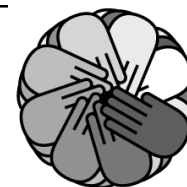


Insights



The Newsletter of the Discovery Community, Inc.

July 2006

Labor Day Retreat 2006

Friday September 1st - Monday, September 4th

Saratoga Springs Center

Register Early for discounted prices!!!

Joy + Caring + Kindness = Community”

“Joy + Caring + Kindness = Community” is the theme of this Labor Day’s Retreat at Saratoga Springs Retreat Center in Lake County on September 1-4. The committee of Jon A., Lee R., Randy L., Tim C., and Ken K. will host us at this idyllic site which has been the site of so many great Discovery Community retreats. The retreat will emphasize joy – play a game, swim in the pool, dance, be silly or outrageous, from bean and macaroni art to massage training to our legendary parade of “beauties”. Saratoga is a great place to be outside and let it all hang out. And the retreat will provide lots of opportunity for caring and kindnesses. Whether in small group, 1-1 or as a community, our attention will be brought to how to create caring and kind moments in all that we do. Among many activities – some of them new to Discovery Community retreats, we will be making gifts for homeless children as one way during the weekend that we will show both caring and kindness to others.

Among them this year will be star gazing, a campfire gathering, light-hearted personality testing and a poolside dinner featuring “American kitsch”. Saratoga Springs Center, nestled in the wild hills of Lake County California, lends itself to unwinding, exploration, and play in a beautiful natural setting enhanced by healthful mineral springs and comfortable guest lodging.

There will be great opportunities to make new friends, renew old friendships, hang out by the pool or hot tub or just retreat into some private moments with yourself. You can also enjoy the trails on nearby ridges during a guided nature walk or on your own. In addition there will be nights of dancing, playing, singing & telling stories and the chance to ham it up – or watch others ham it up - at our Talent-No Talent Show.

There are still spots available for workshops or activities from our community! Please contact Jon Simunovich-Audron jjsn@pge.com if you’d like to offer a workshop or activity during the weekend.

Register before August 7th for early bird pricing!

July 4th Fireworks at Stillheart

This was no ordinary retreat for Discovery Community; it was an extraordinary retreat. The site is one of the best sites Discovery has been to. It is nestled in the redwoods, and sports a wonderful meeting room, cozy bedrooms, and a fun pool and hot tub, which was going all weekend. The weather cooperated all weekend, never getting cold at all. The sun shone every day, but did not get too warm for us to be out and enjoying the beautiful grounds.

Discovery used a new caterer this time around, Party Flavors. Mark Hamilton, the owner, and his partner Steve, prepared tasteful surprises for us each day. The food was yummy and plentiful. We hope to work with Mark and Steve again as they had a great time with us.

The retreat focused on relaxation of the mind and body. Guys who came quickly bonded on the first night so nicely facilitated by Jim B., one of our “founders”. Saturday and Sunday were filled with great workshops provided by our many community volunteers.

No one event during the weekend over-shadowed any other, the mix between light hearted workshops like abstract painting, and piano sing-along was just the right amount to balance Don and Lee’s exploration of ourselves and our spiritual lives. Saturday night Bill B. hosted a fun and frivolous Slumber Party where all the girls showed up in their PJ’s, made jewelry, painted their nails and laughed their asses off to “Sordid Lives” starring Olivia Newton John. By the end of the weekend, everyone had so much fun that we were relaxed and at peace just as the planning committee had intended.

Many things go into planning a retreat, but most importantly it’s the planning committee’s hard work, dedication, and giving of themselves that make the whole weekend possible. Three Cheers to Jim Bartholomew, Bill Britt, Ed Tauscher, Jerry Maynard and Joseph Coleman for all of their hard work. Many thanks go out to all the volunteers who helped with assisting the committee: Shuttle drivers Ken, Mark, and Peter; Matt, our mistress of ceremonies for the No Talent/Talent Show; Clean Queen Mikel J., and camp doctor, Bill B. And thanks to all of the members who gave of their time leading the workshops: Mark, Jerry, Don, Richard a.k.a. Ricardo, Charlie, Bill, Russ, Gary, Joseph, and finally Lee. Without you volunteers we couldn’t put on the retreat that built community and taught us how to forget about city life with three simply refreshing days in the redwood’s of Woodside.

Joseph Coleman

A Message from the President

From the Heart-Circle

One of the things I love most about Discovery Retreats is the closing Heart Circle at the end of a retreat. Discovery has a way of taking the most simple of ideas, sit in a circle and share from the heart, and turning it into a special, memorable moment. This past July 4th at Stillheart was no exception.

I was moved by the shares in this heart circle both for their quality and for sparking in me, and in the community who listened, hope and inspiration. One member shared a story he got from another member of our community not present on the weekend. He said that for him, Discovery was simply "Gay men at their best". Not ironically, the Stillheart weekend was all about gay men at their best. It never ceases to amaze me how quickly and seamlessly this community comes together in a weekend. Men bring the best of themselves, their hopes, their passion, their spirits, and their outrageousness. Men lower their defenses seemingly at light speed, opening up the opportunity for connection and intimacy. No one instructs us to do it. We just instinctively go to that community place where we all hope to be; where we are accepted for who we are, where we can explore who we are, and where we can feel connected with other kindred spirits. It makes the time we have together precious. And I think we all felt really grateful for that time we spent at Stillheart, experiencing the best of ourselves and each other all weekend.

