

Reflections

A magazine for family, friends, and supporters of The Camphill School

SPRING + SUMMER 2026




**The
Camphill
School**

Reflections

Cover: Varun at the Hagley Museum, where his class took a field trip
Below: Jill, Stephanie, Eunice, and Ella at Foxfield

Contents

3 Editor's Letter / 4 Pedal Power: Bike Crew Empowers High Schoolers / 6 Turn your Pennsylvania personal or business tax dollars into tuition assistance! / 7 Welcome New Board Members / 8 Bridge Program / 16 Join the Sustainer's Circle: Why Monthly Giving Matters at The Camphill School / 17 Foxfield Al Fresco / 18 Caring for the Future



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Contributors Emily Hess / Ivan Rynder

Editor's Letter



“The world is full of miracles, but none greater than how far a young person can be carried by someone else’s belief in them.”

—Fredrik Backman, *My Friends*

Think back to when you were in your final years of high school. At the precipice of adulthood. At the beginning of the rest of your life. Remember how many people asked you what was next for you? What you wanted to do? What you wanted to be? Very rarely did they ask who you wanted to be. What if they had asked you that? What a complicated, complex question that is!

What if you had been given the time to figure that out? How would your life be different or perhaps the same if you had the opportunity to explore who you are and who you wanted to be at that important moment? What if at that time you were surrounded by people who were there simply for that purpose: to help you discover your potential?

As students at The Camphill School finish their high school years, they typically move on to our Transition Program at Beaver Farm. However, in recent years, our faculty has realized that some students may not be ready for that next step. It was with this in mind that the Bridge Program was created. Now in its second year, the program allows students to explore prevocational activities and opportunities while remaining on the Beaver Run campus.

This extra time not only provides the continuity of being with familiar staff in a familiar place, but it also allows these young people to learn more about themselves. They can determine what type of work they enjoy, how they can best work in conjunction with one another and their support staff, and receive the therapeutic, cultural, and home-life activities that take place on campus.

The late teenage years are complicated for anyone, but there is an especially dire lack of options for those with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The school’s Bridge Program is helping fill that gap, not only for our currently enrolled students, but also for those from schools that lack such a curriculum.

We are pleased to share more about this much-needed program within the pages of this issue of *Reflections*. We hope you enjoy discovering for yourself what the students’ days are like and what they are accomplishing as they explore their capabilities.

Courtney Coffman
 Editor

01 / On Wednesdays, the independent riders bike 10 miles, often on the Schuylkill River Trail.

Pedal Power: *Bike Crew Empowers High Schoolers*



At The Camphill School, high school students participate in an afternoon prevocational program designed to develop skills and attitudes that enhance their social development and provide experience in meaningful, cooperative work.

Students rotate through various crews, including the school store, household

activities, gardening, landscaping, weaving, stable and animal care, woodworking, maintenance, and life skills. In fall 2018, the Bike Crew was born. Bike Crew offers a diverse range of biking opportunities for our students. They deliver items such as mail, bread, vegetables/fruit, and paper products around the school, ride on trails throughout the wooded areas on campus, and take biking trips to local

“rails-to-trails” paths, like the Schuylkill River Trail, where students have opportunities to experience neighboring communities.

There are multiple educational benefits for high school students in the biking program. Students foster physical, mental, and developmental growth, including enhanced coordination, strength, and motor planning, while

02 / Renny riding tandem with Ivan in the former riding ring

promoting independence. Bike riding is an intrinsically fun activity; it boosts self-confidence, reduces stress, and improves focus, empowering students through skill mastery. And students partake in fulfilling work, delivering items on campus. As they notice their skills are improving, they become empowered and closer to reaching their full potential.

To date, sixty-five students have completed the program. Half learned to

03 / Ellis riding tandem at Beaver Run

ride a two-wheel bicycle, and the other half either learned to ride a tricycle or improved their previous biking skills. The biking skills obtained in Bike Crew can be used for recreation, commuting, and employment upon graduation from school.

