



NEWSLETTER

Growing up in L'Arche - Nathan's Story

Nathan Lusignan's early memories of L'Arche are typical of a young boy. He remembers playing on the pile of cushions that still lie in the corner of the Big Living Room, spinning on the chairs in September House (now Bethel) and trading hockey cards with his friend Melina.

"L'Arche was a great place to grow up in," he recalls. "We had the run of the place but still had to treat others with respect."

His first and favourite babysitters were young assistants who watched Nathan while his mother attended a contemplative prayer group that met at L'Arche. Eventually his mother would be a volunteer and then employed at L'Arche and Nathan would spend much of his childhood at L'Arche picking raspberries, making friends and learning lessons that would shape who he is today.

It was L'Arche that shaped his definition of community and his future plans. "L'Arche has the power of an intentional community, something that society is trying to recreate when L'Arche has been practising it all along. An intentional community sees the value and need to include everyone – children, the elderly, people with disabilities and all kinds of diverse cultures."

"People can learn a lot from L'Arche, we all need a sense of belonging. We need nurturing relationships. We do this by sharing food, songs and walking the important journeys of life together."

The 25 year old recently graduated from UBC with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science that included a year of study in Lyon, France. He has been involved with the Vancouver Board of Trade's Spirit of Vancouver Youth Task Force, helped found the Vancouver District Youth Council, and worked as an advocate for youth issues with the City's Social Planning Department. Currently, he is a Community Coordinator for the Vancouver School Board working with at risk youth on a project which he describes as "integrating school and community based after school programming." Nathan also served as a founding Director of



Nathan with his friend Melina

Families for School Seismic Safety where he worked with parents to raise 1.5 billion over eight years from the provincial government to make the schools safe in the event of earthquake. He views this particular project as an important piece of personal development. "I learned a lot about the media and political involvement."

One of his early L'Arche babysitters, Zoel Breau became a lifelong friend of Nathan's and in 2000 the pair cycled from Vancouver to New Brunswick to raise awareness of L'Arche across the country, visiting many of the L'Arche communities along the way. He sums up the adventure with the observation "Although the faces were different at each stop, the spirit of welcome in the communities was the same."

Zoel, who is now the Zone Coordinator for L'Arche Canada, recalls an incident from their trip across Canada that demonstrated Nathan's honesty and maturity. "We had one difficult day together. We ate our supper in silence. At the end I said 'I'm going to bed now.' Nathan, who was only 16 years old at the time, said 'Don't you think we should talk about today so that I can sleep tonight?'"

A memory that goes further back is seeing Nathan as a young boy sitting in the hallways at L'Arche reading things like the Globe and Mail. "He has always had a curious mind and been conscious of the bigger world around him."



Zoel and Nathan on their bicycle trip across Canada in 2000

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:



A Birthday Reflection on Mission

Birthdays and anniversaries are times to reflect on growth and change. As someone who has been present for over 20 of L'Arche Greater Vancouver's 35 birthday celebrations, I am so grateful for the growth and transformation in myself and the privilege to witness it in so many others associated with the community. I also believe the community itself has grown in many ways, particularly in the way we understand and live our mission today.

When the International Identity and Mission Statement of L'Arche first came out in May 2005, it affirmed what we already had a glimmer of; that it is really important that we take our place in society. In terms of our core values, L'Arche does have something precious to share, and to offer to our world.

A few years ago we reflected together on what new forms of mission could look like. The process included looking at our own neighbourhood and realizing how it had changed over the decades. We've gone from a quiet, middle class, primarily Caucasian suburb with mostly single family homes, to a multi-ethnic, high density area with increasing poverty, homelessness, and violent crime on our doorstep. How could we make a difference here?

We discovered in our reflections that we are a community which over time has developed a strong sense of welcome. It is clear that the people with developmental disabilities in our community have been, and continue to be, our teachers and our leaders in this beautiful gift of welcome.

