The school celebrated as the Waldorf® educational movement turned 100 on September 19th. There was music, skits, chocolates, and a tree planting. For me, the highlight was when a group of our teachers and coworkers stood up to recite one of the morning verses, each in their own language: German, English, Russian, Ukrainian, Israeli, Xhosa, Mandarin, Spanish, and Portuguese. I welled up as I listened. It was difficult not to be awe-inspired imagining the paths each of us have traveled to become part of The Camphill School. So many people from every corner of the planet were led to this place to become part of a community that, in most cases, they never laid eyes on. We all made our way for our own individual reasons, but we are all here for one another, for the students, for their families, for the community.

Our world is becoming smaller, yet as that happens the number of people who would consider themselves lonely has increased. People live their lives more alongside technology than alongside their fellow humans. At The Camphill School, meaningful relationships are made possible through care, compassion, and genuine interest in one another. We connect on a true human level, face to face, together. We see each other. We learn from each other. We are here for one another. We want to understand where the people in our lives come from—not just the physical place, but also the inner place. We know that where they are coming from shapes their response to the world around them. If there are conflicts, we talk to one another to work out whatever is going wrong and make it right. This is not only for our own well-being, but also for that of the community. We must all care for ourselves as much as one another because the health of the entire school depends on it. No matter our nationality, language, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or ability, it is through this interconnectedness that we thrive.

All for one. One for all.

Courtney Coffman
Editor
Some thoughts on the founding of the Waldorf® School in 1919

By Ginny Thimme

100 years ago, the first Waldorf® school opened its doors in Stuttgart, Germany. There were 256 students and twelve brave teachers!

This summer, I have been reading and pondering about how this first Waldorf® school came about and about the individuals who made it happen. I have especially been studying Emil Molt, the owner of the Waldorf Astoria cigarette factory, who went to his friend, Rudolf Steiner, and asked for a school for the children of the workers at his factory. Emil Molt was a special man, and there are so many stories about him that make me smile. For example, during the First World War, Molt began sending cigarettes to the soldiers in the trenches, but one day, realizing that cigarettes were not enough, he started printing off poems and fairy tales and sending them to the soldiers, inside the cigarette packets!

Emil Molt bought all the land and the buildings for the first Waldorf® school, paid the teachers’ salaries, paid tuition for all the factory children to go to the school, treated the teachers to a special festive meal after the opening school ceremony, and took them to the opera to see The Magic Flute. He also bought 256 boxes of chocolates for the children on their first day of school! Not pencils or crayons or paints, but chocolates! In his memoir, Molt writes that in post-war Germany, many of the children had not seen or eaten chocolates before. What a wonderful man!

Another person who caught my interest was Johannes Geyer, one of the first Waldorf® teachers. After the school had started and been in session for a few days, he went to Rudolf Steiner and asked for a morning verse for the children to recite each morning before lessons began. Rudolf Steiner immediately produced two morning verses. (He had been thinking about it too, but was just waiting for someone to ask!) One verse was for the younger children (grades 1 to 4) and one was for the older children (grades 5 to 12). These verses are still recited every day in every Waldorf® school across the globe (including ours).

When talking about the morning verses, Rudolf Steiner told the children: “When you come to school in the morning, when you recite the morning verse, then you should remember: I am here in order to become an upright person.” And when talking to the teachers, Rudolf Steiner said: “Let the children repeat the verses each morning, and, even though there may be some among them who cannot say a word, you will find this repeating in chorus has a wonderful balancing influence.”
To learn to live: My personal unfolding from a year at Beaver Run
By Benedikt Meßer, Coworker Alumnus ‘19

You are coming back from an exciting trip to New York City. You have seen more different people in an hour than you have seen in a month, rushing up and down the avenues. Honking cars, flashing lights, and billboards swarm in your head.

Then suddenly, you spot the white, rustic facade of Creekside between the cover of the lush branches. Even if you have only lived here for a couple of months, there is a feeling of coming home.

It is a haven— for the students just as it is for coworkers, young and old, everyone. Which is where it gets interesting. It is a social experiment where everyone from everywhere is connected through our bond to the children.

