



The Menucha Meander



Harvest Fundraising Dinner

Gathered in Harmony

On a September evening, 100+ Menucha friends gathered for our annual Harvest Dinner. As the sun slipped toward the horizon, the tables were filled with good food, conversation, and laughter. But what made the evening special was more than the setting. It was the sense of connection.

Aaron and Nicole Keim of The Quiet American shared music and words, including their beautiful rendition of *This Is Home*. Courtney invited us to reflect on what makes Menucha feel like home. We were reminded of the many ways Menucha has supported the learning, reflection, and renewal of people and organizations across our region.



By the end of the event, our community had pledged and donated almost \$69,000, making this our most successful Fundraising Dinner yet. We are grateful to everyone who attended, sponsored, volunteered, gave a gift, and made the evening possible.

The dinner also offered a glimpse of where Menucha is headed.

More Than a Place to Rent: Menucha has long been a place where people gather. Our buildings, grounds, and hospitality provide a beautiful setting to bring people together, step away from their usual surroundings, and focus. But our vision for the future is bigger than renting space. We want Menucha to be a partner.

That means listening to what communities are trying to accomplish and asking how to help. Sometimes it is hosting a retreat. Sometimes it is developing a program together, creating learning opportunities, connecting organizations, or finding ways to welcome people who haven't traditionally had access to a sacred place.

Menucha has an opportunity to shape what comes next. We are caring for a remarkable property with more than a century of history, but we are not simply preserving the past. We are building a place that can continue to serve people and communities for generations to come.

The Harvest Dinner beautifully expressed that future. It brought together people who believe in Menucha and in what this place can make possible.

In this newsletter you can expect:

Reflections from the Executive Director

Special Announcements

Menucha Kitchen Recipe

Events

Programs

Supporting Menucha

We Are Partners

By Courtney McHill

Families Like Ours is a newer guest group to Menucha. “Families Like Ours offers connection, rejuvenation & support that normalizes the parent caregiver experience and protects them from the well-documented impacts of their caregiver burden.”

Menucha became their retreat space almost two years ago. They retreat twice a year, and pictures of Menucha fill their website to promote what this nonprofit centers on: the retreats.



At their last retreat, I arrived a couple of minutes early for their orientation. I saw the relief on caregivers' faces as they walked into Wright Hall and took in the atmosphere. I checked in with leaders and got a sense of how things were going. I glanced at their schedule, curious about how an organization formats its retreat. A Board Member walked in and said hello with a huge grin. We recognized each other. She immediately said, “Now, when I drive down the entrance road, it feels like I am coming home! I know this place.”



Just a few weeks before this, I was excited to see one of our recovery groups arrive. This women's recovery group has added me to their Facebook group. I can see all year's preparation for this retreat. Forty-five women came in full of excitement, having waited all year. As I walked in, their leader gave me a huge hug and said, “Oh! Courtney! You get to do our orientation again! I just love you!”

These are just a few of the many stories about guest groups, program participants, and nonprofits who feel a deep connection to what we do here. We aren't just hosting guests at Menucha. We steward sacred space

for amazing, purposeful work. We are partners in this work.

As we move forward, we are leaning more into this partnership. Our work dovetails with what work an organization shows up to do. We partner to serve our world. We prepare to offer an experience that will rejuvenate an organization and help it better our world. Our business model will shift toward more partnership, addressing what groups need to do their work, rather than limiting groups by what we have always done. This will let us serve our partners more meaningfully.

Partners create together. Partners set up success. Partners lean into relationship. Partners can serve a wider group of people. Partners allow for creative connection. Partners see each other more deeply and serve one another, creating better mission-oriented work. Menucha partnering with so many amazing people and organizations is a beautiful future.



Menucha Welcomes New Electric Van Through PGE Drive Change Fund

We are excited to announce the arrival of Menucha's new electric van, made possible through the Portland General Electric Drive Change Fund by way of the Oregon DEQ Clean Fuels Program.

This new vehicle represents more than a transportation upgrade. It is an investment in accessibility, sustainability, and Menucha's ability to serve our community for years to come.

The van will be used both on and off the property to transport supplies, equipment, and guests. Whether it is helping retreat groups move materials across our 100-acre campus or providing transportation support that makes it easier for people to participate in programs and events, the van will play an important role in reducing transportation barriers at Menucha.



As a retreat and conference center that welcomes thousands of visitors each year, we rely on transportation as an essential part of our operations. By transitioning to an electric vehicle, we are reducing emissions, lowering operating costs, and taking another step toward responsible stewardship of the land.

We are grateful to Portland General Electric for helping make this project possible. Their investment supports not only cleaner transportation, but also greater access to the meaningful experiences, connections, and opportunities that happen every day at Menucha.

