

# CORNERSTONE HOUSING SOCIETY

...building on the L'Arche model in Newfoundland and Labrador



## BUILDING BLOCKS NEWS

JULY 2015



### BUILDING COMMUNITY BY WORKING TOGETHER

On June 13th, 2015 Cornerstone Housing Society held its second Yard/Flea Market sale fundraiser at the Longside Club.

We had a wonderful response for donations which proved to make an extremely successful outcome with people coming to purchase "treasures" from opening to closing time. To the delightful surprise of all participants a princely sum of nearly \$1700 was realized.

It was felt by some that these fundraising times are also a valuable opportunity for Members and Core Members to gather and work side by side in cementing friendship on another level in our common cause to see a L'Arche Community in Newfoundland and Labrador become a reality.

We throw a bouquet to the many who supported Cornerstone with their donations of saleable items from their home and garden, and to all Cornerstone participants who came out and dedicated their time, energy, enthusiasm through their generosity of spirit and goodwill to make our fundraiser the wonderful success it was. Thank you!

**Anne Marie Moore**



*Dedicated volunteers spent hours sorting and arranging the "treasures" donated for our second "Yard Sale / Flea Market."*



### NEWS FROM THE BOARD

Our second Annual General Meeting was held Sunday, June 14 at the Salvation Army Citadel. We opened with a slide show prepared by Brian Dawe highlighting the various people, places, and events of the past year. Peter Barnes then led us in a Reflection inviting us to identify the principles necessary as we practice belonging and acceptance within our evolving community. Sister Diane Smyth closed our time by leading us in the song "A Better Way" by Liam Lawton.

Don Rowe, 2014 Board Secretary and Chair of the 2015 Nominations Committee, facilitated the Election of Directors. In accordance with our by-laws, three directors were elected to the Board of Directors: Lorraine Angelopoulos, David Buckley, and Paul McCarthy. At the organizational meeting of the Board on June 16, the Executive Committee was selected with Evelyn Friesen named as Chair; Lewis Andrews, Vice-Chair; Lorraine Angelopoulos, Secretary; and Paul McCarthy, Treasurer.

Your Board is committed to working with you and for you as we strive to fulfill our Community Mandate and continue building on the L'Arche model in Newfoundland and Labrador. If you have any suggestions, concerns, or ideas, please feel free to contact us by telephone at 709.722.3786 or by email to: [office@cornerstonehousingociety.ca](mailto:office@cornerstonehousingociety.ca).



### SISTERS OF MERCY / PRESENTATION SISTERS EDUCATION FUND

We are so thankful to the Sisters of Mercy / Presentation Sisters Education Fund for their very generous contribution to Cornerstone Housing Society. This donation will enable us to move forward with several new initiatives critical to our development as an organization as we work towards our goal of becoming sanctioned as a L'Arche Project.



## FORGING CONNECTIONS WITH L'ARCHE ATLANTIC REGION

What a “time” we had! On July 11<sup>th</sup>, while many sat on Confederation Hill trying to stay warm awaiting Rod Stewart, about 40 people including members of Cornerstone and our new friends from L’Arche Atlantic Region were enjoying a memorable afternoon of food and warm fellowship despite the temperature. Some were even brave enough to go for a swim!

Buddy the Bayman arrived, cod in hand, to screech-in the group – and Krista’s reaction to her swig of screech was classic! Purity syrup was offered, but Screech was the libation of choice.



One of the goals of having the group from L’Arche Atlantic Region visit was to see L’Arche life in action. For those of us who were able to spend time with the group, either on arrival at the airport, or going out for Fish and Chips, hosting in our homes, or observing and visiting with them at the BBQ and Pool Party, the pleasure in each other’s company was evident. The group was a collective witness to mutual relationship, caring, and friendship. We are inspired and encouraged by their living the shared life.

As a remembrance of their time with us, Core Members Anna from L’Arche Halifax, Krista from L’Arche Saint John, Michael from L’Arche Antigonish, and Jonathan from L’Arche Cape Breton, were each presented with an art original for their L’Arche house, created by our own core member Jonathan Dawe.

