



"Okay,
we love ya hun"



Meet Katherine (Kathy), a spritely woman, fierce, always the first core member to welcome you into Greatfull House or what she likes to call it, the Party House. For decades, L'Arche has been Katherine's home. It's a place of comfort and safety, of friendship and shared moments.

Barbara, Kathy's sister, shares, "my first memory of Kathy, my younger sister, was when I was about 4 years old. We were sitting in a big wash tub outside, blowing bubbles. She always loved water. You can tell by the many times she takes a shower. When Kathy was old enough to take them alone, she would take three a day. She loved our lake house. A big fan of the water, she would bounce up and down in it for hours."

That still rings true to this day. At 80 years old, Kathy values her shower time, and takes pride in always looking nice and feeling fresh. She always enjoys when assistants help her with her hair, applying the curl cream delicately to her curls, as the shades of purple take shape and have Kathy looking like royalty.

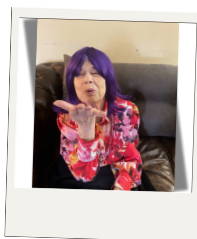
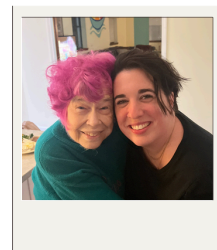
When you walk into the Greatfull House, you're immediately drawn to Kathy. Maybe it's the purple hair, or her ability to welcome you into her home as if you have known her your whole life. She'll often invite you to come in and have a seat, maybe ask an assistant to make you coffee or tea, or even pour you a glass of wine, excited that you're visiting. After you're settled, she'll sit back down on the couch and continue watching her favorite TV shows like Little House on the Prairie, Bonanza, a cheesy Hallmark Christmas movie, or even a Jaguars game. She is often very talkative while watching the Jaguars; remarkably knowledgeable in the game and coaching players from the couch, even giggling over players' hairstyles while on the sidelines.

Kathy isn't afraid to speak her mind- often without a filter, and always comes up with the best one liners. She'll greet you with a "Top of the morning to ya!", during a prayer say "Dear Jesus, I need space when people irritate me," or even express how "She's a carnivore and doesn't eat vegetables".

As you get to know Kathy, you witness her many loves: music, holidays (especially Halloween and Christmas), colorful wigs, dolls she has collected over the years, cherished photos of her family, and decorations that she continues to add to her room. More recently, Kathy is very proud of the work she does at Rainbow Workshop. She'll come home excited after a day at the workshop, beaming with accomplishment over the things she made out of clay that day whether she was molding the pieces with her hands, painting the glaze on, or even helping move things to the kiln to be beautified. Kathy loves the clay room and loves the Rainbow Workshop- especially when her brothers decide to dress up as Santa and his elves for the Christmas party.

Since she calls Greatfull House "the Party House", music can be heard throughout the day, in the van on the way to and from Rainbow Workshop or even around town. Kathy loves music and is often the one orchestrating the singalongs. She's fond of the memories when she would sing with her dad, and the times they would belt Frank Sinatra. Her singing and her own renditions and lyrics to classic songs and hymns can be heard across the church while at mass with her housemates, in the circle at Rainbow Workshop, and even during the Living Nativity- a song is always in her heart.

Kathy is full of love: for her family, her friends, and most importantly her community. If you're ever having a bad day, read Kathy's story and imagine her singing in Karen Carpenter style, "Just like me, they long to be close to you."



Traditions, stories and experiences are shared every day at L'Arche Jacksonville. Stories like the one from Kathy's childhood singing Frank Sinatra with her dad, or an experience of an assistant sharing holiday traditions from their youth or country of origin. These memories that form a personality and a life, are passed on throughout the years, making each listener laugh or remark on the uniqueness of an individual life and character.

Triumphs are **celebrated** here! Achievements like creating ceramic clay pieces at Rainbow Workshop, dying your hair a new shade of purple. These triumphs are marked as important, whether they are simple or monumental, and they are remembered.

We couldn't share our stories or celebrate our triumphs without the **We Are Family Fund**. When you support Kathy, you are supporting her and her ability to thrive in community as she gets older and reaches life's milestones. You are also supporting each of us at L'Arche Jacksonville and the stories, traditions and triumphs that are to come!

Help us flourish in L'Arche Jacksonville and contribute now to the We Are Family Fund!





About L'Arche Jacksonville

L'Arche Jacksonville, founded as Harbor House in 1985, opened its doors originally as a ministry of the Catholic Diocese of St. Augustine. L'Arche Jacksonville was welcomed into the International Federation of L'Arche communities in 1992. The only L'Arche community in the state of Florida, we share a common identity and mission to the other 160 communities around the world. We are a community of people with and without intellectual disabilities that live and work together in family homes and an art workshop. We share life and our gifts with one another and the world, promoting a more inclusive and loving world.

Photos

Cover: Kathy is crafting clay pieces in the ceramic room at Rainbow Workshop

Inside: Photos provided by Kathy's family and friends in community

Back: Top left: Kathy posing for a photo in a purple wig. Top Right, Kathy in her younger years, Bottom Left: Kathy smiling for a photo, and Bottom Right: Photo shared by Kathy's family

Photo credit: Kathy's family for providing photos and Mallory Koch

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