

The September 2009 Retreat...

The sheets are all back on the beds, the towels hanging on their respective bars, the dishes all put away. Walking into the building and looking around, you'd never know there were 11 people there the last weekend in September. And yet, there is a feeling that lingers, an aura if you will. If you stand in the yoga studio, you might hear the quiet, rhythmic breathing of the students as they sit quietly in meditation or holding a warrior pose. If you sit at the dining room table, perhaps you'll hear remnants of the laughter from a silly story told. Or maybe the compliments for the local talent as you stand in the gift shop. And, yes, perhaps even the gentle snoring emanating from a few of the bedrooms. That weekend brought together a most marvelous group of women, from as far as Minnesota and near as Avon; some who had never met and others who were familiar with the lives they share in nearby towns. All, though, came because of one thing they have in common – a love of Yoga. Some have spent many years practicing asanas (the poses of yoga) while others are relatively new to the practice. Jane, who is certified instructor in several areas of yoga, traveled from New York State to teach about Kundalini Yoga, a vigorous and energetic practice that had us up on our toes and flat on our faces. "Jane's positive energy is extraordinary and inspiring," wrote one of the participants. Daria Babbitt, Salem, instructed the group on Meditation and had us "mindfully" walking about the property as the sun warmed us and the gentle breeze touched our faces. Meredith Kendall, Farmington, and Anna Diebold from Phillips, gave a very meaningful class on Reiki. We learned about the positive, healing energy we are all capable of bringing to those in pain. And Megan Roberts, also from Farmington, concluded the weekend workshops with a self-affirming Ananda Yoga class.

"Free Time" was scheduled for Saturday afternoon. Some enjoyed 30 minute massages from Heidi Sorenson of Rangeley, a perfect compliment to the other activities of the weekend. There was also an impromptu Vinyasa (flow) Yoga class; some ventured to Reeds Mill Church, within walking distance of the venue, and enjoyed belting out a few familiar hymns; others hiked the property or just sat in the sun and enjoyed the views of the meadow across the way, backed by colorful forest and mountains. Ahhhh.....

One of the highlights of the weekend for this writer had absolutely nothing to do with Yoga, yet was just as inspiring. At 7:12 Saturday night, we stood outside and watched and waited and waited and watched and finally, yes, there it was.....the International Space Station, gliding from the WSW to the ESE. A 3 minute trip across the darkening sky, our eyes glued to the shining light and our voices ringing clear as we sang our National Anthem. Now, this may seem a bit corny to some, but considering the times, how appropriate! Honoring our fellow countrymen who ride in space at 18,000 MPH along side people from other countries. Kinda goose-bumpy....

"This was a wonderful, growing experience of different ideas and people enjoying togetherness," was one closing comment. Another wrote, "It was all that I needed for a relaxing and fulfilled time, for me to be with others who believe in this way of life – taking care of self to be present for others," wrote Martina Arnold, a yogini in her own right! It was truly a pleasure and honor to bring this kind of special time to the people I have had the privilege of meeting as I go about Franklin County teaching Yoga. Thank you all for bringing so much to my life. I look forward with great anticipation to our next retreat.

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