Deepest thanks to Catherine Snow and her family, Pat, Bob, Maria, Clare and Stephen who welcomed us warmly and hosted us so generously. It was a wonderful time together and will be held in the memory of Cornerstone Housing Society.

Petra Sunner, who along with David and Anton hosted Michael and Mariya from L’Arche Antigonish, shared a few thoughts based on her experience with them. Here is what she had to say: “I believe that I have a good comprehension of what L’Arche means – in the humanistic, philosophical sense of it, and of how life is in a L’Arche community – I believe I also have a good idea of the “having a home and family” that L’Arche offers the core members as well as the assistants. However, I must admit that having Michael and Mariya with us for three days added a solid “brick” or layer to my understanding of what L’Arche means! On the one hand, to experience their mutual relationship was one of the most pleasant impressions I have ever had; on the other hand, it triggered deep sorrow and longing for my beloved son to one day be able to have a life like that alongside and outside his present family. So I am not sure really why the tears swelled when they left; tears of joy to have new friends, or tears of deep sadness. Both probably.

Their visit also illustrated to me the possibility that a person who had not experienced intellectually disabled people closely before can absolutely truly relate to them, accept them, and share life with them!”



New friends Mariya, Petra, David, Michael, Anton



## WELCOME TO THE NEWEST MEMBER OF OUR CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY

Congratulations to Shrami Hebert and Jacques Hurley, and big sister Madeleine, who welcomed baby Camille Jeannette on May 27<sup>th</sup>.



## BUILDING ACCESS - INCLUSION - EQUALITY

On June 19 the provincial government unveiled its strategy for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in Newfoundland and Labrador. Petra Sunner and Lorraine Angelopoulos attended this event on behalf of Cornerstone Housing Society.

To quote from the message of Clyde Jackman, the Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities, "The strategy focuses on working together to find solutions that remove barriers, provide services with dignity, fairness and respect, and advance our goal of an inclusive society." The vision, goal and objectives of the action plan represent a fundamental shift in attitude whereby accessibility is a first thought in all government plans, not an afterthought.

The five objectives are:

1. Build a positive image of disability
2. Engage persons with disabilities in decision-making
3. Increase accessibility of the built environment
4. Increase access to disability-related supports
5. Deliver services with dignity, fairness and respect

These objectives and many of the detailed action plans that go with each one relate directly to our goal of establishing homes and community for adults with an intellectual disability. L'Arche philosophy is about changing public perception "one heart at a time." L'Arche communities foster the "gifts" of people with intellectual disabilities. L'Arche is about inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in all decisions affecting them. L'Arche is all about the empowerment of persons with disabilities. L'Arche embraces its core members with dignity and respect.

It is significant and exciting that our government, having worked with many organizations representing people with disabilities and with the Provincial Advisory Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, has come to recognize its crucial leadership role in this area. It feels like the time is ripe for our project. People are becoming more open; government is listening. A L'Arche Community in this province is an idea whose time has come.

**Lorraine Angelopoulos**



## THANK YOU

We have been blessed to be welcomed to

- St. Mark's Anglican Church on Logy Bay Road
- West End Baptist Church on Topsail Road
- The Salvation Army Citadel on Adams Avenue

Thank you for allowing us to use your facilities for meetings and gatherings these past months.



## BUILDING COMMUNITY IN THE GARDEN



Cornerstone Core Members, their families, and their support workers are reminded of the invitation from Marie Rowe to visit the vegetable garden at the Autism Society. Marie received the plot as a Mother's Day gift from her family and has placed it in the name of Cornerstone Housing Society so that our members could avail of the opportunity to visit and tend the garden by pulling a few weeds or watering as necessary. We look forward to sharing the bounty of the harvest at a Community gathering in the fall!



## FUNDRAISING

Sincere thanks to those who participate in the on-going work of Cornerstone Housing Society with tax deductible contributions. Donations may be made directly to Cornerstone Housing Society, 209 Marine Drive, Logy Bay, NL A1K 3E2; online through Canada Helps; or via e-transfer to [office@cornerstonehousingsociety.ca](mailto:office@cornerstonehousingsociety.ca)





## BUILDING ON THE L'ARCHE MODEL

At the invitation of the Community Building Committee, Jenn Power, L'Arche Atlantic Regional Leader, facilitated a town hall meeting July 2nd in which she presented a snap shot of life in L'Arche Atlantic region. With slide show and stories she shared what it means to be a L'Arche community in the Atlantic provinces. Emphasis was placed on making a concerted effort to belong by having Cornerstone Housing represented at key events organized each year by L'Arche Atlantic.

