

Innisfree

VILLAGE VOICE
SUMMER 2020

*Thais, Flo, Solveig,
and Maggie
prepare croissants
in the bakery.*

We Love Our Volunteers!

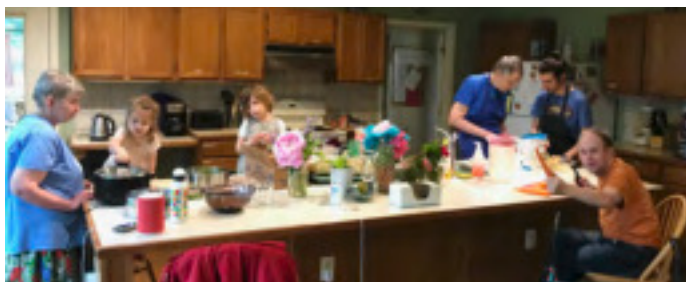
Innisfree's volunteers are our backbone and enrich our lives in many ways. Over the past few months, they have stayed on site at all times in order to protect the health of our coworkers. They have remained positive and creative, and we cannot possibly adequately express our gratitude for them. It seemed the perfect time to let you get to know a few volunteers better and to ask them to reflect on their time at Innisfree.

Flo and Max

Maxime (36 y.o), Florianne (40 y.o) Solveig (4 y.o) and Thais (2 y.o)—we are a French family. We live in Nantes, near the Atlantic Ocean, one of the main cities of France. We live in a house with our 2 cats that we miss. We like hiking, climbing, the forest, the ocean, bike trips, van trips, playing



*Max, Solveig, Thais, and Flo
outside of their home in France*



The Amity family at work in the kitchen



Baskin, discovering, sharing, and new experiences.

Florianne came to Innisfree for 3 months in the summer of 2007. She had many great memories. This experience got stuck in her mind and she really wanted to come back again but for at least a year. She convinced Max and it was the right moment regarding our daughters and our jobs. So let's do it! We made the application to be Innisfree volunteers (that took some weeks...), asked our jobs for one year off, rented our house, sold our van and 1 year later, we arrived at Innisfree, September 12th 2019.

We were quite surprised to receive a "yes" for both of us, a "yes" to receive a family, with two little daughters that don't go to school yet and don't speak any English words. We and Innisfree wondered how to manage to be volunteers and take care also of our kids, and we took time to find a plan for workstations that we can manage. The proposal to live in Amity was probably the best thing to do. We have space, we can help and be with our daughters. The coworkers learned to



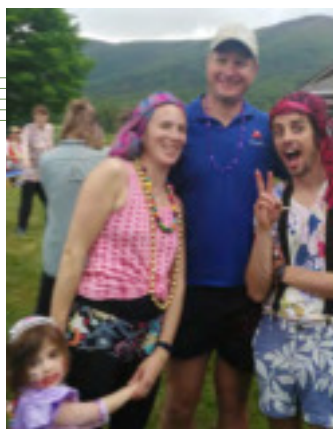
*The girls help Heyward and
Max with a baking project.*

Continues on page 2

Flo and Max, continued from p. 1

appreciate us, and our (sometimes) noisy girls, and even enjoyed playing, passing time with them. The challenge of doing our volunteer job and our parenting activities is here every day, and of course not always easy. Perfect time is when we manage to do both: pool time, playground, snack time outside, outings, going for a walk... for coworkers and us. At this moment it's just perfect!

Our daughters have discovered another language (and we try to improve our American English), and after 6 months they already manage to speak, understand in many situations, just being here, it's amazing! They see us being helpful, working in the woodshop, in the



Solveig, Flo, Louis, and Max after Innisfree's parade in May

veggie/herb garden...being with the co-workers, and all of these situations will stay somewhere in their mind, reminding them that it's normal to live with other people, and have to make an

effort to be understanding also.

The idea to come here was of course to take a break and be useful at the same time, but it's also because for us Innisfree represented the perfect place of sharing life. We were curious about it, and we hope we can find ideas to help also French families that we know who have kids with disabilities and are looking for a project, ideas for them, to have a great life, and here for sure all coworkers have a great life!!!

Louis

My name is Louis van Bouillon and this is my story. I was born on the southernmost tip of the majestic African continent where the Atlantic and Indian ocean meet. A place with stunning coastlines, dramatic immense mountainscapes and the abundance of untamed unsurpassed wildlife, a place called South Africa. We have a multicultural diversity and 11 official languages. We consist of 9 provinces or states. (Not nearly close to 50). The inner beauty of South Africa is breathed



Katie is excited to see Louis upon returning from a visit with her parents.

through the smiles of friendly faces, the infectious joy, the mosaic of cultures and cuisines, and the complex and



Louis runs on his way to score a try during a Centurion Rugby Club match in Pretoria.

dramatic history that has shaped us. And that is why we are known as the rainbow nation.