We also clarified that the mission of L'Arche is not primarily the care of developmentally disabled people, although this is a very important and a central aspect of what we do. Rather, the mission of L'Arche is expressed when the person with a developmental disability, and the one who assists, together reach out to the larger community, and/or together welcome people

into the community. The mutual relationship between them is a key expression of mission.

Some of the concrete ways we are living mission today are deeply rooted in traditions like welcoming a guest for lunch every Friday at the Emmaus Center, one of our day programs. This tradition started some twenty years ago, but what has changed is how carefully we think about who to invite. It is now not only our friends and those we know who are invited to the table; we also seek to welcome the "stranger" who may be a single parent, a refugee, a person with a disability, or a local politician.

Another form of mission is growing today as we looked around our neighborhood and realized that there are many seniors living in our area. There is a movement in our society to support the elderly to live in their homes as long as possible by providing different services, like meals, shopping and taking people to medical appointments. However, we discovered that there seemed to be little support in the way of yard work and basic maintenance tasks.

It was out of this need and a desire to respond to it, that our newest day program, Neighbours Helping Neighbours, was born. It was inspired by our mission, where people with developmental disabilities and assistants go out together into the community and reach out in concrete ways to seniors.

This process of living our mission has been like a tremendous breath of fresh air blowing through our community as we seek to reach out to and welcome others. On the surface, when you look at the daily life and challenges in the homes and day programs, it may appear in some ways like not much has changed, but in another way, with our new understanding of the mission of L'Arche and our place in the world, everything has changed.

Sincerely,

Denise Haskett
Executive Director/ Community Leader

Life in Community





Are you an Ark Builder?

As in the days of Noah, we're looking for people who believe in the future. The original ark builder had faith and committed himself to build what the rest of the world couldn't have imagined. Today, we're also looking for friends who will have faith in God's work at L'Arche and commit themselves to build something that will help keep others safe.

How do you know if you're an Ark Builder?

- You want to support the mission and mandate of L'Arche Greater Vancouver
- You currently give or are willing and able to give \$500 or more annually
- You are willing to share your expertise to expand the work of L'Arche Greater Vancouver

How will Ark Builders be celebrated?

- Recognition (if so desired) in our Annual Report, Newsletter and Website
- Invitation to Ark Builders Circle events (2 or 3 annually)
- Invitation to special events at L'Arche Greater Vancouver
- Invitation for you and a friend to enjoy lunch at the Emmaus Day program to see how your donation is being used.
- The opportunity to be involved in special projects at L'Arche Greater Vancouver

How do you become an Ark Builder?

- Plan to attend our first Ark Builders event on May 23. Call for details.

Sig Stark 604-435-9544 ex. 35 or sstark@larchegreatervancouver.org

Introducing our Board of Directors

L'Arche Foundation of Greater Vancouver

K. Deirdre Lane (President)
Donna Diskos (Treasurer)
Carol Cheveldale
Rob Fournier
Penny Lee
Tom Nowak

L'Arche Greater Vancouver

Trudi Shaw (President)
Tom Nowak (Vice President)
James Dorsey
Carol Cheveldale
Ken Lee
Jason Wong

Keep L'Arche Motoring

The 2009 Vehicle Campaign

L'Arche Greater Vancouver has launched a **\$180,000 fundraising campaign** to replace most of our current vehicles. We are seeking funding for vehicles that are safe, fuel efficient, accessible and have low maintenance needs. Two leads gifts have made it possible for Rob Fournier, L'Arche Board Member and CEO of Cornerstone Concepts Auto Finders, to locate the first vehicle on our list, a 2008 Toyota Yaris (pictured at right).

About our fleet: Besides the day-to-day errands, we also plan house holidays, spring break and other fun activities together that require reliable transportation. Most of our vehicles have exceeded their lifespan and need to be retired.

We are grateful for the people who made this possible and for Rob's hard work in finding the right vehicle at the right price. If you would like to know more about the vehicle campaign, please contact Sig at 604-435-9544 ex. 35 or sstark@larchevancouver.org

A Year of Celebration

Mark your calendars as we celebrate 35 years of L'Arche Greater Vancouver throughout the year!

