

Soundings



Volume 36, Issue 1



June 2025

FIVE HOLES, A FEW RIDGES, AND ONE FRIENDSHIP THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

by Donna Knudson, Farm Volunteer (excerpted from her JV Northwest Benefit Dinner reflection)

Since 2017, I have served at L'Arche Farm and Gardens. The farm staff includes Core Members, who are folks with intellectual disabilities.

I was prepared to be the best volunteer farmer ever, and soon realized by example that it was really all about the relationships. I'd like to share one of the relationships I have built there.

My first work with Debra, a Core Member, was cutting cedar boughs to build Christmas wreaths. I was on a ladder, whopping off limbs, and Debra was on the ground picking them up and... talking. I tried to carry on the conversation until I realized she was just being vocal about the current experience, and that I was accompanying her on the task—and that was enough.

Another day, several of us were working together to sort hundreds of pots in a huge messy pile. Debra was correcting me



Debra and Donna

on my sorting prowess. I was dumbfounded. After all, I have a master's degree, and I had put the round pots together and the square pots together very well, thank you. But Farmer Debra told me to look at the bottom. Guess what! Some have five holes, some have four holes, some pots have ridges, and some don't. I was humbled. I learned again to value Debra as a co-worker. If I need to know the name of a plant, I ask Debra. And Debra is an excellent artist. She crafts many projects at home but also puts together beautiful dahlia bouquets to sell by the roadside.

My volunteer hours shifted a bit, and the farm manager suggested I take Debra out for coffee on one of her days off. I didn't quite understand. Why would we go out for coffee? Wasn't I supposed to be doing farm work with Debra? But now, for the past three years, I look forward to Friday mornings when Debra and I go out for coffee, see our "Friday Friends," and greet our baristas. We check out Wilco for seasonal

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FROM KATIE

by Katie Miyakado, Executive Director



Volunteers! L'Arche Tahoma Hope would not be the same without all the many ways that volunteers have stepped in and made a difference in the lives of our Core Members.

People show up in so many ways here! We have year-long Jesuit Volunteers, our dedicated board members, local farm volunteers, and school and immersion groups who stay for a few intense days. The people who show up to work and to build relationships in our community have a powerful impact. They also tell us that their own lives have changed for the better!

I hope you enjoy this issue of L'Arche Community Connections with highlights of our many incredible volunteers.

Are you interested too? Would you like to step into more connection with us? Reach out using the QR code here or go to larchetahomahope.org/volunteer to sign up today! We'd love to have you join us!



TAHOMA HOPE VOLUNTEERS BY THE NUMBERS

IMMERSION GROUPS

6 schools
59 volunteers
898 farm hours

BOARD MEMBERS

12 members
994 total hours
83 average hours per member



WORK PARTIES

2 times per year
spring & fall
16 volunteers
48 total hours

SCHOOL GROUPS

4 groups coming repeatedly
10-50 kids per visit
100s yearly hours



COMMUNITY FARM VOLUNTEERS

5-10 regular volunteers
100s yearly farm hours

AUCTION COMMITTEE

7 members
182 total hours

FIVE HOLES...

Cont'd from pg. 1

decorations or greet the baby chicks, and always go to the Dollar Tree to shop and say hi to our favorite clerk, Christine.

At the end of our Friday outings, I thank Debra for hanging out with me. When I started, I thought I was called to serve the Core Members at L'Arche, but now I see I was called to be part of this community—way more gratifying.

I am different as a result of my service. Now the marginalized are constantly on my radar and this affects the way I vote, the way I give to charitable contributions, and the way I serve.

In the future, I will continue to serve at the farm and on the Farm Visioning Committee, and—most importantly—have coffee with my friend, Debra.



Come Visit Us this Season!