Now, who is in charge of who? I guess it is a balance. Let’s call it “educating freedom,” and that is just fine because forgiveness is the key to balance. A harmonious atmosphere that is warm and holding, nurturing and empowering for all its villagers. But first and foremost, human. Alive and breathing! From fall to spring life-giving and draining. From summer to winter full and ever-changing.

What a place to grow up, to learn to live, to give and receive. Everyone who comes gets what they need because there is a teacher in everyone and everything. Sometimes it is a walk in the woods (or a run), eating a seemingly simple meal (or preparing one), an intimate conversation (or holistic lecture), but always when you don’t expect it.

Which was exactly my case. I started the year with pure excitement and motivation to experience a year abroad but was not at all able to grasp that my life’s journey was just about to begin.

Beaver Run is a multicultural country in itself that would teach me to see the world in all its different facets and colors. The children invited me in the most innocent way to be a part of their lives. Working, playing, and living with them taught me that we all have our “special needs.” It taught me to understand, accept, and embrace them within myself and in others.

Love became bigger than fear and all its sidekicks.

When I arrived, I carried the seed already, but I had it concealed in a shell. I was offered my very own place to grow in the community life, a fertile soil. I was welcomed to learn and to evolve. Everyone is. That is what we all strive for: to learn to live, wherever we go.

But a place where learning and living, change and growth, are so welcomed and ever-present, as they are in this children’s school hidden in the woods, is hard to find in a world that is ruled by money and statistics. We learn how to live with love but also with responsibility.

Leaving Beaver Run means carrying out the magic that does not only live in the eyes of the children but which can be kindled in everyone.
We did things with joy: 
Hedda Smith-Hald

Hedda Smith-Hald arrived in the U.S. on September 1, 1963. Hedda’s journey to Camphill in the U.S. was, like many others, perhaps based on coincidence but, more likely, a path forged by fate. She was born and raised in Norway by an anthroposophist mother who was deeply interested in becoming a biodynamic farmer. While her mother was at a biodynamic farm in Denmark, an aunt and uncle cared for her. She joined her mother in Denmark at the farm and stayed in a large farmhouse. A couple rented one wing of the farmhouse and used it as a children’s home. Hedda was twelve at the time and was taken with what they were doing for and with the children. She recalls signing a memory book that summer and saying, “I am going to work with handicap children.”

Her mother, also inspired by the children’s home, went to Scotland to train with Karl Koenig and the Camphill movement; Hedda followed. At that time, the training was either at Glencraig or at Sheiling. Hedda shared, “We were very much living a community life of building up the place. We were jacks-of-all-trades and masters of none. There was no time to prepare; we just did what was necessary. We worked hard, but we did things with joy!”

In the fall of 1964, a year after the school began, Hedda and Ursel planned an open house. They prepared for days ahead of time, cooking and cleaning. They were up until 1 a.m. picking salad greens by the light of the moon. “Morning came, and not a single person showed up!” Hedda said. “Later that afternoon, two ladies did come walking through campus, but they were cleaning women who had worked in Whitestone for the previous owners. They wanted to see what we had done with the place.”

Hedda met Steve Ljovshin when he was in seminar (now the Camphill Academy), and they married at Beaver Run in 1965. Hedda was doing all of the things that regular and extended family life at Camphill entailed while running a house, teaching, and raising her five children. In 1978, the family decided to move to Camphill Village USA to have more time in their days. Being an artist, Steve especially wanted to find more time to paint. After two years in Copake, they moved to Detroit to help lead a group home. Their eldest daughter married in Norway in the summer of 1982. Being in the splendor of a Norwegian summer inspired the entire family to move there. They did so, and have never left. Since then, Hedda has kept herself meaningfully busy assisting refugees and serving on the Board of Camphill in Norway.

Hedda returned to Beaver Run for the first time in five years for the Waldorf® 100 celebration in September. She used to regularly visit Ursel and accompany her on trips to and from Norway for Ursel to see her daughter. During these visits, Hedda has seen how the school has grown: “It is very solid and professional. It is overwhelming to see all the cars! For the first fifteen years, we managed with two cars per neighborhood. In the beginning, it was only Ursel in the office; and once a week an account-ant would come for a couple hours to check the books. The outer community and inner community are intertwined. I hope that the school manages to transform and meet the demands of the outer world and be true to the inner life of the community that is Camphill.”

