

We Are Family: Celebrating 25 Years of L'Arche Harbor House

By Shannon Henderson

The year 2010 will be a time of reflection, prayer and celebration for the extended L'Arche Harbor House family. It will also be a year to look to the future. "We are so grateful for the many blessings that made our first 25 years possible," says Community Leader Amy Finn-Schultz. "Building a community like this is very hard work. We're reminded of that as we watch L'Arche projects in Atlanta and St. Louis struggle to find their footing. On the other hand, keeping it all going is a challenge, too. This is particularly true given the economic downturn – and the increased health issues of our core members as they age. In many ways, our supporters matter more now than ever before."

Community Coordinator Sharon Toth concurs: "Just like any family, the longer we know our core members, the more precious they are to us," she says. "We have to make sure that we can meet their needs for life. That's what makes the 25th Anniversary so much more than just a pat on the back for work to date. It's really about what happens next."

Anniversary-year events and an initiative to rally supporters past, present and future will be organized around the theme *We Are Family*. "We think of ourselves as family on so many levels," explains Board President Cheryl O'Connor. "Obviously, the core members and assistants are family. But we never forget the dreamers and doers who started this amazing place; the family members who trust us with their loved ones; and the many, many friends, volunteers and contributors who help keep it all going. They are family, too, and the core members are very much aware of their loving support. We wanted to capture all this in a slogan that emphasizes the connections."



In 1985 the first home, Peace House, opened with six female core members and live-in assistants Curt and Dianne Welch (and son Joshua). Two of the original six ladies, Ann and Joy, are still members of the L'Arche community. Photo: Ann is fifth from the left; Joy second from the right.

Look forward to a variety of events and initiatives during our anniversary year, including:

- a community **spiritual retreat** in the spring
- a **gala homecoming** for LHH friends, past and present, Friday, November 12, on the grounds at L'Arche Harbor House. During this *We Are Family 25th Reunion* event, the community will honor our founders and celebrate our core members, including two (Ann and Joy) who have been in residence from the very beginning.
- the launch of a *We Are Family Fund* that will link friends of the community to areas of special interest to them – and help grow our critical support network

Did you know?

The Faith & Sharing group that laid the groundwork for Harbor House in the early 1980s envisioned from the start that it would one day be part of the L'Arche Federation. That happened officially in 1992; today, we are one of 135 L'Arche communities worldwide – and the only L'Arche in Florida. First-time visitors from other L'Arche communities are often surprised to see our campus. While the more typical L'Arche model in America features houses separated by considerable distances and sometimes in different parts of town, we are blessed to live in close proximity to each other on grounds provided by the Diocese of Saint Augustine. At the hub is our beautiful community center, a gift of two special LHH friends: Mrs. Eleanor Blanchart and the late Captain Leonard Blanchart. No, we don't have the advantage of being out in the "real world" like many other L'Arche communities. But we do have the chance to create something special here – and invite the world in to see and witness!

Reminiscences Wanted

What's your favorite memory of L'Arche Harbor House? If you were an assistant, volunteer, board member, supporter, family member or friend of the community at any point during our first 25 years, we'd love to hear from you. Anecdotes will be collected in a special commemorative scrapbook; select entries will appear in upcoming newsletters this year.

Send to Nancy Smith at
700 Arlington Rd. N.
Jacksonville, FL 32211
or email to
developmentjax@bellsouth.net

UPCOMING EVENTS

March

- 4 First Thursday
6pm, Blanchart Center
- 23 Meet & Greet
@Burrito Gallery
- 28 Annual Softball Game
@ Christ the King

April

- 26 20th Annual Golf Classic
@ Hidden Hills CC

May

- 6 First Thursday
6pm, Blanchart Center
- 15 Rainbow Sale
@ Quality Inn, Jax Bch.

