



SOUNDINGS

Volume 22, Issue 2

September, 2010

The Imprint of L'Arche on Our Lives

by Laurie Smith, former assistant

My household is a lot like a L'Arche home: happy, chaotic, filled with mismatched furniture, always a bit too busy, overtaxed yet delightful at the same time. In my case, the "core members" are our three little boys and the only assistants are Andy and me. I spend my days zig-zagging between preparing meals, playing, bathing, going to endless appointments, squeezing in bits of housework, and tackling Mt. Rainier-sized laundry piles. Like a L'Arche assistant, I am chronically overworked. I'm usually exhausted. But I am constantly humbled by the joy of it all.

Barely a month goes by without the Potpourri gratefully acknowledging an assistant who is moving out and moving on. But whatever happens to us movers? Do we remember L'Arche Tahoma Hope? Do we somehow manage to live L'Arche in our newly-knit lives? Do we think of Les' Elvis birthday parties, Nancy's haw-haw-haw laugh, or Ricky's gift for holding doors? Are we really changed by L'Arche?

I suspect that the answer for most of us leavers is that L'Arche Tahoma Hope changed us profoundly, perhaps in ways it will take us years to unravel. Andy and I were privileged to spend four years living in L'Arche. We left the community to raise our sons on the East coast, but in some very real way, the community never left us. Our L'Arche years constantly echo through the mundane moments of family life, sometimes in the form of stories we tell our kids, sometimes in the parenting perspective we take. To me, L'Arche is about creating a space where people can be together in the fullness of our selves, unabashedly revealing and reveling in our God-given whole. It's a profound example undiminished by distance or time. It's also not the way the "regular world" works.

I often think back to Joanie and her crazy purses. Joanie used to create fabulous purses from paper, ribbon, and whatever scraps of things she found around Hilltop. One day she labored especially hard with her stapler, then excitedly yelled, "Look! Look!



Laurie with sons Ryan, Danny & Sean



Laurie & Andy with Dick Sutherland

Do you have any stories you'd like to share? We'd love to hear them! Tell us about your favorite L'Arche story, or how L'Arche has touched your life, and maybe you too will find yourself on the front page of the Newsletter! Send to: info@larchetahomahope.org.

Thank you!

Stacie Swanson Works Her Magic!

by Sue Hudacek, Noah's Workshop Coordinator

"You are my people", and he shall say "thou art my God"
- Hosea 2:23

Jean Vanier writes in Community and Growth,
"My people are my community, made up of both the small community, those who live together and the larger community which surrounds it. 'My people' are those who are written in my flesh and I am in theirs. I carry them and they carry me. We recognize each other again when we meet. There is solidarity between us. What touches them also touches me. 'My people' is my community, made up to those who know me and carry me."



Stacie with a friend from Puyallup Playcare

A morning at Noah's Workshop does not go by without Stacie praying for "pick 'em up!" It started years ago when Stacie volunteered at First Place for Children. She would spend her time with small infants whom she would both hold and rock gently. From the beginning she referred to the infants as "Pick 'em up." Later she volunteered at Kid's Place until it closed. There Stacie started volunteering with the smallest infants, and later chose to be with the toddlers and pre-school children. After Kid's Place closed, Stacie volunteered for several years at Franklin Elementary in Tara Glackin-Coley's autistic immersion classroom. Two years ago she started volunteering at Puyallup Playcare in the Adventurers Classroom with Miss Julie (an amazing kind-hearted teacher!) and 5 and 6 year olds. Stacie had far more volunteer experience with children than I did when we filled out our application forms. Sort of embarrassing!

The moment Stacie arrives in the classroom, the call goes out, "Stacie's here! Stacie's here!" Across the room, heads look up to greet her. Several of the children will often run to her for a hug. It is obvious that to Stacie, these children have become "my people" and she has become theirs.

