



MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR, WAYNE DIPERSIO

Another circle around the sun and another remarkable year for L'Arche Halifax. Another year full of joy in seeing new members of the community join and sadness as we said goodbye to others. Another year in the shadow of COVID but another year where core members and assistants proved over and over that they can do anything. I am so proud to be part of such a wonderful extended family.

So many people to thank; assistants for their compassion and hard work, community leaders for their professionalism and dedication, Board members for their spirit of volunteerism and gift of time, friends and family for their constant love and support, but most of all our core members who meet every day with eternal optimism and love of life.

The warm summer breezes bring with them a renewed sense of happiness. Ever-present smiles are becoming a bit wider as thoughts turn to all the things that we have missed over the past twelve months. As the province begins to re-open and daily life returns to what was once normal, we look forward to reengaging with our north end neighbors in new and more meaningful ways. It will be time to revisit many of the aspirations in our 2020 mandate; goals undermined by a global pandemic. The promise and potential of better days..... 😊

Blessings,
Wayne



MESSAGE FROM THE COMMUNITY LEADER

Dear friends,

I realized when I sat down to write this annual report that there hasn't been a lot of time for reflecting over the past year. It has been a full year of living community during a pandemic which is something we have never done before and frankly, something I hope we never have to do again. As a community we really tried to keep things as simple as possible and focus on how we could help each other have a good day. We bought portable air conditioners for each of the homes to help assistants better cope with wearing masks in the summer heat. We received a grant from the United Way to purchase iPads for both homes to help core members be able to better communicate with their families when in person visits were not possible. We ordered take out once a month as a little way to treat ourselves and have something to look forward to. We had a fun summer vacation time with a fantastic movie night, a dress up awards evening, theme days, scavenger hunt, more take out because you can never go wrong with food, trips to Emilie's pool and much more.

This past year has been difficult for everyone. For our core members and their families, for the assistants, for our Leadership Team, all of us. It seemed like the rules were changing so often and we were all trying to understand and communicate those changes to everyone as best we could. There were long stretches where core members couldn't see their families and to say that was hard would be a huge understatement. Many assistants who have families in other countries are still unsure of when they will be able to go back home for a visit. And yet, most if not each day, you would still hear laughter in our homes.

My heart is filled with gratitude for every one of you. To the families, for your patience, your trust, and your kindness -Thank You! To the core members, your world has been turned upside down and yet it's you who keeps us all going. When I'm having a rough day, I leave the office and go spend some time with you because you always have a way of making me feel better. To the assistants, what an awesome group of people you are! I learn so much from you and it's a privilege being able to watch you learn and grow.

A special thank you to our Board of Directors for all your support from behind the scenes. Your care and concern for the members of our community is recognized and appreciated.

I'll finish with what has been the highlight for our community-Anna moving into her own apartment through the ILS Program!! This was a huge step for Anna and her family. She has worked so hard for this opportunity. Anna has assistants who spend time with her at her place and help her with things like groceries, meal planning and medical appointments. Anna has supper in each of the homes once a week and will join for any activities or events that she would like to. Anna says that the best part about living on her own is having her own space, having her own food, and not needing to worry about other people taking it. Anna says that sometimes she misses living at Journey House, but she is happier in her own place.

Anna's move has also allowed L'Arche Halifax to be able to grow which we didn't think we would be able to do for a long time so thank you, Anna!!! We now offer the ILS Program which is a DCS funded program that enables people to live in the community with supports from an organization so in Anna's case, it's L'Arche Halifax. We hope this program will be a way for others to join us and find their place of belonging. Anna's moving out created a place for someone else to move in and we were so happy to be able to welcome Ian to Journey House. We are still getting to know Ian and have really appreciated the support and guidance of his family during this time of transition. Ian has lots in common with his house mates and seems to be enjoying living on a busy street in the city. Ian, we are really glad that you have come to live at L'Arche!

In closing, as life slowly returns to what some are calling our new normal, I will share some wise words from my friend, Anna. I have found myself repeating this phrase many times over the past year and it seems to be appropriate to most situations: Step 1-Stay Calm 😊

Kelly Geddes | Community Leader



GOLF TOURNAMENT

September 21, 2020 was going to be a big day for our L'Arche Halifax golf tournament. We had re-named the tournament the "David W. Banks Memorial Golf Tournament in Support of L'Arche Halifax" in honour of the founder of our annual golf fundraiser. We had changed venue for the second time in our history. We were going to play on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean at Hartlen Point Forces Golf Club at Eastern Passage.

But the Covid 19 virus had other plans. When the pandemic hit in March 2020 we waited, hoping we'd be able to go ahead as planned. As the weeks passed it became obvious - the tournament would need to be postponed.

After a long winter as spring 2021 approached and the vaccines started to roll out we became confident that the tournament would go ahead this year. We set the date for September 20, 2021 and booked Hartlen Point Forces Golf Club again.

We sent invitations to past sponsors and golfers, unsure how businesses had fared during the pandemic. Would they return?

It remains to be seen what September 20, 2021 will bring, but it looks good. Nova Scotia and Canada are "opening" and the vaccine rollout is ahead of schedule. Golfers and sponsors have responded positively. Now that summer is here we are more optimistic than ever that the first annual David A. Banks Memorial Golf Tournament in Support of L'Arche Halifax will go ahead three months from now. I hope to see you there!

ART SHOW AND SALE

We are hoping to have our 10th art show on November 12 -14 of this year, again at St Agnes Hall. We will send out an invitation to artists in August and hope for the best!!

If you would like to help out with preparations or work on the weekend, or know of any artists that might be interested in attending, please get in touch!

Barb Ross

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GROWTH PROJECT

The L'Arche Halifax vision of a dedicated gathering place complimented by a modest component of affordable/accessible apartments is taking shape.

L'Arche Halifax has entered into a formal relationship with the Tamarack Institute (tamarackcommunity.ca) Their role in our project is to "develop and support collaborative strategies that engage citizens and institutions to solve major community issues across Canada and beyond" by providing specialized training and executive coaching in community engagement. We will be working with them over the next year to help identify community needs and connect with potential stakeholders.

Concurrently with that a formal growth committee has been established and a project plan and capital campaign are being developed. This is a long road that will not bear fruit for several years. That said, progress is happening and we are encouraged by the positive feedback and support we are receiving.





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