June

- 3 First Thursday
6pm, Blanchart Center

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Catherine Bain
Rainbow Workshop
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L'Arche Harbor House
700 Arlington Rd. N.
Jacksonville, FL 32211
904-721-5992
904-721-7143 FAX
larchejacksonville.org

CELEBRATION is

...a communal experience of joy, a song of thanksgiving. We celebrate the fact of being together; we give thanks for the gifts we have been given. Celebration nourishes us, restores hope, and brings us the strength to live with the suffering and difficulties of everyday life. —Jean Vanier

RAINBOW WORKSHOP

DAY PROGRAM

- ✦ Our November sale, hosted by **Mary Malone** at **European Street Café**, was a resounding success. More than \$3,000 was raised for the Rainbow Workshop. Thank you, Mary, for everything – great food, great location, and wonderful hospitality.
- ✦ **Resurrection Catholic School** was the site of a three-day sale of beautiful hand-crafted items from the Rainbow Workshop. Thank you to all of our faithful volunteers for your help.
- ✦ Thank you, **Atlantic Pottery Supply**, for donating more than \$2000 worth of beautiful glazes for our ceramics and pottery creations.
- ✦ Thank you, **Alden Road School**, for your donations.
- ✦ JU Professor and Rainbow volunteer **Anne Acker** is working with one of her classes to design a computer game that features one of **Jo Marie's** sharks as the star character. The Rainbow is eager to play and awaits the unveiling.
- ✦ Many thanks to the **River Road Baptist Church** in Hilliard for inviting the Rainbow to attend their Christmas party. **Robert McCormick** was so happy to be invited to sing!
- ✦ **JU Best Buddies** continue to visit Rainbow every month and assist core members in craft projects and playing games.
- ✦ We're very grateful for the computer wizardry of JU student **Igor** who repaired one of our computers.
- ✦ Welcome to **Mary Lewis**, who volunteers once a week at the Rainbow.
- ✦ **Mary Malone's** "pickle bucket" collection financed a trip to Gainesville for the Rainbow.
- ✦ Mark your calendar: **Rainbow Sale May 15** at the Quality Inn, Jacksonville Beach

Living Nativity Reminds All of True Meaning of Christmas

Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church in Ponte Vedra graciously hosted the 21st annual Living Nativity. Under the direction of Kate Norton and Dawn Smyser, the presentation by the core members and assistants was an inspiring reminder of the true meaning of the Christmas season. Prior to the program, the crowd was treated to a concert by the talented musicians of Suzuki Strings. This production would not have been possible without the help of many: Our Lady Star of the Sea and Monsignor Daniel Logan; the Suzuki Strings musicians led by Rocky and Judy DiGeorgio; our talented singers and musicians; the Bishop Kenny Key Club; Cheryl O'Connor and Fran Gullman for costumes; and all who provided refreshments for the reception.



Prior to the start of the program, core members and assistants were smiling for the camera. Above: Sharon, Kathy, Mary, and Brenda; Below: Larry, Jeff, and Sally



Angels Loren and Ann



Dino and Tommy

More Joy to the World

One of our most cherished gifts of the Christmas season was the custom L'Arche "video card" created by Kate Norton and Renaissance Creative. The video, produced by Kate and Stan Norton and the Renaissance team, highlights the "joy" of L'Arche as its members share in the ordinary things of everyday life; reminding us all that the happiness we seek is in the love we share daily. A lovely thought any time of year.

Holiday High-Five

L'Arche USA selected Michael Edden's artwork for the cover of its 2009 Christmas card. We're proud of Michael's effort and thank Mary Ann Miller for coming up with the project for her monthly art class at L'Arche. It's also the featured December artwork in the 2010 calendar.



Thank you, Emily!

Three cheers to Emily Rawitsch for the outstanding design of our new web site, launched in September. After being introduced to L'Arche by board member Kate Norton, she generously offered to re-design the web site; an offer that was quickly accepted by the Development office! Emily has recently launched her graphic design business Studio Orange Design, LLC – visit her web site: www.studio-rangedesign.com. Our thanks also to board member Shannon Henderson for the many hours spent writing the extensive script. What a team!



www.larchejacksonville.org

Please visit our site often for updates on events, recent news, online newsletters, photo galleries, and stories about our core members, assistants, and supporters. An online donation page now offers a convenient and secure way to contribute to L'Arche.

Finding Room for Thought

By Hannes Svedburg

What is community life about? After four months in Harbor House, for me it means first of all, a re-evaluation of my own often romanticized and narrow ideas of what it is to live together. It can be difficult to see the reality through the veils of big and charged words that inevitably emerge when trying to articulate and communicate great experiences often sprung from seemingly small everyday occurrences. "Come and see!" Jesus says.