Through a grant from the Camphill Foundation, we will expand our fleet with two adaptive trikes and a trailer to transport them. Currently, the crew

04 / Wednesday's independent Bike Crew

splits into two groups on Wednesdays. The independent riders go off-campus to a local “rail to trail.” The second group—tricycle riders and co-riders—stay on campus. The trikes with e-assist and a tandem option will allow more students to participate in Bike Crew, and the trailer makes it possible for the whole crew to travel off-campus while increasing their strength, confidence, sense of freedom, and recreational opportunities.

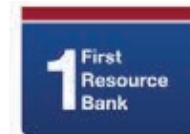


Turn your Pennsylvania personal or business tax dollars into tuition assistance!



Thank you to these businesses and individuals who have participated over the last year:

Anonymous
Scott and Jen Althouse



Fran Kinniry
Pennsylvania Education Partnership LLC



Sherrie Savett
UNIVEST
BANKING | INSURANCE | INVESTMENTS

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.

- Bank Shares Tax
- Title Insurance & Trust Company Insurance Premium Tax (excluding unauthorized, domestic/foreign marine)
- Mutual Thrift Tax
- Malt Beverage Tax
- Surplus Lines Tax

For businesses, application deadlines apply.

If you want to support our students and make a gift directly to the school, you will get a tax deduction, yes, but the majority of that donation is still a cost to you. If you make a gift to the school through this EITC program, it can offset almost your entire PA tax bill – in other words, the donation comes at almost no additional cost to you. You are basically *redirecting* who gets the money when you pay your state tax bill, which you have to pay anyway.

To learn more, contact
Courtney Coffman
(ccoffman@camphillschool.org)
or visit camphillschool.org/ways-to-give.

To qualify for the program, businesses must pay one of the taxes listed below. 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

Welcome New Board Members

In December, The Camphill School welcomed two new members to its Board of Directors: Krysta Knaster and Samantha Wallin. We are delighted to have them join us and look forward to the insight, energy, and expertise they will bring to our community.



Krysta Knaster has worked within the Camphill Movement for eight years and currently serves as Executive Director of Camphill Soltane, a Camphill community supporting adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Krysta began her work at Camphill Soltane as a direct support coworker in the weaving studio and has since held roles focused on operations, program support, and organizational leadership. She holds a BFA in Photography from the University of the Arts and brings a strong appreciation for creativity and experiential learning to her work.

Krysta is deeply aligned with The Camphill School's approach to education and its commitment to nurturing the whole child. She lives in Phoenixville with her husband, two children, and two dogs and is grateful for the opportunity to support and steward The Camphill School community.



Samantha Wallin, Ph.D., is a special education leader committed to inclusive, student-centered learning. She currently serves as a Professional Development Specialist with the Delaware County Intermediate Unit (DCIU), where she supports schools through coaching, training, and systems-level professional learning focused on evidence-based special education practices, inclusive instruction, and MTSS (Multi-Tiered Special Support.)

Dr. Wallin also serves as an adjunct professor, teaching undergraduate and graduate-level coursework in special education and collaboration. Her work bridges research and practice, with a focus on strengthening school teams and improving outcomes for students with disabilities through high-quality professional learning and family-school partnership.

Dr. Wallin has a meaningful connection to The Camphill School, as she previously served as an Academic Support Teacher for five years, supporting learners with diverse cognitive, social-emotional, and behavioral needs. She brings to the Board a strong commitment to Camphill's mission and a deep respect for the school's holistic, relationship-based approach to education. As a Board member, she is dedicated to supporting long-term sustainability, inclusive school culture, and continued growth of programs that help students and staff members thrive.

Bridge Program



Elias starts the day with a puzzle, improving his fine motor skills and engaging critical thinking.



Simon in the classroom at the start of the morning, is ready to find out what is in store for the group that day.



Danielle fills the birdfeeder the class set up.



Elias and the rest of the class help Joseph, our chef in Meadowsweet, with prep for lunch.



Art and nature are essential to learning. Danielle shows the ink pressing she made using a leaf discovered on a walk around campus.