GREENHOUSE HOURS

Tuesday - Saturday, 10am - 3pm

PRCOTOR MARKET

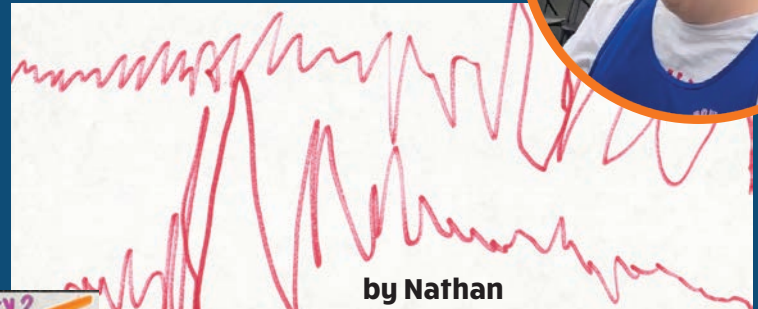
First Saturday of every month
9am - 2pm

larchetahomahope.org/farm

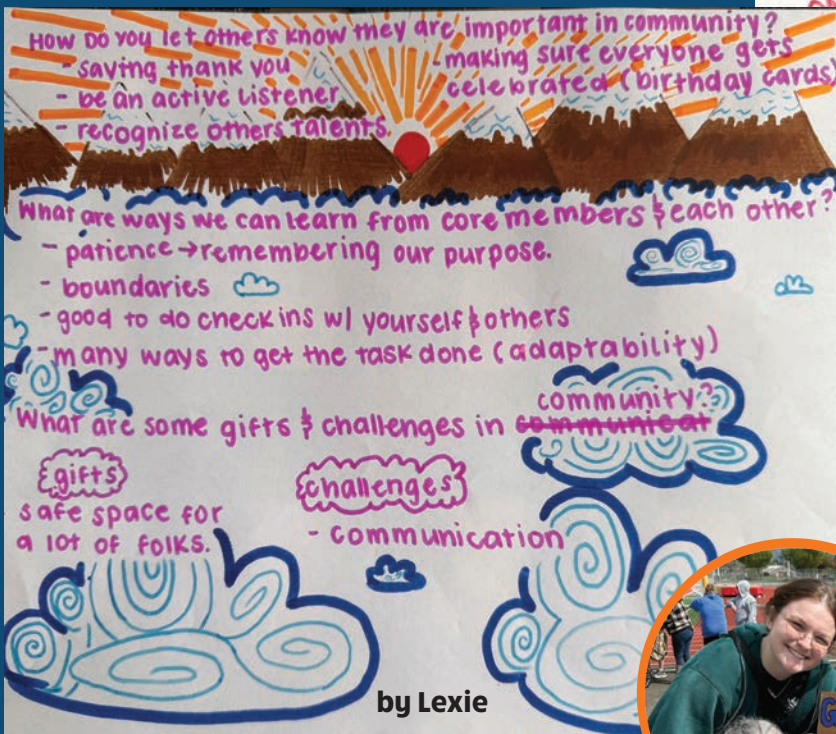


COMMUNITY REFLECTIONS FROM TOWN HALL...

Quarterly, our community holds a Town Hall gathering. At this meeting, we receive community updates and share our thoughts on different aspects of community life. It is a special time to come together around our common vision. Below are some gleanings from our time together.



by Nathan



by Lexie



"We teach each other to slow down and enjoy the moment"

"Asking questions is important."

"Eating dinner together is a gift."

"It's challenging when people leave for distant places."

"Fun is a gift in community"

"Mowing the lawn is a challenge in community!"

"I love how the core members are always checking on you."

"It's a gift to be able to eat what the community grows."

"Pray for people, learn names, give shoulder kisses"

"I'm grateful we can fill our cart with food."

"Living with lots of other people can be both a gift and a challenge."



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Harvest of Hope

Saturday, October 4th, 2025
 11:00am - 3:00pm



We're Hiring!



Find out more at:
larchetahomahope.org/employment



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 Support!



larchetahomahope.org/donate

2026 Auction Save the Date!

March 14, 2026

larchetahomahope.org/auction

