



NOTES FROM THE CENTER

NATURE NOTES

I have been overwhelmed by the reports of the oil spewing into the Gulf of Mexico. As I sit here in the temperate rain forest of eastern Clackamas County it is difficult to imagine the extent of the damage and the eventual costs to all of God's creatures and the ecosystems that will be impacted. But I do believe that there are things that we can do.

During 2009 I attended an event sponsored by The Natural Step, an organization that began in Scandinavia that promotes a scientific framework to sustainable business practices. One of the elements of this framework is to purchase products made from renewable resources or to not use resources faster than the earth can replenish them. This means of course that we must curtail our use of fossil fuels dramatically if we are to allow the earth to replenish them and for us to live in harmony with the earth and its natural system.

Some businesses have set the goal for zero waste production! This is a challenging goal for any one business or person to accomplish. It will take many people to desire such a goal and then the cooperation of vendors and manufactures to provide supplies that are not waste producing but are either recyclable or compostable. At the Collins Retreat Center we have been recognized for our recycling efforts through the Clackamas County office of Sustainability, we use organic gardening methods, we compost kitchen waste, we have decreased our use of fossil fuels and we recycle whatever packaging materials that we can as well as paper, cans, plastics and glass. We will continue to look for ways to do this more effectively and to encourage our guests to help us with this work.

What we do here at Collins and in the Pacific Northwest seems like very little in the face of such an environmental, governmental and business catastrophe as the oil spewing into the Gulf of Mexico, I know that our actions will shape tomorrow and the future that we leave for the generations to come. I am also reminded of the words of Walt Disney -- "Today we are shapers of the world of tomorrow." How will you shape the world of tomorrow? Peace,

Todd Bartlett
 Director, Alton L. Collins Retreat Center
 Creating Sacred Space for Mind, Body and Soul

JUNE 2010



Go to our home page and click on the video link to see one of our guests!

DONATE NOW

To donate a Peace Pole plaque (\$25) or any portion of the cost for the gravel for the Peace Path (\$230) or for a new oven (\$3000) go to: www.gocamping.org/donate

GARDEN NOTES

With all of the rain that we received in May and early June we were still able to plant vegetable starts and seed some others in our raised beds. We have planted summer squash, tomatoes, turnips, rutabagas, parsnips and greens in anticipation of a harvest that will help feed our guests. Winter squash and peppers will go in later. The orchard trees and blueberries have put on fruit — bringing the anticipation of even more excitement to our taste buds.

The herb garden is taking shape (see the photo with the Peace Path story on page two) and soon we will be able to employ fresh herbs in our cooking. Not to mention being transported by their aromas as we walk the Peace Path.

RETREAT IN THE TAIZÉ TRADITION

This event is scheduled for Aug 5- 8, 2010. Register now by clicking on the following link www.collinsretreatcenter.org then click on the "events" tab at the top and follow the links for registering for this wonderful retreat.

A RECIPE FROM OUR KITCHEN

Triple Chocolate Peanut Butter Cookies (makes 30 1 oz cookies)

Ingredients:

1 C Butter (unsalted)

1 C brown sugar

1 C sugar

Pre-heat oven to 325 degrees. Using a mixer with the paddle, add ingredients and beat until creamy.

2 ea Eggs

1 tsp Vanilla (pure extract)

Slowly add the eggs and vanilla and beat well.

2 C Peanut butter (creamy)

1 C Chocolate chips (semi-sweet)

Add ingredients and mix until well blended.

3/4 C Baking Cocoa Powder

2 3/4 C Flour (unbleached)

1 tsp Baking Soda

1/2 tsp Salt

Add dry ingredients and mix into dough, do not over mix. Using a 1 oz scoop, place dough balls on a parchment covered sheet pan. Lightly flatten cookies and place in over for 12 minutes. Remove and allow to cool completely.

Glaze

1 1/2 C Chocolate Chips (semi-sweet)

1/2 C Heavy Cream

1 Tbsp Butter (unsalted)

Place ingredients in a double boiler (if you don't have one, use a bowl over a medium size sauce pan with water in it). Allow ingredients to melt together slowly, mixing every few moments. When smooth, dip cookies into chocolate covering 1/2 half of the cookie.

1/8 C powdered sugar

Let cookies cool and serve with some powdered sugar sprinkled on top.

Guillermo Reyes *Chef / Food Service Manager*

PEACE PATH: A WORK IN PROGRESS

The Peace Path at Alton L. Collins Retreat Center is a work in progress. When this labyrinth/herb garden is completed there will be a Peace Pole at the center and space for 12 "May Peace Prevail on Earth" plaques each in a different language. We currently have 9 of the 12 -- in English, Hawaiian, Cree, Irish, Japanese, German, Nez Perce, Portuguese and one to be named later. If you'd like to see a language added, send \$25 to the center designated for the Peace Pole. We will add benches for seating at the center of the Peace Path and around the outer edge adding to the number of places for reflection and meditation at the Collins Retreat Center. The pictures below are from March, April and June, come walk anytime the spirit moves you. If you would like to donate to this or any other project go to: www.gocamping.org/donate

