

# Radius

May 2008

Issue 37

A newsletter for Camphill Special School families

*“Receive the children with reverence, educate them with love, send them forth in freedom” - Rudolf Steiner*



Anna

## Monthly Musings: Reflections on the Parents' Workshop

By Anna Schmidt,  
Fourth Year Student of the Camphill School of Curative Education

One by one we all trickle back into Oakhill. With a slightly nostalgic, post-vacation sigh, we get back to work. Every corner in the house has to be dusted, beds need to be made, tablecloths ironed and flowers arranged.

Yes, it was time once again, for the spring Parent Workshop where, for two days, parents join us and have the opportunity to get a glimpse of what life in Camphill Special School is like.

While the parents are in the Schoolhouse learning, conversing, and meeting each other, the Oakhill crew takes a first walk through Beaver Run, delighting in the beautiful changes spring has brought about. The sun is shining, trees and bushes are blooming and from Ben and Joni's a promising smell of hot dogs, brownies, popcorn and what-nots, travels through the air. Everything seems suddenly so alive again, after vacation's repose.

At lunch, to the best of our abilities, we squeeze children, parents, and coworkers around the table to enjoy a delicious meal. In the midst of all the merry chatter, I inwardly step back for a moment and notice that I am surrounded with so many joyful smiles from children and adults alike, all celebrating this precious time together.

Throughout the weekend a festive mood could be sensed all around, and truly it was like a festival: a festival of encounters and sharing!

## MAY 2008

Fri. May 9	6:00 pm	Tennis Ball (The Desmond Hotel, Malvern, PA)
Sat. May 10	1:00 pm	ProAm Tennis Tournament (Valley Creek Park, Malvern, PA)
Sun. May 11		Mother's Day
Wed. May 14	1:30 pm	Parent-Staff Group meeting (Schoolhouse kitchen)
Sat. May 17	9:30 am – 12:30 pm	Lower School Open House
Mon. May 26		Memorial Day - Office and Maintenance closed

*As always, if you would like to participate in any event, please contact your child's houseparent or teacher.*



Kindergartener Jack and aide Lisa enjoy one of the new ducklings born on April 22nd

**New Student Council hard at work**

*By Courtney Coffman, Development Officer*

*I recently sat down with this year's newly elected Student Council President Sarah to speak with her about this year's Council and their plans.*



Sarah is this year's Student Council President

*Who are this year's Officers and Representatives?* I am President and twelfth grade Representative; Alexandria is Vice President and eleventh grade Representative; Angela is twelfth grade representative; Stevie is tenth grade Representative; Will and Mindy are tenth grade Representatives; and Nina and Mark are ninth grade Representatives

*What activities are you planning for this year?*

We are planning to have a Prom, but are not sure when it will be. We are holding afternoon clubs on Tuesdays and Fridays. We have basketball, high school singing, high school orchestra, baking, soccer and football, and arts and crafts. We are thinking of having a fundraiser – maybe a bake sale, car wash, or a concert.

*What do you hope to accomplish as President?*

There is a lot of teasing in the High School and I would like that to stop. I tell people, "Stop teasing. You are in high school, act your age." I also want to make sure the Prom is really fun.

*What are you most excited about?*

I am very excited about graduation and our play. We are doing *Much Ado About Nothing* and I am playing Beatrice.

*When does the student council meet?*

We meet on Tuesday afternoons and are working on getting the clubs up and running and discussing the Prom.

*Thanks Sarah! We look forward to seeing all your hard work making a difference in the High School!*

**Volunteers help prepare Beaver Run campus for spring**

Twenty-one young men from the Muhlenberg College chapter of Sigma Phi Epsilon (pictured below) volunteered on the afternoon of Saturday, March 29th. The fraternity worked on various land projects and did a wonderful job of . Thanks for volunteering, ΣΦΕ!



Employees from LexisNexis Mealey's (pictured below) volunteered on Friday, April 18th. The five workers had a beautiful day to rake and clear out the grassy areas around the pool. We truly appreciate your efforts, LexisNexis, and look forward to you returning next year!



Fourth and fifth graders from Shamona Creek Elementary School (seen working below) spent the late morning of April 19th clearing and mulching the gardens around the Schoolhouse. They and their parents made huge progress on this beautification project.



### Camphill Special School welcomes four new students this spring!

Jeremiah is fourteen years old and from Chatham, New Jersey. He is in Maureen’s seventh grade class and is living in Garden House. His parents are Joanne and Peter and he has two older brothers, James and Nathaniel.



Sixteen year old Andrew is from Cedar Grove, New Jersey. He is in Else’s eleventh grade class and is living in Trillium. His parents are Kim and Andrew and he has a younger sister named Abigail.

