



The Menucha Meander



Letter from the Friends of Menucha Foundation

Happy New Year and greetings to all of Menucha's supporters from the Friends of Menucha Foundation. The new year always brings with it a reflection of the past and hopes and anticipation for the future. These hopes are vital for us as individuals and in our communities. This new year also marks a new time for Menucha as an organization, and we are writing to share an important announcement: **the Friends of Menucha Foundation has officially merged with the independent nonprofit Menucha Retreat and Conference Center.**

The Friends of Menucha Foundation was established in 2004, and at that time, **the primary objective was to raise money to support Menucha's distinct mission and programs.** In the early days, we held an annual dinner with auctions to assist in raising money. Over time, the Foundation realized that Menucha's supporters were there to do just that: support Menucha as a community vs. acquire auction items. Hence, we shifted the focus to an annual dinner that promoted community—both at the dinner itself and for Menucha's purpose of building and supporting community. One of the significant benefits of these early efforts was the major projects that updated Wright Hall, including a new roof and substantial kitchen re-do, as well as new windows, paint, and the extended exterior patio. The transformation was visible evidence of the **impact donor support could have on Menucha.**

Menucha has grown and evolved over time, and it became clear that the organizational structure was also ready to evolve and mature as well. **The Friends of Menucha Foundation wholeheartedly supports this evolution.** The merger between FOMF and Menucha Retreat and Conference Center recognizes the advancing of Menucha into its own independent organization with a board that serves in many roles, including fundraising. The merger combines the separate efforts of the Foundation with those of the Menucha board. The result will be reduced duplication of effort and more efficient use of precious volunteer hours. In addition, our long-term planning always included the assumption of responsibility for fundraising by the Menucha board. The merger makes that step official.

Menucha's mission and programs will remain unchanged. It will, however, make fundraising for those programs and mission more efficient. Several current FOMF board members are already on the new board, with the potential for others to join. This, too, has led to a smoother transition during the merger.

The merger was effective 12/31/24, so we begin the new year with hope and anticipation! **As always, we remain so grateful to the many supporters of Menucha, its mission, and its programs.** Thanks to the hard work and generosity of many, this sacred space will continue to be viable for generations to come.

With gratitude and all good hopes for the new year.

Sincerely,

The Friends of Menucha Foundation

Community

By Rev. Courtney McHill

"There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about." – Margaret J. Wheatley

We have begun 2025! Happy New Year!

As I write to you, I am celebrating six months at Menucha. It has been wonderful to experience each season for the first time in this place. From the changing of the leaves to the mighty wind, our little family is learning what it means to be on-site and present with this community during each transition.

Menucha is in the midst of a new transition as we say farewell to our Foundation and absorb its good work into the body of Menucha. The Foundation appeared when it was needed the most and fulfilled its purpose for decades. Menucha benefited from the Foundation as the branch to raise funds, extend gratitude, and walk alongside the good work that happens on the property. The people who have put in hours to make the Foundation thrive are essential to who we are as an organization.

At the same time, Menucha is evolving and gaining its own two feet, putting down its own roots as one entity. We are increasingly discovering who we are and what we care about the most. As I continue to explore and learn, it is clear that Menucha is about creating community. I dream that we will be known for enriching lives through community. As we look ahead, this work is essential to who we are and what we must do in the world. I dream of people coming from all over because we are the place that creates community. Our daily practices lend themselves to this: how we eat together, work together, rest together, and treat one another. We can only do this work with the community that surrounds Menucha. This community continues to grow.

I am amazed and humbled by the community that supports Menucha. You all have been so wonderful in lending your skills, time, money, and support. You book the retreats, spread the word, volunteer, and gather. Recently, I signed letters to all who donated to the Foundation this year and was blown away by the names I still do not know and recognize. There are many I have yet to meet, and I am so excited to meet you. The fact that the names include many I do know and many I do not means the community is extensive beyond what I can learn in six months! Amazing!

I look forward to seeing how you will continue to surround Menucha and become a larger part of what it means to build and create an extensive community that can make all the difference in the world.



Facilities Update

We had a fantastic year in 2024. A few highlights:

1) Creevey focus:

- New exterior paint to tie in with the rest of the property.
- All new mattresses (with help from donations).
- We began the first steps of a special landscape project, which included planting boxes, pots, lights, and new benches along the walkway from Ballard to Creevey (thanks to donors for these projects).

2) We renovated the McCall house to welcome our new director and her family.

3) Our housekeeping department purchased new furnishings (with the help of donations) to make the break space more relaxing for staff. We also bought new commercial washers and dryers to reduce the cost of renting linens and provide higher-quality linens to guests.

4) Sunrise Daisy path installations have begun assembly.

5) Boy Scouts made more wooden picnic tables for us (we now have 10 tables, which means we can seat 100 people).

We are excited to see where 2025 will take us.

FAQs for Friends of Menucha Merger

How should I make my future donations?

Please make check donations payable to Menucha. Online donations will use the same web portal.

What will happen to my recurring donation to the Friends of Menucha Foundation?

Recurring credit card donations will remain constant as the bank is switched to our system. However, bank bill pay will need to be edited to Menucha instead of Friends of Menucha Foundation.

Will my donations to Menucha still be tax-deductible?

Yes, all donations are still tax-deductible. The Menucha Retreat and Conference Center is a 501(c)(3) charity.

How will this merger impact the use of my donated funds?

Funds will continue to support Menucha's mission, including retreat programs, facility maintenance, and other initiatives.

