



“128,  
or 29,  
almost  
130”



Meet Viva, a woman with deep faith, love, and kindness, who lives a life of routine and remembering dates like they just happened yesterday. Viva was born in Jacksonville to her mother and father in 1967.

She graduated from Alden Road High School and moved to L'Arche Jacksonville in 1990.

From a young age, Viva had opportunities to socialize and grow thanks to her mother. Viva was involved in developmental dance therapy and thrived in ballet, tap, and tumbling classes. She was chosen to perform with Cyd Charisse (American dancer and actress) when she came to Love Grove Elementary for a visit. Knowing more about Viva's childhood, it makes sense that if you're playing songs she likes in the house, she will be the first one to get up and dance, fearlessly busting a move with the tunes!

When Viva was younger, she had the honor of playing piano with Arthur Fielder (Boston Pop Conductor). Along with being musically socialized, Viva also participated in Girl Scouts. Her mother started the first Girl Scout Troop for girls with disabilities and they would receive badges based on their abilities and gifts, creating an inclusive environment for young girls with different gifts. Her parents, especially her mom, were instrumental advocates working towards Viva's independence.



Today, Viva continues to thrive with her L'Arche family. She continues to make her own choices; becoming a member of the Catholic church, faithfully praying for everyone on her list every day, opening her own bank account at VyStar, and even taking care of her baby dolls Chad Francis, Ava Kayla, and Lulabelle.

Her infectious personality is remembered and adored by everyone she meets. Viva welcomes all and even remembers the date in which they arrived. Viva not only impacts individuals at L'Arche Jacksonville, but she motivates the greater Jacksonville community to do better. She continues to work at Pizza Hut, where she started working over 30 years ago, intricately folding boxes. After her work day is done and you've asked her how many boxes she folded that day, she always responds, "128 or 29, almost 130", showcasing her love for routine in her life and her dedication to her craft and community.



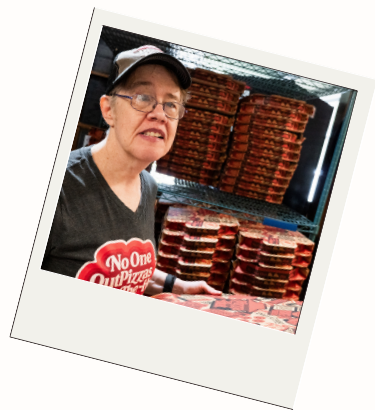
**Traditions, stories and experiences** are shared every day at L'Arche Jacksonville. Stories like the one from Viva's childhood when she mistakenly put her eyeglasses in the fish aquarium, or an experience of an Assistant sharing holiday traditions from their youth or country of origin. These memories that form a personality and a life, are passed on throughout the years, making each listener laugh or remark on the uniqueness of an individual life and character.

Triumphs are **celebrated** here! Triumphs, like opening a personal bank account or celebrating 30 years of commitment to your job at Pizza Hut. They are marked as important, whether they are simple or monumental, and they are remembered.

We couldn't share our stories or celebrate our triumphs without the **We Are Family Fund**. When you support Viva, you are supporting her and her ability to thrive in community as she gets older and reaches life's milestones. You are also supporting each of us at L'Arche Jacksonville and the stories, traditions and triumphs that are to come!

**Help us flourish in the 40th year of L'Arche Jacksonville and contribute now to the We Are Family Fund!**





## About L'Arche Jacksonville

L'Arche Jacksonville, founded as Harbor House in 1985, opened its doors originally as a ministry of the Catholic Diocese of St. Augustine. L'Arche Jacksonville was welcomed into the International Federation of L'Arche communities in 1992. The only L'Arche community in the state of Florida, we share a common identity and mission to the other 160 communities around the world. We are a community of people with and without intellectual disabilities that live and work together in family homes and an art workshop. We share life and our gifts with one another and the world, promoting a more inclusive and loving world.

### Photos

**Cover:** Viva is laughing and enjoying time on the back deck during St. Patricks Day

**Inside:** Photos provided by Viva's family and friends in community

**Back:** Top left: Viva at the Golf Classic, Top Right, Viva at Living Nativity, Bottom Left: Viva with Chad Francis and Ava Kayla, and Bottom Right: Photo shared by Viva's family

**Photo credit:** Viva's family for providing photos and Mallory Koch

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