Those of you familiar with the community probably know Jo Marie. Jo is difficult to wake up, she likes to organize gigantic piles of papers and newspaper clippings, and to drink her Coke. Jo is herself, all the time, every second; and if something or someone is not pleasing to her, she will let them know. One of my first few days here, we went for a walk, the two of us, around the houses. I, who have a tendency to go through life as if it were a series of things to get over with, am finding it hard to stand the – *at times* – less-than-brisk pace (life here can be slow), and I keep trying to speed things up. "Sit down, please!" Jo says firmly. I obey and succeed this time in taking in my first lesson from a core member. My breathing slows down and deepens, and thoughts get a chance to settle. This is one of the benefits of a 14-hour day: room for thought. It is indeed difficult not to think things over. The days often contain teachings like this from core members. How often do I miss them?

Although I've only been living here for four months, and without using too many, too big words, I would like to try and say that there is a combination of security, responsibility and spirituality here that provides a very rich soil for personal growth. It seems to be a place to be weak and perhaps to overcome some resignation and weariness.

"The longer we journey on the road to inner healing and wholeness, the more the sense of belonging grows and deepens. The sense is not just one of belonging to others and to a community. It is a sense of belonging to the universe, to the earth, to the air, to the water, to everything that lives, to all humanity. If the community gives a sense of belonging, it also helps us to accept our aloneness in a personal meeting with God. Through this, the community is open to the universe and to human kind."

(Jean Vanier, "Community & Growth" p. 17)



Hannes and Jo Marie

The Eagles Have Landed



Getting to know the members of Boy Scout Troop 212 has been a transforming experience for L'Arche Harbor House. Three members of the troop designed and supervised three separate projects – each project a critical step in the process of becoming an Eagle Scout.

Thanks to their effort and hard work, the L'Arche campus was revitalized in three important areas: the parking area in front of the Greatfull House, the gazebo building and swings, and the peaceful grotto located behind all three houses.

The scouts painted, raked, mulched, planted and constructed ramps for wheelchair access to the gazebo. The spirit of teamwork was inspiring as scouts and parents worked side by side to accomplish their goals. Congratulations to **Jacob Dirghalli**, **Grant VanWinkle**, and **Garret Maloney** and thank you for all the improvements at L'Arche Harbor House.



Calling All Young Adults

Meet & Greet • Burrito Gallery
Tuesday, March 23 • 5:30-7:30 pm

A group is being formed made up of individuals in their 20s and mid-30s in support of L'Arche Harbor House. We invite you to have fun and participate, get to know the community, and enrich your life by doing so.

Please contact Development Assistant Catherine Bain at cbain700@gmail.com or 721-5992 to discover ways to become involved. Join us for our first information meeting at **Burrito Gallery** for **hors d'oeuvres, door prizes and a cash bar.**

A Simple Joy

(A meditation on L'Arche)
by Chad Allen

*How heavy the season
on this exiled body.
But you, in metallic,
sun-drenched spinning chair
wrap melodies around
my twisted legs.
And I, like David,
dance before the
Ark.*

*Then, a soft voice, the seraphim song
drifts through row upon row of
listless ears.*

*Blind and beautiful eyes of wonder
You touch the vision of glory,
releasing the floodgates, and
Singing your mirth into
the deserts of my heart.*

*Folding linens with laughter
easy and free, my friend
and I already glimpsing
eternity.*

*A simple joy
opens attic windows,
and invites the
songbirds in.*

*You and I know, it is here
they will nest, and
we smile in this
truth,
Our silly grins unraveling
across our faces like a
million woven mysteries.*

(Chad Allen recently completed his stay as an assistant at Sunflower House. See page 8)

Festive Evening at Seven Bridges Introduces 2010 Calendar

A party to launch L'Arche Harbor House's fourth *A Year of Celebrations* calendar was celebrated Thursday, October 15, at Seven Bridges Grille and Brewery in Tinseltown. Braving unseasonably warm weather for the outdoor event, a crowd of more than 150 L'Arche friends helped kicked off sales for the community's important annual fundraiser. Among the evening's high-



Paul's artwork was the focus of lively bidding as Nancy Smith displayed it for all to see. Santioni's was the winning bid.

