

L'ARCHE ANTIGONISH SOCIAL

L'ARCHE ANTIGONISH NEWSLETTER

FALL 2022



"L'Arche has a special place in my heart..."

~ by *Claire Keyes, L'Arche Antigonish Volunteer*

My first introduction to L'Arche was through the welcoming of my Aunt Sarah Keyes to McKim House in (L'Arche Saint John) Saint John NB, something our entire family was overjoyed about. Following my aunt's transition into McKim house, I headed off to Antigonish for my first year of university where I wanted to learn more about what it meant to be part of a L'Arche community, thus I became involved with L'Arche Antigonish.

When I returned to Saint John following the completion of my first year at StFX, I began looking for summer job opportunities and came across a position at Creative Connections (CC); a L'Arche day program back home in Saint John. I have learned so much from my time at Creative Connections about how to care for others and what it truly means to be a good friend, all while getting to spend time with my Aunt Sarah; an added bonus. Every day I looked forward to work because of the positive environment which ensures a safe space for all to work, to share their gifts, and to contribute to the unique projects of the day. Moreover, I truly enjoyed getting to see my aunt thriving in her own environment.

L'Arche has a special place in my heart due to the care that has been provided for my Aunt. Sarah's transition to L'Arche occurred during a very difficult time for my family due to the illness of my grandmother, who could no longer care for Sarah. The transition into McKim house was a huge change for our large and tight knit family, as we had been used to having Sarah come to our own houses for weekly dinners, but over the summer I got to experience going to supper at McKim house with Sarah and be part of her own new life. The transformations in Sarah's happiness and independency have been a gift to our family, as Sarah is now the director of her own life, which L'Arche provides to so many core members.

Through my time at CC I have learned the impact of true teamwork and the importance of the simple act of spending time and getting to know others. Lastly, I have been humbled through creating friendships that are not only appreciated but treasured. Within L'Arche every person matters, and the uniqueness of each person's journey is accepted, and their growth is nurtured. I am so excited to be back in Antigonish for this upcoming school year and I cannot wait to take everything I have learned and bring it back to L'Arche Antigonish.

Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference

~ by Nancy Marenick, L'Arche Canada Board Member

Two groups met for the first time on June 8, 2022: L'Arche Antigonish welcomed the Nova Scotia delegates from the Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference (GGCLC). The purpose of the conference is to bring together 250 of Canada's future leaders from different regions, perspectives and backgrounds. Members are introduced to a range of issues and situations designed to expand their ability to interact with people and to broaden their perspectives on work, leadership and their country. Antigonish was one of many stops for the Nova Scotia delegates.

This was the second time L'Arche Antigonish has been included in the GGCLC Nova Scotia tour and the reactions and feelings seemed identical. The atmosphere was lively as the delegates were welcomed by Karen, Alana, and Tina who prepared for their visitors. The delegates were also welcomed by many of the core members, assistants, Moe Smith (L'Arche Antigonish Board member and long-time supporter of L'Arche), and me. I served on the L'Arche Board for many years and am now on the L'Arche Canada Board. My daughter, Anna, was one of the organizers for the Nova Scotia tour, and the delegates were informed that I would be in attendance when they stopped at L'Arche. I introduced myself as "Anna's mom."



There were several highlights of the visit: the video, Tiny Lights, which featured people from L'Arche communities all across the country singing along, dancing, or signing to the song on Zoom. The video showed the communities' resilience and need for connection when everyone was isolated during COVID. Donny, who has lived in L'Arche for 31 years and Gemma, an assistant from Donny's house spoke about their daily routines. Perhaps the highlight was the drumming session lead by Christian Gerro. Christian doesn't hear the music; he feels it. Elizabeth danced as others played the drums.

The drumming touched all the delegates in different ways. When the delegates introduced themselves, almost all mentioned the impact of the drumming, but they also commented on the laughter and the feeling of belonging by all the members of L'Arche. I mentioned that the "feeling of belonging" is certainly evident and not new. I mentioned one example that happened many years ago when L'Arche Antigonish was welcoming eight new people to our homes. Gus Leuschner, Community Leader at the time, Donny MacIntosh, and I were meeting with the new Core members and their families. The room was filled with nervous energy : this was a big move/change for all the family members. Gus welcomed everyone and then asked Donny to say a few words. Donny changed the mood in the room saying that "you aren't leaving your family; you are gaining another family." The tension in the room disappeared thanks to Donny.

Most of the delegates knew nothing about L'Arche when they arrived, but when they left, they understood how L'Arche continues to value and create belonging for persons with intellectual disabilities. Of the delegates' nine-day tour of Nova Scotia, L'Arche Antigonish was one of their highlights. Once again, L'Arche does what it does best: welcomes people unconditionally and touches their heart.



Joseph MacPherson 1940-2022

We had to say a hard goodbye to our old friend Joe Mac; where he spent his retirement in Hope House/Cornerstone. Joe Mac was a dapper man with a deep faith and a heart of gold, a great sense of humour, a love for music and a passion for dance & art which he explored late in his life. If anyone was lucky enough to spend a lot of time with Joe, you know he has taught you that you are never too old to set a goal or dream of something new! - Katie MacIsaac

Well we recently said a sad goodbye to Joe "Mac" who was well known in many circles! He was dearly loved by his family and had friends in William's Point, St. Ninian's, CACL, and his final home in Hope House at L'Arche Antigonish! I knew Joe for over forty years but the last four I spent my days at Cornerstone so I saw Joe everyday! He often asked about my family but also had to keep up on the William's Point news! He called me "The Old Pointer"! Joe was like a grandfather figure at Hope House and Cornerstone as he watched all the comings & goings! He knew everyone's vehicle & was usually up on where they were headed! We miss Joe especially sitting in his favourite place on the front veranda waving & talking to friends & neighbours as they went by! We said our farewells to Joe but still feel his presence. He is still watching our coming & goings.