The van has arrived and is already preparing for its first adventures. We look forward to putting it to work in support of our mission and the communities we serve.

Preserving Menucha's History for Future Generations

We're excited to share that Menucha has been awarded an Oregon Heritage MentorCorps grant! Through this opportunity, we'll work with a heritage mentor to assess and develop a plan for preserving and sharing the historical materials connected to Menucha's rich history.

Since 1914, photographs, documents, stories, and other historical materials have accumulated, reflecting the people, architecture, and events that have shaped this special place. We want to ensure these resources are cared for and that their stories continue to educate and inspire visitors to Menucha.

This mentorship will help us take the next steps in understanding, preserving, and sharing our history as part of our ongoing commitment to stewarding this remarkable place for generations to come.





Food Partnerships: Helping Hands

We're pleased to be partnering with Columbia Gorge Helping Hands, a local food salvage program that provides food assistance to residents of Corbett and rural communities east of the Sandy River. Their network of more than 100 volunteers reaches over 1,500 people each week, while also working toward a zero-waste

approach to food salvage.

Through this partnership, leftover food and prepared meals from Menucha can reach people who can use them, rather than going to waste. For Helping Hands, it means another source of food to share with our rural neighbors. For Menucha, it's another way to extend the hospitality at the heart of our mission beyond the people who gather here.

We love partnerships like this because everyone benefits: good food gets another life, resources are shared, and our community becomes a little more connected.

We're grateful to Columbia Gorge Helping Hands for the work they do throughout our community, and we're glad to be part of it.

The Cooktop: Recipe from the Kitchen By Jake Crouse, Food Service Manager

Empanada Dough

4 cups of all-purpose flour
1 tsp of salt
1/2 cup of butter (unsalted), melted
4 egg yolks
1 cup of water



1. **Mix dry ingredients.** Mix the flour with the salt in a large bowl.
2. **Add wet ingredients.** Add the melted butter, egg yolks, and water to the flour mixture.
3. **Work the dough.** Mix together until a dough begins to form. Transfer to a floured surface and knead until a consistent ball forms. If the dough feels too wet, add flour one tablespoon at a time until it no longer sticks to your hands.
4. **Chill.** Cover the dough with a towel and let it chill in the fridge for at least 30 minutes.
5. **Roll.** Divide the dough into quarters, then into eighths, then sixteenths, then into 32 pieces. Roll each piece into a ball. On a flour-dusted surface, roll each ball into a round circle using a rolling pin.
6. **Fill.** From here, you're ready to fill your empanada dough with whatever you like. Don't overfill your empanada dough; brush the edges with water, then crimp the dough shut with a fork.
7. **Bake.** Brush with egg wash and bake at 400°F for 20-30 minutes, or until golden brown and flaky.

Save this date:



December 13
2:00 PM

You won't want to miss our holiday
celebration filled with music and stories!

Mark Your Calenders: 2027 Programs

January 25-29, 2027 Time & Space Retreat

March 5-7, 2027. Scrap & Sew Craft Retreat #1

March 22-26, 2027 Ukulele Band Camp

March 24, 2027 Menucha-lele Concert - at the Grange

March 28, 2027 Easter Sunrise Service

April 7-11, 2027 Columbia Gorge Early Music Retreat

May 3-6, 2027 Spring Watercolor Workshop with Susan Kuznitsky

May 7-9, 2027 Scrap & Sew Craft Retreat #2

June 7-11, 2027 Time & Space Retreat

June 10-13, 2027 Tributaries Writing Retreat

August 1-7, 2027 Creative Arts Community @ Menucha

August 8-14, 2027 Creative Arts Community @ Menucha

September 20-24, 2027 Time & Space Retreat

October 6-10, 2027 Blues in the Gorge

October 9, 2027 Acoustic Blues Concert - at the Grange

October 21-24, 2027 Harmonica Northwest

October 25-28, 2027 Fall Watercolor Workshop with Kristie Mooney

October 29-31, 2027 Scrap & Sew Craft Retreat #3

TBA, 2027 Bluegrass in the Gorge

TBA, 2027 Bluegrass Concert - at the Grange



What Does Partnership Look Like at Menucha?

