



SOUNDINGS

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Letting Our Light Shine - Right Where We Are

by Amanda Schappler, Long Term Assistant



Amanda and Nancy hanging out at Community Weekend (left), and Bobby shares his light with Zach (above).

Light a Candle; Become a Lighthouse

By Frederick Douglas Harper

Light a candle within your soul;
Nurture that glow and allow it to grow;
Nurture the fire within you as spirit;
Your spirit of life to develop as your gift and
Purpose in giving and receiving;
Start a lighthouse from a candle's light,
So effervescent to show the direction for those
Who will come to aid you or be aided by you;
Develop your beacon and show that light for
Ships both full and empty to come to your port;
People who will come to give to and receive
From you.

This Fall, at our annual retreat to Seabeck, we introduced our theme for the year: "Letting Our Light Shine". Throughout the weekend we sang a song with these lyrics:

"You are the light of the world...so shine, shine, shine where you are..."

As we sang, I thought, "What exactly does it mean to "shine where you are"?"

Sometimes, I think I have to be in a certain place in order to "shine". Or maybe things have to be a certain way - first I need to get to this point in my life, or first I need to accomplish that goal. Or maybe it's when things get a little less chaotic. I could go on and on. Here in our community, we experience all kinds of growing and changing. We are in constant transition, constant action. And yet, in the midst of this, there remains a powerful stability that reminds us that we can shine just as we are, where we are.

One image that comes to mind is the image of the lighthouse: tall, sturdy structures that radiate light for a specific purpose. When lighthouses are built, it is not fully known who they're going to reach, who is in need of help, but yet they remain shining brightly for whoever may come. Lighthouses convey a calm, steady, and consistent presence. To quote writer Ann Lamott: "Lighthouses do not go running all over an island looking for boats to save; they just stand there shining."

We can think of each of our L'Arche houses as "lighthouses", shining out into the community around us. Here in L'Arche, we don't have to go far to find people to shine our light on. Our L'Arche homes serve as beacons that attract all sorts of people, who come for all sorts of reasons, who stay for different lengths of time, and leave changed in all sorts of ways. The challenge lies in discovering just how we "let our light shine" on all the people who enter into relationship with us. What does it mean to do this?

I've found that it is the simple act of caring for others...and letting others care for us...that keeps the lights in our homes shining so brightly. See, that's the thing about lighthouses: in order to really shine, they need someone to care for them. It is the faithful, consistent, loving care of the lighthouse keepers that enable the lighthouse to fulfill its purpose of shining out as a beacon for

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Letting Our Light Shine *(continued from page 1)*

boats who pass by. Like lighthouses, our L'Arche homes are dependent upon the people who care for them. The other day, I was reminiscing with my good friend Nancy Tyson. As a core member in the Farmhouse for 25 years, Nancy has been a steady presence and great example of the kind of consistent, caring presence that keeps Farmhouse going. "You've seen a lot of people come in and out of this house," I told Nancy. She agreed. "How do you do it?" I asked her. "What's your secret?" She just looked at me, smiled, and said...slowly and deliberately so that I wouldn't miss the message... "I just love them while they're here."

Nancy knows a thing or two about how to let her light shine right where she is. She understands the value of simply showing up each day, in a spirit of welcome to whoever she might come across. She also knows how to be cared for and how to love others just by being herself. Nancy reminds me that it doesn't take much to shine our light. All it takes is a little openness, faithfulness, and willingness to show up, care, and be cared for.

My hope is that this Advent, we may all remember to be lights to the world by doing just that. May we simply take the time to show up...be cared for...love others where they are...and shine!

BOARD MEMBERS WANTED!

L'Arche Tahoma Hope is actively seeking new Board Members. We are especially interested in recruiting board members with experience working with non-profit organizations in the areas of advocacy, facilities management, communication, fundraising/development, and human resources. Above all, we welcome individuals who share a passion for the mission of L'Arche and desire to support the efforts of L'Arche in "working together toward a more human society."

Key responsibilities include the following:

- Consistently preparing for and attending monthly board meetings;
- Participating as an active member on at least one LTH committee;
- Making a financial contribution that is meaningful to you; and
- Participating in organizational fund-raising activities in a manner appropriate for you.

In addition, you are welcome to share in many community events and explore the various other ways you can contribute to the LTH community.

Please contact Kevin King, Board President, or Stacy Cates-Carney, Community Leader, if you would like more information or to identify yourself or someone you think would be a good candidate to serve on the LTH Board. You can reach Kevin at kevingking43@gmail.com and Stacy at commleader@larchetahomahope.org.

Swimming for Solidarity

by Siri Carlson, Recreation and Day Support Assistant

Inspired by the L'Arche International Gathering in Atlanta, L'Arche Tahoma Hope's 35th anniversary, and the Summer Olympics, the Monday Night Swim Club held "Swimming For Solidarity," a fundraiser for L'Arche solidarity, in the month of August. Every Monday night in August, Doug, Leana, Stacie and Nathan, along with a supportive group of assistants, walked and swam as many laps as they could during their regular swim time.

With dedication, hard work, and cheers of encouragement, the swimmers/walkers met their goal of completing 300 laps collectively over the four-week challenge. With the sponsorship and cents-per-lap pledges of many friends of the community, **the Monday Night Swimmers raised \$835 for L'Arche Solidarity!** The money will go to L'Arche USA's Solidarity with the South campaign, supporting L'Arche communities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Congratulations to Nathan, Stacie, Leana, and Doug for their incredible effort and athleticism and "Thank you!" to everyone who supported their fundraising efforts. The Monday Night Swim Club continues to meet weekly and looks forward to the next opportunity to use their prowess in the pool to support other L'Arche communities.

