

No family is an island, especially when a child has a disability.



Tommy's lifelong journey with intellectual and physical disabilities began with a tragic brain injury at birth in 1948. Slow to speak and develop muscle, he learned to walk wearing full leg braces as a toddler. By 1953, Tommy was the proud big brother to two sisters in a happy, close-knit family of five, embraced by loving grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and friends.



When the family moved from Ohio to Florida in 1967, Tommy enrolled in Pine Castle. This major transition introduced a new group of people into his life and support system.

Tommy relished life with his family and was very sad to lose his mother to cancer in 1980; his father retired later that year to become his sole caregiver. Although challenging at times, a deep love and undeniably strong bond developed between father and son. As his father aged and grew more frail, it became apparent that the time had come to explore all options for potentially transitioning to a new home.

The search was on and the bar set high. In 2003, L'Arche Jacksonville answered countless prayers for a spiritual, loving home environment. Tommy's father passed away in 2009 at the age of 92, with such gratitude and peace in his heart for the community of L'Arche Jacksonville and the generous supporters who also love his son. His two sisters are involved as volunteers at L'Arche and Tommy continues to thrive in an environment where he is loved, his voice respected and his needs fulfilled on a daily basis.

Just like home.

