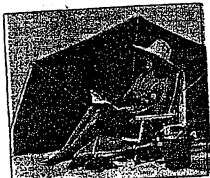


STANLEY STEEMER



TOUGH ON DIRT. GENTLE ON CARPET™ 675-9988



SUMMER STUFF
Take wind out of gales

Knock off the blowing beach sand with a product called "Windthingy"
Windthingy is a fan-shaped umbrella-style nylon shield made to block wind or blowing sand. Think of it as a beach umbrella secured on its side in the sand.
Windthingy is 7 feet wide and 3 1/4 feet tall. When its aluminum shaft and plastic stakes at the fabric ends are buried in the sand or soil, the umbrella's fan spreads out to protect sunbathers, loungers or campers.
The product can be folded for carrying and comes in blue, red, gold, green and purple.
Windthingy sells for \$39, plus shipping, and is available from www.windthingy.com. It was created by WesArt Productions of Irvine, Calif.



BOOK FOR THE BEACH
'Silent Boy' offers ageless story

A writer who specialized in novels for young readers once said, with tongue in cheek, "if what I do is classified as 'juvenile' fiction, then everything else must be 'senile' fiction, right?"
There's nothing juvenile or senile, in that respect, about Lois Lowry's "The Silent Boy" — a great summer read for both young readers and their parents. Ask about anyone, be it a high school freshman or her grandmother, to name their favorite books, and "To Kill a Mockingbird" would be one of them.
In "The Silent Boy" there is something of that same good writing and impressive lesson learned. Throw in a little "Horse Whisperer" theology, and you've got the basis for this two-time Newbery-winning author's story about the spunky and warm-hearted daughter of the town doctor and her odd and special friend, Jacob.

—INA HUGHES

KIDS COOKING

Go ape over banana treats

The kids already act like monkeys; might as well let them eat like one. Do these up ahead of time and it might entice them down the tree. If they help in the preparation, be careful they don't burn themselves on the peanut butter mixture.

Jungle Bananas

- 8 to 10 wooden skewers
- 4 or 5 banana halves
- 1/4 cup peanut butter
- 1/4 cup butter-soaked morsels
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 cups crushed cereal

Insert a skewer in each banana half. Melt peanut butter, butterscotch morsels and oil. Pour into tall glass. Dip banana halves into peanut butter mixture. Roll in cereal and freeze.

REFRESHING CHANGE



DON WOOD/NEWS SENTINEL

Retreat centers allow visitors to refocus, recharge

BY JENNIFER HUNTER
hunter@knews.com

"An inability to stay quiet is one of the most conspicuous failings of mankind."

— WALTER RASENOT

CHILHAM, Ala. — A shawl of quiet blankets St. Bernard Abbey.

The only fast-paced action comes from squirrels darting across the lush campus or a lone monk walking briskly to attend Mass.

In this community of prayer, guests at its newly renovated Retreat and Conference Center can embark on a vacation for their soul. They can choose to visit by themselves in unstructured and undirected activity or as part of meetings, retreats or camps.

In today's 24-hour frenetic lifestyle, such silence is golden, priceless.

When Daytimes runneth over and Blackberry are filled to capacity with personal and professional appointments, there are places to go to recharge, refresh and restore one's spirit, without driving too far from Knoxville.

"Centers like ours give people the opportunity to experience somewhat the monastic life," said Abbot Cletus Mesinger of the Catholic monastery of Benedictine monks in northern Alabama where the monks celebrate the Bucharist and Liturgy of the Hours four times a day at the abbey church. Guests also may attend Mass. The monks also observe private prayer called "lectio divina" or meditative holy reading.

"Sometimes the most urgent thing you can possibly do is take a complete rest," said cartoonist and author Ashleigh Brilliant, whose books include "I'm Just Moving Clouds Today" — "Tomorrow I'll Try Mountains" and "I Try to Take One Day at a Time, but Sometimes Several Days Attack Me at Once."

