



MENUCHA

Sacred Space - Purposeful Work

The Menucha Meander



*Photo courtesy of
Caton Photography*

GEORGE ERDENBERGER HONORED AS MENUCHA'S VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

The Gresham Area Chamber of Commerce honored thirty-six community volunteers at its annual Golden Note awards luncheon on Tuesday, January 30th. Our own George Erdenberger was one of those celebrated.

George began working with the Menucha staff in 2002 to develop a landscape assessment and management plan. He brings a passion for large estates that he developed growing up and exploring New York's Hudson River Valley's numerous large well-known country estates. A degree in Landscape Architecture from the

University of Florida's College of Architecture and Fine Arts began a career of over 40 years in land use and urban planning for architecture/engineering firms and city/county planning agencies (e.g. Multnomah County) and large scale multiple use site planning and detailed landscape design.

George's parallel career in building construction began during the Vietnam era as a builder in the US Navy Construction Battalions (Seabees). He continued as a Construction Project Manager with large development companies building office and industrial parks, shopping centers and mixed residential communities which included golf courses, playgrounds, lakes, model homes and clubhouses.

For the past 25 years George has been involved in private practice. A sample of the variety of projects include garden designs and construction, land use permit preparation, sustainable and energy efficiency buildings, plans for grounds maintenance and site management, and planning and landscape design for a large institution with facilities in several states. In addition, George is a developer and designer of Portland in-fill housing in association with a long term contractor-developer friend. Projects range from single family cluster housing, small/narrow lot house designs and construction, live/work townhouse units and residential over commercial development.

Volunteer work on estate restoration has involved coordination of volunteer work efforts, site design, and construction/renovation of buildings and site features (waterfalls, ponds, utilities, historic building restoration, etc.) Examples of local public involvement include: several years as co-chairman of the Columbia River Gorge Scenic Area Bi-State Economic Development Advisory Board, an advisory board member for a private school, participant in public testimony on land use and park master planning, Key Contact reviewer during development of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area management plan, and participant in management plan and future envisioning for the C.R.G.N.S.A.

George's wife of 36 years, Georgia, is principal/owner of the Portland architectural interiors firm of Czopek and Erdenberger. They live in the Gorge in Bridal Veil with their alpacas and golden retrievers. Their daughter Kerry is also an interior designer and a producer/director/actress in her theater company, Fuse Theater Ensemble.

Thank you, George—and congratulations on this well-deserved honor!

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE Sunday, April 12 6:30 am



We would love to have you join us for our annual Easter Sunrise Service at Menucha on April 12th. This community service, sponsored by Menucha and the Presbyterian Churches of East Multnomah County, will begin at 6:30 am. Weather permitting, we will gather at the pool area; if the weather is poor, we will meet in Wright Hall.

Coffee, tea, hot cocoa and pastries will be served following the service. All are welcome. We invite you to gather with us as we celebrate Christ's resurrection.

"WHAT MENUCHA MEANS TO ME"

Menucha touches lives every day...
perhaps we have touched yours!

What does Menucha mean to you?
Has being part of what happens here transformed your life in some way? If so, we may like to tell your story in one of our newsletters or upcoming publications.

You can email us at office@menucha.org,
or drop us a note or letter at
PO Box 8, Corbett, Oregon 97019-0008.

Whether you came as a first-time guest or have been coming for a number of years, we would enjoy hearing from you!





IT'S NOT ALL BAD - Spencer Parks, Executive Director

I have never considered myself a Pollyanna sort of person. Neither have I been the pessimist. For me the glass is neither half empty nor half full. It is just a half a glass of water. But as our nation sinks deeper and deeper into this economic morass, I am more and more convinced that it is important to hear about the positive things that are occurring. This is not meant to lessen or denigrate the plight of those who have lost their jobs, homes or means to support themselves. I am aware that for many people, there is very little for which to be thankful or even for which to be positive. However, with so much doom and gloom in the air, I think it is time for us to focus on something else, lest we allow the economic crisis to spread to a crisis of the spirit and the heart as well.



My father, a child of the great depression, told many stories to us as we grew up. Some were stories of poverty, but most were stories of family and community and how the struggles of the time drew them closer together. I have found this to be true for me and my extended family here at Menucha. With financial resources dwindling, we have had to refocus some dreams, but, in so doing, some unexpected things have come sharply into focus. I appreciate those around me more now than ever. I especially appreciate the staff that works with me at Menucha for their uplifting spirit, their unflinching generosity of time, and their willingness to reach out to all those who come through our gates. It is true that we will work with less, but it is also true that, because of that, we will give more. Everyone seems to have adopted the positive attitude of: "We're all in this together so we might as well weather it well." What is more heartening is that I have felt this sense of camaraderie spread to the guests we serve as well.

