

Greetings,

I know, I know, it's been a couple of months since I've written. I did not fall off the face of the Earth; my computer fell prey to viruses and needed intense dedicated work from a computer genius to be revived. (Thank you, Brian!) A new computer is in my future to be sure. I am fortunate; my master list to write to you is intact and backed up! May the fleas of a thousand camels infest the armpits of hackers who create invasive critters to attack the average Joe computer for the sake of wrecking havoc - bad karma to them! Wait a minute maybe it's my bad karma that caused my suffering?  
Nah!!! ;-)

Well, at this writing, I have just returned with my daughter from a fast-paced visit to Eugene, Oregon over the Labor Day weekend. We were visiting family and friends. Oregon is a beautiful place. In three days we hiked to the top of Spencer Butte, picked blackberries and plums, went white water rafting down the Mackenzie River and drove out to the Pacific Coast where mountains meet ocean meet sky in a breathtaking clash of spiritual elements.

Eugene is a college town where people-watching is easily the most amusing pastime for someone with that hobby. Vegetarian cuisine abounds. I ate incredible blends of vegetable-based recipes at tiny restaurants that were unique for their relaxed semi-self-serve approach. I couldn't help feeling that the mindset of most business owners in Eugene was based on finding the balance of being successful in business and being in sync with their world of conservation-minded naturalist customers. I saw very few fast food places or national chain restaurants. Eugene seems to thrive on the small business model. Perhaps there are not many millionaires there but there are many independent passionate people trying their hand at creating their own version of prosperity without a corporate training manual. Kind of refreshing to someone who lives in the heart of tourism where many things are cookie-cutter in approach to salve the insecurities of our fellow Americans who choose to vacation here.

I came to feel connected with the efforts Oregonians make to keep the natural beauty and bounty alive and sustainable despite the demand on resources from the forests and agriculture and water the rest of us make on their state. This is a refuge and haven for a brand of American looking for camaraderie in conservationist morality. It is a work in progress but a model nonetheless for those of us who share the desire to keep our homes and families in balance with our environment. Less means more in Oregon. That truth is evident when you stare at the half of a mountain that has been "clear-cut" with no concern for the damage that baldened earth will sustain from the erosion of wind and rain. To look at the bared soil hurts the soul. Efficiency is important but to care-take the source of these raw materials is to gain insight into the true preciousness of all life.

It elevates the chance to feel our interconnectedness when we travel to such a place as Oregon. I wish we could create field-trips for students to see Splendor in natural form. Perhaps we could start a revolution to treasure what we take so for granted that we consume it without savor. If our children are our future shouldn't we value what we leave

behind for them to inhabit and learn and teach them how to keep it safe and secure and continuously abundant?

I can think of a few ways I could, in earnest, change to create a positive answer to that question. And every little bit does help.

Namaste,

Stacey

This month and next The Stacey Knights Group has some great opportunities to perform for you. I hope to see you at the show!