In "Retreat," author Roger Housden notes that "more people are going on retreat than ever before. While the Christian monastic tradition is in decline all over the Western world, retreat facilities of every spiritual denomination are full weeks, even months, in advance."

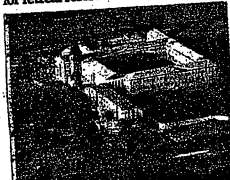
In 2001, Phil Stone created www.findthedinve.com, which lists more than 1,200 such centers in the United States and Canada. He notes that there are more than 2,000 abbeys, monasteries and spiritual retreat centers in North America.

"These hidden jewels are out there for almost nothing, cost-wise," Stone told "Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel" magazine. "A spa will cost you \$200-\$300 a night; some retreats are \$100 for a weekend, meals included. So it's a spiritual and a financial escape."

The following is a thumbnail sketch of retreat centers where visitors may find silence and solitude within six hours' drive of Knoxville.

Jennifer H. Hunter may be reached at 865-342-6324.

■ **Abbey of Gethsemani, Thpapist, Ky.** Speaking is permitted in designated areas. Tours of the abbey are not available; day visitors have access to the Abbey Church and the front grounds. Retreat house is primarily for individuals during one weekday retreat or two weekend retreats each year. A four-month window is open for retreat reservations. 502-549-3117.



Abbey of Gethsemani

■ **Center for Massage and Natural Health Retreat Center, Asheville, N.C.** Lakeside and mountain views. Offers variety of packages such as individual Pilates and yoga retreats. Vegetarian, vegan, macrobiotic, Ayurvedic or American cuisine prepared. Ideal for individuals and groups. 828-659-0814.

■ **Cross Winds Contemplative Retreat Center, a 25-acre ecumenical center in College Grove, which is outside Nashville.** Features an outdoor labyrinth. Ideal for individual and small-group retreats. 615-368-7525.

■ **Forest Hills Mountain Resort and Conference Center, Dahlonega, Ga.** located on 120 acres of forests and rolling hills. Ideal for individual and group-oriented getaways. 706-864-6456 and 1-800-654-6313.



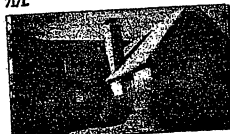
Forest Hills Mountain Resort and Conference Center

■ **Living Waters Catholic Reflection Center, Maggie Valley, N.C.,** 40 miles west of Asheville. Facilities for private and directed retreats, preached retreats, seminars and conferences. Ideal for individuals and groups. 828-926-9332.

■ **Roanah Barren, Jewish summer camp and year-round retreat center,** surrounded by Chattahoochee National Forest near Clayton, Ga. Has 122 acres complete with crystal-clear mountain brooks, a picturesque lake and a 100-foot waterfall. Ideal for conferences, board retreats, Bar/Bat Mitzvah and other gatherings. Organizes popular Camp Ramah. 706-782-9300 and 404-631-0801.

■ **St. Bernard Abbey, 1600 St. Bernard Drive, Cullemt, Ala. 256-734-3946.** Newly renovated and decorated center accommodates 96 guests. Each room has two twin beds with a private bath. Complete meal and banquet facilities. 800 acres in the mountain lake district.

■ **Stonehaven Retreat Center, Little Switzerland, N.C.** Christian retreat center in Western North Carolina mountains. Has 16 pastoral and wooded acres and sleeping capacity for 30 in a five-bedroom main house and attached apartment and log cabin. Ideal for individual daytime visits, work visits, overnight guests, conferences or church groups. 828-765-7771.



Stonehaven Retreat Center

For additional information, consult www.findthedinve.com; Retreats International at www.retreatsintl.org, which lists 340 retreat centers in the United States and Canada; and NARDA, a network of Christian retreat and educational centers, at www.nardacenter.org, which lists a few hundred Christian centers in the United States and Canada.