



# Spring Edition 2020



## CAMPHILL SCHOOL NEWS UPDATE

### From our Principal's desk

Since the return of all our staff and learners after several months of lockdown, it is my pleasure to report here on the activities of our school since the beginning of the year.

Due to the wildfires our Community experienced at the beginning of 2019 leaving behind an underground peat fire, our learners were moved offsite till mid July, placing tremendous strain on our Education Programme. Our learners also had limited access to all therapies, our admission of learners slowed down and our Vocational phase learners were also not able to participate in any outside skills development programmes. As you can appreciate when the new academic year started off, we were all adamant to make every moment of 2020 count. With the five day International Camphill Dialogue 2020 hosted by our School and our neighbouring Farm Community scheduled from 16<sup>th</sup> March and the Independent Quality Assurance Association (IQAA) process scheduled for May, it was going to be a busy start to our new year.

During the first term, our admissions team was constantly engaged in interviews with new applicants, our therapy programme was in full swing and preparations were underway with the Dialogue fast approaching. Our children and teachers were very involved with all preparations and rehearsals for the big African evening Dialogue performance.

While we were still planning our full schedule for our academic year, Covid-19 was declared a Pandemic by the World Health Organisation and our President declared a National State of Disaster on the 15<sup>th</sup> March. With this announcement we unfortunately had to cancel the five day International Dialogue and our

School closed two days after. Our four young German volunteers were fortunate to go home at the end of March, but sadly without having the opportunity to say good-bye to us all.

During the first weeks of lockdown we arranged with Child Welfare to deliver dry goods to our learners' homes in Mount Pleasant and Zwelihle, but it was really difficult to manage during lockdown Level 5.

When it became clear that schools will not reopen on the 14<sup>th</sup> April as originally planned, we had to apply to the Temporary Employee/Employer Relief Scheme (TERS) to assist us in paying salaries to all our employees.

The Department of Basic Education (DBE) and the Department of Labour issued Covid-ready workplace regulations and protocols to be implemented by the Principal and Management team before anyone could return to the premises. Our Medical Officer was appointed as the Covid-Officer and Dr Tilla Muller came to do a risk assessment for the school free of charge once we had started with our preparations. She was impressed with the volume of work and planning that we had done to make



Camphill School a Covid-ready workplace and had some useful suggestions for us. Our management team met with every school department to give thorough covid training and what is to be expected of each

staff member. The beginning of June our school drivers



took schoolwork to every learner's house on Monday mornings. On the first day we sent workbooks and stationery home to enable them to do their homework. The parents and guardians were very grateful.

In the interim preparations were underway in anticipation of the return of our Teaching staff and learners with a phased in approach. We welcomed back our Foundation Phase learners on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July,



Intermediate Phase a week later, followed by our Senior Class 1 and Creative classes. As our President announced the closure of public schools for certain grades our board decided that, due to the vulnerability of our learners and the risk to older staff members with comorbidities, we sadly had to close again on the 25<sup>th</sup> July, just before our Senior Class 2 and Vocational Phase could return on the 27<sup>th</sup> July. During August we sent schoolwork and meals home to every learner in our school. Thank you to Woolworths Station Square and Whale Coast Mall, Peninsula School Feeding Association, Checkers and Engen for your continuous donation of surplus foods



and to our Hermanus Community for the donation of food containers, making these deliveries possible. We were able to deliver home cooked meals to all our children three times a week.

School resumed for all our classes on the 24<sup>th</sup> August. What a pleasure to have all our learners back at school and settled in. Even with new regulations and all the rules that they have to adhere to, our children are happy to be back – and so are all our teachers and support staff. It has become clear that some of our learners have become quite lazy in the academic sense, but others are more eager than ever to learn once again.



Temperature checks and screening of each child takes place in the mornings by our bus driver or support

staff, before the child is allowed on the bus, with the child's parent or guardian answering all screening questions.

Julio our Covid-Officer screens all the learners, teachers and class assistants again before lunch and there is a checklist in each classroom, for sanitizing and cleaning surfaces throughout the day, which is strictly adhered to and monitored very closely. Sanitizing of all classrooms and the kitchen is also done at the end of each day and all school busses are sanitized before and at the end of every trip.

The wearing of face masks has proved to be the most challenging thing that our learners have to contend with, it is for this reason that we had shortened school hours at first. But with the weather improv-



ing our learners are able to spend more time outside and our school hours are all back to normal.

After strategic planning meetings between the school's management team and the Board at the end of October 2019 it was decided that Camphill School would close our boarding facilities and enter into a 189 Process with 8 Homelife employees. At that time 5 of our 60 learners were fulltime boarders and could be accommodated at adult facilities. Our boarding facilities are not subsidised by the WCED and providing the type of support that our boarders needed (often 3 - 1 caring needs) required ample trained staff members to deliver the service which made it extremely expensive. Very few residential learners could afford the full boarding fees and we also had more "challenged" learners requiring even more support. This process was concluded by the end of March 2020.

