



H(ARK)!

A Sign of Hope in a Broken World

Volume 2 Number 3

Summer 2007

Dates to Remember:

- Board of Directors Meeting, Tuesday, September 25, at 7:00pm at Central UCC
- Community Building Event, Sunday, September 30, at 5:00pm at Northside UMC
- Vision and Mission Committee Meeting, Tuesday, October 9, at 7:00pm at Gathering Grounds
- Announcing Event, Sunday, October 21, at 10:45am at St. Luke's Episcopal Church
- Committee and Board Development Meeting, Tuesday, October 23, at 7:00pm at Central UCC
- Announcing Event, Thursday, October 25, at 7:30pm at Gathering Grounds

Inside this issue:

Meet Board Members	2
Chuck walks a marathon	2
Community Building	3
Thank you, Donors	3
An Intimate Gathering	4

The Summertime Blues

Bob Berlon
Board President

When we live our lives according to the seasons, we discover a rhythm that impacts us both personally and organizationally. In summer, we “vacate” our normal activities and use our precious time to breathe in and to reenergize our bodies and our spirits. This is good! We are successful in reducing our stress and anxiety when we are willing to set aside our agendas and our egos and to explore the healing that comes from relationships that are built on integrity and humility.

This past Spring, the International Federation of L'Arche restated its Vision, Identity, and Mission in an effort to align L'Arche more completely with both our founding story and the society we live in now.

Our Identity is: *We are people with and without intellectual disabilities sharing life in communities belonging to an international federation. Mutual relationships and trust in God are at the heart of our journey together. We celebrate the unique value of every person and recognize our need for one another.*

It has been said that the pace we live at is often not the pace of our spirit. In L'Arche, we often speak of this pace as “L'Arche Time.” Those of us that are without intellectual disabilities often find it very difficult to reset our internal clocks to feel secure working at L'Arche-speed. Our core mem-



Board members and guests come together at the last community building event to announce the impending arrival of L'Arche in Atlanta. Photo by: Susanna Miller

bers, on the other hand, aren't encumbered by agendas and tight schedules – rather, they tend to live according to the rhythm of their spirits and not to the demands of so many external controls.

Learning to live in L'Arche Time is a challenge for many of us. Yet, we are also aware that we have a mandate to have a L'Arche home within the next 18-24 months. To this end, we really need your help in so many ways. We need to tap your experience and your gifts by inviting you to join our journey and to share your insights and your encouragement. If you have special knowledge of government and its regulations and policies, it would be very helpful if you could share your advice and knowledge. If you have particular insight into where we should focus our

search for a neighborhood where we could build or rent and grow, we need to hear from you. If you are aware of funding opportunities, we would truly appreciate hearing from you. Hopefully, we can leverage your involvement to generate the funds we need to establish our first home. Our goal to have several homes within a short distance of each other over the next 5-15 years. We appreciate the value of your time so our invitation is not to tie you up; rather, our hope is that you would consider a few hours to help us find our way.

As we enter Autumn, we are excited by the opportunities we have to become more competent and committed to our Identity and Mission. Our goals are clear. We can accomplish them (in L'Arche Time!) with your help.

Meet Our Board

Each newsletter, we are going to highlight three to four members of our Board of Directors. We want you to learn a little about who they are and what they are bringing to our community.

Laura Magistro Wells, Vice President & Secretary of the Board of Directors of Friends of L'Arche Atlanta, is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) who has worked in the field of developmental disabilities for the past ten years since graduating with a Master's of Social Work from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1997. Laura also has a BS in Psychology from Duke University. Laura worked for The Marcus Institute and Developmental Pediatric Specialists, Inc., both non-profits in Atlanta, and specialized in assessment and coordination of care for young children with autism, ADHD, and cerebral palsy. She was inspired to work in the field of developmental disabilities after spending a year living in a L'Arche community in Scotland after graduating from Duke. She currently stays at home with her children, Evan and Julia. Laura has been an active member of the Atlanta Friends of L'Arche planning group since it's inception in 2003, and is currently the Vice President and Secretary of the board of directors. She loves to sing and play the guitar, and also volunteers her time at St. Paul United Methodist Church by teaching two of the children's choirs and singing in an adult ensemble.



Chuck Miller, Treasurer of the Board of Directors of Friends of L'Arche Atlanta, is employed as Director of Corporate Accounting by RARE Hospitality International, Inc. He became acquainted with L'Arche when his older daughter, after her college graduation, served as an assistant and then house leader for three years with a L'Arche community in Compiègne, France. He has been involved with the Atlanta L'Arche project from the beginning as a result of attending the Jean Vanier Retreat. Chuck is a graduate of Queens College of the City University of New York and attended graduate school at St. John's University also in Queens. He has lived and worked in New York City, Honolulu and Atlanta. He is an Army veteran and holds the Eagle Scout award from the Boy Scouts of America. He is an avid tennis player and together with his wife of 34 years, Judy, is involved with the marriage preparation program at All Saints Catholic Church. He is currently the president of his 716-home subdivision's homeowners' association. He and Judy have four grown children and two granddaughters.



Growing up in Shreveport, LA, **Susanna Miller** was surrounded by adults with physical disabilities, and for that reason, she grew up with a heart of compassion towards those with different abilities. Susanna first discovered her love for individuals with special needs when working at a summer camp in the North Georgia Mountains, designed for adults and children with developmental disabilities. Susanna graduated from Centenary College of Louisiana with a BA in Religious Studies and a minor in Sociology in 2003.