I have been privileged to support Stacie on Friday mornings for a number of months now and only a few kids know my name (Miss Sue)! Yet, everyone knows Stacie! They watch her humorous antics and immediately want to know if she would like to play with Legos together, or paint or numerous other activities. Stacie simply loves these children and they certainly love her. One of the boys asked one day, "Stacie wears glasses so does that mean she drives?" There are four women in the office who always greet Stacie as we sign in. They take a moment for Stacie to model what she is wearing (they especially love her pink leopard tights!) and to say hello.

September will bring a whole new group of kids into Stacie's life. We know for a fact that the children she worked with this year have left their mark in Stacie's heart as she has in theirs.

Last week as we were leaving, a 3 to 4 year old girl was on the playground. As we walked by, she ran up to the fence and watched Stacie get in the car. She was still watching Stacie as we began to drive away. Stacie and I waved and this little child waved back vigorously with a wonderful smile on her face. It is no wonder that Stacie prays for "pick 'em up" each day. For Stacie, 'my people' is her community, made up of those who know her and love her.... those who delight in her and bring her joy.

"Stacie is like a ray of sunshine every Friday!"

- Nancy Handy, Executive Director of Puyallup Playcare

"My Friday mornings are not complete without seeing both of your smiling faces."

- Julie Stewart, Adventurers Teacher

The Imprint of L'Arche on Our Lives, continued from pg. 1

My purse!" We were all at the table just finishing lunch, so Joanie had a ready audience. She presented to us a paper purse bedecked in curly orange ribbon with an entire banana peel stapled to its front. At a different table in a different sort of home, Joanie's purse might have seemed strange or even a bit disgusting. In L'Arche, it was awesome. Awesome because it was a labor of love and enthusiasm, awesome because it showcased Joanie's creativity and hard work, awesome because it made us all laugh for a long, long time. I want this sort of home for my own sons: a place where they can be themselves, trusting that they are created and loved by God. A place where they are supported and celebrated as they grow into the men God intends them to be. In short, I want my boys to grow up knowing something of what it feels like to live in L'Arche.

Of course, community life isn't all about deep moments and profound truths. The paradox of L'Arche is that it's about the biggest and smallest things at the same time: it is equal parts God's love and Costco cake-in-a-box. Here too, L'Arche has had a profound impact on my life. As a twenty two year-old who probably hadn't made my own bed in years, I was shocked to discover that something as simple as making a bed could be a sign of love and respect. There must be a thousand small acts a day in community life—a routine done with tenderness and thoroughness, a favorite video replayed for the zillionth time, a special trip for ice cream—that communicate great love. In the slog of stay-at-home motherhood, I try to recapture some of that spirit by tending to my tasks lovingly. Though the title "homemaker" went out of fashion long ago, L'Arche taught me how to create a home. It's an unimaginable amount of work and an awful lot of fun.

I may never fully understand L'Arche Tahoma Hope's profound imprint on my life, but I want my own home to be as L'Arche-like as possible. I am deeply grateful to everyone in the community for who you are and how you live. You serve as role models for me and my family. Among the dozens and dozens of assistants who have passed through Tacoma over the years, I suspect there are many "mini-arks"—households deeply rooted in the tradition of L'Arche, where Tahoma Hope's mission ripples through the dailiness of family life. Incidentally, one of my boys happens to share Joanie's purse-producing talent and he regularly makes paper purses for the girls at his preschool. So far, he hasn't stapled a banana to one, but if he ever does, the L'Arche assistant that dwells deeply within me will be there to cheer him on-- marveling, laughing, and cleaning up the mess.

Memorial Contributions

We are grateful for the donations we have received in memory of the following people. They, along with their families and friends, are in our prayers.