Another positive outcome is that we have become more creative. We have had to rethink old ways of doing things and address old habits that were unproductive. It has been a delightful (and I really do mean delightful) challenge to reassess what we do and how we do it. Ultimately, when times are less challenging, we will be even more fit to carry out our mission and able to do even more with the resources at our disposal. I am aware that this process can be painful at times, but, as the old saying goes: That which doesn't kill you makes you stronger. I am sure that we will emerge much stronger than before.

And last, but certainly not the end of my list, we have been presented new opportunities to address and expand our mission. When it seems that the world is spinning out of control and all is chaotic; when times are depressing and hope is bleak; when you are truly at your wits end—that is when what we do at Menucha makes the most difference.



This sacred space is a respite of peace and tranquility, a port of calm where you can come and focus on the truly important things in life. Menucha is a place where you can regroup and re-gather. It is a place where you can come and discover, or rediscover, the many uplifting and fulfilling experiences available to you. Menucha is a place where you can come and be a part of the positive change we all so desperately need.

Come visit us. There are a lot of good things going on here!

ONE WAY YOU CAN SUPPORT MENUCHA: THE FRIENDS OF MENUCHA FUND

Recognizing the importance that stable funding represents, Don and Rosemary Pullin created a designated fund for the Friends of Menucha Foundation through the Oregon Community Foundation: The Friends of Menucha Fund.

The Friends of Menucha Foundation is dedicated to the financial support of Menucha, and this fund will

continue to provide support far into the future. The Friends of Menucha Foundation will receive regular distributions from this fund, and anyone can add to it at any time. If you are interested in giving to the Friends of Menucha Fund at the Oregon Community Foundation, please contact Arlene Siegel Cogen at 503-227-6846. Contributions can also be sent directly to:

The Oregon Community Foundation
Friends of Menucha Fund
1221 SW Yamhill Street, #100
Portland, Oregon 97205-2108



MENUCHA HOSTS THE PCCCA MAINTENANCE CONNECTION



The Maintenance Connection Conference of the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association (PCCCA) is the annual gathering of maintenance-minded people from camp and conference centers across the US and Canada. The conference, held at Menucha February 2-5, was a success, even though the registration was a bit lower than in previous years due to the economy and distance. Several of the men brought their wives this year.

The theme of the conference centered around the historic significance of camp and conference center sites and their preservation. George Erdenberger took us on a tour of the Franciscan Sisters estate in nearby Bridal Veil, a restored villa surrounded by the beauty of forests and gardens, and we visited our neighboring conference center, Crestview Manor. In addition, there were presentations about invasive species and steps to control them, and a tour of the Menucha grounds with Warren Aney.

The weather cooperated wonderfully. On Wednesday we toured the Columbia River Gorge and Mt. Hood; it seemed to be the highlight for many of the guests. On Wednesday evening we had the privilege of hearing stories and history of the Native American Indians in the Northwest from one of the few Indian Medicine men left in the Northwest, Ken Smith. Everyone was spellbound by his presentation. Thanks, Ken.

Much time was left for everyone to network informally about their sites and some of the issues that they all deal with. It was a time to share "war stories," as well as a time to get to know each other on a personal level. It was good to have Bob Miller with us again this year.

Thank you to all who attended, and a special thanks to the staff at Menucha for all the little details that they took care of, from registration to name tags. Thanks to our kitchen for all the wonderful food, especially the jam and bread; everyone loved it. Thanks to Spencer and Scott for the encouraging devotions which they led.

We are looking forward to the next Maintenance Connection which will be hosted by Paul Verdisi at Holmes Presbyterian Camp and Conference Center in Holmes, New York February 1-5, 2010. — Ernie Yoder



UPCOMING MENUCHA PROGRAMS

WHEN THE POCKETBOOK IS LEAN

by Scott Crane

Three quotes caught my eye recently when reading an article from the website www.findthedivine.com archives. The article, entitled "Why Attend a Retreat Now?" quotes Helene Van Manen: "The media is blasting us daily with the collective fear around the failing economy. Pressures abound for many people and the act of going on a retreat can provide one with the restored hope that will allow you to cope with this season of transition and uncertainty that we live in" (my emphasis). In the same article Chris Murphy reminds us, "Retreat Centers offer a respite for all to come away for a time, quiet their restless minds, and let the soul find its voice." Suzanne Buckley also echoes those words, "...retreat centers continue to provide a place for those who seek solace, deep connection and refreshment for their souls."



