



# SOUNDINGS

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## The Call to "Show Up"

by Stacy Cates-Carney, Community Leader

During a recent morning at Anawim, Ricky and I were the first ones in the kitchen – I was putting dishes away and Ricky was working on making coffee for himself and another core member.

"Hey, Stacy"

"Yeah, Ricky"

"Thanks for being here."

Thanks for being here. Thanks for showing up. Amid all the responsibilities as community leader, including lots of meetings and numbers, I am brought back to the essential by spending time with Ricky and being reminded of the great value of 'showing up'. The feast of Christmas is about celebrating God's incarnation... God showing up in the wonder and mess of humanity and proclaiming through the life of Jesus, "I will be with you". Mary's 'yes' to God's indwelling Spirit wasn't practical, nor very reasonable. Our 'yes' to each other, being willing to show up, might not always be either.

One of the gifts I've been given in my years with L'Arche is coming to peace with the fact that life in L'Arche doesn't always make sense. More often than not it is hard to explain in very rational terms why I or anyone else chooses a life with L'Arche. It is very common for one to have a clear reason why one *comes* to L'Arche but most reason falls away as one lives in community and relationship day in and day out over the years. It is love and God's grace that hold us in mutual relationships where we keep showing up with and for each other. The best I can say is "It's what love does".

In a time when economic challenges are facing individuals, local communities as well as state government, one can easily be captivated by fear and anxiety. Over the past several weeks I have been in a variety of meetings and I have listened to parents who are struggling to support their children with disabilities, mental health professionals who don't have the resources to respond to individuals in crisis, and agencies working on strategies to maintain services while facing additional funding cuts. And while I did hear anxiety in each of these scenarios, I also heard individuals deeply motivated to care for the most vulnerable in our midst.

Sound reason and creative thinking are important in facing the challenges before us but these can't be the only elements woven into determining what will support and sustain what is essential. In what appears to be parched ground, I need to believe that love can still bloom bright and wild! There aren't easy answers to the challenges we face but whatever strategies or solutions we arrive at, I hope they rest on the value that in community, whether L'Arche, city, state or family, we can respond to the call to "show up for each other". It is, after all, what love does.

On behalf of the L'Arche Tahoma Hope community, I extend our gratitude to our many friends and supporters who 'show up' in so many ways to sustain our life in community. We wish you all a blessed Christmas.

"This is the irrational season,  
when love blooms bright and wild.  
Had Mary been filled with reason,  
there'd have been no room for the child."

~ Madeleine L'Engle



# Making the World a Smaller Place

by Elisa Stene Carrothers, Farm & Gardens Grower and Long Term Community Member

Starting at the top of the hill, we walked and rolled... two by two... our own little parade. Miguel and Juanita led with a L'Arche banner. "El Arca! El Arca! Ra! Ra! Ra!" We sang and cheered while rattling plastic bottles filled with dry beans, noise blowers, tambourines, recorders, and what ever else we could find. Police cars escorted us, to protect us from local traffic. People peered out their windows and doors to see what all the commotion was, and then greeted us with warm waves and smiles. We walked and wheeled our friends for a long time. At last we ended our pilgrimage with mass in the church at the bottom of the hill.

I was blessed recently with the opportunity to travel down to Mexico City for a L'Arche Inter-zone retreat. Thirty members of L'Arche in the Americas gathered together, reaching from Canada to Argentina. We silently focused on our commitment to our people, to the truth, to L'Arche and to God. Richard Bower, pastoral minister of L'Arche USA, and Robert Larouche, community leader of Amos Canada and founder of L'Arche Haiti, presented throughout the week. It was an amazing experience to gather together with a group of people living out the same mission, but with different flavors and experiences. Within the week and between the silences we were able to build relationships and see first hand the solidarity of L'Arche. The retreat culminated (as is tradition) with a foot washing service and a Fiesta. My new friend, Rosemary Almeida, community leader in Brazil, washed my feet, and suddenly the world was a much smaller place!

When the retreat ended many assistants, including myself, stayed to participate in a small tour of the city. We visited the cathedrals, climbed to the top of the Pyramid of the Sun, and had a fiesta with the L'Arche community in Mexico City.

The real gift of the trip came at the end. I took a three hour bus ride to Queretaro, to visit the community there. Queretaro is our sister community, and we are well paired! Upon entering the community I immediately felt as though I

was home. This is where I participated in the pilgrimage mentioned earlier, and met some of the most wonderful people. Jose, brought my bags up to my room, and showed me how to feed the chickens and rabbits they had in their back yard. Moisis, tried to teach me Spanish, and showed me his Michael Jackson impressions. Rosio caught a random pigeon off the street and carried it around in a shirt/blanket all afternoon. Bertha greeted me with a smile and let me help with her night routine. And of course, Chavo, community leader of Queretaro, who spent time in our Tacoma community, added his outgoing energy, making everyone feel special and important. Chavo would pop up with a Jimbo, Nancy, or Kai saying, revealing how close our community is held to his own heart. I was only in the Queretaro community for three days, but it was difficult to say goodbye when the time came. I sincerely hope that the relationships between our two communities can continue to grow and deepen. We have so much to learn and share with each other.



