

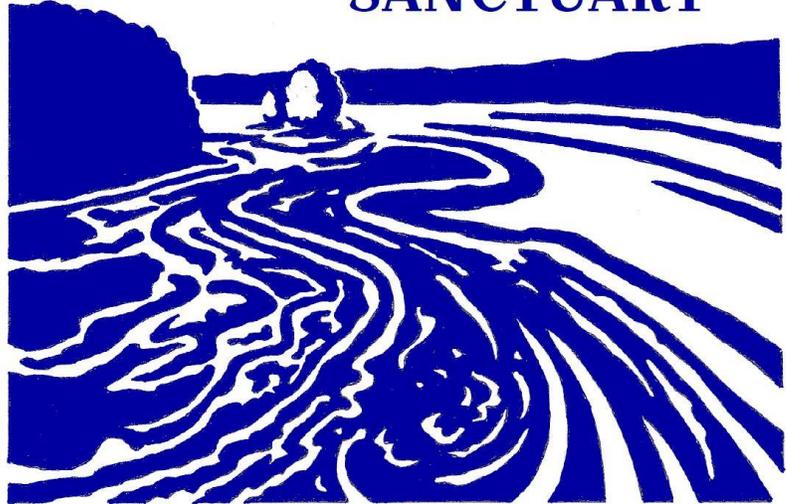
Ebb and Flow

*Reversing Falls
Sanctuary*

Newsletter

December 2018

REVERSING FALLS SANCTUARY



Dear Friends,

Winter has arrived on the peninsula, and we all seek warmth — warmth in our homes, warmth in our friendships, warmth in our relationships with our families. Every December on a dark and usually cold afternoon, we gather at Reversing Falls Sanctuary for what is for many the most special event on our calendar — the Advent Spiral. After Anne’s introduction to the spiral, there is no talking, only the beautiful, meditative music provided by Jackie and Bobby. Each of us walks the spiral alone with whatever thoughts and concerns are on our hearts. Yet there is a shared warmth in the experience that generates a peace that those who have experienced it do not want to miss.

This year, in addition to the beauty of the fir and spruce lined spiral and the great tree decorated with large paper snowflakes, the *Gallery Within* will be featuring Annie Poole’s painted Advent Calendars and Sally Cook’s carved and painted birds in an exhibition called “The Magic of Winter.” The Advent Spiral announces the arrival of that magical season, preparing our hearts and fortifying our souls for all that is to come: The Winter Solstice, Christmas Eve at RFS this year, the Martin Luther King, Jr. commemoration, and the months when it seems the earth and many of its creatures sleep while some of us exult in winter’s activities and some of us cope. See the events listed in the calendar and do come join us.



Winter Sowing in Jugs: Eight Years of Experience

by Martha Bunim Moss

While living in State College, PA, I became a member of a group of men and women—the Penn State Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners—and joined a committee to do something locally that would be of benefit to the community as well as the environment. We wanted to create a native plant garden in a public park, to try and stir up interest in the town to join in or emulate our efforts.

At that time there was virtually no knowledge of or interest in native plants (myself included!). In fact, the town was largely a great swath of manicured lawns, similar evergreen shrubs around every home, and nothing for a hungry butterfly or bee to eat! As a result, bird populations were visibly down, and there were very few butterflies seen in the summer.

We were offered the use of a large greenhouse on the Penn State University campus. We eagerly accepted that and worked for two years to try and grow enough plants for our first demonstration garden. The problems we were having were many: Our plants died of “damping off” diseases. They became infected with molds and fungi of many kinds. They were invaded with spider mites, aphids, thrips, weevils, and white flies. This happened despite weekly professional cleaning and disinfecting with insecticidal sprays!

The following year we tried something different: We converted a large area in a house into a plant propagation room. We lined it with shelving, special lights, heating pads, and a host of other expensive paraphernalia. We tried growing our seedlings in small pots of many kinds. Peat pots, newspaper pots, clay pots, plastic pots. The results were mostly bad. Our plants became spindly, weak, yellow, and could not sustain the transfer to the great outdoors. We also had various insect invasions. Then one of our members heard about sowing seeds in milk jugs, so we decided to try that next. Our local recycling center supplied us with revoltingly filthy milk jugs that had not been properly washed before recycling.



Lobelia cardinalis, or Cardinal flowers,
from seeds sown in January in water jugs.

Ugh. We all suffered and worked to disinfect those reeking jugs. That first year we made many mistakes: We used too little soil, and the wrong soil; we could not properly open the jugs in the spring; our labels became illegible; and many other mistakes. However, despite all those errors, all our jugs had some healthy, sturdy seedlings that we were ready to immediately transplant into our public demonstration garden. No hardening off! No insect or mildew problems! This was indeed a revelation!