Menucha takes very seriously the role we play in the development of the spiritual lives of our guests. It is true we aren't overly pushy about claiming why we do what we do. It's also true that we sometimes have a lot of fun being "serious" about why we do what we do. Silly games and group challenges during Community Building at the beginning of a retreat is one example. Providing space for guests to do their own reflection is another. We also have materials available to guide spiritual reflection as well as some course offerings for creative expression. How we see ourselves living out our mission is more of an "enfleshing" of a set of values based in the Christian world view that motivates us to reach out to "welcome the stranger" and "feed my sheep." In response to God, how we live our own lives of faith propels us to consistently offer the spiritual gift of hospitality to the many different kinds of groups that come to Menucha albeit for enrichment, learning, spiritual guidance, rest or renewal. How we live that out unfolds with every meal we put on the table and every program we offer to the community. Especially when times are rough for everyone. Find a program, join us, and experience renewal yourself!



FUND RAISING SCHOOL RETURNS TO MENUCHA

We will again be offering the four courses needed for a Certificate in Fund Raising Management from Indiana University School of Philanthropy. The first course this year, Principles and Techniques of Fundraising, is taking place March 16-20, 2009. We currently also have scheduled three additional classes: Introduction to Planned Giving, Interpersonal Communication for Fundraising, and Developing Major Gifts. Stay tuned to our website (www.menucha.org) for dates and registration information.

Plan your continuing education opportunities now and join us for these invaluable classes! Questions? Call our office at 503-695-2243 and talk with Scott. We look forward to serving you.



UPCOMING MENUCHA PROGRAMS

EDUCATOR CERTIFICATION COURSES CONTINUE

Just as important for groups and individuals to retreat for a time of reflection, so too is it important for professionals to focus on specific skills to broaden their ministries and enhance their understanding of their role. In April, we will be hosting the Religious Education Theory and Practice course for educators. In addition, we are planning to offer Biblical Interpretation in June (this course is also open to Commissioned Lay Pastors). We look forward to contributing to professional learning, professional ministry, and thus touching many more lives vicariously in the name of Christ. For more information, contact our office and speak to our program director Scott Crane.



DO YOU WANT TO BE AN ARTIST?

As you read this, you may be wondering what is going on RIGHT NOW at Menucha? There are journalists and writers at a workshop with two local authors practicing their craft and reflecting on nature's wonder as part of the www.way-points.org programs that we are hosting at Menucha. If you would like to experience a Way-Points program, we encourage you to try your artistic wings.



Gayle Weisfield, a local Gorge artist, will be teaching a class on watercolor techniques in May, just in time for the May flowers after April's showers! She is well able to coach you, whether you are a beginner for the first time, an intermediate, or an experienced artist. Register at www.menucha.org and you can paint, too! We are thankful to be a part of the Way-Points ministry opportunities. For more on Way-Points, stay tuned!

WHAT IS WAY-POINTS.ORG?

Way-Points is a nonprofit organization comprised of 13 different Presbyterian Church Retreat and Conference Centers around the United States. In a collaborative effort to bring together quality programming with a taste of travel and spiritual pilgrimage, Way-Points was launched in the summer of 2008 at General Assembly after a year of preparation.



We have been interested in reaching out to the adult campers of our denomination who have interests and abilities to travel and learn, retreat and reflect, and engage in artistic endeavors with a view to expressive spirituality.

Menucha was one of the organizing retreat centers and the impetuous behind formation of Way-Points. We are proud to be able to reach out and serve adults wishing for enriching experiences that grow the spirit and bring meaning to life.

Don't just get away. Add some travel to life's journey!

Visit www.way-points.org. All Menucha Way-Point programs can also be found on our website, www.menucha.org.



SOMETHING NEW AT MENUCHA IN 2009

Erich Merrill, Friends of Menucha Foundation President

Part of what is wonderful about Menucha is the contradiction between its reliable sameness, and the discovery of something new with every visit. Sometimes the new discovery is on the grounds; just as often it is in the visitor.

I recently had the opportunity to read some notes that the staff had received from Menucha guests. The words tell how this amazing place and its welcoming faces serve as a catalyst to bring about something new, memorable, or just plain fun. Here are samples:

"Thank you and your remarkable staff for the generous and gracious hosting of [our group]. It was perfect. You cannot know how important and significant it was for me to be at Menucha for this."

"Thanks so much for your gifts of food that fill my spirit."

