

L'Arche News

FALL 2025

A SISTER'S STORY

My sister Linda has been a gift to our family. She inherited my Dad's sense of humour and love of adventure. Her raucous laugh and joyfulness are infectious. She grew up sheltered by our family, travelling extensively and attending many social functions, including Sunday Mass. She endeared herself to all that met her. Since Linda and I are very close, I assumed that upon my parents' passing, she would live with our family on Vancouver Island.



Ellie with sister Linda

When they passed, however, it became clear that Linda had developed strong programs and supports in Burnaby, including my brother's family. She also yearned for greater independence. Several of her friends lived in L'Arche Greater Vancouver homes, and since my brother and I were aging, we realized that L'Arche could offer secure lifelong care and the independence she sought.

Linda bubbles when she describes her life at L'Arche. She has blossomed intellectually, emotionally, and

socially, becoming the "Linda" she was meant to be. It's been wonderful to witness her involvement with the expanded community at her new L'Arche home in Willow House and hear her infectious laughter once more.

She is involved with spiritual activities that meant so much to my parents. I often tell her how proud Dad would be of her, and she replies, "Yes, I know." She enjoys the numerous choices offered for local outings and travel, such as her trip to France and as a representative at a L'Arche conference in Belfast with her friend Celine. She enjoys knitting for the homeless and baking at the in-house Evergreen Program and has developed a line of toques bearing a unique logo. She also produces a painting each year for the Art Together program.

Linda lives in a loving and protective community that offers appropriate independence. L'Arche Greater Vancouver has been a godsend for her and for us, her family, knowing that she has a home for life here and that she loves it so much.

From a grateful sister, Ellie



Linda with friends Lawrence and Louise

Why Volunteer at L'Arche?



Nancy's journey with L'Arche began when she worked for L'Arche Arnprior in Ontario. She had already become acquainted with that community through her church, so when she was approached to start working in their home programs, she agreed. She served in various roles until her retirement. The day after retirement, she drove to Vancouver and eventually attended one of our Community Prayer evenings.

She started volunteering one day a week with the day program, then joined our casual support list, helping in our homes as needed. However, when we moved into our new building, a new opportunity arose for which she was well-suited.

"Once we moved into the new building, the rooftop garden adopted me, and now we produce fresh veggies for the four L'Arche homes most weeks of the year. People from the Evergreen Program water the garden during dry spells. Each Monday morning, a core member helps me gather that week's veggies and deliver them to the homes."

"L'Arche holds a special place in my heart as the core members are at the heart of the community, and it is to them that we must listen to determine how to move forward as a community. L'Arche is a place that readily accepts the gifts each person brings and celebrates them for who they are."

Meet Erol from L'Arche

Erol started his journey with L'Arche in 2017 as a participant in the Emmaus Centre, the previous name of our day program. At that time, he lived with his mom; now he's a member of Cedar House, one of the L'Arche homes in our new building, and participates in our Evergreen Day Program.

It's well known that Erol is a big fan of the Vancouver Canucks as he's often seen wearing a Canucks hat or hoodie. He and Laura translated his love of hockey into their "Double Hockey Sticks" painting they created for L'Arche's 2025 Art Together Show.



Although his favourite Evergreen activity is checking out sports and games on the computer, he also takes his responsibilities to

the program and others seriously. He takes care of the garbage and composting when needed, washes dishes, and generally helps with cleaning up. He goes bowling, recycling, helps deliver Meals on Wheels, shops, and sets up the tables for the Friday Lunch Program.

When it's his turn to pick

the menu for Friday lunch, it's burgers and macaroni salad.

His friends in the program say that Erol has a contagious laugh and a great sense of humour. He also knows a few phrases in multiple languages and sometimes greets people in a language that they are familiar with. In a community as diverse as L'Arche, Erol fits right in and helps others do the same.



L'Arche is Rich in Diversity

Ever since L'Arche opened its doors more than 50 years ago, we have welcomed hundreds of young people from around the world who come to experience life in an intentional community.

Some stay a year; others stay longer and make L'Arche their home and their vocation. Those who return to their home country often take the message and light of L'Arche's mission with them. Their L'Arche experience became foundational in the way they view and respond to the needs of people around them.



Hosts of our "African Culture" Community Gathering

At present:

- **76%** of L'Arche employees represent cultures from outside Canada.
- **21%** employees have been with L'Arche for more than **10** years.
- The ages of our employees range from **21** to more than **70** years.

In Memory of Melina Boote

June 17, 1938 - May 22, 2025

*She comes sailing on the wind,
her wings flashing in the sun;
on a journey just begun,
she flies on.
And in the passage of her flight,
her song rings out through the night,
full of laughter, full of light,
she flies on.*

Even though Melina's health had been declining, we weren't prepared to say goodbye. She, however, was prepared. Well in advance of her death, she chose every hymn and reading for her service, including the hymn mentioned here. This was a testament to how she lived her life – intentional, thoughtful, and deeply rooted in her faith and a reflection of her spirit.

Melina was part of our community for 48 years. Throughout those years, she touched countless hearts with her quiet strength, her gentle spirit, and her love for those around her. Many of us carry special memories of her - whether it was her laughter, a calendar with everyone's birthday, a handmade card, or her delight in butterflies, and all things green and pink.

Melina was a faithful member of Joy Fellowship and Jubilee United Church, where her presence and faith were deeply cherished. Even though we will continue to grieve her loss, we will also celebrate her life, a life filled with meaning, connection, and beauty.



Supporting Organizations

We gratefully acknowledge the following Organizations
for their support from May 1, 2025 to August 31, 2025

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Tributes

The following were honoured or remembered
with a tribute gift to L'Arche

In Honour of

The Family of Art and Thea Hoffman

In Memory of

Melina Boote
Alice Clarkson
Thea Hoffman
Joan Rocha
Gerry Staudacher
Liliana Tesan

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