Long Prairie Knights of Columbus
Long Prairie Packing Co.
McVay Foundation
The Medicine Shoppe
Minneapolis Marriott S.W.
Premiere Charities International Assoc. The
Rathmann Family Foundation
Sauk Centre Knights of Columbus
Sisters of the Order of St. Benedict
State Farm Insurance
Sy and Sons, Inc., Commercial Real Estate
Whole Farm Coop
Widseth Smith Nolting & Associates, Inc.
Ziegler Inc.

UPDATE ON HAHN FAMILY CHALLENGE GIFT

We are very near our deadline to meet the Hahn Family challenge gift. As you will recall, the Hahn family is offering a challenge gift of \$35,000 if we are able to raise \$70,00 by the end of the month. At this point, we still need to raise some \$34,000. If you are considering a contribution to Camphill, doing so now before the end of the year, would multiply your gift by 50%. Thus, due to the challenge gift, a \$500 gift would in effect be a \$750 contribution to Camphill.

If you would like more details on the challenge grant please feel free to call Mary Gruber at 651-222-3112 or Bill Briggs at 320-732-6365.

George and Joy Rathmann

LOYAL SUPPORTERS

As a long time friend of the Rathmann family, I remember the beginning of their long and wonderful support of CVM. Our friendship, which began when we were neighbors in St. Paul and spans 43 years, has been one of the more important parts of my life.

I had been on the Camphill Board of Trustees from very early on and in 1989 was acutely aware of the desperate need to find a better way to raise funds. Our long-time mentor, Don Steinkraus, found a part-time fundraiser willing to take on the challenge and developed a budget for the project. The amount required struck fear in my heart for I could not visualize finding that much.

Then I called my friend George Rathmann, who by then had moved to California. Both he and his wife, Joy, knew and loved our son Danny who was living at Camphill. I tried to describe the wonderful place we had found for our son and the environment Camphill created for him and a dozen others with special needs. I explained our need for a better system of fundraising. George listened intently and then asked, "What is this going to cost me?" I gave him Don Steinkraus' figures. George simply responded, "We'd love to support Danny's place."



Joy and George Rathmann

That generous donation made it possible to start the Development Office, without which Camphill Village would not have survived. Then, in the following years, when Camphill was in need of capital funds, the Rathmanns continued to faithfully respond to the needs. Thus, they

made significant contributions towards the acquisition of Marlspring Farm, the completion of St. Martin's Hall and other building expansion. To this day the Rathmann Family Foundation continues to be responsive to Camphill's needs in a most generous way.

For more than 18 years, CVM has enjoyed the Rathmann's support. On behalf of my family and all of Camphill, I want to thank the Rathmann family for their on-going love for and significant support of Camphill Village Minnesota. Phil Goan

On August 10, Gregory Kara passed away. Greg was one of the early residents of Camphill Village Minnesota, arriving in 1983. In the early days he was Don Wilson's faithful helper around the farm. Later, he had to curtail his work due to physical limitations, and steadily declined until he went to the hospital in July, never to return to CVM.

Although Greg could not communicate verbally, his glowing smile and enthusiastic hugs conveyed his love and dedication to all of us at Camphill. We will miss him.

Gregory Kara 1948-2005



community were the first co-workers – Hartmut and Gerda von Jeetze, Don and Kristin Wilson and Mark Steinrueck. Mark continues to serve the village as long-time treasurer and board member. Don and Kristin devoted themselves to farm, craft and home for 15 years in the Village, laboring with love so that people with special needs could experience community life. Hartmut and Gerda were outstanding founders for the village. Their love of this land, enthusiasm for renewing agriculture and their quality of vision that material life needs to be imbued with spiritual life are just a few of the many gifts that they gave to us.

Without the support of many who did not live within the early community, the Village would not have survived. If anyone could be called godparents to the village, it would be Carol and Sheridan Robson. Before there was any Village in Minnesota they visited Camphill Copake in New York State. They organized, held meetings (long, long meetings Carol recalls), financed so much, brought groceries, whatever it took to help bring to birth a village in Minnesota. They nurtured the young Village then and continue even today to take an active role in Village development. Joining the Robsons in providing organizational guidance and hands on help with building, repair work at the farm and whatever else needed doing were Shirley Capps, John Miller, Peter and Linda Quinn all from the Twin cities.