Before departing, Hedda shared, “I am very grateful to come back even though I hardly know anyone. It is not a strange place, it still feels like home.”
The desire to simply help out
By Jennie Renninger, Volunteer

I learned about The Camphill School in the spring of 2014. I was looking online for volunteer opportunities and came across several needs at the school. I was at a point in my life where I was very unhappy in my career and ready for a change. My husband was the one who suggested that I start looking for volunteer work to see what other interests I had, since my career had dominated my life for so many years. I responded to the call for a third grade class helper. This was Ginny Thimm's class. My role that year was helping the students when they arrived at the schoolhouse to settle in for the day. We would start the day with morning circle, main lesson, and transition to snack and recess. Third grade was a very special year because the class builds a house in the woods. I was lucky to be a part of this project. We worked on making clay, sawing, and hammering wood with Carlton, the woodworking teacher, and ultimately building a lovely little house in the woods that we returned to visit over the years.

At the end of third grade, I had already made up my mind that I wouldn't return to Camphill simply because of how far it is from my house. The drive is a half an hour in each direction, which at the time I thought was a bit far to travel for a volunteer job. I said goodbye at the end of the school year. That summer I spent much of my time wondering what the students were up to, and so when September rolled around, I was ready to return if there was a need. I sent Ginny an email and asked if she could use my help in fourth grade. She replied “Yes!” and so I returned. In fourth grade, she asked me if I would be willing to work with one student in particular, Josh. I would greet Josh before school and help him to get ready for the day. Usually after telling each other what we had been up to since we last saw each other (sometimes our chatting may have lasted a little too long), we would work on reading, writing, or math.

Each year my role has been different depending on the class's needs. Over the years, I was a part of the main lesson, handwork, eurhythmy, and music classes. I also helped with snack and recess. My primary role was to help Josh with his lessons and with the class during times of transitioning for snack, recess, etc. At the end of each school year, Ginny would ask me, always with a look of hesitation on her face, “Will you be a part of our class next year?” and each year I would respond with “If you will have me, I will be back.” By the end of fourth grade I already knew that if I could plan my work and personal schedule around Ginny's class, I wanted to be a part of it in whatever way I could until the end of eighth grade in 2019.

There are several reasons why I decided that I wanted to continue volunteering at Camphill. I was truly appreciated as a volunteer who spent as little as two hours a week at the school, and made to feel like an important part of the community. From very early on, Ginny made sure to introduce me to other teachers, students, coworkers, aides, volunteers, and anyone we encountered. I always felt welcome wherever I went. Through the years, I was impressed by how teachers, parents, aides, and staff all work together to nurture and help bring out each child's talents. Whether it be art, music, or a love for working with their hands, over time these skills are brought out and nurtured. I really enjoyed watching the children grow their individual talents.

Originally, it was my husband who encouraged me to volunteer, but over time it became the kids in Ginny's class that influenced my decision to keep returning. I would be remiss not to mention my affection for the kids. I feel very fortunate to have been able to watch them grow and blossom into teenagers, each with an amazing personality. I enjoyed being around each of them as well as Ginny, their teacher.

When not at Camphill, I work part time as a dental hygienist, but what I enjoy most is tending to my small flock of sheep. I am an avid knitter and around the same time that I started volunteering at Camphill, my husband came up with the idea of buying a sheep to enhance my education about wool and what goes into creating the perfect yarn. If I am not knitting, I am usually daydreaming about knitting! While the kids were in fifth grade, I was able to help pass this love for knitting on to them, as their handwork lesson was learning to knit. I enjoyed around the classroom watching students, coworkers, our handwork teacher, Tina, as well as Ginny all knitting away.

If you are thinking about volunteering at The Camphill School, I say go for it! I started volunteering with the desire to simply help out in the classroom in any way possible. I expected nothing in return, but I was rewarded with a great sense of purpose in knowing that I played a special role in the lives of the students in Ginny Thimm's class.

Interested in learning about our volunteer opportunities? Contact Sarah Downs at downs@camphillschool.org.
Turn Pennsylvania tax dollars into tuition assistance!

The Pennsylvania Education Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program enables you to redirect your Pennsylvania tax dollars – almost dollar for dollar – to the Camphill School for tuition assistance for our students from Pennsylvania.