Enjoy these monthly promotions and a donation will be made to L'Arche Harbor House.

March: European Street Café

You'll find your HERO at E-Street!
Order the Prince Andrew Hero.

April: Sticky Fingers Rib House

Mmm...10¢ per rack of ribs throughout April.

May: TacoLu

Taco de Mayo! Baja Fish Taco is the star.

June: Zaitoon Mediterranean Grill

Cheers! Any wine purchase qualifies.

lights were delicious samplings from calendar sponsor restaurants Shula's 347 Grill, JJ's Bistro, Sticky Fingers, TacoLu, Pastiche, Santioni's Cucina, Seven Bridges, and Sun Dog; a coffee bar hosted by Fazzini's Coffee & Tea; a live auction of calendar artwork by auctioneer Chuck Plumley with help from celebrity MC Mary Baer; and a raffle featuring beautiful baskets created by Jeanne Vlieg containing wines donated by Seven Bridges, 2010 calendars, and gift certificates from many of the calendar's restaurant sponsors.

L'Arche Harbor House thanks all who contributed, all who attended, this year's talented calendar artists, and our volunteers, especially Maripat Meide, who headed the launch party committee, her LHH Auxiliary helpers, the Scarlett Red Hatters, and the Bishop Kenny Key Club. We also extend a very special thank-you to Brian Shaner, general manager of Seven Bridges, for his unfailing generosity, love and support.



Models take a bow following the show. Front: Joy and Pam; Back: Agata, Jo Marie, Stacy, Sally, and Katrina

Fall Fashion Show a Big Hit

Core members, assistants, and friends hit the runway for a Fashion Show organized to benefit L'Arche Harbor House. Members of UNF's chapter of **Kappa Alpha Theta**, lead by **Melissa Leonard**, sponsored the successful event held in September at Christ the King. The Dressbarn presented the latest in fall fashions while the male core members, serving as escorts for the models, looked dashing in tuxedos courtesy of Michael's Formalwear. We're very grateful to this inspiring group of young ladies, whose efforts raised more than \$1,600.00 through ticket sales, a raffle and silent auction.



PLEASE SUPPORT OUR CALENDAR SPONSORS THROUGHOUT 2010



Group Calendar Sales Effort Applauded

Many thanks to the organizations, schools, businesses, and churches that sold or purchased 25 or more calendars:

Lighthouse Christian School
Bishop Kenny High School
Bishop Kenny Key Club
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church
P.E.O., Chapter EO
St. Paul's Catholic Church
St. Paul's Catholic School Safety Patrol
Bishop John J. Snyder High School

Vystar Credit Union
Trad's Garden Center
NLAPW
Prince of Peace Catholic Church
Jax Beach Condos
Surety Markets, Inc.
Compass Bank - Mandarin Branch
Clarity, Inc.

Ending the Year on a High Note

Robert M. and Paul thank everyone who accepted their invitation to celebrate the end of 2009 and the arrival of 2010 by attending the *No Show New Year's Eve Gala*. This "non event" was a success as 68 friends responded and generously contributed \$6,200.00 to L'Arche Harbor House. The last we heard, there were no complaints about not needing a clean-up committee!

2010 Calendars are still on sale.

Call 904-721-5992 or order online:
www.larchejacksonville.org

Thanks to all who supported the 2009 calendar through sales and sponsorship – **\$31,000** was raised for L'Arche.

Wheelchair Lift Van Fund

Because of the need for a new wheelchair lift van, a fund was established in 2009. We must soon replace an aging van that now requires many costly and frequent repairs. Thanks to several grants, designated gifts, and a portion of the proceeds from the sale of 2010 *Year of Celebrations* calendars, more than \$26,000 has been raised as we approach our goal of \$40,000. If you wish to contribute to this fund, please send your donation to L'Arche Harbor House or donate online at www.larche-jacksonville.org. Many, many thanks for the tremendous response in support of this need.