Hartmut & Gerda von Jeetze with Dennis Dietzel

From the first days in the fall of 1980 neighbors from Todd County guided and supported the little Village initiative in the Midwest. Darryl Meyer, head of Todd County Social Services offered encouragement and a warm welcome for the Camphill Village taking root. His insight into the potential of the Village was a brave and inspired deed that saw beyond the humble start of the community. Loyal friends stepped forward in the most amazing way to help the Village make firewood, fix fences and equipment, paint, gave welcomed advice on so many things and took us into their families: the Goplens, the Orrs, the Krolls, the Browns, the Flans, the Schenks and the Porchers. Some served on the board of directors, others helped put up buildings and roads, and all shared their warmth and love of the place that is their home in central Minnesota



Sharing memories: Craig Branfass, Carol & Sheridan Robson, Erick Capps. (behind)

New organizations, like the Village, require great financial support in the first few years to become established. We have been blessed that through the intercession of Carlo Pietzner, Otto and Marguerite Manley stepped forward with significant donations that allowed the first building to become a reality. Next, Phil and Joan Goan worked tirelessly in these years to find the funds for necessary projects of the Village and also to secure funding to put the Village on a solid financial footing. Since the earliest days, Don Steinkraus has been our development advisor extraordinaire, leading us

faithfully and well into the then mysterious world of foundations and philanthropy. Coming originally from the small town of Bertha in central Minnesota, Don has always had a warm spot for social projects in this part of Minnesota and he has been an unbelievable friend and mentor to us. To these six individuals we owe a very great debt of gratitude and appreciation for their bringing the financial resources to build up our community in its formative years.

The story of Camphill Village Minnesota is still being written as we go forward into the next quarter century. To all of those named and unnamed in the preceding paragraphs we express our gratitude and thanks for what you did, so that we could enjoy and participate in the community that you gave birth to and nurtured so lovingly. You all are the modern day Martins, who have spread your mantles of warmth and kindness around our lives. Thank you so much!
Bill Briggs



Phil Drake &
Jacque Bieringer

“NEW” CO-WORKERS

Six years ago this past August, we met on the gravel road outside Prairie Wind House. Immediately there was a connection, an intrigue, which we continue to be bound by today. Eight months later we left the Village together to embark upon a journey that has since changed our lives in many profound ways. After a few months of living in Long Prairie, Phil accepted a position as Class Teacher at Spring Hill Waldorf School in Excelsior, MN. The following year, Jacque also joined the Spring Hill Faculty as a Kindergarten assistant, and later, as a Lead Kindergarten Teacher. Both of us found great joy and deep satisfaction in working with children through Waldorf education, and due to the fact that Spring Hill was a developing school, we quickly found ourselves at the very hub of its development serving on many committees beyond our roles on the Board and Faculty. Despite our deep love of teaching, pioneering a school for five years left us desperately in need of balance and a new life rhythm. After some time of exploring various options, we realized that CVM was a place where we could begin to find balance in our lives as well as continue our striving in those areas of human spiritual life that we hold as ideals. In addition to this, we recognized that out of our teaching and life experiences there were many gifts we could offer the community in return.

The welcome was warm and familiar. We returned with much inspiration gained during our time away from CVM. Just as we had grown and changed, so had the Village. Our leaving and returning offered us a unique opportunity to gain new perspectives of the many facets of community life here. It is a wonderful place to call home. Among the daily routines, it is important for us to enrich life for ourselves and for those with whom we live through a connection to something greater and higher. We are delighted to offer an Arts and Movement Group twice a week for twelve Villagers which includes therapeutic-remedial activities, movement, verses, songs, stories, games, and artistic activities such as painting, drawing and lantern making for Martinmas. We are currently helping bring about this year’s production of the Shepherds’ Play and enjoy taking part in festival planning and celebrations. Phil is also engaged in this year’s orientation course for new co-workers and will be working with Bill to facilitate a Homemaker’s Group as a support for house parents in the Village.

We both hold working with children dear to our hearts and look forward to having a family of our own and returning to Waldorf teaching at some point in the future. Right now, we are grateful to be part of a house community once more within the life and rhythm of CVM, where people of varying needs and abilities unite to work, live and celebrate life together.
Jacque Bieringer and Phil Drake

“ISOLATION FROM COMMUNITY LIFE IS THE WORST DISABILITY”

This article was first printed in the Midwest Anthroposophical Newsletter

October 2005 marked the twenty-fifth birthday of the Camphill Movement in the American heartland. It was that month in 1980 when six daring souls from Camphill Village Copake in upstate New York moved onto a dairy farm just north of Sauk Centre and became the first residents of Camphill Village Minnesota

The celebration of this anniversary was “low key, kind of like the community itself,” according to one attendee. The 40+ coworkers and lifesharing people with special needs who currently live and work in the community hosted a special dinner and gathering of about 30 of the many people who carried the community in its early days, from inside and outside the village itself. A panoramic photo display chronicled those who have come and gone from the community over the years, and an evening of reminiscing about the first days brought many tears and much laughter, as well as a new appreciation for the hard work and tenacity of the first pioneers.

