



**MENUCHA**

*Sacred Space - Purposeful Work*

# The Menucha Meander

## **WORDS FROM OUR NEW DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR Debbie Vasen**

In early November of 2023, I stepped into the Menucha office for my first day of work. The team had curated an inviting space with cheery notes and chocolate. Throughout those initial weeks, my interactions with staff, guests, volunteers, and supporters consistently echoed a common theme – "welcome."

Menucha has an enchanting quality that becomes apparent whether it's your first or hundredth visit. As you turn into the entrance, the sign indicates that it is a sacred space for purposeful work. Traversing down the driveway provides a distinct sense of transcending time and space. You are entering into a spiritual dimension, and you are welcome there.

Over the past few months, as I have become more confident in my position as the Development and Communication Director, I have been collecting stories capturing the essence of this extraordinary place. For those who have yet to experience it firsthand, comprehending the transformative power of a Menucha retreat or program can be challenging. How can a few hours, days, or weeks in one location be life-altering?

I can imagine now how you are nodding your head. Undoubtedly, many of you have encountered these powerful experiences at Menucha but found difficulty articulating the depth of the encounter. It's in the towering strength of the evergreens, the steadfastness of Wright Hall's wooden floors, the enticing aromas wafting from the kitchen, and the shared smiles and hugs from your community. Yet, it transcends the tangible – a feeling you sense but struggle to touch or describe.

This intangible quality is what our mission aims to harness. By bringing individuals to Menucha, we provide an environment where magic unfolds. We're eager to share this enchanting space while extending the warm hospitality that lets our guests focus on reflection, renewal, and learning. Whether it's a personal retreat, nonprofit workshop, a musical program, or anything in between and beyond, we're crafting something magical that deserves to be shared.

I invite you to join me in spreading the word. Engage with us on our social channels, encourage friends and family to subscribe to our emails and newsletters, attend our events and programs, and, most importantly, simply come and visit. Rediscover the magic within Menucha, and let's collectively celebrate the extraordinary experiences that make this place special.





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## **SMALL TOWN LIFE**

### **Reverend Spencer Parks**

### **Menucha Executive Director**



We've lived in Corbett for close to 20 years now. It's a lot like other small towns I've lived in (except for college and seminary, I've never really lived in a town of any significant size). Living in Corbett means that:

- For the most part, you must travel to another town for groceries, gas, movies, and almost everything else. (We do have the Country Market here, and they carry many necessities and snacks, but you're probably not going to do your weekly shopping there.)
- You're not going to have the luxury of being anonymous. Everyone knows pretty much everyone else, which means that secrets are hard to keep, and sometimes the rumor mill works overtime.
- Electricity is something you never take for granted. As I'm writing this, my electricity came back on just an hour ago. That was the second time we've lost power in less than a week. While a wild winter storm was the culprit this time, we lose power on average about once a month.... which is why we have a generator. (I also realize that part of this is due to living in the "suburbs" of Corbett. I don't live at the edge of the world...but you can see it from my porch.)
- I don't get reliable cell phone service (again...this is due to the "suburb" effect...most of Corbett gets some cell phone service).

Now, don't get me wrong. While there are challenges to living out here, we love it. When I retire, we don't plan on going anywhere. We're staying put. That's because living in Corbett also means:

- On a clear night, the stars are breathtaking. We can watch the Perseid Meteor Shower from our backyard. The air is clear and clean.
- Things move a bit slower here. Folks don't seem to be in as much of a rush as they do in town. There's time to notice the small things.
- You know your neighbor (by the way, we define "neighbor" as anyone who lives within 5 miles of your house), and your neighbor knows you. This means that, even though we might have some differences, we look after one another (most acutely demonstrated during the Eagle Creek Fire in 2017 but continues to play out in winter storms and other such events).
- There is a sense of community. We have a great 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration and a robust Grange Hall that offers activities that range from concerts to yoga classes. There are book clubs, art guilds, gardening meets, and a host of other activities that happen throughout the year.