Students participate in music class, developing hand-eye coordination, dexterity, teamwork, patience, and artistic appreciation.



Spending time socializing at Beaver Farm helps students more easily integrate into the Transition Program in the future.



Cleaning shared spaces benefits everyone and has therapeutic benefits, too.



Renny participates in the Biking Ability Group.



Danielle and Sydney make a batch of cookies as part of food processing activities. They also make pickled vegetables. The class shares their homemade goodies with houses and classes throughout campus.



Sydney and Danielle were part of a field trip this past fall.



The Bridge Program students and staff visit a local pumpkin farm and enjoy a hayride.



Elias has deepened his love of music since joining the school this year.



Students play music together each week.



Alexsandra and Joseph cook in Meadowsweet's kitchen.



Teacher Emily looks on as Sydney and Danielle flex their muscles and learn about physics in Movement Ability Group led by Ivan.



A big part of the Bridge Program is managing the School Store, including receiving inventory and fulfilling orders from our on-campus houses from everything from produce to eggs.



Danielle and Sydney have made special bonds with their fellow program participants and the paraprofessionals who support them, including Keshia.



Renny visits the chickens on one of the many visits the Bridge Program students make to Beaver Farm.

Join the Sustainer's Circle: Why Monthly Giving Matters at The Camphill School

At The Camphill School, every child is seen, valued, and supported to grow in a place where learning is woven into daily life, and community is at the heart of everything we do. Our students thrive because they are surrounded by people who believe in their potential – and because of generous supporters who ensure the resources are here to help them flourish.

One of the most impactful ways you can support this mission is by becoming a **monthly donor**.

Why Monthly Giving Makes a Difference:

1. Steady Support Creates Stability

Consistent monthly gifts give The Camphill School something incredibly valuable: **predictable funding**. This allows us to plan more effectively for programs and resources that directly support each student's journey.

2. Small Gifts Add Up to BIG Impact

You don't have to make a large one-time gift to make a difference. Monthly contributions - whether \$10, \$25, or \$100 - grow into significant annual support that helps us provide:

- A living-education environment that nurtures independence
- Specialized therapies and individualized learning tools
- Meaningful vocational and artistic programs
- A safe, inclusive, and loving community

3. It's Easy, Flexible, and Sustainable

Becoming a monthly donor is simple and convenient. Your gift is processed automatically each month, and you can update or pause your donation at any time. It's a sustainable way to support the school all year long with no extra effort.

4. Your Monthly Gift Helps Create Brighter Futures

When you join our community of monthly donors, the **Sustainer's Circle**, you're investing in:

- The joy of learning
- The dignity of meaningful work
- The beauty of friendship and belonging
- The lifelong growth of children and young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities

Every month, your generosity provides the tools, resources, and experiences that help our students grow into the fullest expressions of who they are.

How to join the Sustainer's Circle

We invite you to join the Sustainer's Circle by making a recurring donation (weekly, monthly, quarterly, every six months, or yearly) to The Camphill School. Use the QR code or visit camphillschool.org/donate/. Simply check the "Sustainer's Circle: show my support by making this a recurring donation" box for options.

Feel free to contact Courtney Coffman at 610.469.9236 x132 or ccoffman@camphillschool.org if you would like help setting up your recurring gift or if you have questions.

Your commitment, no matter the size, helps ensure that every student in our community continues to receive the care, education, and opportunities they deserve.

Your ongoing support builds the strong foundation that our students stand on every day. Thank you for believing in our mission – and in our children.



◀ Support The Camphill School.



FOXFIELD AL FRESCO

FRIDAY, MAY 29


**The
Camphill
School**

Join us for an elegant evening in the garden to support our students and community. Guests will enjoy dining al fresco, dancing, bidding, and a performance by our students.

Friday, May 29, 2026

6:00 to 10:00 p.m.

Foxfield Farm
701 West Seven Stars Road
Phoenixville, Pennsylvania

Our auctions will allow you to bid on items for yourself *and for our students*.