Tom Precious	J.T. Talbot
Dick Sutherland	James Wolfe

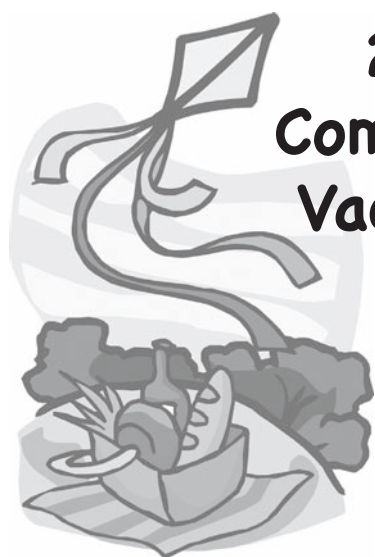
We are also thankful for the donations we received in honor of:

Ben Davies	Mark Drangstveit
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Welcome Doug!

Doug Creek moves into the Farmhouse this fall. For many of us, Doug is a familiar face from his many years on the Farm and Gardens crew. Doug is an easy going guy, who loves the outdoors and enjoys a good cup of coffee. He likes helping around the house and enjoys spending time with others. Doug works evenings at Centerforce on a janitor crew. Welcome Doug!





2010 Community Vacations

Summer at L'Arche Tahoma Hope wouldn't be complete without our Annual Community Vacations. As in recent years, the five groups were scattered throughout the state and into Canada. All of the groups had great vacations and seemed grateful for the chance to get away and play together. We would all like to send a huge thank you to everyone who helped make community vacations possible. For more pictures, view our community vacations photo album at www.larchetahomahope.org.

One group traveled to the far reaches of Vancouver Island for a relaxing getaway. The group spent a lot of time drinking coffee, relaxing on the deck, and going on short walks around town.



Another group spent the week exploring south Puget Sound. Group members went swimming, bowling, and picnicking, while enjoying all the comforts of home. The group had an evening bonfire and enjoyed trips to the movies and library.

We had a group a week at a lakeside outside of Olympia. The guys group relaxed, went fishing, ate, and went on a few



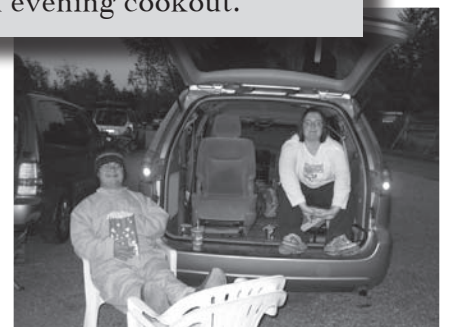
The Bellingham group spent a week on the campus of Western Washington University. The group also enjoyed a number of coffee outings. They visited a raspberry festival, went to a baseball game, went swimming, and ate a lot of good food.



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side cottage
pia. The all-
ted by the lake,
a lot of meat,
w bike rides.



The last group ventured to the quaint, little village of Hoodspport. The group attended a salmon festival, had a picnic on the beach, enjoyed slow, relaxing mornings and had an evening cookout.



Commitment & Belonging Update

by Stacy Cates-Carney, Community Leader

A picture is worth a thousands words. You've heard this saying, right? Well, in front of our main office for the past couple weeks; there has been a large chalk 'picture'. Not sure what it is, but sensing its something special, cars don't park there, and folks walk around it. This 'picture' is a mandala created by our community members.

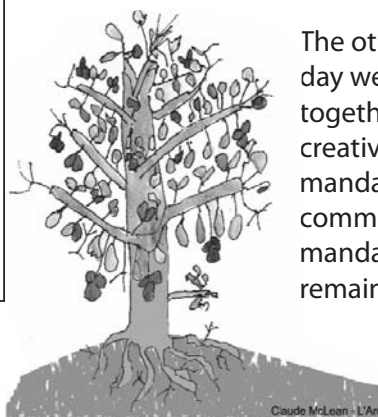
As a community we've created a myriad of images and pictures to convey our sense of *commitment* and *belonging*. In mid-August we gathered as a community in the bright morning sun to pray about and give expression to our experiences of commitment and belonging in L'Arche.