Susanna now works as the Work and Progress Coordinator for the Bobby Dodd Institute where she teaches adults with developmental disabilities work, life and social skills. On the weekends she works as the Weekend Program Director for Camp Caglewood, a camping program for children and adults with developmental disabilities. In her free time, Susanna enjoys spending time with friends, cooking, camp-

ing, and working with the youth, young adults and hospitality committee at her church home, Embury Hills United Methodist Church in Atlanta, GA. She is also the president of the Atlanta Alumni Chapter for Centenary College.

Walking the talk

Judy Miller
Fundraising Committee

Our treasurer, Chuck (pictured above) plans to perform a fundraising "feet." He will walk the Portland Oregon Marathon this coming October 7th. He would be delighted if you would pledge a donation to Friends of L'Arche Atlanta on behalf of this 26-mile trek.

This walk represents a lifestyle change for Chuck and hopefully will raise money for a lifestyle change for some future Core members. So please put your money where Chuck's feet are. Please consider offering \$1, \$10, \$100 per mile or any donation to mark this auspicious feat and make L'Arche a reality in Atlanta. Send pledges or donations to our PO Box or email to larcheatlanta@yahoo.com Donations are tax deductible. Thank you very much!

Portland Marathon Pledge Card

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

I pledge:

\$1 per mile \$10 per mile \$100 per mile

other _____



Come & See Taste & See That the Lord is Good...

Sharing the Sign of Hope...

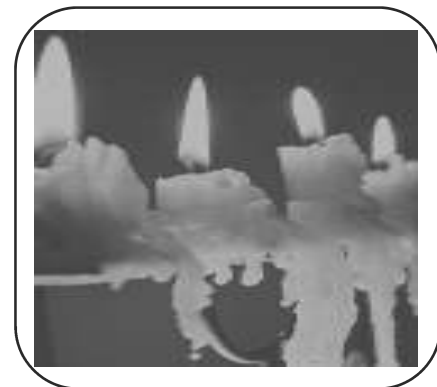
Friends of L'Arche Atlanta Community Gathering

Sunday, September 30, 2007 5-7pm

Northside United Methodist Church Boardroom on 1st floor

Please RSVP to larcheatlanta@yahoo.com by Friday, September 28.

We need to know the number in your party and what food item you will be bringing.



Laura Magistro Wells, Vice-President & Secretary

"In a divided world, L'Arche wants to be a sign of hope. Its communities, founded on covenant relationships between people of differing intellectual capacity, social origin, religion and culture, seek to be signs of unity, faithfulness and reconciliation." Excerpt from the *Charter of the Communities of L'Arche*.

Come join us on September 30th, 2007 at 5pm as we explore what it means to be a sign of hope, and what we believe that L'Arche will bring to the city of Atlanta. We know that the world cannot change overnight, but we also know that real change only comes through meaningful relationships where the hearts of individuals are changed. Anyone who has ever shared a meal with others in a L'Arche community or spent any amount of time at L'Arche can tell you how the relationships that are built in L'Arche changed his or her life. Come and experience a little of L'Arche, as we will share in a meal, worship, fellowship, and a short presentation about Friends of L'Arche Atlanta.

"Mother [Teresa] opened her first mission outside India in Venezuela. A rich family in Cocoroté had given land to the Missionaries of Charity to build a home for orphaned children. When Mother Teresa visited South America, she went to thank the family. She noticed that their first-born child was 'terribly disabled'

She asked the [boy's] mother, 'What is his name?'

'Professor of Love,' replied the mother, 'because this child is teaching us the whole time how to express love in action.'

From *Mother Teresa's Reaching Out in Love*, ed. Edward Le Joly and Jaya Chaliha

Thank you to the following individuals for their gifts:

Otis & Judy Aust
J.P. Berlon
Maro Cooper
David Herbster
Bob & Kathy Kenney
Sharon Maddox

Chuck & Judy Miller
Joslyn Ogden
Margaret Talmadge
Father Edward Weist
Mary Wenska

In Honor of:
Julia Magistro Wells

Given by:
Charles & Linda Wells

The marriage of Andrew & Amy Miller and the anniversary of Chuck & Judy Miller

John & Patricia Van House

Coming Soon to a Computer Near You...

(H)ARK! will be available in electronic format. In order to be good stewards of our resources we would like to email you the newsletter or newsletter link. Please send us your email address to larcheatlanta@yahoo.com

Gathering—Gaining—Giving



Please join the L'Arche Board members and their closest friends for an evening of "Learning about L'Arche" at Gathering Grounds Coffee House in the historic Kirkwood, Atlanta. We will of course have coffee, (hors d'oeuvres and wine, too if you'd like.) It will be a meaningful time of gathering with like-minded, kind and generous-hearted people. The evening will allow an opportunity for sharing questions and answers and hopes and dreams. Your presence would be a huge present for us! Please come.

Thursday, October 25th, 7:30-9:00

Gathering Grounds

1994 Hosea Williams Drive
Atlanta, GA 30317

www.gatheringgroundskirkwood.com



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOB BERLON, PRESIDENT

LAURA MAGISTRO WELLS, VICE-PRESIDENT & SECRETARY

CHUCK MILLER, TREASURER

ISAAC BAROI, CHAPLAIN

CATHERINE BOOTHE

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SUSAN KOZIOL

SUSANNA MILLER

BETTI KNOTT

KEVIN YORK-SIMMONS

IDENTITY OF L'ARCHE

We are people, with and without developmental disabilities, sharing life in communities of faith. Mutual relationships and trust in God are at the heart of our life together. We seek to build a world that recognizes the unique value of every person and our need of one another.

The MISSION OF L'ARCHE is

To make known the gifts of people with developmental disabilities, revealed through mutually transforming relationships;

To engage in our diverse cultures, working together toward a more human society;

To foster community that is inspired by the core values in our founding story and responds to the changing needs of our members.



A sign of hope in a broken world...

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