Anniversary Coffeehouse

Saturday April 25, 2009 7 – 9 p.m.
South Burnaby United Church Hall
7591 Gray Ave. Burnaby BC

Summer Festival

Saturday August 29, 2009 noon to 4 p.m.
The Courtyard at L'Arche Greater Vancouver
7401 Sussex Ave. Burnaby BC

The Art of Being Together*

Saturday October 17, 2009 1 – 5 p.m.
The Ellipse Lobby at Nikkei Centre
6688 Southoaks Cresc. Burnaby BC

**The Art of Being Together is a new special event that will bring together artists, a respected art jury, friends of L'Arche, sponsors, and the general public. If you are interested in helping to plan, sponsor or simply want more information about this unique event, please call Christiane at 604-435-9544 ex. 33.*

Corpus Christi College Chamber Choir Benefit Concert

December 2009 7:30 p.m.
Details to be announced

Tribute Giving

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

In honour of...

Sr. Normande Bedard
Joe & Helen Beraducci
Danielle & Stewart
John & Cathie Howard
Madison Leslie
Eric Telford
Joel & Sarah Woods-Macht

In memory of...

The Beebys
Wilfred MacDonald
George Miller
Dermot Murphy
Jean Thomson



Our community gathers in the driveway of The Crossing house to bless our new vehicle: the Toyota Yaris.



We're proud to announce that:

- L'Arche Greater Vancouver was named **Not for Profit Organization of the Year** by the City of Burnaby and the Burnaby Board of Trade
- Our Founder **Jean Vanier** was named **Nation Builder of the Year** by the Globe and Mail

Unity House Celebration

On March 11 the residents and friends of Unity House celebrated the completion of the accessible washroom project. In attendance were representatives from Saint Mary's Foundation, who funded the project and Ferreira Home Improvement Inc. who were contracted to do the work.



L to R: Norm Ferreira of Ferreira Home Improvement Inc.; Beverly Welsh and Betty Wynne of Saint Mary's Health Foundation; and Tom Nowak, VP of L'Arche Greater Vancouver Board of Directors.

WAYS to give...

Here are some ways **friends and donors like you** can give:

Give through payroll deduction

- Larger companies often give employees the option of donating to their **favourite charity** through payroll deduction. Sometimes the company will even match your gift which doubles your investment. In some cases (as with United Way partnered companies) the employee can designate which charity they want to support by **notifying their payroll office** with the charity's name and charitable registration number. (The L'Arche Foundation of Greater Vancouver, charitable registration number 137648671RR0001)

Invite a L'Arche Speaker

- to come to 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

- Interested in helping to plan a **special event** or volunteer elsewhere at L'Arche? Contact Marni at 604-435-9544 ex. 34

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**. Call us at 604-435-9544 ex. 33

Donate your Shoppers Optimum Points™

- Go to shoppersdrugmart.ca/donate to donate your points. Select *L'Arche Greater Vancouver* as your charity of choice.

We invite you to share our message by giving your copy of this newsletter to someone else.

Give online: larchevancouver.org and click "Donate"

CONTACT:

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

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

PROV. _____ POSTAL CODE _____

TEL. HOME _____

TEL. WORK _____

EMAIL _____

- I would like to become an **Ark Builder**
- I would like to receive information about **donating securities** or **leaving a gift in my will**
- I hereby give my permission for my name to be published on the **donor recognition list**
- I wish to remain **anonymous**

HERE IS MY GIFT OF:

\$500 \$250 \$100 \$50 Other _____

Make this a monthly gift!

METHOD OF PAYMENT:

Visa Mastercard Cheque

NAME ON CARD _____

CARD NO. ____ / ____ / ____ / ____

EXPIRY DATE ____ / ____

SIGNATURE _____

Please make cheque payable to: *L'Arche Foundation of Greater Vancouver*
Charitable Reg. #137648671-RR0001

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