

BRIDGES-OVER-BARRIERS

TELLING OUR STORIES • • • • • SHARING OUR EXPERIENCE

Hello to all Bridges members, friends and allies!

Sharing a Message of Hope

I am very happy to announce that our Bridges Song of Hope is now published as sheet music! It is dedicated to all our Bridges friends and allies.

Getting this far has been a collaborative achievement and a kind of miracle. I composed the words in November 2010, just as we were completing the editing of our Bridges DVD and book, *In Our Own Words*. We were in time to include the song in the book, on page 106. During 2011, we talked about setting it to music. I wanted to have it played by piano and flute. That happened in early 2012, thanks to a new Bridges friend who teaches music and helps many people in Simcoe, Ontario. Leah read the lyrics and immediately composed the music which she recorded on the piano with Tyler playing the flute. At most 2012 gatherings we listened to the music and tried to sing along together. Judy Loman Umbrico and Linda Umbrico, Joey's mother and sister, helped us to play and sing together, and Judy with her colleague Mitchell edited the final version of the musical score for publication. My friend Marie, a cartographer and graphic designer, used one of my paintings to create a cover design. The painting is my vision of a Bridges Centre, a golden dome-shaped house on a bridge in the green forest with all of us communicators shown relaxed and happy. As with all my art, it is a collaboration with my art mentor, Heidi. I type about the images, colours and shapes that I want, and Heidi helps me to get the paint on the canvas.

Now we are sending you copies of the sheet music for you to feel inspired and to share with anyone who could be interested. I have another idea. Everyone connected with friends who are singers and musicians could play and sing the song wherever you are. If you could record the playing and singing and send this to us, we could put all the recordings artistically together in a DVD to inspire even more people. We need so much to speak up for our rights and abilities to express our thoughts. Being helped to do this makes life better for everyone!

We are beginning our tenth year as a community of communicators. Up to 15 of us meet monthly in Guelph, with our families and friends, to share ideas and friendship, and we have some distant members as well. In 2013, these are dates of our monthly meetings (all Saturdays): March 16; April 13; May 11; June 8; July 6; August 10; September 7; October 5; November 2; November 30

As well as meeting in our gatherings, we also try to keep in touch by email and Internet. Look up my Andrew's Bridges blog at: <http://andrewsbridges.blogspot.ca>

Link to our last full newsletter: <http://www.ont-autism.uoguelph.ca/BoB-12-2012.pdf>

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