



NEWSLETTER - FALL 2009

Ali's Journey to L'Arche

I am from South London, on the edge of Kent and I studied Theology at Oxford University, graduating last summer.

It was a friend of mine who first told me about a community that his brother was involved with in Canada. He described how people with and without disabilities lived together in community. He told me about visiting the community and how he had shared a meal and been made to feel very welcome as every person round the table, without being prompted, thanked God for his visit.

There was so much in the story of L'Arche that I was drawn to. Studying in such an academic environment was a wonderful blessing, but it also meant being surrounded by the idea that you were worth as much as you could achieve. I was living alongside people who aspired to run banks, lead countries, and change the face of Western Christianity... the idea of taking time simply to care for people who were often marginalized by society and to share with them in their daily joys and struggles seemed a real challenge, but a beautiful and worthy one.

University for me also involved the blessing of great friends who shared many of my ideals, hobbies and character traits, but studying the Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard I found this way of life challenging. In 'Works of Love' Kierkegaard writes of Christ's challenge not simply to love those who appeal to us, who make us feel smart and beautiful, but to just love those who God puts in front of us. This is exactly what L'Arche is about!

I was also very attracted to the international, ecumenical and interfaith aspects of L'Arche. Coming from the diverse cultural mix of South London, with Anglo-Catholic parents, evangelical



Ali with her housemate Lawrence.

Ali with her housemate Linda.



friends and attending a liberal Baptist college, I was excited to be involved in a community that CELEBRATED difference, and sought to muddle out a way for people with different beliefs to share a common life of service, fun and prayer.

I live in Unity house, with four core members (people with disabilities) and a team of five full time assistants. We are a diverse bunch, from England, Germany, Korea, Uganda, France, and Canada; we vary greatly in age and religious background.

It is a real challenge to sum up my experience in Unity house. There is such richness in the people I live with. Life is simple, but every day I think I appreciate something new about them and life in community.

One important lesson I have learned is the value in slowing down, in speech, action, and way of life. I'm of a personality and at an age where I want to be doing five different things at the same time. L'Arche has taught me the importance of being present to people, to hear their worries or the things they look forward to. That's not an easy task, particularly when you are told the same thing 20 times in one day.

Later this year I will go back to London to train to teach Religious Studies. While I did not choose to spend time in L'Arche to further my C.V. I am sure that the skills and character traits that life here has developed will be invaluable. I will be particularly interested to see how children with learning difficulties will be included in the classroom. I hope my relationship with L'Arche will continue over the years. I would love to visit other communities around the world.

I think I can say that what I have found in L'Arche, amongst diabetic diets, health appointments, and living alongside people who have been defined by the things they cannot do is 'LIFE, in all its FULLNESS'.

Our Mission is to:

Make known the gifts of people with developmental disabilities, revealed through mutually transforming relationships.

Foster an environment in community that responds to the changing needs of our members, while being faithful to the core values of our founding story.

Engage in our diverse cultures, working together toward a more human society.

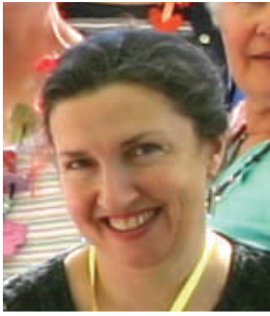
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From Denise's Desk:

In September we held our Annual General Meeting where I had the privilege of sharing my annual report to the community. Here is an excerpt of that address:

I am filled with much gratitude for the many blessings and abundance our Community has experienced together over this year. It has been a year of discovering how rich we are in friendship. There are many people who have continued to be faithful over the years through long term relationships with the community, and their support of the mission of L'Arche.

We have also made many new friends including new assistants, board members, volunteers, and donors who have joined us on the "Ark" and shared generously of their energies and gifts. It has been a year of continuing to tell our story to many people and letting the larger community know that L'Arche is here in Burnaby. As a result we have built a stronger network of relationships with our neighbours, many churches, various community groups and the business community in Burnaby. Those in public office at the City of Burnaby, as well as local MLA's and MP's have also taken greater interest in L'Arche and have been strong advocates on our behalf. It was a tremendous honor to be named Not-for-Profit of the Year by the City of Burnaby and the Burnaby Board of Trade.

It is hard to believe we are now half way through our four year mandate! Our mandate reminds us that we are first and foremost a community of people who choose to share our lives together and we have fostered and built community in a multitude of ways.

As we care for one another, we strive to keep relationships at the center in the joys and challenges of daily life together.

We were particularly blessed this year to be reminded of the gift of larger family of L'Arche. Many members of our community had the privilege to attend a Regional gathering and retreat with Jean Vanier in Calgary. Also the International Federation meeting of L'Arche in Kolkata India was a beautiful witness to how God has called L'Arche into being in so many different cultures and faith traditions around the world.

I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to each and every person who has been part of this journey together over the year; for your support, commitment, hard work and faithfulness. A special thank you to the Boards and the leadership team who have shared so freely of their expertise and wisdom and gone the extra mile for L'Arche. It has been a year of much learning for me and it is a deep privilege to lead this Community. May we continue to move forward in hope and trust and explore new ways to grow together.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Haskett
Executive Director/ Community Leader

Accreditation Success!

In June our second CARF (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities) survey took place with success. Within a few weeks we learned that we had earned three year status, the highest possible, for the second time.

Brian Boon, CARF President/CEO writes "The achievement is an indication of your organization's dedication and commitment to improving the quality of the lives of the persons served. Services, personnel and documentation clearly indicate an established pattern of practise excellence."

