

The School of the Natural Order, Inc.
P. O. Box 150
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RESONANCE

January / February 2010

Around the Place

Home Farm has been quiet the last few months. Although we have had very little precipitation for most of the winter, the unusually cold temperatures have made working outdoors, taking walks, etc., uncomfortable. About the only extended outdoor activity has been firewood cutting. A combination of car and foot traffic, northern exposures and extended below freezing temperatures have perpetuated the large icy areas around the Main House, making walking there fairly treacherous.

The past week has brought two days of snow to our valley. The ten inches of snow that fell was then blown about by the wind, forming lovely drifts over three feet high in many locations, while scouring other areas clear down to brown dirt. Charlie Sheppard is just about the same height as some of those drifts, and he had a wonderful time falling down into the soft snow, eating large handfuls of icy whiteness, and running along the plowed roads, looking very much like a short brown penguin.

On many days, the most visible activity on the Farm is among the birds. Three ducks are wintering over on the pond, and the haunting calls of the owls can often be heard both day and night. Juncos and

goldfinches busily search for seeds on the ground. And the huge flock of starlings raises a ruckus wherever it settles, their chattering continuing long after dark has fallen.

Many community activities in the Valley have helped break the winter doldrums, however. EskDale, the religious community across the valley, held its annual Christmas banquet and play, plus several other musical programs. The bi-weekly "ladies lunch" continued, highlighted by a "high tea" brunch at the Border Inn. The Snake Valley community center is open each Tuesday for visiting, snacks and crafts activities.

The annual shepherders' gathering, plus several dances held at the Border Inn, have also provided opportunities to get out for those suffering from cabin fever.

We had a lovely Christmas dinner at Home Farm this year which was attended by about 30 people. Tender roast turkey and smoked pork loin were served along with many delicious side dishes. A smaller group enjoyed a traditional southern meal of ham, sweet potatoes and black eyed peas on New Year's Day. Several drum circles

were held for winter solstice, hosted by Nomi and John Sheppard. This was the first drum circle experience for many of us and we hope for more chances to share the experience.

Our garden seed orders have been completed and we should now have enough seeds to last us several years. We have purchased both hybrid and open pollinated varieties to enable us to collect seeds if we choose to do so. Pruning has begun again in the orchard and we continue to keep our compost bin supplied with kitchen scraps. The School's board of directors has approved the expenditure for materials to rehab the greenhouse and cold frame, so they should be usable this season once construction is completed.

We have also had several planning meetings for our summer seminar (please see enclosed flyer) and are very excited about providing an opportunity for our resident and local natural healing practitioners to share their expertise with us. We are also looking forward to welcoming people from the local area to attend our seminar classes, not just SNO students and visitors as in the past. Many

local residents say they have not even been to Home Farm even though they have lived in the area for years!

The Saturday movie night at the Centrum has resumed now that a new projector has been purchased. The cost of the projector was shared by the moviegoers and the School. This win-win situation will allow people from Home Farm and Baker to enjoy movies each Saturday, and the School will now have an excellent video system available for School-related class activities and presentations.

Our weekly Thursday evening class continues to meet. We have chosen *Self-Mastery Through Meditation* to read and discuss together. This is an interesting volume, in that it is a compilation of Vitvan's writings about meditation that spans almost two decades.

May the peace and the power of the Infinite Spirit which passes all understanding hold us and keep us in the love of the Christed consciousness, while we are seemingly separated, one from another.

— Jane Murray and Susan Wetmore, 2010