

Living with Grace and Passion

A Seasonal Newsletter from Peggy Patenaude
Spring 2009

Coming Up

My One Wild and Precious Life Women's Retreat

Friday, May 29, 7:30 PM to
Sunday, May 31, 1:00 PM
Sacred Hearts Retreat Center
Wareham, MA

For information & registration:
Contact Peggy at (508) 548-9149 or
timeoutretreats@comcast.net

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### My One Wild and Precious Life Women's Retreat

Friday, June 19, 9:30AM to  
Saturday, June 20, 5:00PM  
Xavier Center  
Convent Station, NJ

**For information & registration:**  
Contact Xavier at: 973-290-5100 or  
[xaviercenter@scnj.org](mailto:xaviercenter@scnj.org)

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Finding Peace Amidst Loss

Sunday, June 28, 2009
1:00PM to 4:00PM

One Light: A Center for Spiritual
Transformation, W. Yarmouth
Facilitated by Peggy Patenaude
and Carol O'Connell.

For information & registration:
Contact Peggy at (508) 548-9149 or
Carol at (508) 362-4141 Ext.118

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### One Light Service

On April 26, May 10 and June 14  
Peggy will be the guest speaker for  
the 10AM Sunday Service at  
One Light: A Center for Spiritual  
Transformation, W. Yarmouth.  
[www.peaceoncapecod.org](http://www.peaceoncapecod.org)

For Peggy's complete calendar visit  
[www.timeoutretreats.com](http://www.timeoutretreats.com)

## Peg's Ponderings: Holy Loafing

The river near our house is home to many elegant white swans. As I stood watching them the other day, I was struck by how smoothly they glide along the water. Their gracefulness made me long for the same type of ease for approaching life, especially work.

Life works better when we go with the flow. As the story goes, two men were walking along a path beside a river when a storm arose and they were caught in a flash flood. One man furiously attempted to swim to shore, only to drown in the process. The other, realizing the current was stronger than he was, relaxed and let the river carry him safely to shore. So often we "fight" life when acceptance, trust and a new strategy could work so much better.

Recently I was struggling with writing a talk at my computer. To add to my frustration, the computer froze. Neither would the cursor move nor would the computer shut down. Feeling helpless, I turned off the power in the entire room and took a walk!

What I chose to do was what Alan Cohen calls "holy loafing" - the getting away from our task and doing something completely unrelated. Holy loafing keeps the creative juices flowing and our lives balanced. I returned home renewed, "unstuck" and ready to work again . . . and so was the computer. It's funny how life provides.

Often, the harder we work at something, the less it works for us. Too many of us driven by perfectionism and compulsion falsely believe if we keep at something, the better it will be. Holy loafing could be so much more productive - like going for an ice cream cone, reading a juicy novel, hiking in the woods. *Living with grace and passion* is enormously enhanced by doing what might appear to be the opposite - taking a break.

Letting go of old habits is a challenge, but I'm convinced the rewards of living with ease are worth it. I'm actually contemplating taking a *whole* day off mid-week and making it my *Wellness Wednesday*. With the emergence of new life all around us this spring, let's believe that a new way of living is possible for all of us if we but relax and do a little more "holy loafing".



## Passing It On

*A Deep Breath of Life* by Alan Cohen

Subtitled *Daily Inspiration for Heart-Centered Living*, *A Deep Breath of Life* offers a one-page message for each day of the year. Each theme includes an inspirational quote, a story, a prayer and an affirmation. Actually, the three quotes in *A Little Soul Food* came from this book, and along with the swans, several essays in this collection inspired my reflection, *Holy Loafing*. *A Deep Breath of Life* is truly a treasure!

*The Shack* by William Paul Young

While you are doing some “holy loafing” you might check out this New York Times bestseller. The fictional story centers on the tragic loss of Mackenzie Philips’s daughter and his subsequent encounter with God. Though I found some of the dialogue a bit too wordy, I’m happy I stayed with the story. It left me with the sense of a loving, compassionate God. *The Shack* is an excellent novel for discussion in a book club. It has the potential to stretch one’s image of the divine, as well as shed light on the timeless question: *Where is God in our suffering?*

*Women of Faith*: Documentary film by Rebecca M. Alvin

On Thursday, April 16 at 7:00PM, Cape Cod filmmaker Rebecca M. Alvin's latest documentary, "Women of Faith," will premiere at the Screening Room at the Cape Cod Museum of Art in Dennis. The film explores issues of faith, gender, sexuality, and activism in the Catholic Church through interviews with several active and contemplative nuns, a former nun, and a Roman Catholic womanpriest. The latter two with Ms. Alvin will host a reception and Q & A session after the film. Tickets (\$10) can be purchased in advance by calling 508-385-5644 or at the door the night of the show. For more information, visit <http://www.capecinema.com/> and click on the link for Screening Room.

## Recent Events



### St. Francis Xavier, Acushnet, MA Faculty Retreat, January 30, 2009

Cathedral Camp in East Freetown, MA was the site of the annual retreat for the staff of SFX. The day closed with a ritual in which teachers commissioned one another “to go forth and be a living edition of the Gospel.”

### Keeping Your Love Alive February 28, 2009



### Communication Magic and Miracles March 1, 2009



Strengthening relationships was the focus of two mid-winter programs held at **Genesis Spiritual Life Center in Westfield, MA** - a couples retreat and a communication skills workshop. For one couple, “It made the difference we needed to get our marriage back on track.” Those who came to sharpen their communication skills were given lots of practice. As one commented, “I’ll be able to use skills I learned today in real life situations, especially in conflict.”

## A Little Soul Food

*To do great work  
a man must be  
very idle  
as well as  
very industrious.*

~Samuel Butler



*Shift  
your sail  
with  
the wind.*

~Italian Proverb

*If you ever feel  
that you “should”  
do something,  
lie down  
until the feeling  
passes.*

~Arnold Patent