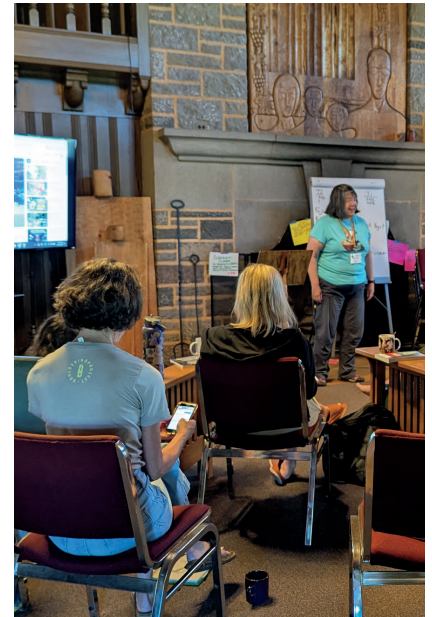
Menucha is shaped by partnership. From the individuals who care for this property to the organizations that gather here, our work is made possible by people bringing their time, skills, knowledge, and purpose together.

Some of these partnerships have grown over decades. Others are newer relationships that help us find fresh ways to serve our community. Each plays a part in fulfilling Menucha's mission of enriching lives through hospitality, learning, reflection, and renewal.

Guest Services: Preparing for Purposeful Work

Every group that comes to Menucha arrives with its own purpose, plans, and needs. Our Guest Services team partners with group leaders long before they arrive, learning about their organizations and helping them choose accommodations, meeting spaces, and arrangements that will support their time here.

The goal is for group leaders to walk through the door knowing we've taken care of the details, leaving them free to focus on the work that brought them here. By listening, planning ahead, and working together across departments, we help create the sacred space each group needs to do its best work.



Business Office: Partnership Behind the Scenes

Much of the work that keeps Menucha moving forward happens through partnerships beyond our property. Our Business Office works closely with external professionals who bring specialized knowledge and help us make sound decisions in a changing financial and regulatory environment.

Our CPA and bookkeeping partners help us stay current with accounting requirements and best practices. Our bank works with us to evaluate how we structure and use our accounts so our financial tools support Menucha's goals. Our payroll and insurance partners help us navigate changing regulations, employee benefits, and other requirements that affect how we operate.

Volunteers: Partners in Caring for Menucha

Menucha couldn't operate without our volunteers. Their contributions go far beyond lending a hand. They meet critical needs our operating budget cannot fully support, making it possible to care for our property, welcome guests, and carry out our mission.

Through our staff-augmented volunteer arrangement, volunteers work alongside Menucha staff in essential roles throughout the organization. They help maintain our grounds and trails, care for our historic buildings, provide office coverage, and support events and other activities. Their work extends our staff's capacity and keeps Menucha's day-to-day operations moving forward.



A Partnership That Multiplies

We are pleased to announce that **the Maybelle Clark Macdonald Fund has awarded Menucha a \$30,000 matching challenge grant in support of our mission.** This generous commitment is more than a financial award. It is a partnership with a funder who believes in Menucha's value and is helping us build the resources needed to sustain our work for years to come.



The matching challenge will be part of our upcoming Annual Appeal, allowing donors to multiply the impact of their generosity. The Fund's support is designed to encourage new donors to join the Menucha community and existing donors to increase their giving. New and increased gifts of \$50 or more will qualify for matching funds, turning individual acts of generosity into a larger investment in Menucha.

This is partnership in action: the Fund makes a significant commitment to our future, and our community can build on that commitment through its own giving. Together, we can strengthen the support that helps us care for our property, welcome diverse groups, and provide a place for learning, reflection, renewal, and purposeful work.

Watch for future emails and mailings for details about the Annual Appeal and how you can take part in this matching challenge!



MENUCHA
Sacred Space - Purposeful Work

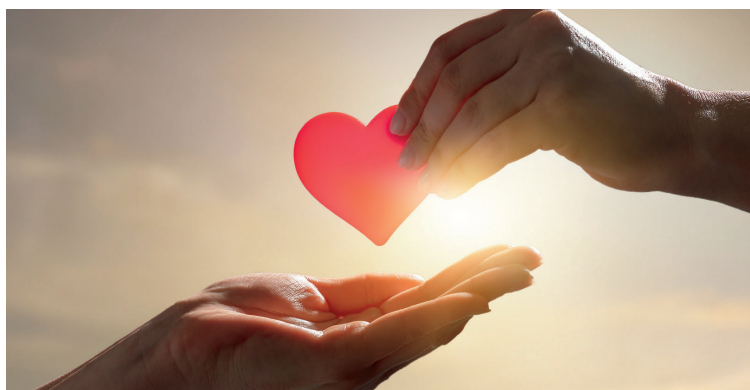
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Your Partnership Has an Impact

As the year ends, we invite you to remember Menucha. Tax laws affecting charitable giving have changed for 2026, including a new potential federal tax deduction for some people who take the standard deduction. Your eligibility depends on your individual circumstances, so consult your tax professional as you plan your giving. Your gift is an investment in the meaningful work that makes this place special.



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



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Facebook: Menucha.Retreat.Center

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Email list: Sign up at Menucha.org

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