

A Message from your Board Chair & Community Leader

The Christmas season is one associated with journeys; people travel near and far to see loved ones, kids return home from university for a home-cooked meal and free laundry, even the busy weeks leading up to the holidays can feel like a journey!



Indeed the Nativity story is an intersection of myriad journeys: those of Mary and Joseph, the Shepherds, the Magi. Undoubtedly, their journeys were full of challenges, and likely caused them fear and doubts along the way.

Yet what kept them going? They had no directions, no Google Maps, no GPS... just a Star, Faith, and one another.

Our own journeys may sometimes feel like we are working without a road map or GPS. For some this may feel exciting and invigorating; for others it is a lonely, fear-filled process. Regardless, all journeys can feel safer and more predictable when you have people to share them with.

We started our journeys as Community Leader and Board Chair around the same time. We have experienced challenges that have required some new ways of thinking and new ways of doing. Yet with the mission of L'Arche as our guiding star, and the faith that we can rely on the strength of our community, we hope that we can continue to walk with you in our Homefires journey!

So as the Christmas season draws closer, may you experience the love and kindness of the season, and find ways to support the journeys of those around you. And thank you for your continued support of the L'Arche Homefires journey: We couldn't do it without you!

In kindness,



Erin Hennessy
Chair, Board of Directors
L'Arche Homefires



April Veinot
Community Leader
L'Arche Homefires



Discover the Latest: What's Going On

Volunteer of the Year

Sharon has been awarded a Provincial Volunteer Award for volunteering at the Wolfville Children's Centre for 25 years. She initially started volunteering when her mom contacted the center to offer her help after their family moved to the area. Sharon dedicates three days a week to assist in the kitchen, mainly supporting the cook, Melissa. Her tasks include setting up and delivering snacks and lunch to classrooms, helping with dishes, and preparing vegetables for over 40 children. Sharon's warm demeanor and consistent presence have made her an essential part of the team. She never misses a day at WCC except for well-deserved vacations. Sharon has even shared her musical talents with the children, playing the guitar and participating in center celebrations. Sharon is not just a volunteer; she is a cherished member of the Wolfville Children's Centre family. The entire WCC is immensely grateful for her 25 years of dedicated support and looks forward to many more years to come.



"I like helping in the kitchen and I love children. I'm very proud of myself for getting this award."

- Sharon

A Wonderful Website

We are delighted and excited to announce that L'Arche Homefires has a brand-new website! Our Development and Communications Coordinator, Ryan, has been hard at work creating a fresh website to help raise awareness for our community, showcase our Applewicks products, and encourage more donations. Take a moment to explore it for yourself today:

www.larchehomefires.org



On the Journey Together - The Smith's Travel to NB

Brendon Purdy-Smith and his father, Kimberly Smith, embraced the wonderful opportunity to attend the 2023 L'Arche Atlantic retreat at Villa Madonna in Rothesay, New Brunswick. The retreat, titled 'Awakening to Wonder,' was facilitated by Greer Stackhouse from L'Arche Saint John and Valeria Montes from L'Arche Antigonish.

New friends were made, and everyone truly learned to appreciate not only the awe and wonder of the natural world—trees, flowers, birds, the sky, and the river—but also the awe and wonder of each other. One of the most memorable moments was when Brendon and Kim showed everyone how to discover and play with the music in each other's names. Attendees of the retreat represented our local communities of L'Arche Halifax, L'Arche Antigonish, L'Arche Cape Breton, L'Arche Saint John, and of course, L'Arche Homefires. Brendon and Kimberly already have plans to travel to these communities and are looking forward to reconnecting with their new L'Arche friends!



Living Independently - An Interview with Alexander

Alexander is one of our Core Members who lives independently with support in our community. He is particularly excited for his next chapter with L'Arche Homefires as he will be moving into a brand new apartment in early 2024. We conducted an interview with Alexander so he could share his experience and feelings about being involved with L'Arche:

Where are you living now, and where will you be moving?

I was previously in Eden House with L'Arche Homefires, and I am currently living in an apartment in Wolfville. Eventually, I plan on moving again to a place in New Minas. I have lived on my own since September 1st, 2023.

What challenges did you have living on your own?

I struggle with budgeting. That's the big one. I've been doing a lot better with managing my money. Also, cooking. I'm good with cooking, but it's about finding the time and space to be able to cook. I have a good support system that helps me along.

What are the benefits of living alone?

It's a challenge that I like to accept. The challenges of everyday life and normal activity, whether that's out in the broader community and finding a job, which I'm aiming to do. The benefits include having a space to call my own for my downtime when I need it. I still have interactions with people during the day, but it's nice to have my own place to escape to.

What does independence mean to you?

Independence is the will and freedom that is given to be yourself. Personal independence, in my eyes, is being myself in a place where I feel comfortable.

How do you hope to entertain guests?

Being able to have friends over with the amount of space I'll have will be great. I was hoping to play video games and sports outside with them too, like basketball.

How has your family supported you in living independently with L'Arche?

It's been with my time at L'Arche that I've really grown up. My mom has always been in my corner, no matter what has happened; she's always been there for me and taught me a better direction, which has worked, as I'm now a young adult.