We took time for quiet reflection in our chapel, we painted, we created prayer flags, made music as well as musical instruments, and joined our efforts in creating a beautiful mandala. These were all ways community members were able to give expression to their thoughts and experiences. The original invitation came from L'Arche International as stage 2 in a process to explore commitment and belonging in L'Arche throughout the Federation.

Our mandala was a powerful image of the gifts and challenges that accompany commitment and belonging. Mandala is a [Sanskrit](#) word that means "circle".

In common use, mandala has become a generic term for any plan, chart or geometric pattern that represents the [cosmos](#) metaphysically or symbolically. Our mandala represented our unity as well as our diverse experiences. We started by drawing with chalk a very large circle in front of the office on the blacktop. We drew some smaller circles on the inside edge of the large circle. And then...each person made his/her own contribution. Throughout the morning the mandala got more colorful and dynamic, people came and went... to color...to watch... to help...to laugh. As I witnessed the creation of the mandala unfolding ...the process itself spoke so well of the blessings and challenges of commitment and belonging: a number of individuals needed help to be able to make their 'mark', while there was

some form/structure it was also important to have some freedom and flexibility, what was contributed varied between individuals, it was messy and it was beautiful, all the individual expressions and images did hold together in a wonderful image of unity.



The other images, music and words of the day were also powerful. Just spending time together listening and expressing ourselves creatively fostered a sense of belonging. Our mandala is a beautiful representation of our community. After the rains have washed our mandala away, hopefully this awareness will remain.





Holiday Sales on the Farm...

Farm and Gardens will be gearing up for their Holiday Craft Season. Cards, journals and paper crafts are in process and they will have wreath sales soon.

Place your order for evergreen wreaths now! All of our arrangements are made from scratch using fresh local cedar and noble fir. We will be making Christmas and Advent wreaths as well as door swags.

Call the Farm at (253) 537-7871, or email us at farmandgardens@larchetahomahope.org for order information. Order forms can also be downloaded at our website - www.larchefarmandgardens.org.

L'ARCHE AUCTION

Save the Date:

March 5th, 2011!



L'Arche Tahoma Hope will once again be hosting the party of the year! We'll be celebrating Mardi Gras this year with our Annual Auction at the Landmark Theater in Tacoma and raising lots of money to help support L'Arche. Until then, if you have any ideas or items you'd like to donate, please feel free to call Mary or Rachel at (253) 535-3178 or email us at auction@larchetahomahope.org. We look forward to seeing you there!

Consider Planned Giving

What is PLANNED GIVING? Sometimes referred to as GIFT PLANNING, this is a way of supporting non-profits and charities with larger gifts than donors might be able to make from their income alone. Thus, it is a major gift that is made during a donor's lifetime or at death. Usually, there are tax benefits to the donor. It is part of a donor's overall financial and/or estate planning. By contrast, gifts to an annual fund are made from a donor's discretionary income and are not part of long-term estate planning.

Planned giving can come from such sources as cash, appreciated securities or stock, real estate, artwork, partnership interests, personal property, life insurance, and/or a retirement plan. There are three types of planned gifts:

1. Outright gifts that use appreciated assets as a substitute for cash;
2. Gifts that return income or other financial benefits to the donor in return for the contribution;
3. Gifts payable upon the donor's death.

For more information, contact our Development Coordinator, Rachel Knoke at (253) 535-3178 or development@larchetahomahope.org

The information contained herein was excerpted from www.plannedgiving.com

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www.larchetahomahope.org

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L'ARCHE®
FARM & GARDENS
Growing People, Growing Plants

Join us for Our Annual

Harvestfest

October 2nd, 2010 9am - 4pm

- Fall is a great time to plant....take home a few plants to give you the fall color you're looking for and prep for the spring.
- There will be great deals on fall plants and perennials.
- Come out and see the latest improvements on the Farm.
- Say "hi!" to our farm animals.
- While you're out, you can place your order for our fresh evergreen wreaths and swags (see pg. 7 for details).