We're proud that Menucha is a part of the Corbett community. Many of the advantages of living in a small town can be found right at Menucha.... a community, people who care for each other, and a plethora of activities that can enrich your life. It's a sense of coming home to a place that feels warm and comfortable, a place where you can be yourself, a place where you can take a deep breath and relax. It's a place where, on a clear night, the stars are breathtaking.

We hope that part of your 2024 will be spent at Menucha. We think we have some beautiful things to offer that will make the rest of your year even better.



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## **YEAR-END UPDATE FROM THE FRIENDS OF MENUCHA FOUNDATION Susan Hedlund, President**

As we bid farewell to 2023, I am excited to share the remarkable achievements we have accomplished together at Menucha. This year has been a testament to our community's strength and our supporters' unwavering commitment.

Thanks to your generosity, I am thrilled to announce that we have successfully concluded the year by raising \$181,464. This would not have been possible without the dedication of our 196 active donors, 34 of whom joined us for the first time this year. Your belief in our mission and your willingness to contribute have made a lasting impact, allowing us to continue our journey of enriching lives.

Reflecting on the past year, 2023 has been a beacon of hope and resilience for Menucha. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, we have witnessed our guests and programs flourishing, demonstrating the incredible power of community support. Moreover, we have smoothly transitioned to our own nonprofit status, marking a significant milestone in our organizational journey. This achievement ensures the sustainability of our initiatives and opens new avenues for collaboration and growth.

Looking ahead, we are primed and ready to embark on the exciting journey that 2024 holds for us. With your continued support, we are confident we will build on the past year's successes and further our mission of enriching lives. Together, we will create lasting positive

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### **A FOND FAREWELL - Donna Leamy**

Donna Leamy started working at Menucha in the late 1970's. With the exception of a few years, she has worked steadily at the facility for over 40 years. During that time she has served in a number of roles. In the last 20 years she has been our office manager and primary staff support with the Friends of Menucha Foundation.



She has put together and edited countless newsletters, written thousands of thank-you letters, and has been the first voice most of us have heard when we have phoned in. Along with her regular duties, she has stepped into fill in for our housekeeping staff, has been known to lend a hand in our kitchen, and has provided invaluable support for our fundraising and other events (she has a keen eye for decoration).

Donna completed her service to Menucha the end of December of 2023. It is with great fondness (and a little sadness on our part) that we wish her well in her retirement. She has been a vital part of the ministry and mission of Menucha and her presence will be missed.

Donna drops by the office on occasions now so if you'd like to send her well-wishes you can do so in care of our office address.



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## THE COOKTOP - A Recipe from the Menucha Kitchen

Sergio Calvillo-Ruelas, Food Services Manager

### Ricotta Cheese Manicotti - Prep 1 hour, Serves 12

32 oz Ricotta cheese

1 cup of mozzarella

1 cup of parmesan

1 - 2 handfuls of spinach

2 large whole eggs

12 - 14 lasagna noodles

32 oz of tomato sauce

1 medium yellow onion

3 tbsp of Italian seasoning

3 garlic cloves minced

2 tbsp of oil



1. Filling for pasta: in a bowl mix all the cheeses together with eggs and spinach. Place in fridge once ready.
2. In a pot, place noodles in water and bring to a boil. Boil for 15 minutes. Drain and set aside (*tip*: once pasta is ready and drained, toss with oil so noodles don't stick)
3. To make sauce, add oil and onions to a pot and let them cook for 5 minutes on high heat. Turn down heat, and add garlic to cook for 2 more minutes.
4. Add tomato sauce to the pot with the onions and garlic. Let simmer for 10 minutes.
5. Making noodles: bring out filling and 8x8 baking tray. Put filling on each noodle and roll up. Spread sauce on bottom of 8x8 tray. Place noodles on tray. Cover in sauce + cheese. Bake for 40 minutes at 350 degrees.

## FACILITIES UPDATE

Tim Kurkinen, Facility Operations Director

As we reflect on the past year, I am thrilled to share with you the incredible impact your support has had on our facilities and, more importantly, on the lives we touch.