\$40K

Bishop Kenny Interact Club Donates \$8,000 to Wheelchair Lift Van Fund



The officers of the Bishop Kenny Interact Club surprised Mrs. Cheryl O'Connor, president of the L'Arche Harbor House Board of Directors and employee of Bishop Kenny High School, by presenting her with an \$8,000 check for the Wheelchair Lift Van Fund. The officers are Jamie Heekin, President; Michael O'Brien, Vice-President; Theresa Parker, Chaplain; Kerri Gilbert, Treasurer; and Alexa Zelinski, Secretary. According to Mrs. Chris Ball, Interact Club sponsor, the officers had discussed this contribution and were very eager to make the presentation. The BK Interact Club currently has 186 very active members who participate in a variety of service and fundraising projects. THANK YOU to the members of Bishop Kenny Interact Club!

Businesses That Give Back \$\$

◆ Donate to L'Arche without spending a dime.

Browsing the Internet or shopping online can benefit L'Arche. Visit Goodsearch.com and Goodshop.com to see how easy it is to use this powerful Yahoo search engine. Goodsearch is donating tens of thousands of dollars to charities every year – 50% of its revenue!

Start using Goodsearch today; there's no reason not to!



◆ Turn your coffee routine into cash. www.fazziniblend.com/larche/

Do you appreciate a premium cup of coffee or tea? Does your company have a coffee service?

Switch to Fazzini's Coffee and Tea and you'll not

only be enjoying the freshest, most flavorful coffee (roasted right here in Jacksonville), you'll also be supporting L'Arche by doing so. Companies that have switched include Grubb Ellis|Phoenix Realty, CEVA Logistics, Vallencourt Construction, Co., and the Office of General Counsel.

Every purchase by an individual or business results in a donation to L'Arche. If you're already a coffee drinker, make each sip count! Give us a call and we'll make the introduction. (Go online for easy ordering for individual purchases.)



◆ A return on car repairs and service. www.rpmautomotive.com

Tell RPM that you're a supporter of L'Arche and a donation will be made to L'Arche for any purchase or service rendered.

Seven locations, locally owned and operated.



Fore! Golf Classic Returns in April

The 20th annual Golf Classic, our most important fundraiser of the year will take place on Monday, April 26 at Hidden Hills Country Club. This event offers an opportunity for **everyone** to participate in some way: as a golfer, a sponsor, donor of an item for the raffle, silent auction, or door prize, or as a volunteer.

We are in need of items for door prizes, auction, and raffle. Plus, there are many levels of sponsorship, including that of Benefactor for which you designate any amount. Please visit our website - www.larchejacksonville.org - for details or give us a call at (904) 721-5992. L'Arche needs you – please help if you can.



Upcoming Events



Sunday, March 28
2:00pm
Annual Softball Game
Angels vs. Saints
sponsored by First Coast
Apartment Association



Birdies For Charity
April 5 - May 5 (pledges)
sponsored by
The PLAYERS Championship
Pledges will be collected as
you guess how many birdies
will be made during the 2010
PLAYERS.



Monday, April 26
Hidden Hills CC
Captain's Choice
Shotgun Start - Noon
Raffle, Skill Prizes, Door
Prizes, Auction
Teams, Sponsors, and
Donors needed!



Rainbow Sale
May 15
Quality Inn, Jax Beach
Hand-crafted items
created by the Rainbow
Workshop artists.
Ceramics, jewelry,
stationery...



October 18-24
Sawgrass Dye's Valley Course
Order tickets NOW!
Weekly Grounds Pass only \$25
10-Pack of Weekly Passes only \$200
L'Arche keeps 100% of its ticket sales.
Online: www.larchejacksonville.org
or call 904-721-5992

We gratefully acknowledge the gifts of our supporters throughout the year. These gifts include donations to the Ribbon of Hope Club, special event supporters, gifts made in memory or in honor of, in-kind donations, and donor-designated gifts through the United Way. These individuals, businesses, communities, and foundations have provided **vital** financial support for the mission and programs of L'Arche Harbor House.

*Due to space limitations, a complete list of donors will appear in the next issue.

Honoring Special Occasions

We appreciate tribute donations that honor the life events of friends and families. Contributions may be made in memory of a loved one, or in celebration of special events such as birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, etc. L'Arche notifies the recipient of the gift; the donor receives a grateful acknowledgment of the tax-deductible gift.

The following tributes were received between 01/01/09 - 02/28/10.

Please let us know if there are any omissions or errors.

