



## NOTES FROM THE CENTER

### NATURE NOTES

My first walk alongside Deep Creek after becoming the director at the Alton L. Collins Retreat Center was following the flood of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2009. This walk allowed me to see the devastation caused by the combination of rain and warm temperatures that melted the two plus feet of snow we had received in December of 2008. Where once we had trails there was air, where once the creek flowed now there was just a pile of rocks, where trees had stood for decades if not over a century, now there were root balls with the fallen trees lying across the creek catching all sorts of debris, and where there once had been two bridges allowing access to Camp Leewood, there were only remnants of what had once been. And yet the resiliency of plant and animal spoke of life and hope for the future.

Throughout the year as my walks took me beside the creek I looked for signs of fish. There were not any through the first half of the year, maybe because the flow of the creek kept the silt in the water and made the water muddy. At some point late in the summer I saw a single fish (trout?). There was life but not much it seemed.

Imagine my excitement at the end of October when two guests returned from a walk and said that there were salmon jumping in the creek! I did not waste much time finding a reason to take a walk along the creek. What I had only seen on video I was now seeing with my own eyes: salmon making their way to their ancestral home that they might spawn a new generation that will return in a few years to this place.

There is much that I learned from these "elders" of the creek and I hope to learn more in the years to come, but the thought that I would like to leave with you is that if we look for joy at Christmas time, I know that Christmas came early for me this year, for the joy that I felt reached to the depths of my being and has continued to abide with me. May you find joy the whole year through.

I hope that you have the opportunity to come to the Collins Retreat Center in 2010 and experience the joy that comes with being in this place.

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

### DECEMBER 2010



Ice on Deep Creek from the cold-snap of December 2009.

### PROGRAMS

#### FOR 2010

The Alton L. Collins Retreat Center will be sponsoring the following programs in 2010:

From Our Table to Yours:  
Kitchen Ministry Training  
Feb 8-10

Volunteer in Mission 6/27-7/3

Time to Sow – lectionary reading week 9/14-17

Great Hymns of the Faith I, II, and III

Retreat in Taize Tradition 8/5-8

Boston University Lecture featuring Dr. Dana Robert 9/17-19

Take a look at our website to keep up to date with new program offerings. Our website is:

[www.collinsretreatcenter.org](http://www.collinsretreatcenter.org)

### SALMON VIDEO

To see video of the Coho salmon in their annual migration in Deep Creek please [click here](#).

## A RECIPE FROM OUR KITCHEN

Apricot Chicken Serves 6

by Guillermo Reyes, Chef at Alton L. Collins Retreat Center, Eagle Creek, Oregon

Ingredients:

6 pc Chicken breast (skin / bone on)	1 c Apricots (dry) minced
2 T Olive oil	¼ c Golden Raisins
2 tsp Balsamic vinegar	1 c Chicken stock
½ tsp Kosher salt	2 ea Lemon zest
½ tsp Black pepper (course ground)	2 T Lemon juice
2 T Herbs de Provence (dry)	2 c White wine
¼ c Stone ground mustard	2 T Unsalted butter
1 c Brown sugar	1T Flat leaf parsley (minced)
1/8 c Flat leaf parsley (minced)	

Place chicken breast in a bowl, add oil, balsamic, salt & pepper, and herbs de provence and mix well. Add mustard, brown sugar, parsley, apricots, & raisins to the chicken and mix well. Add chicken stock, lemon zest & juice to the chicken and mix well. Cover and let sit in refrigerator over night.

Pre-heat your convection oven at 400 degrees.

Take out chicken and place on a parchment covered sheet pan. Cover chicken with the rest of the mixed ingredients left in the bowl. Cover chicken with the white wine and drop the butter in small amounts over the chicken.

Roast chicken for 15 minutes. Place chicken and pan juices on a platter, sprinkle with remaining parsley and serve.

## PEACE PATH COMING TO THE COLLINS RETREAT CENTER

In 2010 we will be working on placing a Peace Pole near the lodge at the Collins Retreat Center. This pole will be at the center of a small labyrinth/herb garden combination. The pole will be of Western Red Cedar selected from our forest. We believe that there will be spaces on this pole for at least 12 plaques bearing the phrase "May Peace Prevail on Earth" in a variety of languages. If you would like to donate a plaque, the cost is \$25 per plaque. You may also request the language that you would like to see on your peace pole plaque.

Around the pole will be a walking path separated by herb garden beds. The path will be lined with bricks that we are "harvesting" from the chimney of the lodge at Camp Leewood. Camp Leewood was the original use of this property after the Methodist churches of the Portland metro area purchased the land in the 1940's. The lodge at Camp Leewood burned in 1986. All debris was removed leaving the chimney to stand watch for nearly 25 years. This enduring presence will be brought to the peace path by the bricks. If you would like to help with any facet of this project please contact the director, Todd Bartlett – email [director@relianceconnects.com](mailto:director@relianceconnects.com) or phone 503.637.6411. If you would like to donate to this project [click here](#).

## GARDEN BEDS ARE MADE UP FOR THE WINTER

At this time of the year we have put our garden beds to "sleep" for the winter. Our beds have been made by spreading a fine layer of wood ash over them, then a covering of our own rich compost, a layer of cardboard (a weed barrier) and finally topped with horse manure. We are also choosing seeds for next year and preparing for another year of wonderful gardens and great food at the center.

The other activity that is going on right now is the "feeding" of the bees. To help the bees make it through the winter our beekeeper, Glen Andresen, feeds them sugar water. It is quite an interesting experience to be "feeding" the bees. (picture taken during honey harvest in August)



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