Guest Emcee: **Peter Urscheler,**
Borough of Phoenixville Mayor
Music by: **Almost Minnesota**

The Camphill School is proud to induct
Caldwell, Heckles, and Egan, Inc.
as *Corporate Partner*

givebutter.com/camphill2026



Caring for the Future

By Guy Alma

The Camphill School is a unique place in this world. Over the past six decades it has grown and transformed, finding ever new ways to serve its central purpose: creating a community where children in need of soul care can flourish and the adults who support them can gain ever deeper insight into their work. Living, learning, and working together have been the never-changing hallmarks of life at Beaver Run and Beaver Farm.

Consider this: The school has grown from one house in Nantmeal Village in 1963 into a children's village with school buildings, homes and gardens, and a functioning livestock farm with cut flower gardens and a commercial kitchen. The expansion of facilities, staff training, and variety of activities that the students participate in depends on foresight and planning and the investment of the funds that can allow it all to happen. Behind the scenes there are individuals whose job is to look ahead, to sense what is needed, and to provide the resources to turn dreams into realities.

On August 29, 2005, a young woman arrived at the office to start her job as the school's new Development Associate. In Louisiana that day, Hurricane Katrina was bringing devastation to New Orleans. It was a day to remember. The average tenure of a development staff member is three to four years. On January 1, 2026, over twenty years later, that Development Associate would become the Director of Development.



Courtney Coffman is dedicated. She started her work by building special events and volunteer programs at Camphill. Her presence as the organizing force behind our annual Gala became so routine that she became the face of the event along with Anthony DeCecco, the tennis pro who began it. The needs of the school demanded the kind of Development office that Camphill could never afford to run. Courtney stuck with

the tasks in front of her and played a central role in establishing a team that could do it all. In order to lay the groundwork for the future, the Development staff had to become experts in so many areas. Courtney learned database management, designed annual fund campaigns, created social media content and informative publications, worked with Board members, engaged donors, and executed capital campaigns.



Courtney's love for her role is based on her joy for the people she works with and serves. Over the years the children, coworkers, and staff at the school, and many of our wonderful donors, have become friends. Courtney was married at Bethany Beach in 2007, and we were there to witness the festivities. She had to miss the Camphill Challenge cycling event she had worked so hard on in October of 2010 so that she could give birth to her first child. True to form, the week before the Gala in 2015 we had to force her out of the office for the birth of her second son! Courtney's entire family volunteers at the school—cooking, setting up, and cleaning up after Development events, and generally supporting wherever they can.

If you have walked through Beaver Farm or Foxfield, or stepped into Meadowsweet or the newly renovated Craft House, you have witnessed projects that only happened because Courtney was at work behind the scenes. So many families have only been able to access the school because of the funds raised for financial aid. For two decades Courtney's efforts have helped to keep the lights on and the bills paid. Those of us who have worked with her over those years hope that you will join us in congratulating Courtney for her for much deserved, invaluable, and treasured role as Director of Development!





FSC LOGO HERE

PLEASE JOIN US

May 9	Farm Fest & Mother's Day Flower Sale 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. (Foxfield Farm)
May 29	Camphill Gala – Foxfield AI Fresco (see page 17)
May 30	Family, Friends, and Alumni Day, 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. (Foxfield Farm)
July 25	Blooms and Brew (Foxfield Farm)
Oct. 10	Fall Fest and Ribbon Cutting for Woodledge and Ember

VISIT CAMPHILLSCHOOL.ORG FOR MORE DETAILS ABOUT ALL EVENTS.

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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.

The Camphill School does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, creed, gender, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, religion, or disability.



HELP THE CAMPHILL SCHOOL CONSERVE RESOURCES.

Choose to receive future issues of *Reflections* via email. Send your digital subscription request to reflections@camphillschool.org.

Join the growing ranks of the Pietzner Legacy Society by naming our supporting foundation, Beaver Run Foundation, in your will or other estate plans. Call Courtney Coffman at 610.469.9236 x132 for more information.