In Memory of:

Gene Dunham

Mimi Adams
 Alan Asker
 Bank of America
 Barbara Bath
 Woody Blackburn
 Carlos & Davron Cardenas
 Clarity Graphic Design, Inc.
 Clarity, Inc.
 Frank Dunham
 Kathryn Dunham
 Joseph & Dorothy Grippi
 Marzelle M. Harmon
 James & Mary Harvey
 Ken & Donna Haun
 Myra Hays
 Kay Henderson
 Greg & Sherry Hieb
 Carrol & Patricia King
 Karl & Dorothy Klein
 Sam Latiff
 Judson & Vicki Litchfield
 Frank Lucente
 Kathleen F. Mankinen
 PEO Sisterhood Chapter EO
 Paul & Mary Scagliarini
 Catherine Scanlon
 Brian & Rachel Smith
 Eileen Smith
 Jean Smith
 Nicholas Stamaty
 Terry & Jeanne Vliek
 Steve & Amelia Wallace
 Elaine Weaver
 Sherry Williamson & David Boree

Vincent Shea

Barbara Bath
 Pasquale & Dolores Bianco
 William & Helen Damato Sr.
 Christina Denger
 Eileen Fitzpatrick
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 LCI, Ltd.
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 Bishop Kenny High School
 Eleanor Blanchart
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 William & Denise Boudreau
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 Karen Pierce
 Barbara Pietruszka
 St. Johns Bar Pilots
 Raymond & Marjorie Standrowicz
 Sharon Toth
 Sherry Williamson & David Boree
 Steven Zukowski

Bob Seigler

Barbara Bath
 Richard & Mary Russell
 Jeff & Nancy Smith

Donald Fitzpatrick

Donald & Norma Hoskins
 Gloria & Richard Nagel
 Paul & Mary Scagliarini
 Michael & Merrell Shuttack
 Ruby Sides
 Tom Schifanella Commercial Realty II, Inc.
 TOPS - FL 64 chapter
 WW Gay Pipe Shop
 Louann Yirak

Jim Bilderback

Barbara Bath
 Rick Bilderback
 Marti P. Goldring
 Susan Hull
 Karl & Dorothy Klein
 Tom & Kathy Kuruc
 Jeff & Nancy Smith
 U.S. Attorney, N. District of GA
 Candice Wessinger
 Sherry Williamson & David Boree

Nell Williamson

Barbara Bath
 Gene & Jamie Beck
 Robbie & Melony Bell
 Rick Bilderback
 Virginia Bilderback
 Thelma Boree
 Gracie, Allan & Tammy Boree
 Julie & Randy Crews
 Laura & Bill Denison
 Marcus Drewa
 Mark & Elizabeth Ellison
 Lois T. Ellson, MD
 Epping Forest Tennis Friends
 Bill & Jane Evers
 John & Linda Greene
 John & Michele Harrell
 Joan & Wm. Rein Family Foundation
 Susan Louise Johnson

Karl & Dorothy Klein
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 Senior Adults I Sunday School
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Bob Kelly

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Scott Weinstein

Ron Mallett

Raymond Miller

Eileen Smith

John Aumente

Elizabeth Aumente

Betty Myers

Karl & Dorothy Klein

William Bacher, Sr.

Dorothy Bacher

In Honor of:

Barbara Bath

Sherry Williamson
 Dottie Klein
 Ham & Genie Cooke
 Nancy Chamblin

Dottie Klein

Barbara Bath
 Amy Norris
 Gordon & Norma Scott
 Sharon Toth
 David & Margie Weinstein
 Sherry Williamson

Ron Pendleton

Barbara Bath

Sister Rita Baum

Nancy & Jeff Smith

Chad Allen

Marguerite Allen

Frances Ayskeu

Dottie Klein

Sherry Williamson

Barbara Bath
 Dottie Klein

Margie Weinstein

Sherry Williamson

Mary Russell

Dottie Klein

Warren and Joanne Powers

Jane Collins
 Nancy Powers

Ron Pendleton

Robert Clark

Robert McCormick

Mike & Janice McCormick

Mary Malone

Dottie Klein

Tommy Dunham

Greg & Sherry Hieb

Sandy Clarke

Barbara Bath

Mary Baer

First Coast Manufacturers Assn.