What does L'Arche mean to you?

L'Arche Homefires is a kind-hearted community filled with kind-hearted people who are compassionate. I couldn't imagine myself not being a part of L'Arche in some way. When I got into this community, I developed into what I've become, and it's been a blessing.

What advice would you give to others who were looking to get involved with L'Arche?

You're always supported, no matter who you are, as an Assistant or a Core Member.

What was your favorite memory with L'Arche?

My favourite memory was definitely doing the Mud Creek challenge days. This past year was my third year doing it. It was extremely fun being a part of the L'Arche Homefires team. Those were always a blast. Even just spending lunch together or talking with the people is great. Our candle shop is really fun as well.

What are small ways in which you feel like you could make a positive difference in someone's days at L'Arche?

Being able to teach people how to learn or just having the fulfillment of being a part of something that is a benefit not to myself but to other people. For example, the art show coming up and being able to do artwork with other people. I'm a very artistic person and I like to see what other people can do. The art program in this community is great and gives me a chance to express myself and see how other people can express themselves.



Celebrating Art and Community: L'Arche Homefires Art Show Success!

We are delighted to share the joyous news of the successful L'Arche Homefires Art Show, held on Saturday, November 18, from 2-4 PM at 341 Main Street in the heart of Wolfville. The event coincided with the cherished Acadia Craft Expo weekend, creating a vibrant atmosphere for art enthusiasts and community members alike.

Diverse Creations by Local Artists:

The art show featured an impressive array of creative expressions, ranging from paintings and feltwork to knitting, clothing, mosaics, mixed media, and beyond. The collaborative efforts of Core Members, Program Assistants, and office team members produced a stunning collection of artworks guided by talented local Artists in Residence.



Our sincere appreciation goes out to the esteemed Artists in Residence:

Jane Beals, Petra Van Bree-Josten, Carol Chen Lord, Mallory Gorman, Doretta Groenendyk, Ezra Fitch, Brianna Lynch, Pia Skaarer Nielson, Mary Norton, Sarah Shortliffe, and Shin Ou Yang. Their guidance and expertise brought forth a diverse and inspiring showcase of artistic talent.

Community Support and Engagement:

The response from the community was overwhelming, with a fantastic turnout at the event. The silent auction was a highlight, raising over \$2200, while in-store sales at Applewicks contributed an additional \$400+. These funds will play a crucial role in sustaining and expanding our art program.

The generous art grant provided by the Harrison McCain Foundation made this event possible, enabling the purchase of materials, hosting Artists in Residence, and commissioning frames for the artworks. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Harrison McCain Foundation for their support, as well as to all the donors who contribute to the growth and success of L'Arche Homefires.

Looking to the Future:

The success of the art show has set the stage for a promising future. With the support of donors, we aim to develop and enhance our art program, fostering a space for creativity and self-expression. We envision the art show becoming an annual tradition, enriching the cultural tapestry of Wolfville for years to come.



Acknowledgments and Thanks:

A special thank you to everyone involved in making the L'Arche Homefires Art Show a resounding success. Whether you attended, supported, or purchased original artwork, your contribution has made a meaningful impact on our community.

Let's continue to celebrate the intersection of art and community, fostering a spirit of creativity, inclusivity, and joy. We look forward to your continued support on our artistic journey.

Scan the QR code to watch a short acknowledgment video!



2023 Memories



Yes, I want to support L'Arche Homefires to create a world where everyone belongs!

Name:
Address:
City, Province:
Postal Code:
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Here is my gift of: \$ _____
 by Cheque made out to **Wolffville L'Arche Homefires Society**
 or by Visa Mastercard
 E-transfers to **office@larchehomefires.org**

Credit card information

Card #																			
						Expiry date													Signature

- My gift is to:**
- The area of greatest need
 - A specific area _____
 - I have included L'Arche Homefires in my will.
 - I am interested in learning more about leaving a gift in my will.
 - I would love to receive L'Arche Homefires communication
by email: _____

Thank you!
 We sometimes recognize our donors throughout our print and digital materials. If you prefer that your name not be listed, please check this box.

Monthly giving
 see reverse for more detail.

2023 Memories



Yes, I want to support L'Arche Homefires on a MONTHLY basis!

You can support L'Arche Homefires operations and programs all year long by becoming a monthly donor.

Your pre-authorized monthly gifts will be deducted on the 15th of each month and you will receive one tax receipt for the full amount of your donation in February each year.

You can revoke or make changes to this authorization by contacting us in writing or office@larchehomefires.org or calling 902.542.3520 ext. 225 with 30 days notice.

Monthly giving is the most cost-effective way to donate.



341 Main St, PO 2192 Wolfville, NS B4P 2N5
 P: 902.542.3520 F: 902.542.7686
 Charitable Reg. No. 108219106RR0001

For more ways to give, visit larchehomefires.org/donate

Each month I would like to give:

I authorize L'Arche Homefires to withdraw my gift on the 15th of each month or the next business day in the amount of:

\$10 \$25 \$35 \$ _____

by **Preauthorized debit payment**
 (I'm enclosing a cheque marked "VOID")

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Thank you!

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Card #															
Expiry date				Signature											