To qualify for the program, businesses must pay one of the listed taxes. Individuals qualify if their Pennsylvania state taxes exceed $3,500 annually. Effectively, you or your business can donate to the Camphill School instead of paying taxes to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Eligible businesses and individuals can receive a tax credit equal to 75% of their contribution to the Camphill School. This credit increases to 90% if you or your business commits to give the same amount for two consecutive years.

Any business authorized to do business in Pennsylvania subject to one or more of the following taxes may be eligible:

- Personal Income Tax
- Capital Stock/Foreign Franchise Tax
- Corporate Net Income Tax
- Bank Shares Tax
- Title Insurance & Trust Company Shares Tax Insurance Premium Tax (excluding surplus lines, unauthorized, domestic/foreign marine)
- Mutual Thrift Tax
- Malt Beverage Tax
- Retaliatory Fees Under Section 212 of the Insurance Company Law of 1921

For businesses, application deadlines apply. To learn more, contact Courtney Coffman at 610.469.9236 x132 or coffman@camphillschool.org.

A touch of the Irish

Thanks to our generous donors, the school was able to bring Irish artists Carmel Balfe and Tom Meskell to our community this summer.

They developed a program and show based on Irish folklore for and with our four-week Extended School Year (ESY) students. Each morning, the students assembled in the Blue Room and Tom and Carmel told stories from three tales: “Tir Na Nog,” “The Salmon of Knowledge,” and “The Giant’s Causeway.”

They told each story three times over three days as requested by our teachers, as repetition imparts the tales more deeply within our students. “The response we got was better and better as the days went by,” shared Tom.

As the four weeks went on, together with the students Tom and Carmel developed an installation and shadow theatre show that combined the three stories. Some students worked to make sculptures depicting scenes from the stories. While others made shadow puppets and practiced using them. It culminated in an unforgettable performance attended by the entire community as well as family and friends of the school.

At the end of their stay, Carmel told us, “I found it so rewarding to work with all the students. Each of them is really cherished for who they are. You get the support and time to explore who they are through the medium they’re working through so they can excel in their own way, and each one of them brings so much to the project.”

Thank you, Tom and Carmel, for spending the summer with us and creating such a beautiful experience with our students!
Are you 70½ or older with an IRA? Then this article is for you!

When you start the process of taking your Qualified Minimum Distribution (QMD) from your individual retirement account (IRA) this year and realize the taxes you’ll have to pay, maybe think “The Camphill School” instead.

If you are at least 70 1/2 years old, you can give up to $100,000 per year directly from your IRA to The Camphill School without it counting as taxable income. Qualified charitable distributions (QCD) are now a permanent addition to the tax code and can benefit both you and our students.

There are some rules and processes to keep in mind:
- You must be at least 70 ½ or older at the time of the transfer.
- You may transfer up to $100,000 per year.
- Your distribution must come directly from a qualified IRA.
- The amount transferred is excluded from your adjusted gross income (AGI).
- Each financial institution that holds IRAs has their own paperwork and processes that you must complete.
- Always consult your financial advisor before making any charitable gift, including a QCD.

• The Camphill School receives the funds directly from your IRA administrator and your name will not be relayed to us, so if you plan to make a QCD to the school, please let us know—we want to be able to thank you.

Want to learn more or let us know you will send a QCD this year? Contact Courtney Coffman at 610.469.9236 x132 or ccoffman@camphillschool.org.

On December 3, 2019, The Camphill School will once again take part in #GivingTuesday, kicking off the charitable season when many focus on their holiday and end-of-year giving. There is Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, and Cyber Monday. Why not take away the stress of holiday shopping and donate to our school in honor of your loved ones this holiday season?

This year we hope to raise $50,000 to give students the life-changing gift of education. We are also excited to announce that a very generous family has offered to match the first $5,000 raised! Now is your opportunity to make your donation have twice the impact! How can you be a part of it?
- Join one of our five awesome teams and create your own personal fundraising page today! bit.ly/TCSGive19
- Brilliant Board: bit.ly/TCSBoard19
- Proud Parent: bit.ly/TCSParents19
- Fearless Farmers: bit.ly/TCSFarmers19
- Busy Beavers: bit.ly/TCSBeaver19
- Fantastic Friends: bit.ly/TCSFriends19

Start fundraising to benefit the school’s #GivingTuesday Campaign. It’s simple, customizable, and shareable on social media and email.