Dino Baron

Leandra Knes

Sharon Toth

Dottie Klein

A Special Friendship

By Dottie Klein

Jim Bilderback, passed away on January 3, 2010. He was 82 years old. Jim was a long-time friend and volunteer and brother to late core member, Mary B. and uncle to community member, Sherry Williamson.

"Friendship is your needs answered. He is your field which will sow love and reap with Thanksgiving."

We give thanks for Jim who shared his gifts of carpentry and engineering with us: for being the architect and one of the builders of the Greatfull House deck; for building the pantry and closets in Peace House, the wooden swings; and refurbishing and covering the gazebo in honor of his older sister, Little Mary.

"And let there be no purpose in friendship save the deepening of the spirit."

Jim began his relationship with the L'Arche Harbor House community because his sister Mary moved in and became a long-term core member. Mary had Down syndrome and was small in stature (hence her



Jim Bilderback is shown here with his niece Sherry Williamson at one of the Rainbow Workshop sales.

nickname), but big in character. Jim offered his time and expertise out of a feeling of gratitude toward L'Arche for offering his sister a new way of life during her final years. He witnessed her happiness and how she was given opportunities for travel and work and play; how she was loved and respected. Jim maintained and deepened his relationship with the community after his sister's passing in 2000.

He became a regular volunteer at the Rainbow Workshop, and through his work there formed close relationships with the core members, especially Paul, Brenda, and

Robert M. The importance of these friendships in his life became particularly evident to me one time when I visited him in the hospital just after he came out of surgery; the first words he spoke when he saw me were "How is Paul?" – not of what was happening to him (serious surgery and recovery). He could not wait to get better and get back to the Rainbow!

"And in the sweetness of friendship, let there be laughter and sharing of pleasures. For in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed."

In L'Arche, we like to celebrate and laugh a lot. Jim had a wonderful sense of humor. Often, he would banter back and forth with Paul at the Rainbow, and together they would work on "manly" projects. They thought of each other with kinship and this made them both very happy.

We give thanks for the life of Jim Bilderback and all the ways that he loved us and we loved him.

-quotations from Kahlil Gibran's *The Prophet*

Wish List

Check the website for updates

- Passenger van with wheelchair lift—to replace one aging van
- New window screens
- Potting soil
- Computer
- New upright freezer
- Gardening tools (i.e. pruning shears, etc.)
- Wheelbarrow
- Mini Washer/Dryer
- Radio with a CD player
- Phonics and Math workbooks—early elementary level
- Dr. Seuss books
- Old calendars with beautiful photos
- Small to medium shells
- Gutter repair

House Vacations

The **Greatfull House** experienced a "Magic Kingdom" vacation at Disneyworld in November. Everyone was so grateful for the opportunity to get away and enjoy being with each other.

The **Sunflower House** went to Savannah in December. The visit included a city tour and walks through the scenic, historic areas. **Larry, Paul, Michael, Chad** and **Eric** had a wonderful time. On our last day, we celebrated Paul's pre-birth-day with cinnamon buns and yogurt ice cream.

The **Nouwen House** enjoyed a "stay-cation" with day trips that included traveling to St. Augustine, Lake City, Savannah, and Marineland; going to the movies and then out to eat. But at the end of the day, they were all so happy to sleep well in their own beds!



Three members of our community participated in this year's L'Arche Mobile Marathon. In spite of the very cold weather, **Paul, Adam** and **Hannes** completed the walk and had a good trip.

Activities and Volunteers

Thanks to the creativity and quilting skills of **Jo Ann Bennett** and **Kathy Faryon**, a fabulous quilt now hangs in the Blanchart Center. Every square represents artwork of the core members featured in the *Year of Celebrations* calendar. What a memorable gift!



On Wednesdays you'll find **Marc Skarin** cooking something up in one of the houses. Thank you, Marc, for sharing your culinary skills with the community.



The **Classic Line Dancers** were a big hit at the First Thursday in October. Everyone was out of their chairs and on their feet by the end of the program. Thank you, ladies!