Due to our unforeseen Covid expenses this has been an extremely financially challenging time for Camphill School. It was therefore necessary to remove 4 positions from our staff establishment, to ensure that our resources are allocated towards the delivery of our core service; quality education for learn-

ers with special needs. We thus entered into a 189 process with the 4 employees in the various departments.

Finishing on a very cheerful note; our maintenance team members and cooks prepared a delicious braai for us all the day before Heritage day. Our senior classes



requested to participate in the global "Jerusalema" dance chal-



lenge and on Heritage Day they made us very proud performing for us all

in the school courtyard. Every class performed their own contributions to this Heritage Day celebration with some of our staff and children dressed in their traditional wear.

A few days later our community gathered to celebrate the festival of St. Michael, where all our learners participated in a Eurythmy performance, led by GERALYN. Before everyone left the school courtyard, all learners and staff had to jump over a rope, representing all our life obstacles. I know that our School will overcome these challenges and that we can only grow and learn from all these experiences. I wish to thank all the staff for your hard work and dedication and look forward to the last quarter of the year.

**Jeanne-Marie Botha**

**Principal**



# Heritage Day and St Michaelmas celebrations



When we returned to school at the start of the first term we were extremely excited at the prospect of the two Camphill Communities in Hermanus (Farm & School) hosting the International Camphill Dialogue 2020 Conference at our premises from 16 - 20 March 2020.

The theme for this conference was "What are the Camphill values you're currently working with and how is working with them in your region going to ensure Camphill remains sustainable in your region into the future?"

Camphill Dialogue is held every three years to promote the associative work between the Camphill regions and is an opportunity for representatives from Camphill Communities worldwide to discuss views, recommendations and advice, and to cultivate shared aims and ideals in the spirit of association.

Preparations for the Dialogue took centre stage during the first term and the learners were industriously mak-

ing the most beautiful bookmarks and shakers for our Dialogue delegates as keepsakes, as well as rehearsing their songs and dances for the African experience themed evening.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> March the whole community came to school in old clothes to participate in gardening and weeding, neatening our School community. The maintenance team worked in the vegetable garden while we tackled the rest of the school. This also served as a community building exercise and we all shared a delicious picnic together afterwards.

While the planning committee was working flat out to put the finishing touches on the arrangements, the Covid-19 virus was steadily spreading around the globe. On the eve of our opening we decided that it would be safer for our community members to move the conference venue from our premises to the Windsor Hotel, where the majority of delegates were being accommodated. Even at such short notice the Windsor Hotel



were completely accommodating and willing to make a conference venue available as well as work spaces for the planning committee to use as an operation centre. The Windsor Hotel also agreed that their kitchen could be used and caterers Saffron Functions would be able to carry on with their service. We had just finished setting everything up that Sunday evening at the hotel when our President declared a National state of disaster in South Africa and announced that international borders would soon be closed.



Unfortunately the official welcome addresses by former Minister of Education in the Province and special advisor to the Premier of the Western Cape, Mr Donald Grant, and Mr Dudley Coetzee, our Overstrand Mayor, had to be cancelled last minute and our VIP guests had to be informed of the change of plan. We wish to thank you both Mr Grant and Mr Coetzee for your willingness to participate in this event

The planning committee decided to shorten the conference to one day and went ahead with a very short opening. Christo Brand, former warder of Nelson Mandela at both Robben Island and Pollsmoor prisons and keynote speaker, opted to still give his very moving presentation about his valuable relationship with Mr Mandela. His message had significant relevance to the overarching 'values' theme of the conference. After his questions and answers section and a lovely rendition of Nkosi Sikelela iAfrika by our event organiser, Bianca Le Roux, we closed the conference.

Only a handful of delegates remained and they gradually left during the week as and when they could

book a return flight back to their home countries. Even though the delegate numbers dwindled as the Covid risk increased closer to the conference and we had to adapt to our situation it was a very positive experience.



As we could not have the lavish gala dinner for 120

guests to draw the Conference to a close on the Friday night as planned, Bruce Henderson at La Vierge accommodated the much smaller party on Tuesday evening 17 March. Bruce and his team treated us to delicious meals and the guests really enjoyed the wine donated for the evening by La Vierge, the champagne sponsored by Krone, Old Harbour Beer and soft drinks sponsored by Coca Cola. The local Rewind Band had the delegates dancing the night away. It was really a great evening and at the end of it the delegates, very generously, organised that a "collection hat" was sent around the room for contributions towards the cost of the evening.