Celine, from Tallahassee, Florida, is fourteen years old. She has joined Sally’s ninth grade class and Woodledge. Her parents are Janis and Robert and she has an older sister named Aleah.



Franki joins Camphill Special School as a day student from Brodheadsville, Pennsylvania. He will be turning twelve in early May and is in Ginny’s fifth grade class. His parents are Marlene and Franklin and he has two older sisters, Christina and Frances, and an older brother, Adrian.

#### Staff Children News

**Amelia Sabra**, daughter of Garden House housemother Melanie, starred as Lady Larken in Kimberton Waldorf School’s production of *Once Upon a Mattress*. The show was a big hit with audiences and we offer our congratulations to Amelia.

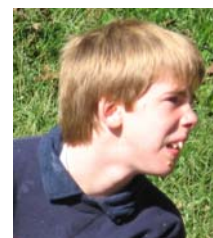
**Lioba Schad**, daughter of Andreas and Corina, appeared on the cover of Community Courier newspaper for her volunteer service at East Vincent Township Park. Lioba is a junior at Kimberton Waldorf School.



Lioba (second from left) and her KWS classmates

#### “Eddie’s Voice” on May 3

Ed Williams, parent of Eddie, will host an event called “Eddie’s Voice” on Saturday, May 3 at R.P. McMurphy’s on MacDade Boulevard in Holmes, Ridley Township, PA. The festivities will be from 4–8 p.m. and there is a suggested \$30 donation. Part of the proceeds will benefit Camphill Special School.



Eddie

## Parent Workshop, April 4 - 6

By Florie Seery, mother of Alasdair

Photos by Marc Bryan-Brown, father of Alasdair

As a first year family, I didn't know what to expect of the Parent Workshop, but I must admit I was excited about putting on my hiking boots and working the land! I packed work gloves and felt ready to make a contribution - yard work sounds a lot better when it's someone else's yard and you are not working alone. I was game for group discussion, but I had no idea how powerful the sharing would be. I also underestimated the value of "in house" time with our children. Like most parents, I miss my son so much, but participating in meal time and house life made me realize how essential his Camphill experiences are.



Florie and her son, Alasdair

The weekend began with a potluck dinner. Afterwards we gathered in a big circle and introduced ourselves. Carsten Callesen kicked off the discussion, sharing Rudolf Steiner's insights about how birth order impacts the development and personality of a child. He opened up the floor and we were off and running! This group of parents had no trouble keeping the discussion going. It was very inclusive and moving. The theme of the weekend was "Finding the Balance in Family Life," much of the discussion focused on siblings, but we also covered a wide range of topics, such as the life of the couple, vacations, family social events, and transition. The validation of being in a room with so many people with shared experiences was empowering. Parents spoke so eloquently about their children during group discussion. What a supreme pleasure to put the names with these beautiful faces!



Left to right: Florie, her daughter, Angela, and Paul Downs, father of student Henry, play the hand bells

Saturday was a beautiful day at Camphill. Spring had sprung - the bulbs were up and the air and sky were beautiful. We gathered as a big group again - over forty adults attended and over fifteen siblings. The siblings were given a range of activities to choose from. There was horseback riding, soccer, and art projects, including making beautiful stepping stones. When I asked my fifteen year old daughter if she felt ridiculous being led around the horse ring by an adult she replied, "Mom, how could anyone feel ridiculous at this place?!!" The acceptance our children feel at Camphill creates a charmed, peaceful atmosphere for all of us. The parents broke into small groups, but just before lunch we gathered together again and learned how to play the bells, and appropriately enough, sang spring songs. It was great to use music muscles again! And of course, as with most conferences, the exchanges and conversations that happen over coffee and breaks were the most helpful. The staff made superb contributions to the weekend. They really know how to listen and their comments and insights were invaluable. The mutual respect we had for each other was wonderful.

The land work was very satisfying. Many hands make light work! We raked, built fences, and burned wood. It was particularly lovely to see parents work with their children, or see them hang out with their kids at Ben and Joni's snack shack! Another wonderful family activity was Manfred leading children and parents in folk dancing.

Sunday there was more time for sharing and wrap up. One parent pointed out that a weekend at Camphill was good for the soul - I couldn't agree more! We felt like a group of friends, not strangers. Sad to leave, but so happy that our children are part of the most wonderful community in the world!



10th grader Brian

**Classroom and Transition Program Happenings**



The bag the children made for Elsbeth

**Kindergarten:** Kindergarteners processed wool from sheep to make a special gift for Elsbeth, their music teacher. The children helped to clean and card the wool, helped a bit with the spinning, dyeing, and rolled it into a ball ready for knitting.