For the next two years, we worked out the problems and realized the full potential of this system of plant propagation: Free jugs, using water, not milk jugs! Free seeds, by collecting from our garden. A fun effort for a group of people on a day in January, and then no work until springtime when the seedlings come up.

After we had mastered the technique, we realized that this same method could be used by other organizations and individuals to spread “satellite” pollinator gardens all over our county and beyond. We scheduled workshops, arranged for school programs and demonstrations, and appeared at a number of events where we featured this method, and educated the public.

The outcome was that within a few years, from one small committee’s efforts came 43 additional thriving pollinator gardens, in a town of just 50,000 residents. This method helps the pollinators but also helps to build our human community!

For more information on this project, see:

Snetsingerbutterflygarden.org



Verbena hastata, Blue vervain, also from seeded water jugs sown in January.

On Sunday, Jan. 13 from 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. at Reversing Falls Sanctuary Martha will offer a “Winter Sowing in Jugs Workshop.” Cost \$10. Workshop limited to 20 participants. Preregistration required:

<https://extension.umaine.edu/register/product/winter-sowing-brooksville/>

RFS Building Progress

Visitors to the Sanctuary will have seen the well at the corner of the building and the new septic field and parking area beyond the old parking area and behind the building. The old kitchen has been torn out and work is ready to begin on the

interior construction of the bathroom, a galley style kitchen, and a supply closet. A recent appeal letter from Bec Poole on behalf of the board of directors invites your contributions toward the funds needed to finish these projects and/or your volunteer labor for those tasks that do not require contractors.

[You should have received the appeal in hard copy at your mailing address or, if we do not have your mailing address, as an attachment to an email. If you did not receive one, contact Gary at garyvencill@gmail.com.]



The Magic of Winter

“The Magic of Winter” at the *Gallery Within* at RFS features beautiful, lyrical and personal views of winter in Advent Calendar paintings by Annie Poole and Bird Carvings by Sally Cook. The *Gallery Within* will be open from 1 to 4 p.m. on Sunday afternoons through Jan. 6. Information: 326-0899 or www.reversingfalls.org

Coming Events

Sun. Dec. 9, 1 to 4 p.m. **“The Magic of Winter”** at the *Gallery Within*

Mon. Dec. 10, 6:30-7:30 p.m. **12 Step Community Gathering** for people whose lives are being affected by family or friends who are struggling with addiction. Come share experience, strength and hope.

Wed. Dec. 12, 4:30 p.m. Program Team meets

Sat. Dec. 15, 10 a.m. **Advent Spiral Setup**. Work begins after meditation. Bring tips of fir, spruce or cedar if you have some available.

Sun. Dec. 16, 1-4 p.m. **“The Magic of Winter”** at the *Gallery Within*

4 p.m. **Annual Advent Spiral** with music by Jackie Pike and Bobby Cleveland.

Mon. Dec. 17, 6:30-7:30 p.m. **12 Step Community Gathering**



Fri. Dec. 21, 4 p.m. The **Winter Solstice Celebration** will feature a time for meditation, luminarias, a procession to the Reversing Falls of the Bagaduce, a renewal ceremony at the solstice fire, and the launching of a boat filled with hope for the coming year. [Watch for a detailed announcement about what to expect and what to bring.]

This photo from a summer solstice

Sat. Dec. 22. Winter Solstice snow date

Mon. Dec. 24, 4 p.m. **Christmas Eve Service** at Reversing Falls. This year the Brooksville United Methodist Church will host a service for the Brooksville community at Reversing Falls Sanctuary. The tree, the spiral, and strings of lights around the sanctuary will make a perfect setting.

Sun. Jan. 6, 1-4 p.m. Closing opportunity to view **“The Magic of Winter”** at the *Gallery Within*.

4 p.m. Women’s Circle

Mon. Jan. 7, 6:30-7:30 p.m. 12 Step Community Gathering

Sun. Jan. 13, 1:30 to 4 p.m. **Winter Sowing in Jugs Workshop.**

4 p.m. **Kaleidoscoping Christianity.** Continue the conversation at Elaine and Mike Hewes'. A potluck supper will follow at 6 p.m.

Mon. 1/14, 6:30-7:30 p.m. 12 Step Community Gathering

Tue. 1/15, 6 p.m. Megan Flenniken, GSA ecology teacher, will discuss her **ecology** classes at George Stevens.

Sun. Jan. 20, 4 p.m. **Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemoration.**

Photo credits:

Spiral Apples by Julie Cleveland

Winter Sowing Flowers by Martha Moss

Septic Field and Parking Area by Daksha Bauman

Summer Solstice photo [no longer certain]

Advent Spiral by Julie Cleveland

Advent Logs provided by Dan Husijen

Information: 469-7850 or www.reversingfalls.org