Twenty-five years later, the community is comprised of two contiguous farms -- 470 acres of beautiful Minnesota woods and wetlands along the Sauk River where seven houses, several workshops, 250 biodynamically farmed acres, and a large new community center provide a rich cultural and social environment for residents ranging from 20 to 77 years old. Most of the lifesharing adults with special needs are from different parts of Minnesota, but the coworkers are from all parts of the United States, with backgrounds as diverse and representative as might be found on any city street. Some come for a short time from Europe, Asia, and Africa as well, to learn the Camphill model of Social Therapy and to take advantage of the opportunity to live and work in the U.S. “Young” people of all ages also join the community for a year or two through the Americorps program, in which participants receive financial support for past or future educational endeavors in exchange for their volunteer efforts. Volunteers from the local communities and colleges are frequent visitors, and regular trips into the surrounding communities to shop, volunteer, and attend social and cultural events make the boundaries of this community much broader than its physical parameters. No one who lives in the community receives a salary – all are volunteers seeking to live out the Fundamental Social Law by caring for their neighbor and allowing their neighbor to care for them in turn, without the exchange of money. In spite of not receiving a salary, most find the quality of life higher than they would ever be able to accomplish in the world of wages and paychecks.

One thing on which all agreed: It is impossible to understand or truly appreciate the life and work of Camphill without visiting a community. The level of mutual respect and camaraderie between coworkers and people with special needs and the unswerving commitment to meaningful work is truly counter to the current culture of “mainstreaming” that relegates many disabled adults to days of menial work and nights in front of the TV. In Camphill, each person is recognized for the strengths and gifts they bring to the home and workplace, and supported in reaching their highest vocational, social, and personal goals. As John McKnight, Director of Community Studies at Northwestern University, once said, “Isolation from community life is the worst disability.” Everyone who has lived and worked in, and supported, this rural, agricultural community in the Upper Midwest knows and embodies the truth of this statement.



Karen Davis-Brown

MESSAGE FROM BOARD PRESIDENT

I have been around Camphill Village Minnesota for most of its twenty-five years, first as just the brother-in-law of Dan Goan who came to live in the Village in its early years. I remember how wonderful it was to discover that a place existed with purpose and spirit for Dan to make his home. And then some time ago (when Oakwood was just being finished) I joined the Board. I have told many people over the years that being on the Camphill Board is, unlike many boards on which we have opportunities to serve, refreshing and invigorating – the spirit of the place and people rubs off. So, here I am, serving my second stint as President.

We have spent the last twenty-five years growing CVM from an idea to a “mature” village: we have acquired land and we have built houses and workshops and the great St. Martin’s Hall; we have established and grown an endowment fund; we have grown and nurtured a support community that cares about CVM.

The challenges for the next decade are in many ways as great as when the Village was new. Most villagers receive funding through the county of their residence. One of the consequences of budget tightening at the State level has been to reduce funds available to counties for persons who would otherwise want to be at Camphill. Many counties tell us that as a result of state funding cuts they simply do not have funds to place additional persons at Camphill. The Board and Village are working on finding new avenues of funding. This is not an easy task and it will, at a minimum, require considerably more administrative time and expense as we go forward. The residents of the Village, villagers and co-workers, are aging (as is most of our country) and we are thinking and planning about what that means for the Village. And, while we do not foresee any new building projects, we have roofs and siding to replace and maintain and many other ongoing maintenance projects (which are often not as exciting to fundraise for, but are just as essential.)

But no less than when the Village was new, we are excited about the future and optimistic about our challenges. And we are thankful for all of the families, friends and supporters of Camphill who continue to help make this place a bright place in our world.

Jim Wiant

Co-workers Robert Rivers and Stephanie Agnew were married on October 7. They join Evelyn Keacher, Jerry Yurek, Chrissy Klotz and Tal Simchoni in the house community at Oakwood. We wish them well.



Robert Rivers and Stephanie Agnew

COMINGS AND GOINGS.....

Summer, as usual, marked the departure of many co-workers and the arrival of others. Leaving were **Veronika Sturm**, and **Gabrielle Bonsel**, both returning to Austria; **Johannes Knopfle** back to Germany; **Barbara and Michael Hoet** moving on to Southwest U.S.; **Anna Gammeter** and **Madeleine Michel** back to Switzerland; **Grant Ault** back to southern Minnesota to take over the family farm; **Alicia Santacroce** returning to California (minus her goats) and **Kerry Grant**, taking some time to wander around the country before settling anywhere in particular. The new arrivals are: **Dean King** from England, **Stephanie Agnew** from Minneapolis, **Murugon Vaithilingam** from India, **Kelsey Grant-Jenkins** (Kerry's daughter), most recently from Portland, Oregon; **Phil Drake** and **Jacque Bieringer** (see page 5) and **Tal Simchoni** from California.... In August **Tim King** presented a reading from his book Fathers and Sons... Another successful Fall Festival was held September 11...**Sarah Derkey**, **David Tack**, **John Weingartz** and **Sara Munson** attended the annual "Music for Social Change" in New Ulm. The program included discussions, song-writing, and performances...In August, the **Gammeter** family (former co-workers) along with **Madeleine Michel** feted us with a Swiss evening: Swiss games, food and songs...