I feel extremely grateful for the opportunity of this experience. I often find myself daydreaming about baking bread with Jose and making beaded jewelry with Miguel in their new workshop. I desperately hope to someday return and live those daydreams out. I would like to thank all who made it possible for me to go and participate. The time is deeply imprinted in my own journey of L'Arche.

## Community Happenings

This past August and September we welcomed ten new daily life members into our community. They came from as near as Montana and as far away as China and Lesotho. They are entering in to life in our homes and programs with gusto and we are so grateful for their faithful presence with us as we move into 2010.

In September we gathered for a community night focused on solidarity and, in particular, our relationship with L'Arche Queretaro, Mexico. Elisa Stene Carrothers, our Grower on the farm, had just recently returned from the Inter-zone retreat in Mexico and she was able to visit our sister community while there. She shared with us stories of our brothers and sisters in Queretaro, the work they do and the mission and vision we share (see story on page 2). It was wonderful to see their faces in photos and hear news from their daily life.



*Sharing a meal at Community Weekend*



*Shann whooping it up with new Noah's Workshop JV, Mike*

In November, five of our newer assistants participated in Assistants Enrichment. They came back excited to have met other assistants from around the region and share stories of daily life in L'Arche. In September we named four new house leaders, and they spent a week away together at this year's Team Leaders Circle at Pilgrim Firs, Port Orchard. This was a fruitful time for them to learn from others and strengthen their leadership skills. We also welcomed four new long term assistants into our existing group. This group had the joy of spending two days together in prayer, play and reflection at the home of Betty and Larry Cates. During the first week of December, a group of assistants and core members made the annual Advent journey to pray with the Trappist monks at Our Lady of Guadalupe Abbey in Lafayette, Oregon. We are so grateful to the monks for their on-going and generous support of our community. The abbey is always a wonderful time to rest and reflect in the company of the faithful.

Diana Busch has been heading up "Friday fun" days. This vibrant little group of assistants and core members recently had a sing-a-long with Cindy Rose. Among other things, they exercise and dance together and generally enjoy one another's company.

Around the time of the Feast of All Souls the whole community gathered at the Farmhouse to remember those who have died, especially Dick Sutherland and Wally McGough. Along with their families and old friends we processed over to our "Sutherland Orchard" at the back of the farm and laid Dick and Wally's ashes in the ground. This was a special time for us to give thanks for their good and generous lives.



*Robbie collecting evergreen boughs for Farm & Gardens.*



# "Bajo la Misma Luna" (Under the Same Moon) L'Arche Tahoma Hope Annual Auction

## March 6th, 2010, 5pm

Watch your mailbox for an invitation!\*

Save the date for L'Arche Tahoma Hope's Annual Auction. This year's event will again be at the **Landmark Theater in Tacoma's Stadium District**. Join us at this spectacular fiesta as we celebrate and affirm the life and work of L'Arche in Tacoma and raise money to keep the party going. **Your support matters!** We hope to see you there.

Looking to do MORE than just attend the auction? **Consider supporting our efforts by:**

- **Sending a Core Member to the Party:** The cost for a core member and an accompanying assistant to attend the auction is \$160. If you are able to sponsor a core member – assistant team, please send a check to the L'Arche office with "Sponsorship for Core Member Team" in the memo.
- **Donating Items:** You can download a procurement form and find out more about item delivery options online at [www.larchetahomahope.org](http://www.larchetahomahope.org). This year's item donation deadline is: **February 5th, 2010**.
- **Other Underwriting:** Our goal is to have 100% of our Auction costs covered through underwriting donations. If you are able to help us meet our underwriting goal (every penny counts!), please send a check to the L'Arche office with "Auction Underwriting" in the memo.
- **Volunteering:** As you can imagine, putting on an auction requires the gift of time from many different people. If you are able to help us with our LONG list of varied tasks, please contact us.

All questions can be directed to Mary or Rachel at (253) 535-3178, e-mail: [auction@larchetahomahope.org](mailto:auction@larchetahomahope.org).

\* If you've never attended our auction, but are interested in an invitation, contact Mary in our main office to be added to the invitation list.

### 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.

Peggy Carroll  
Zenta Grobins  
LaVelle Hansen

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

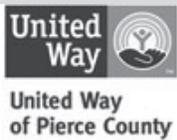
Mark Drangstveit  
Laurie Smith  
Patrick Toohy

### [www.larchetahomahope.org](http://www.larchetahomahope.org)

As the internet becomes an increasingly significant method for information sharing, we at L'Arche Tahoma Hope strive to keep up with the times! As a result of this, our website has experienced a major overhaul in recent months.

While you can still find all of the information that was on our previous site, we have expanded our site to include photo albums of community life, testimonials from former assistants, additional information about the mission of L'Arche and much more!

We invite you to visit [www.larchetahomahope.org](http://www.larchetahomahope.org) and connect with our community in a new way. We always welcome suggestions for additional content on our site. Suggestions/comments can be e-mailed to [webmaster@larchetahomahope.org](mailto:webmaster@larchetahomahope.org).



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L'Arche Tahoma Hope is a non-profit organization.

Your donations are tax-deductible.

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