



GRATITUDE

L'Arche Winnipeg Newsletter #67



Annual L'Arche Christmas Pageant a Public Event This Year

Mary and Joseph, shepherds, three wise men, angels, and ordinary townfolk are all part of the living pageant put on by the L'Arche Winnipeg community every year in December. This year we decided to hold our pageant in a large hall in order to invite the public to join us for this joyful evening.



My Special Friend, Clive

by Kathy French

Clive and I first met in May 1974 at Riding Mountain National Park here in Manitoba. I had arrived by plane from Ontario to work as a summer assistant at L'Arche Winnipeg. I was met at the Winnipeg airport by Sister Marie Paradis and whisked immediately off to Riding Mountain, where the L'Arche community members were camping for the May long weekend. I was twenty-two years old at the time and Clive was just twenty years old, having moved to "Rosseau Court" from an institution in Portage La Prairie five months previously.

Clive has Down's syndrome and is also unable to hear or speak. But that has never stopped him from living as full a life as possible. The weekend we met, I remember watching him from a far, intrigued by the manner in which he was able to adequately communicate. As well as being able to make his needs known through his self-developed sign language, I very quickly observed him to have a keen sense of humour.

With a smile on his face and a twinkle in his eye, he appeared quite skilled as a mime artist, often entertaining us with his antics.



Clive and Kathy, at L'Arche Winnipeg's 40th anniversary celebration in 2013

I lived and worked with Clive that summer, enjoying local trips to Grand Beach and the Winnipeg Folk Festival at Birds Hill Park. We also managed to take in a few rides at the Red River Exhibition, along with a few other assistants and community members. As well, Clive and I met

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The annual pageant will be held on Wednesday December 9th at the **Christian Family Centre**, located at 81 Henderson Highway. We hope many of you will join us for this event which starts at 7:00 pm.

The narration of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem and the events leading to the birth of Jesus will be acted out by L'Arche members, accompanied by music and singing of traditional Christmas songs. One of the highlights is the singing of Silent Night in various languages, reflecting the cultural diversity of our assistants who come from many different countries.

There is no admission cost for the pageant evening. A free-will offering will be collected, and the money will be given to **Hospitality House**, an organization supporting refugees.

Our thanks to **Creating a Scene Inc.** for sponsoring the props used for the pageant. There will be refreshments served after the pageant. Hope to see you there! - by Hubert Pantel

“Art from the Heart” Show at L’Arche Tova Café

by Hubert Pantel

L’Arche Winnipeg’s 2nd annual art show, “Art from the Heart”, was held in the L’Arche Tova Café on August 20th. Over sixty pieces of art were created by 15 people with an intellectual disability, members of the L’Arche Winnipeg community.

The art pieces were created over a period of two months with the help of instructor **Tammy Vogel**, who led six Sunday afternoon workshops for the budding artists. Under Tammy’s guidance, the workshop participants were able to explore various mediums and learn new techniques. The result was a variety of artistic expression with the creation of cards, picture frames, coasters, acrylic on rocks, and other mediums.

There was a steady flow of people between 11:00 am and 5:00 pm, coming to the Café to admire the artists’ creations which were grouped under such headings as “Things I Like”, “Makes Me Happy”, “I Feel Good About”, or “Free to Create”. The art show coincided with the weekly Transcona Biz Market Garden in Centennial Square, just 3 doors west of the Café, so many people were able to take in both events.

The sale of the art pieces totaled \$432.00, and that money is being sent to **L’Arche International Solidarity Fund** – helping L’Arche communities in poorer countries where little, or no government funding is available to support people with intellectual disabilities.



Clockwise, from top: a visitor admiring various art pieces; LeeAnn & Barbara holding some of the art pieces; Clive and Ross showing off more creations.



Thank you to the Inner Wheel Club of Transcona for the generous donation



L’Arche Winnipeg would like to thank the **Inner Wheel Club** of Transcona for their very generous donation of \$1,000. This money will go towards installing air-conditioning for the L’Ainé L’Arche home.

The Inner Wheel Club is an international organization closely linked to Rotary. Inner Wheel Club was founded to unite wives and daughters of Rotarians. The International Inner Wheel objectives are “to promote true friendship and development of acquaintance as an opportunity for service and the betterment of social conditions”.

Photo: Helene Marsh (center), representing the Inner Wheel Club of Transcona, presents the cheque to L’Arche’s Jim Lapp and Diane Truderung.

How You Can Help Us Live Our Mission

by **Jim Lapp**
Community Leader

The mission of L'Arche is to make known the gifts of people with developmental disabilities, meet the changing needs of our members and build a more human compassionate society. To live this mission requires that members of the public develop relationships with and get to know people with developmental disabilities. How can you, as one of our friends and supporters, help us to live this mission?

The first way you can help us is to visit the L'Arche Tova Café and meet the people with developmental disabilities who work there. They love hosting people at the café. Ross spends Saturdays at the café hosting customers even though it is one of his days off work. He loves doing it so much he has given up going bowling on Saturday afternoons so that he can serve others. It would really help our mission if you brought a friend or family member who has never been to the café and help them get to know our story.

Another way you can help us live our mission is to come with your family and friends to community events like the Walk with L'Arche, our art shows or this year our Christmas Pageant on December 9th. (see front page article). The Christmas Pageant is a traditional L'Arche Winnipeg event and for the first time this event will be open to the public so that more people can enjoy this delightful evening. I am sure you will enjoy this event as much as I do. All these activities are an opportunity to renew old friendships with our members with a disability or make new ones.