### Key Projects (completed and planned):

- **Renovated Spaces:** Painting the McCall house in anticipation of our new executive director, landscaping Ballard, and painting the Creevey complex.
- **Hospitality Initiatives:** Our tools and organization management project (aka T.O.M) is in full force as we improve the housekeeping department, vehicle, and tool storage to ensure our staff work safer and more efficiently.
- **Water Upgrades:** From updating our old water filtration system at the pool to new hot water storage to serve all our guest facilities, efficient water movement is our goal.
- **Heavy Equipment:** We are excited about our new rotary brush for cleaning the roads and plan to purchase more chainsaws and generators.

Even though 2024 has already tested us with a significant winter storm, Menucha stands strong, determined, and eagerly poised to serve our guests with vigor. Your partnership is a cornerstone of our success, and we are thankful for your continued support.

Our journey is never over, and essential projects are still on the list. However, your ongoing commitment makes a tangible difference in our ability to enrich lives and create a welcoming space for generations to come. We look forward to the continued collaboration on this transformative journey. Thank you for being an integral part of Menucha's success.



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**2024 PROGRAMS AT MENUCHA** Lori Nance, Program Director  
**Enriching lives. Building community. Opportunities for reflection and renewal  
in our faith, art, and music programs.**

The joy of learning together, making friends, and renewing friendships in-person continues to make our retreats and workshops amazing experiences. Find returning favorites, and new offerings that will bring people together. Learn more about these or to register at: [www.menucha.org/programs](http://www.menucha.org/programs).

**March 1-3, 2024: Scrap & Sew #1**

**March 21-24, 2024: Columbia Gorge Early Music Retreat**

**March 25-29, 2024: Ukulele Band Camp**

**March 27, 2024: Menucha-lele Concert**

**May 6-9, 2024: Spring Watercolor Workshop**

**May 10-12, 2024: Scrap & Sew #2**

**May 30-June 2, 2024: Bluegrass in the Gorge**

**June 3-6, 2024: Painting with Shahrads Malekfazeli**

**June 21-23, 2024: Painting with Joanne Kollman**

**August 4-10, 2024: Week 1 of Creative Arts Community at Menucha**

**August 11-17, 2024: Week 2 of Creative Arts Community at Menucha**

**September 13-15, 2024: Missing You: A Loss & Grief Retreat for Body, Mind, & Spirit** When someone in our life dies, our world can turn upside down. Grief impacts our bodies, our minds, and our spirits - especially when the person who has died is a part of us. This weekend retreat led by Donna Schuurmann and Monique Mitchell, offers participants ways to explore and express their love and grief.

**October 2-6, 2024: Blues in the Gorge**

**October 24-27, 2024: Harmonica Northwest**

**October 31-November 2, 2024: Fall Watercolor Workshop**

**November 1-3, 2024: Scrap & Sew #3**





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**WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THOSE WHO HAVE  
GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED THE FRIENDS OF MENCHUA FOUNDATION  
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Peggy Acott	Vena Edwards	Don Johnson and family
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Rebekah Yoder-Rattaro  
Monica Yoshinaga  
Sharon Ziel  
  
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Ann Leuthauser  
John Leuthauser  
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Lori Nance  
Judy Teufel

**Given in Memory**  
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Eleanor Hardt  
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*Our mission is to enrich lives through hospitality, learning, reflection and renewal.*

**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

**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:

**MAXIMIZING YOUR GIFT**

Setting up a **Recurring Gift** can be a great way to make a larger gift than you might be able make at once. \$25 over a year adds up to \$300, or \$100 totals \$1,200! Sustaining gifts like this secure the day-to-day operations at Menucha and are greatly appreciated.

**Matching Gift** programs offer a way to sometimes double your gift as well as an employee benefit you don't want to miss out on utilizing. You might also consider asking family members to match your gift. This is a great opportunity for older generations to talk to younger family members about what is important to them and how Menucha has impacted the family.