The Survey Summary includes the following observations:

- The missions and values of the organization reflect a person-first environment. Persons served are treated with dignity and respect, and their quality of life is a focus for the organization.
- L'Arche Greater Vancouver has knowledgeable and capable

leadership. The leadership is dedicated, longstanding and supportive of program staff and persons served and their families.

- Stakeholders, including persons served and staff members, express high degrees of satisfaction with the quality of services provided by the organization to persons served.

CARF is an independent, nonprofit organization that reviews and grants accreditation services nationally and internationally on request of a facility or program. Their standards are rigorous, so those services that meet them are among the best available.



L'Arche Greater Vancouver was named 2008 Not for Profit Organization of the Year by the City of Burnaby and the Burnaby Board of Trade

Our Founder Jean Vanier was named 2008 Nation Builder of the Year by the Globe and Mail



The Archbishop Visits L'Arche

Recently L'Arche Greater Vancouver welcomed the Vancouver Archdiocese's new Archbishop, the Most Reverend J. Michael Miller. After touring the homes and programs in our main building he joined core members, personnel, family members and board representatives for lunch. In a short address afterwards he said "I admire your willingness not just to tolerate but to *engage* diverse cultures, working together toward a society that truly reflects God's plan for his creation. You are convinced that society can never be truly human unless its weakest members are permitted to find their own place in it."



Archbishop Miller on his visit to L'Arche Greater Vancouver. Pictured with Denise Haskett, Executive Director.

Emmaus Goes for a Joy Ride



Mike of Mike's Limousine with (from L to R) Ken, Guy, Theresa and Delinda of L'Arche Greater Vancouver.

This summer L'Arche befriended Mike of Mike's Limousine. Mike was hired to drive a group to the ferry and afterward called to say the experience was so extraordinary he wanted to give complimentary 'just for fun' limo rides to our community. Much to their enthusiasm, Mike has taken participants of our Emmaus Day Program on a couple of joy rides.

"It was a lot of fun. We listened to Elvis on the radio and we sang along," says Delinda.

For Mike, these trips are more important than business. "It is for the soul. I love to do it," he says.

If you are in need of limousine services in the Lower Mainland we highly recommend Mike. Visit Mike's website www.limoforall.com or call 604-715-1444.

The following individuals were commissioned into their roles at L'Arche Greater Vancouver's Annual General Meeting on September 28, 2009:

L'Arche Greater Vancouver Board of Directors

- Trudi Shaw - President
- Ken Lee - Treasurer
- Tom Nowak - Vice President
- James Dorsey
- Jason Wong
- Gary Begin

L'Arche Foundation of Greater Vancouver Board of Directors

- K. Deirdre Lane - President
- Donna Diskos - Treasurer
- Penny Lim
- Rob Fournier
- Gary Begin

L'Arche Greater Vancouver Leadership Team

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Denise Haskett | Executive Director/Community Leader |
| Elizabeth MacKeigan, CMA | Director, Finance and Support Services |
| Marni Davis | Director, Human Resources |
| Akiko Iwataki | Director, Residential Programs |
| Jennifer Kazda | Director, Day Programs |
| Sig Stark | Director, Fund Development |

Upcoming Events

Coffeehouse

- Saturday November 7, 2009
- Saturday January 30, 2010
- Saturday May 1, 2010

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

South Burnaby United Church
7591 Gray Ave. (Burnaby, BC)

Free Admission

A L'Arche Christmas Concert by Corpus Christi College Chamber Choir

Friday December 11, 2009

7:00 p.m. - Jazz Prelude; 7:30 p.m. - Concert

St. Margaret's Anglican Church
1530 E 22nd Ave (Vancouver, BC)

Free with opportunity to support L'Arche

The Art of Being Together

Saturday March 6, 2010

1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

National Nikkei Museum & Heritage Centre
6688 Southoaks Cresc. (Burnaby, BC)

\$5 Admission

"A juried art show featuring works of art created by emerging artists and inspired by living in community."



Festival of Friends

Saturday August 29, 2009



Photos by Juan Olaechea.

Grateful thanks to Burnaby North Community Association and South Burnaby Neighbourhood House for lending tents.

Tribute Giving

L'Arche Greater Vancouver gratefully acknowledges the gifts made in celebration of the following individuals:

Gladys Bale
Ivan Cuffie
Rev. Daniel Kirkegaard

Audrey Middleton
Aeline Montalbetti
Peter Paleczny

Support L'Arche

Give through payroll deduction. Designate an amount from each payroll as a donation to L'Arche. Simply notify your payroll office with our name, charitable registration number and the amount you'd like to give. (The L'Arche Foundation of Greater Vancouver, charitable registration number 137648671RR0001)

Invite a L'Arche Speaker to come speak to your community, church or school group. We have a growing speaker's bureau that is eager to share the message of L'Arche. Call Sig at 604-435-9544 ex. 35 for more information.

Volunteer for special event at L'Arche. Contact Christiane at 604-435-9544 ex. 33

Drink Coffee. We're selling Blenz coffee including an organic and fair trade choice. A 1lb bag costs \$16 and a portion of the purchase is tax deductible.

Sponsor a Special Event. There are several opportunities a year for individual and corporate sponsorship. Market your product or service through an alliance with L'Arche, a well-respected community agency.

We invite you to share your copy of this newsletter with someone else.

Give online: www.larchevancouver.org and click "Donate"

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DR. MR. MRS. MS. MISS MR. AND MRS.

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