



NOTES FROM THE CENTER

NATURE NOTES

Now that Fall has officially arrived the gardens are showing off their autumnal riches: apples, some squash, the tomatoes slowing down, the maple and alder leaves are falling as are the temperatures. While fall is much on my mind, I would like to recall something that happened this summer.

On June 4th I returned to the center after a powerful storm blew through the area. There were trees across the highways as well as debris strewn across yards. I went for a walk to see if any damage had occurred here at the center (very little). As I neared the lodge I could hear a crow cawing incessantly, yet with a quality of persistence that was somewhat unusual. Slowly the noise got louder and I realized that there was an army of crows that had joined the first one.

On the upper level of the parking lot near the trail head for the Upper Loop Trail I could see in the shadows of the gray evening sky the outline of a very large owl. The crows were flying around the owl, at a safe distance, making "noise."

The owl remained on the branch of the Douglas Fir, seemingly oblivious to the "noise." As I moved closer to get a better look, the owl opened its wings, shoved off from the branch and flew away, with the crows in pursuit. The owl landed in a tree some 50 yards away with the crows continuing to fly around it and make their "noise."

As I have reflected on this encounter some questions have come to my mind: What do we do when we sense danger? To whom do we turn for help? Do we make "noise?" Will others hear us and join us in standing up against danger? What do we fear the most in this life? Does that which we fear need to be named as "evil" as is so often the case in our world? Is it possible that it is not to be feared but that it is an opportunity for us to learn something about ourselves and our world? May you find sacred places to ponder such questions for the well-being of your soul and the world. Peace,

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

OCTOBER 2009



The beautiful fall colors of a Vine Maple against the blue October sky.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

There is always something you can do to help out the ministry and mission of the Alton L. Collins Retreat Center. If you see something on this list that you would like to help with call, email or stop by and let us know how it is that God is calling you to assist in our ministry of hospitality.

- Trail upkeep
- Plant identification guides
- Making signs for our trails
- Gardening/landscaping
- Program development
- Facility repair
- Forest Management
- Weekend or weekday host
- Join the Site Ministry Team
- Marketing

If you would like your name removed from our list email us at: director@relianceconnects.com.

Questions or comments? E-mail us at alrcr@gocamping.org or call us at: 503.637.6411

FROM THE KITCHEN

Our kitchen, under the supervision of Chef Guillermo Reyes is proud to provide healthy, wholesome gourmet food. Our meals consistently receive great reviews from our guests. Each issue of our newsletter will include a recipe for your use and enjoyment. This month we offer to you—**Creamy Basil & Roasted Tomato Soup**—Serves 12

1 ea Parsnip (fine dice)
1 ea Carrot (fine dice)
4 ribs Celery (fine dice)
2 ea Onions (fine dice)
1 tsp Basil, Dry
1 tsp Herbs de Provence, Dry
As Needed: Salt / Pepper/ Balsamic Vinegar / Olive Oil
¼ c White Wine (or water/stock)
24 Tomatoes (quartered, lightly coated with Salt / Pepper/ Balsamic Vinegar / Olive Oil, roasted at 450 degrees for 15-30 minutes)
¼ c Tomato Paste
2 c Heavy Cream
As Needed: ¼ c Stock - chicken, vegetable, or water
¼ c Cheddar Cheese (shredded)
¼ c Tomato, Fresh (fine dice)
¼ c Basil, Fresh (cut in ribbons)



Sauté parsnips, carrots, celery, onion, garlic (with salt, pepper, olive oil, balsamic vinegar) until soft. Add dry basil & herbs de Provence, mix well. Add white wine & reduce. Stir in tomato paste, low heat for several minutes. Add roasted tomato and cream, mix well. (add vegetable stock or water if needed), reduce heat, lightly puree with hand blender. After soup is heated thoroughly, serve with cheddar cheese, basil and diced tomato on top.

Guillermo Reyes

Chef / Food Service Manager

Please remember “Time to Grow” in your prayers.

WHAT’S IN THE GARDEN?



Apples from the Leewood Garden that would become fresh-pressed cider.

The gardens are winding down for the season. The irrigation pipes have come up, inviting the fall rains to soak the grounds. We have a pile of freshly sifted compost tucked away under a tarp for next planting season. The spaghetti squash have come in, already being enjoyed by guests, and other winter squash will follow shortly. We harvested nearly 250 pounds of apples in the last few weeks, with plans of having them pressed into fresh cider for some lucky breakfast guests.

With harvests slowing we will soon take time to process and preserve the bounty of fruits and berries that we stashed in the freezer during the heat of summer. Fresh jams, preserves, and maybe even green tomato chutney will soon find their way to our gift shop.

Gretchen Doering—Food and Faith Program Coordinator.

GREAT HYMNS OF THE FAITH

A new program for us at the Alton L. Collins Retreat Center in 2009 was a fantastic success. The first event we hosted 12 people, the second event we hosted 36 and the third event we hosted 68! What an exciting day of singing and learning about great hymns of the faith. The dates for 2010 have been set, they are: May 27, August 26 and October 21.

THANK YOU

One of the things that we are clear about is that our staff cannot do this ministry of hospitality without the assistance of some great volunteers. This month we would like to thank: Gene Balcomb (work on some plumbing), Tom Cook (removal of limbs hanging over the sleeping wing and lodge), Roy Henderson (electrical work), Stu McKenzie (cutting of fallen timber and donation of a tarp for the wood supply) and Scott Schmidt (felling some hazardous trees).

Our Mission:

we are committed to creating quality environments of Christian Hospitality and Learning. (Oregon-Idaho Camp and Retreat Ministry)

In addition to this at the Alton L. Collins Retreat Center we are engaged in: creating sacred space for mind, body and soul.

Wish List:

5Qt. Kitchen Aid Commercial Mixer—\$400
PTO chipper/shredder one day rental \$150
Two-way radios \$30