Annika knitted a bag for

Elsbeth and the class presented it to her on her birthday.

**1st grade:** First graders began the new term with a form drawing block and visited the creek many times to watch the water run and jump over the rocks. They are enjoying spring by watching all the flowers they planted in the fall bloom and by planting seeds.

**3rd grade:** Third graders worked on house building in main lesson with Carlton. The house is in the lower school playground. It already has floor boards and the frame for one wall. They are using wood harvested in Beaver Run for the floor and walls.



Adam is in 3rd grade

**5th grade:** Fifth graders are studying Botany. They are learning about the spring flowers—snowdrops, crocuses, daffodils, and tulips. They are so lucky to be at school in Beaver Run with all the flowers on their doorstep. To end their block, they will visit Winterthur, the DuPont family estate, to enjoy all the flowers and blossoms there. A new student, Franki,



5th grader Morgan

has joined the class and his smiles are lighting up the classroom!

**6th grade:** Tales of the Crusades and the plague are ringing in the sixth grade! The Middle Ages is our new main lesson block. The class will go to see the Medieval armor collection at the Reading Museum.

**7th grade:** Seventh graders are actively practicing for their upcoming puppet play. Watch for pictures in the next *Radius*! The class has just started a new main lesson block on anatomy and nutrition.

**9th grade:** The ninth graders have been enjoying a dynamic Physics block. Manfred Maier’s lab is full of interesting and exciting phenomena. The class will be going on a field trip soon, during which they will explore “POWER.”

**10th grade:** Tenth graders finished a block on Abraham Lincoln before spring break. They now are in the middle of an Astronomy block. Students are experiencing space through art and observation. They are looking forward to a visit to the Reading Planetarium.

**11th grade:** Eleventh graders are having a block on the Middle Ages with aide Claire Brannon. The stained glass windows in the classroom set the mood and the students love being knighted and reciting their monkish vows. The highlight will be a trip to the Cloisters in New York City.

**12th grade:** Twelfth graders started to work on their class play, *Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare. They heard the story, casted the characters, and made masks in handwork for one of the scenes in the play.



Senior Danny

**TTP:** The Transition Program students are busy in their spring crews: Land/Animal Care, CSA Garden, and Beaver Farm Garden in the morning; and, in the afternoons, Land/Animal Care, Soap-making, and Stove and Bench Refurbishing. The pigs have gone to the butcher, except for the sow, which they will have bred so that there will be piglets in September! The Farm has a new female calf named Anabelle. A weasel got into the chicken coop during Easter break and the surviving broody hen (due any day now) has been dubbed Molly Brown (the unsinkable). Luckily the ducks began laying eggs, so even though there are no chicken eggs, they have lovely duck eggs with very large yolks. Spring has arrived and they all are reveling in it.



## Are you ready for the 2008 Camphill ProAm?

Just days from now, on May 9th, The Desmond Hotel in Malvern will be bustling with families, friends, and supporters of Camphill Special School. Will you be among them? We hope you will, because not only is the event a lot of fun with dinner, dancing to The Chatterband, and auctions, but you also will be showing your support for your child's school.

Don't miss the ProAm Tennis Tournament on May 10th at Valley Creek Park in Malvern! You will get to watch the fierce competition, as houseparent Andreas Schuschke and his partner pro Frank Englund attempt to reclaim the championship from last year's winning pair, Kyle Hawthorne and Matt Bonds.

Admission to both events is \$125 per person or \$200 per couple. Call Courtney at 610.469.9236 to reserve your space ASAP!

## A sample of this year's auction items...

**Camphill Special School**  
1784 Fairview Road  
Glenmoore, PA 19343

### Mission Statement

*Camphill Special School's mission is to create wholeness for children and youth with developmental disabilities through education and therapy in extended family living.*

**Do you have material you would like to have appear in the Radius?**

Deadline for submission of items to appear in the June 2008 issue of the *Radius* is May 16th. All material should be submitted in electronic form, either by e-mail or on disk, to Courtney M. Coffman in the Office or at [ccoffman@beaverrun.org](mailto:ccoffman@beaverrun.org).

Thank you!

Please note that all material submitted is subject to editing and is included on a space available basis.

**To receive the Radius by e-mail contact Courtney at [ccoffman@beaverrun.org](mailto:ccoffman@beaverrun.org).**



Maureen's Gift Gallery contributed this glass plate by artist Meryl L. Wolper



"Monkey Business" - handmade child's quilt by grandmother Marie Cirafesi



Ribbon, shell, carnelian, Czech glass beads, green turquoise, and citrine necklace and earrings handmade by parent Roz Heiko, Jewel Rose Designs

Right: These tiles are just one of three sets donated by The Transition Program students