I love that in Heart Circle we spend a lot of time acknowledging each other. So many people contribute so much to make these experiences available to us. I am always inspired by how many people contribute. The joy and success we have in our lives is due in large part to other people, so it's important to let them know their special gifts.

Discovery Contact Information

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www.discovery-community.org

While it seems natural to do this on retreat with an expert facilitator (or not), it seems harder to give and especially receive acknowledgements out here in the "real" world. But that is the challenge that Discovery brings, how to integrate what we learn on retreat into our lives out here. No, it may not be easy, but it is definitely doable. I find I am always bringing more and more of my "retreat" world into my world back home. So, let me finish by acknowledging the committee (Joe, Jerry, Jim, Ed and Bill) and all the volunteers who made our July 4th experience so full and seamless.

Lastly, I love that the Heart Circle is ever expanding. There are always wonderful new faces in the circle. Many we will see again, some not. But Discovery is about welcoming others in, not preserving our utopian core. And I so appreciate our newest members who jump right in with both feet and are willing to become a part of a new community group. And so many newcomers stand up at the end of Heart Circle to volunteer to keep this wonderful community experience going. Hats off to Tim, Ken and Randy for stepping onto the Labor Day Retreat Committee. Discovery is in good hands with you.

Discovery continues to provide for me, and I hope for all of us, a real opportunity to build community the way we want it. Discovery provides me wonderful guys to share my time and my heart with. Discovery really is "Gay men at their Best".

Hope to see you all soon.

With Love,

Mark
President, Board of Directors

Volunteers Needed

Want to organize a fabulous Halloween party? How about a Turkey day for everyone to remember? And it's not too early to think about the Holiday Party? Discovery needs to form small work groups around each of these events.

There are also vacancies on the Board, and our regular committees: Social, Fundraising, Outreach. Please contact Gary Winter if interested in any of these at garyxyz3@aol.com or call 415-419-3559.

Thanks!

Proud at Pride

Discovery had a great presence at Pride this year, one of the sunniest in memory. Discovery volunteers came out in full force to support our activities on that day.

Many thanks go out to the almost 20 volunteers who helped out at Pride this year. Our booth looked fabulous thanks to Dennis Hasty, who manned the booth all day as his first gig as Outreach Coordinator for Discovery. Many thanks go to Dennis and all his volunteers who passed out almost 1500 brochures a got over 50 new guys onto the mailing list. We also filled 15 shifts doing donation collection at the gates for Pride. At an event on August 15, Discovery and over 30 other non-profit organizations will receive a check as a result of our participation. Many thanks to the dozen men who donned their sunscreen and flirted with guys for money all day. What fun it was! Thanks to everyone for giving up their beautiful Sundays to make sure that other guys know about Discovery and that we have the money to keep this show going for a long time to come!

Want to Donate?

As a 501(c)3 organization, all your donations to Discovery Community are tax-deductible. Your donations help us meet our operating expenses, provide sponsorships, and produce free social events. Simply fill out this form, enclose a check or put your credit card information below and send to:

Discovery Community
2215R Market Street, PMB#282
San Francisco, CA 94114

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State, Zip: _____

Card Type: AMEX VISA MC DISCOVER

Credit Card #: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Want to Volunteer?

Discovery can always use your help. Do you have a special skill we don't know about? Do you want to plan or throw fabulous events? Do you want to work on retreats? Fundraise? Let us know. Contact us at (415) 419-3559 or www.discovery-community.org



Upcoming Events:

Twilight Hike in Muir Woods — Saturday, August 12, 2006, 6 PM.

Discovery is once again pleased to offer this exclusive twilight tour of the magnificent Muir Woods. We will be lead by an experienced gay ranger on a somewhat steep and strenuous hike around the woods. \$10 fee. Carpools will be arranged from San Francisco and the East Bay. To RSVP and arrange carpooling, please email DiscoverySocials06@yahoo.com or leave a message at 415-419-3559.

Community Potluck Send Off Party—Sunday, August 27, 12-3 p.m. 463 14th St @ Guerrero (Mark & Matt's)

All the community is welcome to gather to reconnect to wish bon voyage to those going to Saratoga. Whether you are going on the retreat or not, it's a great chance to connect with friends old and new. For those going on the retreat, there will be previews of the retreat as well as registration logistics. Please bring a brunch item or non-alcoholic beverage to share.

Labor Day Retreat — Friday, September 1—Monday, September 4—Saratoga Springs Retreat Center, Lake County

Discovery Returns to Saratoga Springs, an idyllic site which has been the site of so many great Discovery retreats. See page one for details and page 3 for registration form. Contact us at 415-419-3559 if you have any questions.

**Watch for more events in the coming months.
Check for updates at www.discovery-community.org or call us at (415) 419-3559.**