I accidentally donated to the Friends of Menucha Foundation; what do I do?

No problem! The foundation has merged with Menucha, so they are now one entity. We can accept payments made directly to the Foundation through our Menucha bank accounts.

Will we still have fundraising events?

Yes! Fundraising efforts will remain in-house at Menucha under the development department's direction in partnership with the executive director and the Menucha board.

If I have a question regarding the Foundation, who do I call?

Call Debbie Vasen, Development and Communications Director, directly at 971-393-2734.

WE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGE THOSE WHO HAVE GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED MENUCHA

January 1 - December 31, 2024

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| Lee Ragen | Sunrise Daisy Retreat | Creative Arts Community |
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| Marcia Randall | Judy Teufel | Ann and John Leuthauser |
| Chris Rasmussen | Umpqua Bank | Skylar Miller |
| Rick Ray and Anne Philipsborn | Paul Van der Salm | Rev Spencer Parks |
| Joey and Chris Razzano | Brad van Woert | Judy Teufel |
| Capi Reed | Stan and Kathy Vejtasa | The Amazing Menucha Staff |
| Rhonda and Dana Reedy | Jim and Ann Walsh | |

The Cooktop: A recipe from the Menucha kitchen

By Sergio Calvillo-Ruelas, Food Services Manager

Chicken Dumpling Casserole

3/4 cup of celery
3/4 cup of carrots
3/4 cup of onions
2 1/2 tsp of minced garlic
6 tbsp of butter
3/4 cup of flour
2 1/2 tsp of sugar
1/2 tsp of salt
1 1/2 tbsp of dried basil
1 tsp of pepper
4 1/2 cups of chicken broth
1/2 cups of frozen peas
3 1/4 cups of diced/shredded chicken
8 frozen biscuits



Saute celery, onion, and carrot first for a couple of minutes with butter, then add garlic (garlic is sensitive and will burn quickly). Once tender, add flour and cook for 2 minutes on medium heat to create a roux (be patient). Once the roux is a dirty blonde color, add the chicken broth, sugar, salt, and basil. Bring to a boil and let simmer for 5 minutes. Stir in chicken and peas. In a 9x13 casserole pan coated with oil/butter, place biscuits and ladle in the mixture. Bake in a 350-degree oven for 20-30 minutes or until biscuits are cooked. Serves 8.

MENUCHA EVENTS FOR 2025

Camp and Conference Sunday at First Presbyterian Church: *Sunday, February 9: 10:30 am*

Come to the morning service to hear the importance of camps and retreats to the church community and show your support for Menucha. Rev. Courtney McHill will be preaching!

Easter Sunrise Service: *Sunday, April 20 at 6:30 am*

Our service is open to everyone! Join us at Menucha to experience the magic firsthand.

Spring Flower Walk: *Saturday, May 17 from 1 pm until 3 pm*

Join us for a beautiful walk through the spring flowers around the Menucha property.

Open House: *Sunday, June 29 at 11 am until 3 pm*

The entire Menucha property will be open to the public for our annual open house.

Fall Fundraising Dinner: *Sunday, September 7 at 4 pm*

Please help us keep the foundation strong and support the future of Menucha's mission.

Fall Tree Walk: *Saturday, October 18 from 1 pm until 3 pm*

Gather at Menucha for an opportunity to wander through the fall trees.

MENUCHA PROGRAMS

As one year ends and another begins, it is good to do a little looking back before looking forward. In 2024, we saw many beautiful moments in Menucha programs: colors were combined in paints, fabrics, and papers; strings were strummed (at least 724 of them); concerts were enjoyed; cups of coffee and tea and water were shared; quilts were pieced; cards made, songs written and performed; friends were remembered in music; grief was shared; friendships were begun, continued, and strengthened by time spent in one another's presence. In this amazing place, the people who lead our programs made opportunities to nurture the shared human need for community.

As 2025 begins, we are looking forward to music-making and art-making and, most importantly, to being a place where people experience the goodness of community. Will you come join us for a program this year? Visit our website for details and registration.



Singing and playing in celebration of the life of Debbie McMeel, a longtime friend of the Columbia Gorge Early Music Retreat.



Ukuleles bring people together!



Family and Family come together to enjoy programs at Menucha.

Missing you: A Loss & Grief Retreat for Body, Mind, & Spirit

In September of 2024, we offered our first grief retreat, and the weekend was very valuable and helpful. Facilitators Monique Julewynn and Donna Schuurman brought their years of experience, offering a kind, caring, and supportive retreat that allowed participants to process their grief. "Life changing" was how one person described their experience.

We will again offer this retreat on May 16-18, 2025. If you, or someone you know, has lost a loved one, this weekend may help navigate their grief. The retreat is limited to 12 participants. You can visit our website for more details and registration.



MENUCHA
Sacred Space - Purposeful Work

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Make a Meaningful New Year Resolution

New Year's resolutions are about creating positive change, and giving to Menucha is a way to bring that change to life. Your support fuels programs and experiences that foster growth, healing, and community. Start your year by planting seeds of hope that will grow throughout 2025.



Make a donation today! Use the QR code to contribute online or mail us a check made out to Menucha at PO Box 8, Corbett, OR 97019



Stay Connected!

Facebook: Menucha.Retreat.Center

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LinkedIn: menucha-retreat-and-conference-center

Email list: Sign up at Menucha.org

Contact us to update your information or sign up for our mailing list at:

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Email: office@menucha.org

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