The evening began with a reflection organized by Clotilde Raydon, Marie Rowe and Lorraine Angelopoulos which began with Clotilde and Luc leading the group in singing in which everyone joined on the refrain. Then came the reading of the parable of the mustard seed, with core members participating by tacking seeds and plants on the poster board. Members and guests were invited to answer the question, "What do we need to grow into L'Arche Community?" People were given green pieces of paper as "leaves" on which to write their answers. They posted these on the mustard tree that had been created by the core members during the reading of the parable. This activity illustrated the necessary focus of building our community together and the special focus on the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities.

The participants shared a delicious meal along with good conversation and fellowship with strangers and friends. Prior to the Town Hall Jenn was presented with questions that had been generated by some of the committees of Cornerstone Housing. One of the key questions was asking for direction on how we are doing in relation to becoming a L'Arche project. It was very helpful to be reminded of the "Criteria To Become A L'Arche Project."

It became apparent that we are moving in the right direction in our efforts to be organized, i.e. creating a structure that is working. Jenn stressed that we must work towards a "meaningful community," that fosters mutuality and celebration.

The idea of community was deepened by the challenge to foster networking and concern for members and prospective members between gatherings, and to consider having an annual community weekend retreat. Everyone's gifts must be

appreciated, valued and respected. It was exciting and somewhat unique to be encouraged to build community by promoting "foolishness." Who would have thought that foolishness is a key ingredient to becoming a L'Arche Community? Foolishness fits with another best practice in L'Arche of communicating with core members using fewer and simpler methods.

In conclusion, there is no formula, nothing that absolutely has to be done a certain way. Rather, to be a L'Arche community we must learn to be together as brothers and sisters who embrace diversity, inclusion and the mission to love and accept one another as we are, for who we are, creations of love and caring, and of God.

**Peter Barnes**  
Co-Chair Community Building Committee



*As a memento of her time with us on July 2<sup>nd</sup>, Jenn Power received a work of art created by Cornerstone Core member Jonathan Dawe.*



## CORNERSTONE MEMBERSHIP

Are you a member of Cornerstone Housing Society? Has your membership expired? We welcome all who want to join us on the journey of working to establish a L'Arche Community in Newfoundland and Labrador. The annual membership fee is \$20 with application forms online at: [www.cornerstonehousingsociety.ca](http://www.cornerstonehousingsociety.ca)



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### CORNERSTONE UPCOMING EVENTS

**Sunday, August 16** 6:30 – 8 PM  
St. Michael’s and All Angels Anglican Church,  
75 Kiwanis Street (just off Kenmount Road and  
Ladysmith Drive)

**Sunday, September 20**, 4:30 - 7 PM  
Supper and Community Gathering  
at Rotary Sunshine Park

**Watch your email for details!**



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## UPCOMING SYMPOSIUM

### SHINING A LIGHT ON HOPE AND PEACE Building More Nurturing Societies

**September 12, 2015**  
Medical Education Centre, St. John’s

This symposium will bring together Memorial University faculty, staff, and students, as well as the general public. It will be of special interest to non-profit organizations and community groups who work with, and advocate for, vulnerable populations.

Presenters include: Dr. Mohamed Ravalia, Sally Armstrong, Dr. Kevin Chan, Dr. Andrew Furey, Dr. Michael Kaufman, Dr. Samantha Nutt.

For more information and to register, please visit:  
<https://www.med.mun.ca/pdcs/programs.asp>

## OUR VISION

Places of belonging in Newfoundland and Labrador where adults with intellectual disabilities and others live fulfilling lives.

## OUR MISSION

Working together with adults who have intellectual disabilities, our mission is to create and sustain L’Arche homes and programs in Newfoundland and Labrador and to educate others about the value and contributions of people with intellectual disabilities.



Cornerstone Housing Society  
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