A very effective way to get to know one of our members with a disability and their gifts is to become a volunteer at L'Arche Winnipeg. (please see the story about Kathy and Clive on the front page). You can volunteer in one of our homes or at the café and really get to know one of our members well. You can apply online at www.larchewinnipeg.org

I was speaking recently to members of the congregation of St. Mary's Anglican Church in Charleswood and realized how difficult it would be for them to come all the way to Transcona to volunteer. So if it is too challenging to develop relationships with the members of L'Arche, then maybe there is a person with a developmental disability

in your congregation or neighbourhood who would appreciate your friendship. Or maybe you already have such a relationship. We would love to hear your stories about how your relationship with a person with a disability has transformed your life. Please feel free to email me at: jimlapp@larchewinnipeg.org



Blaine Reimer (left) is thanked by L'Arche Community Leader Jim Lapp, in front of the new garage at our L'Ainé house. Reimer's company, Olympic Building Centre, donated the complete garage package.

L'Ainé House Gifted With New Garage

The first L'Arche home in Winnipeg, which opened 42 years ago, has a new and impressive addition: a large garage which was built with the help and generosity of many people, for about a third of the cost of a new garage.

Ron Delaquis, whose sister Nicole lived at L'Ainé for many years, spearheaded the project. Phil and Ron Delaquis demolished the old garage with the assistance of Tri Core, Phil's employer, who let him use their backhoe, midhoe and gravel truck without charge. Bill Hicks of Battlefield Equipment gave the free rental of a container to store the contents of the garage during construction and Greg of Crane Towing delivered it at no charge.

Peter Toews of P.V. Construction built the concrete garage pad at a discount-

ed rate. Dawn Fraser and Aaron Anderson of LaFarge donated the concrete for the pad. Olympic Building Centre (Blaine Reimer) donated the complete garage package.

Rental Experts gave the use of a Zumbroom to erect the new garage, including walls, trusses, and roofing.

The volunteer construction crew included Etienne Grenier, Denis Hebert, Gerald Mabon, Bob Hebert, Remi Grenier, Philip Delaquis, and Ron Delaquis.

We are very grateful for all the assistance we have received. We particularly want to thank Ron and Philip Delaquis for all the work they have done including finding many of the donated items and services and a dedicated construction crew.

My Special Friend, Clive

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up with his parents for a picnic at Assiniboine Park on a warm summer's afternoon. On another occasion, we enjoyed dinner at his parent's home where he assisted his mother in preparing a salad and shared a beer with his father as they watched a football game on the television. It was wonderful to see the connection that Clive enjoyed with his parents.

I left the L'Arche Winnipeg community in late August 1974 to return to Ontario and my university studies. Upon completion of my studies in May 1975, I found myself travelling back to Winnipeg to spend another year living and working with the L'Arche Winnipeg community. It was during this year that the special friendship developing between Clive and myself was solidified. When I left the L'Arche community a year later, to pursue a teaching career in Winnipeg, I knew that Clive and I would be friends for a very long time.

Forty years later, we are still friends. Clive has become an integral part of our family and we enjoy his company as much as I imagine he enjoys ours. When my husband and I were married in 1995, we invited Clive to sit at the head picnic table with us in Bird's Hill Park. Since then, Clive has come to spend several days and nights in our home at least four times a year - Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter as well as summer holidays. During those times we have visited pumpkin farms, sat on Santa's knee together, participated in many Easter egg hunts and visited a local fire station. We have also enjoyed the family tradition of travelling to Lockport every fall to relish a foot long hotdog at Skinner's.

Clive, my husband, Roger and I have attended many animated and action films together at local movie theatres. While Clive appears to enjoy the action of the movies, I enjoy watching Clive with his enormous bucket of popcorn and favourite soft drink, miming the story of the movie.

Throughout the years, Clive has assisted us in acting as a "walk marshal" at the annual L'Arche Winnipeg fundraiser walk-a-thon, donning a fluorescent patrol vest and directing pedestri-

an traffic across a street. But he is really in his element when he relaxes in his favourite black leather recliner chair in our living room - a chair that has lovingly been dubbed as "Clive's Chair". He has his own bedroom at our house, which we have adorned with a few toy and stuffed pigs. His love of pigs developed during his years of living at the L'Arche farm in Lorette.



Kathy & Clive volunteering as walk marshals at the 2015 Walk with L'Arche.

In past years, when he was able to, Clive also enjoyed taking our late Papillon dog, Pekoe, for walks around our neighbourhood, introducing him, in his own unique way, to passers-by. And whenever a Papillon dog would appear in a television commercial, Clive would arise from his comfortable chair, walk over to the television, then walk over to our snoozing dog, arouse him and point out to him that he was on TV.

Clive often comes to Roger's family reunion celebrations with us at Christmas and in the summer when we travel to Roger's brother's cottage near Lac du Bonnet. If he is not able to join us, for one reason or another, Roger's family always asks about him, concerned about his welfare and the fact that he is missing out on a family event.

I have heard it said that I am a "L'Arche Winnipeg volunteer". But what is a volunteer? Clive has truly become a member of our family, much like an adopted brother. I cannot begin to imagine my life without him. He has blessed me in more ways than I am able to express. He is truly a gift to me, my family and all who encounter his presence.

L'Arche Tova Café at Your Service

Our Café at 119 Regent Ave. West, is open Monday to Saturday, 8 am to 2 pm. We offer dine-in, take-out, and catering services. We also have fresh baking for sale.

You can see our complete menus at www.larchetovacafe.com You can also sign up for a monthly email from the Café, letting you know about baking and menu specials and other L'Arche related events.

The Christmas season is a time for many family and office gatherings. If you need catering, we deliver!



You may have seen Martha at the L'Arche Tova Café! Martha is a proud staff member of the Café team. L'Arche would like to thank the Jewish Foundation of Manitoba Women's Endowment Fund for the grant that provided the funds to pay for Martha's salary. Thank you again for your very generous support.

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