Thank you to everyone in the Dialogue Planning Committee from Farm and School and a very big thank you to Coastline Events for their hard work. Thank you to Christo Brand, Andrew Plant, Tim Davies and Nicolette Johnson for being willing to take on the role of speaker on their respective days. We are very grateful to Alan Brown and Tom Marx for handing over their planning templates from the Camphill Dialogue 2017

in Scotland and providing support throughout the planning stages, as well as to Colm Greene and Geoffrey Weir for advising and helping us with the planning. Thank you to all the delegates who came from afar to attend the Dialogue, to bring gifts and letters from their residents and communities worldwide. I wish to thank everyone for your support.



This year, Camphill as a movement is celebrating its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary and, although on a much smaller scale than originally planned, we managed to celebrate

this milestone during the conference. May the next 80 years provide abundant opportunities to pass on and keep the flame alive.



**Jeanne-Marie Botha**



# Our angel taken to soon



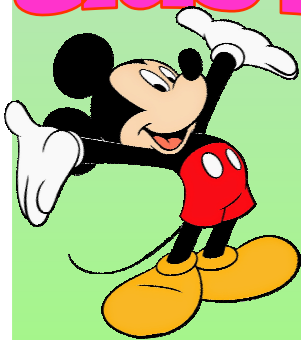
It is with a heavy and sore heart that I share this news. We sadly lost one of our senior learners Joshua Ryan on the 23rd May. Joshua was tragically hit by a car on the R43, the main road just outside Hermanus. He was very badly injured and passed away in the hospital with his family by his side. Joshie had just turned 18 and we have all watched him grow and develop into a young adult, throughout the years here at Camphill.



We still keep his family in our thoughts and prayers. We will forever cherish your smiles, your sweet nature and your naughty giggles and laughs. You have left a big empty space in the Creative Class and your classmates and staff miss you everyday, may you forever rest in peace.



## Side by Side for Equality



### Mickey Mouse And Friends Stay True.

Casual Day is set for the 3rd of December this year (International Day of Persons with Disabilities).

Casual Day has become a firm favourite on the calendar for many of us. It is an excellent opportunity for organisational team building, whilst also making a contribution to one of the country's most vulnerable sectors of society: persons with disabilities.

The project encourages people to dress differently to the usual corporate dress code, whether dressed up or dressed down. The 'license' to be dressed outrageously, is the Casual Day sticker which is obtained for a donation of R20. The project is managed by The National Council for Persons with Physical Disabilities in South Africa. Our School participates via the infrastructure of this project to raise funds for the services that we render.

Casual Day 2020 will be different, but we are determined that it won't be any less impactful in raising awareness and donations despite the COvid-19 pandemic.

If you haven't heard from us and received your stickers, please give us a shout and support us with our fundraising campaign. Geraldine 028 312 4949 or Genevieve 082 71 57 817.



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# Camphill gives thanks....



During these unprecedented times and with the economy in severe recession, many of our donors and supporters are experiencing financial constraints and raising much needed funds has become increasingly difficult. Our Hermanus Community is also experiencing a huge demand made on them by the increasing number of NGO's in our region. It is therefore that we are so grateful to the Peninsula School Feeding Association for their ongoing support and to Woolworths, Checkers and Engen for their surplus food donations, thereby making it possible to provide our learners with nutritious snacks and meals daily.

On another positive note, as a result of having to shorten the International Dialogue, Camphill School and Farm were able to give back to our Community. The Windsor Hotel agreed that their kitchen could still be used and the caterers could continue preparing all the meals as planned. We were thus able to donate 150-200 cooked meals and drinks to a soup kitchen in Mount Pleasant. We thank everyone that was involved in making this possible.

Thank you to the following donors who have contributed monetary donations since the beginning of the year.

Joan St Leger Lindbergh Charitable Trust	JET Lee Will Trust	Nussbaum Foundation
Association of Camphill Communities UK and Ireland	Hermes Trust UK	Joshua King Foundation
Clive Smith Charitable Trust	PSG Wealth Hermanus	Community Chest Western Cape
Dr Mickey Fauel	Frank Pronk	KK Lichtenberg
Anglo American Chairmans Foundation Trust	Nina Engstrom	MySchool
Onrus Manor Retirement Village	Rosenalf Trust	Seven Springs Vineyards
Frances J Appleby Trust	Lily Ashton Charitable Trust	Jeremy and Marti Trevethick
Alan Taylor	Freunde der Erziehungskunst	Hermanus High School
Emmanuel Laset		

We also thank our regular contributors, who month after month, support our School and our learners, in particular-

Rob and Margaret Molyneux	Carin Johnston	Jan and Letanie Nel
Alan Bailey Civil Engineer CC	PJ Myburgh	Marinda Smit

Equally important are the donations-in-kind and sponsorships we received during this period, it is impossible to mention all our generous donors, but we would like to thank the following in particular:

Robert and Nicolette Johnson-Flowers, Paper Shredder, Christmas Tree, Cold drinks	Gerry Cassidy-TV Screen Projector	Ilse Engelbrecht-Clothing
Margaret Young-Pottery Equipment	NG Church Onrus- Books	



Genevieve Linney