"A big THANK YOU for being so friendly and accommodating . . . The children and parents were impressed with your kindness, the fabulous food, and the magical beauty of Wright Hall and the grounds. I'm sure fairies dance in the gardens. Many memories were painted there, forever to be cherished."

"You people rock!" "This is my second home." "We had an awesome time."

"Thanks so much for our Menucha experience and allowing us to create such amazing memories."

"What a joy to be in your space. . . Thank you for your part in providing 'provisions for the journey.'"

The writers of these notes were young and old, spanned the strata of society, and participated in programs with widely varying themes and purposes. Yet each of them experienced part of the transforming, centering, affirming experience that happens so often at Menucha – the something new that moves us forward on the path of life.

I hope you will have an opportunity to visit Menucha in 2009. What will you find that's new?

THE COOKTOP . . . A FAVORITE RECIPE FROM THE MENUCHA KITCHEN

WHITE CHOCOLATE AND CRAISIN SCONES Makes 16

3 cups flour	1 egg
¾ teaspoon baking soda	¾ cup buttermilk
1 tablespoon baking powder	¾ teaspoon vanilla
½ cup sugar	¾ cup raisins
1 cup butter, cold	1 cup white chocolate chips



Combine flour, soda, baking powder and sugar in a mixing bowl; blend together. Cube cold butter and blend into the mixture until it becomes small crumbs. Mix together the egg, buttermilk and vanilla; add to the butter/flour mixture. Mix just until blended. Add the raisins and white chocolate chips. Mix just until well blended. **DON'T OVERMIX!**

Divide dough in half. Form into two 9-inch circles. Cut each circle into 8 pie-shaped wedges, and place on parchment-covered baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 12-15 minutes, or until light brown.

SAVE THE DATE!
Saturday, July 18, 2009

**2nd Annual
MENUCHA
INTERNATIONAL
CROQUET TOURNAMENT
and LAWN PARTY**
on the Menucha grounds



Fun for the entire family!



THE WINTER OF 2008!



Wind gusts of nearly 90 miles per hour, with sustained easterly winds of 70+ mph for three days...ten foot snowdrifts in front of Wright Hall...many branches down along the entrance road and around the entire property... thirty trees blown down or uprooted. These are some of the things we will remember from the storms in December and January.

Many have described this as the worst winter since 1996, but we have much to be thankful for. Fortunately, there was no freezing rain or ice associated with these storms. Our buildings, and the new roofs on Ballard and Boyd, remained intact with no damage. We had no frozen water pipes, and our power remained on except for about 14 hours. Ernie did a fantastic job (with little sleep some nights) making sure the buildings were warm and roads clear.



We only had to cancel one group, and are in the process of working with them to reschedule. We had no staff slips, trips or falls as we navigated around the property. Ernie and Lynn, along with several of our faithful volunteers, have been busy hauling away the many tree branches.

Once the winds died down, we even had a couple of days that resembled a "Courier and Ives" print. The drive down the entrance road was absolutely beautiful as the snow lay softly on each tree branch.

Every season at Menucha is beautiful, and we are especially looking forward to spring this year! The snowdrops are in bloom, and the heather is just beginning to show its color. Daffodils are poking their green leaves through the cold ground, and the robins have returned. We invite you to stop by and see for yourself!



No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn. Hal Borland



Menucha Retreat & Conference Center
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CONTACT INFORMATION



You may join our mailing list or update the information we have for you by returning this form to us, or by contacting us:

PHONE 503-695-2243
FAX 503-695-2223
EMAIL office@menucha.org
MAIL PO Box 8
 Corbett, OR 97019

Name _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Email address _____

I would like to receive Menucha communications via:
 Email Regular mail

PLANNED GIVING: SECURING MENUCHA'S FUTURE

Remembering Menucha in your estate planning can have positive consequences for both Menucha and you. By setting up a Charitable Trust, you provide Menucha with a source of income in the future while guaranteeing yourself and/or your loved ones a steady income stream now. You may even avoid costly capital gain taxes. It's a wonderful way to support the mission of Menucha for years to come. We have excellent representatives who can speak with you and your financial planner to answer any questions you might have about planned giving or estate planning. Please call our office at 503-695-2243 for more details.

DONATE ONLINE

Now, it is easier than ever to support Menucha. You can donate using your credit card with our secure online form. Simply go to www.menucha.org and click on the "Donate" link. You may also print out a Donor Form and mail it to Menucha.

We are grateful for all gifts, large or small. Your gifts help us expand our program, improve our facility and reach out to groups and individuals from around the Pacific Northwest and beyond. Please contact our office if you would like to remember someone special with your gift. Thank for your continued support.