Faces of Change

We Welcome:



Bridget Cashen first arrived at L'Arche Harbor House in 1993 as a live-in assistant and house coordinator at Greatfull House; this after a year of life at L'Arche in Sudbury, Canada. Bridget met and married Tom Cashen, brother to core member, Richard. After

almost fifteen years away from Jacksonville, Bridget and Tom have returned to L'Arche, and have brought with them their two children, John and Elizabeth. In November, Bridget stepped into her role as Community Coordinator and part of the Leadership Team. We are thrilled to have Bridget return to L'Arche and are grateful for her many gifts and talents that she brings to the community!

Adam Rheingans recently graduated from North Central College in Illinois where he studied computer science. Adam visited L'Arche Harbor House twice as a student participating and helping to lead the volunteer spring break program focused on service and community involvement. Adam enjoys exploring rare and out of the way places in his new hometown of Jacksonville. Adam arrived in August and shares life in the Prayer House.



Agata Michalska is a recent graduate from University of Notre Dame, where she studied theology and psychology. Originally from Poland, she was raised in the U.S. In her free time, Agata enjoys jewelry making and reading and spending time with her fiancé, Chad.

Agata comes to us through the Catholic Volunteers in Florida program. Agata arrived in August and shares life in the Peace House.

Loren Fowler is also a Catholic Volunteer in Florida. She recently graduated from Michigan State, where she studied pre-law. She has a long record of volunteering and enjoys spending time with her family and friends. Loren arrived in September and shares life in the Greatfull House.



Hannes Svedberg arrived in September from Sweden. He brings with him his gifts of an open heart and honest presence. Hannes is a student of music and spirituality. He shares life in the Greatfull House.

Hank Harms has been a long-time volunteer at L'Arche Harbor House. He is known for his peaceful and generous spirit. Hank shares life in the Nouwen House.

Catherine Bain is the new Administrative/Development Assistant. A Jacksonville native and 2009 graduate of the University of Central Florida, she brings great energy, enthusiasm, and organization to her role and is off to a fast start in getting to know the L'Arche community.



We Give Thanks:

Chad Allen completed his year of service and ministry here at L'Arche Harbor House in January. Chad spent the year as a live-in assistant at Sunflower House and developed deep and meaningful relationships with the core members and assistants throughout the community. We will miss Chad's peaceful and thoughtful presence, as well as his creativity and humor! Chad has entered the New Camaldoli Hermitage in Big Sur, California to become a Camaldolese Benedictine Monk. We will be praying for you and will miss you, Chad!



Philip Niemann shared life in the Nouwen House as a short-term assistant at the end of the summer. Philip spent one year as an assistant in L'Arche Canada before coming to Harbor House and has returned to his native Germany to pursue his studies at University.

Sr. Rita Baum has moved to France! Sr. Rita's relationship with L'Arche began many years ago through her work with persons with disabilities on a diocesan and national level. During her several years as Community Coordinator, Sr. Rita helped to open the Prayer House and worked on the leadership team. She accepted a position in Le Puy, France, where her religious community, the Sisters of St. Joseph, was founded. There, she will use her gift of hospitality to welcome spiritual visitors and pilgrims. We will miss you, Sr. Rita!



Sherry Williamson has been a long-time friend and volunteer at L'Arche Harbor House. She first fell in love with the community while her aunt, the late little Mary Bilderback, was a core member here. After years of volunteering on a weekly basis at the Rainbow Workshop, Sherry moved to the office to help with development and administration for half the year. Sherry has also served on the Board of Directors and is a member of the Community Council. We are grateful for Sherry's dedication, time and many skills that she offers to the community!



Welcome Celeste Clare

L'Arche Harbor House welcomed its newest member on December 3 when Celeste Clare was born to proud and love-struck parents, Amy and Patrick Finn-Schultz. Celeste was born at the Fruitful Vine Birth Center and weighed 6lbs, 4oz. Though tiny when she was born, Celeste is growing strong, healthy and chubby. She made her community debut at the Living Nativity and continues to enjoy spending time with her new friends at L'Arche. Her parents feel blessed to have a healthy and beautiful baby who has been born into such a loving and welcoming community.



Thank you, Stan!

Stan Entsminger, L'Arche Harbor House longtime and faithful supporter, has retired after six years as Central Regional Representative on the L'Arche USA board. We are grateful for his commitment and the many years he has invested in L'Arche, including several as a Harbor House board member. We hope you enjoy a much-deserved retirement and will visit us often!