- Donate on Tuesday, December 3, 2019, to create transformative educational opportunities for The Camphill School students. Join together with the Camphill community by making your gift on this national day of giving.
- Give in honor of a friend, neighbor, family member, or coworker who has everything. In doing so, you not only give a unique and priceless gift but also are sharing The Camphill School with someone who might otherwise not know about us. By introducing new people to the school now, you are creating the potential for supporters in the future.

Share our messages on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, email, and, of course, by word of mouth. Your endorsements and support are critical to the success of this one-day campaign!

For more information or questions, please contact Hope Rogers at hrogers@camphillschool.org or 610.469.9236 x119.
There was a time in Jaime's life defined by the word remedial. A quest for ways to compensate, accommodate, make up for what was lacking. It was a time when deficits, gaps, needs were pretty much all I could see and find. I remember the agony of those days, the permanent dissatisfaction, the sense of helplessness. His and my own. Measured against the mainstream, Jaime always seemed to fall short and disappoint. The harder we tried, the less anything, even he, made sense.

Then Camphill School happened. It was instantly rewarding. For the first time ever, Jaime was truly agreeing with himself and his surroundings. I can only imagine the relief he felt, if my own relief was any measure of things finally falling into place for him.

It has been almost nine years, and the changes in Jaime continue to bewilder us. Nine years of peeling away layers and layers of disconnect. I remember a meeting with Camphill staff three or so years ago, when we sat around to think ahead about Jaime's prospects as the high school student he so yearned to be. That evening, Carsten said something I was finally ready to hear: “At Camphill, we see only possibilities and potential, and we revise our expectations constantly, to make sure we account for the progress that the individual has made. We never stop imagining what is possible. There is no ceiling; there is no limit to what the individual can achieve.” This is what researchers call a growth mindset. And yet many of us, in our shortsightedness, out of fear and defeat, would rather make up excuses for our children with unique abilities. As it turns out, it was not Jaime who needed to adjust. He was and is just fine, his own persona, his very self, full of possibilities and potential.

Because we all need examples in order to more fully embrace truths, here is one. As a literacy professional, I can safely say I tried every way I knew to teach Jaime the love for books and the skill of reading. I did pretty well with the former. Jaime loves his books and proudly walks around with them. They are his security blanket heading to bed, and the very first thing he grabs upon waking up. Check. Reading, on the other hand, was not in the plan. Or so I thought, based on my failure of trying everything I knew that worked for others. Along came Stephan, Jaime’s beloved teacher and mentor and role model. Jaime will stop at nothing to please his teacher. He simply adores him. So when the time came to test that with reading, Jaime did indeed rise to the expectation. It was last May, with total disbelief and awe, that we received the first testimonial of his triumph over the written word. Ladies, gentlemen, Jaime IS READING. He continues to make progress every day.

It is mind-confounding and life-transforming. It seems so inexplicable, and yet so real. Through hard work, refined skill, and deep knowledge of the individual, Stephan has been able to tap into Jaime’s strengths and bring them to bear. It is what high expectations, motivation, personal drive, and the desire to overcome can do for each and every one of us.

The more I think about it, the more I recognize how much there is for me to learn from this experience. As a community that is intentional in living out the reality of what is possible, Camphill has completely turned Jaime’s life around for the better. At Beaver Run, Jaime is a happy, fulfilled, and able individual. Loved for who he is, encouraged to become his best self, leading the way into a deeper and more meaningful existence. If this is not the utmost wish of a mother for her son, I do not know what is.

Jaime, I am so proud of you, and so grateful for the life you live alongside exceptional human beings.

Camphill teachers, house parents, coworkers, staff: Your commitment to Jaime never ceases to inspire us.

By Lucia Sun, Mother of Jaime
Save the Date
Join us for the 2020 Camphill Gala as we

Feast at Foxfield

Friday, May 29, 2020
6:00 p.m.
Foxfield Farm
Phoenixville, Pa.

Visit bidpal.net/camphill2020 for more information.
The Camphill School’s mission is to create wholeness for children and youth with developmental disabilities through education, extended family living, and therapy so that they may be better understood, they may more fully unfold their potential, and they may meaningfully participate in life.

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