Visit us at www.larchetahomahope.org/fun.html to see pictures of the swimmers, along with a Swimming for Solidarity donor listing.



A New Home for Jimbo

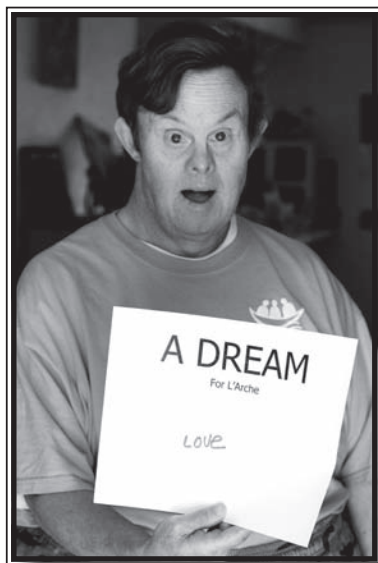
by Stacey Hirst, Interim Administrative Support Person

It's no secret that James Taylor holds a special place in the heart of the L'Arche Tahoma Hope Community. In the two years I lived with James, I came to know some of his greatest gifts, and I was blessed to walk with him (literally, around and around the farm) as he aged and dealt with difficult and challenging life circumstances. Amidst those difficulties, however, he maintains his ability to be with his beloveds in all the joy and pains of transition.

Being in the moment, sharing in joy through laughter, crying with me in pain and sadness, are the gifts that James shares deeply with me. On good days at Farmhouse, he would laugh, dance, and scream in joy as he shuffled out the door and around the barn. On harder days he would sit quietly in the van outside Farmhouse seeking familiarity and comfort. He knows himself, how he's feeling and what he needs, and despite his changing body and mind, he lives a life of gratitude, love, and trust.

We are so profoundly grateful for his authenticity and joyfulness in his life in our community the past thirteen years (not to mention his ten years on the farm prior to that). So thank you, James. Thank you for representing unconditional love through your relationship with your mom. Thank you for reminding us of our loved ones who have gone before us and keeping them close to our hearts by pointing out the beauty of the mountain or the sky and saying, "my Dad's up there." Thank you for your excitement around the simple pleasures of life: a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, a drive around the neighborhood, a good hug, or finding a cookie in the farm break room. Thank you for being tender with the most vulnerable in our community by gently embracing them and saying "It's ok" and "I love you." Thank you for holding our hands, guiding us, and reassuring us through this time of transition.

Although James has moved to a new home, he continues to be a light for us in community. Just as we hold James in our hearts, he continues to hold us in his. His room is filled with pictures and words that remind him of his L'Arche community. He often points out Pat Toohey's car in the parking lot (they have several large gold vans). He continues to run, up and down the ramp, replacing his loops around the barn. James' transition to a new home has been a great lesson in trust for me. Trust that although we as a community may not always be the best physical support for our members, we can continue to live out our mission and find new ways to



James' dream for L'Arche - Love!



Stacey and James sharing a dance at Prom

be supportive. It is a blessing to see James' new community falling in love with him in the same ways we have. But then again, how could they not?

If you would like to visit James in his new home, please contact the L'Arche office for more information.



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.

Fr. Jimmy Boyle
Joe Carbone

Wally McGough
Ken Paillet

Dick Sutherland

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

Allie Corrigan
Shannon Dell
Mark Drangstveit
Ricky Durham
Loch & Emily Garofalo

Robbie Habermann
Carie Halle
Sharilynn Heimzman
Mike Neeland
Leana Shiu

L'Arche Tahoma Hope's 19th Annual Auction



Aloha!

Watch your mailbox for an invitation!*

March 2nd, 2013 at the Landmark Convention Center

At the heart of L'Arche Tahoma Hope are the core members whose smiles are contagious, and whose gifts are celebrated each day. The funds raised at our auction can make a real difference in the continued life and growth of L'Arche Tahoma Hope. Mark your calendars now and come and be a part of the mission of L'Arche!

Want to help make this year's auction our best ever?

- Make a donation of an item, a basket, or maybe a special experience
- Contribute towards our underwriting expenses, ensuring that all proceeds from the event are able to come directly back to L'Arche.
- Help send a core member to the party, because it's really not a party at all without them there!
- The ways to get involved are endless.... Visit our website at www.larchetahomahope.org.

To find out more, contact Mary or Danelle at (253) 535-3178, e-mail: 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.

Pancake Breakfast a Great Success!

On Saturday, October 20th, the L'Arche Board of Directors in conjunction with the L'Arche Club at Bellarmine, put on the 1st Annual L'Arche Pancake Breakfast in celebration of youth service to L'Arche Tahoma Hope. It was a wonderful gathering where several youth from the L'Arche club shared how their lives have been impacted by the L'Arche community. Pancakes, eggs, bacon, sausage, and fruit were plentiful!

Look for the 2nd Annual event next year and mark your calendars early. Thanks to the committee – Board members Steve Kramp, Jen Schott, Paula Olson, and Chris Colleran and Bellarmine L'Arche Club president Caroline Baer – and also to Bellarmine for their incredible generosity in letting us use the Student Center and the kitchen for this event.

Check out some of the stories shared by students at www.larchetahomahope.org/stories.html.

Soundings is published three times a year, Spring, Summer and Christmas.

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

Your donations are tax-deductible.

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