In 2019 I developed a burning desire to do more. A sense of purpose was awakened in me. I was looking for greater life fulfillment. I was searching to gain a natural sense of accomplishment.

America has always been on my "bucket list" for places to visit and explore. I have seen a bit of Europe and played rugby and travelled throughout the United Kingdom.

Coming to Innisfree was quite a huge challenge to me. Not only was it a 9000 miles journey to a different continent with different cultures, rules, humor, beliefs, I mean we drive on the left side of the road. The word village in Africa is a completely different outlook than in America.

Being a volunteer at Innisfree has enriched my life in so many ways. I have gained a wealth of experiences. It has broadened my horizons by interacting with new people and places. I have seen and learned that volunteers are



Margaret is "enstooled" as a queen mother during the annual Battor festival in Ghana.

Margaret



In 2004 I found myself without a place to live, the reasons for that are not important here. It didn't take me very long to decide to do what any child of the sixties would do, I joined the Peace Corps. After training I was sent to my village and all of a sudden I realized that my life was no longer about myself. Previously I had worked to pay for my car and car insurance, to pay for clothes so I could go to work to pay for my car... Once in my village I realized that my life was no longer about myself, it was about my students. I stayed for 3 years to see my students

finish secondary school and they all finished with record-breaking success. It was such an amazing experience that I decided that the rest of my healthy life would be spent volunteering to live and work with those who might need what I have to offer. I returned from the Peace Corps and spent a year and a half as a volunteer at Innisfree. Then I spent two and a half years in Kenya at a girl's school called Wiser, www.wisergirls.org. After that I went to Ireland for two years and worked as a volunteer house assistant in a L'Arche community similar to



Margaret with teachers from Senye primary school in Kenya



Margaret and friends enjoy a safari to Lake Nakuru in Kenya to see the flamingos.

Innisfree. Immediately upon leaving L'Arche I took a little time for myself and walked the Camino, it took 35 days to make my way, on foot, across northern Spain, and it was one of the most meaningful experiences of my life. When I returned to the US I spent a year as a volunteer at a homeless shelter in Maryland, then I spent 9 months volunteering on the Navajo reservation in New Mexico where I worked with the

women to help them understand nutrition and how to cook farm to table. Upon returning to Virginia I decided to reapply for Innisfree and have been here since 2017. At 73 I do not know what lies ahead, but, with the exception of my 4 children and 7 grandchildren, the last 16 years have been the most amazing of my life and as long as I am able I will remain in service to others.

Margaret and Brooke share the love during a visit to Gallaudet University.



Margaret and her grandchild visit DC with the town coworkers.

just ordinary people with extraordinary hearts. They offer the gift of their time to teach, to listen, to help, to inspire, to build, to grow and to learn. They expect no pay, yet the value of their work knows no limit. Greater happiness was achieved through volunteering. Display of love of life has shown me new meaning.

Innisfree itself has a great natural beauty where everything blossoms in its own way. I feel blessed to be here at Innisfree village and am thankful for what I have gained.

Louis and Mark fish at the Halcyon pond.

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a newsletter of
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Mark and members of the Charlottesville Kiwanis club after a radio interview

Mark William Millick

January 16, 1973 - May 15, 2020

Innisfree mourns the loss of our dear friend and coworker Mark Millick, who passed away May 15, 2020 at the age of 47. Mark moved to Innisfree as a coworker in 2002 and was always quick to share that

he had only lived in town, at Magnolia for many years and later Oxford. He was a huge contributor to the woodshop, weavery, bakery, and kitchen. He

also took his physical fitness very seriously and loved participating in FCAP and Special Olympics. One

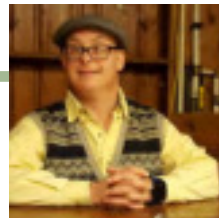


Mark in the weavery



Thumbs up from Mark and Chris

of Mark's biggest passions was music. He played the violin and the drums and was featured in many Innisfree musical



Mark poses behind the bar at the newly purchased Oxford house.

his job doing the sound set-up for the Sunday services at First United Methodist

Church in Charlottesville, where his family had been members since moving to Charlottesville. Mark was the

first president of our Kiwanis Aktion

Club, taking great pride in being a Kiwanian like his father, and setting an ambitious vision for the group. He was extremely independent and self-confident, a natural-born leader. He will be remembered for his happy and caring nature, impeccable sense of style, good humor, and firm belief that he could achieve anything he set his mind to. He is sorely missed by many friends at Innisfree and beyond.



Willie and Mark set sail.