- Florence Riley





MEET OUR ARTISTS

Kelly Farrell

I love painting and taking photos with my camera. I paint what I see. Places I have been or things I have done, what makes me happy or laugh or things I hope to see. I love hot weather. I love Florida and palm trees. I love painting houses, especially all the homes in L'Arche Antigonish. I love showing my paintings to everyone, especially family and friends.
~ Kelly signing and drawing her ideas about her work as an Artist



Megan Maginley

Imagination is boundless! Megan creates characters that make up a whole new universe. Some characters come to life with puppets she designs and builds herself. We are very lucky that she joined our team and we are learning so much together! Megan is never lacking in ideas. This past summer, she facilitated a puppet-making boot camp which was a huge success! Watch out for more!



Community Vacation Gallery!



"Someone take me home" - Machine Gun Kelly

~ by Marie Belintz, former L'Arche Antigonish Assistant

This line of the song "Home" by Machine Gun Kelly describes my feelings after coming back to Germany pretty well. Before I came to Antigonish there was just this whole new, foreign chapter ahead of me and now I can look back to a time where I made so many experiences and to the place I can call my home. A time where I learned to be more independent. A time where I got to know and love so many different characters. A time where I could make so many experiences in work that influenced my decision for a university in Germany. A time where I got to know a community which impressed me and I had the chance to learn so much about relationships. A time where my talent for organization was important. A time which had a huge impact on me and shaped me as a person in a positive way that I want to share it with other people.

"My February" me came into L'Arche and kind of knew what she wanted. I did this brave step to go to a foreign country to work with people I didn't know and speak a language I didn't speak fluently. In the beginning it wasn't that easy to work in this new job with these different personalities, which were very strong :). I needed time to find myself and I got some help from my family and my great team. Our team was great because we had our backs and we could rely on each other. The fact that we spend our freetime together and got good friends influenced the atmosphere at work positively. I really enjoyed to work and most of the time I was excited to start the day :). My daily tasks became routine and I didn't mind to cook anymore and I started to like it.

The small things in my daily life have become clearer to me and I have been able to enjoy them more. A great example would be that nearly every day I sat with some Core Member on the front porch and we watched the passing cars. Whenever there was a red car everyone started to scream "red car, red car" or every Core Member had some specific sentences they said once in a while. These sentences or just a few words made me smile every time.

The winter in Canada was new for me and I didn't know these dimensions of snow from Germany. I tried to fill my free time with exciting activities, which was more difficult this part of the year :). In the first few months I just went outside to go to a warm place like a café or the library because of the cold. As soon as it got warmer the atmosphere at work and with me changed completely. We did so many things for example going for drives or walks which made the daily life more exiting. In my free time I met friends and we went to the beach we went out for lunch in a park or I went for walks in town. My free time was basic and uncomplicated but I loved it this way and I really enjoyed it.

After seven months my time in L'Arche was over and I had to go back. I turned into a woman, who didn't know what she is capable of. During my time in Antigonish I got to know myself in a way I would never have been able to in Germany. I have become a woman I am very proud of and that I like to show other people. I want to share this positive attitude towards life I got to experience in Antigonish. This time made me realize how grateful I can be and there is always something to be happy about!



Welcome Jimmy Bowman

~ by Katie MacIssac and David Sotelo

In L'Arche, with every heartbreaking goodbye to old friends, we also are fortunate enough to welcome someone new. Hope House, welcomed Jimmy Bowman. He is a wonderful person who, regardless of his age, is always energetic and eager to do outdoor activities. He loves to mow the lawn and work in the garden, shovel snow in the winter, cut firewood with his family, among many other things. He is known for being gentle and kind to everyone and for his good sense of humour.

Jimmy is part of CACL Monday through Friday until noon and in the afternoons he is part of Cornerstone. On the weekends he likes to go out for drives with the other core members, especially Kyle, he also likes to sit outside the house eating apples, while in the company of Carol Anne. We are very happy to have Jimmy as a part of our community and our lives and look forward to sharing life together in community for many years to come.



Community Recipe - Fresh Salsa!

- 8 tomatoes
- 1 orange bell pepper
- 1 yellow bell pepper
- 1 red bell pepper
- 1/2 red onion
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1 cup fresh cilantro
- 2 tbs fresh lime juice
- 1/2 tbs of sweetener of choice (sugar, stevia, honey, maple syrup)
- 1tsp cumin
- 1/4 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/4 tsp himalya pink salt



1) Roughly chop tomatoes, peppers, onions & cilantro. Make sure to remove the white membrane of the peppers & centre core of tomatoes as it will make the salsa bitter. Mince garlic.

2) Put veggies along with lime juice, sweetener, spices in blender & pulse a few times until desired consistency.

* if you want more of a pico de gallo; pulse half the tomatoes with the minced garlic, lime juice, spices & pour mixture over the rest of chopped tomatoes & veggies - give it a stir & chill for 30 minutes & enjoy!

3) Taste salsa, add more lime juice & salt if needed. Put in air tight containers or jar. Let it chill in fridge 30 minutes before serving.

DONATION WISHLIST ITEMS

- Place Mats
- Cloth Napkins
- Handheld Mixer
- Yarn
- Crochet Hooks
- Board Games
- Alexa Devices (Echo's)
- Firewood
- Christmas Lights



DID YOU KNOW...?

Did you know that you can donate directly on our website and be issued an immediate tax receipt to your e-mail?

Donating online is easy, and you can even setup recurring monthly donations! This type of dependable income can help tremendously towards our sustainability and growth!

Even more Community Vacation Pictures!



Please also visit our website at www.larcheantigonish.ca



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