

RESONANCE

September - October 2011

August and September have been busy and productive months, filled with lots of activity here at the School, and accompanied by puffy summer clouds during the day and lovely clear skies that showcased a spectacular Milky Way at night.

Despite the unseasonably warm weather, signs of fall are everywhere. The hummingbirds have left, other birds are collecting on the power lines before their migration south, rabbit brush is in full bloom, the aspens in the mountains to the west are brilliant shades of yellow and orange, and other foliage around Home Farm is also turning yellow and shades of red.

Our two preschoolers, Charlie and Brandon, have had a terrific time playing in the orchard near the art trailer, splashing in their pool, digging in their sandbox, and, most recently, watching as their new playground apparatus is being constructed on its leveled pad just north of the apricot trees. Now that the fruit has begun to ripen, the orchard is also host to many deer (and rabbits) who graze on the windfall crabapples, pears, apples and plums.

Several maintenance items on our long-term "To Do" list have been accomplished recently.

The screen on the front porch of the Main House has been completely replaced. Not only does it look very nice, it also keeps the insects outside our living and eating space. Along with the newly painted soffit and the repaired gutter, the entire porch area is in good shape for the coming fall and winter.

The second project involves our pond. Over the past ten years or so, the cattails have grown out into the pond, decreasing the pond area and turning the shores into a marsh that is in danger of taking over the entire pond. In order to cut the cattails, we wanted to drain the pond, but in order to drain the pond, we needed to be able to open the valve on the southeast end of the pond bottom, a drain which was many decades old and completely silted in.

In late August the excess spring water was diverted from entering the pond and a siphon was set up on the east wall of the pond. Over the next three weeks, the water was slowly siphoned off until only a few feet of water was left, exposing the valve along with hundreds of small fish, all of them now concentrated in a small area of water.

While the pond level was so low, some of the reeds were cut, and some pond vegetation was mowed along the east shore. However, renovating this pond is a huge job, and now that we know we can drain the pond to work on it, we will allow it to refill for the winter while we make an upgrade plan to implement in the spring.

The exterior rehab of our shops was also completed. With new doors and fresh paint these shops look almost new!

The gardens have thrived this summer, thanks to our dedicated gardening crew and an exceptionally long growing season. Every

vegetable we planted grew well and produced abundantly. Due to the extended warm weather, some flowers and vegetables got a second wind and re-bloomed, re-fruited, and continue to send out new growth.

Our community gardeners are still harvesting many vegetables—tomatoes, beans, peppers, cucumbers, chard, onions, summer and winter squash, herbs, and flowers—and we are hoping that the first frost, which will end much of our garden bounty, is still several weeks away.

Harvesting the garden is part of the process, and the other, of course, is putting it up. We have prepared bags of vegetables in the freezer, as well as drying some herbs and vegetables and doing some canning, too. We also tried sauerkraut this year, an uncooked variety that fermented for about three weeks in the basement before it was ready to eat. It turns out to be especially delicious with bratwurst!

The garden and orchard trimmings, along with the meadow and lawn mowing, have been combined with the vegetable matter in our compost bin to make this year's fall compost pile. Although only a week old, it is already heated up to 140 degrees and will make a lovely mound of rich material to add to our gardens and lawns next spring.

Vitvan emphasized the need for biodynamic gardening in order to get in touch with nature's formative forces. And William Wadsworth said, "Come forth into the light of things, let Nature be your teacher". Our volunteers find joy, solace, and satisfaction working in the garden.

One of our residents has given our Main House interior some TLC, adding fabrics, pictures, flowers, and other décor to the common areas we all use. Each day when we walk into the

Main House, we enjoy the results of the attention she has given to our living space.

Much of our individual activity reflects the quote that someone wrote on the message board in the Main House kitchen.

Build you a temple in your
consciousness upon the rock of faith,
and by your works make your life a
monument of beauty, whether the
world knows and enjoys it or knows
not. This, in effect, represents the
eternal as well as the universal
significance of faith.

--- Vitvan, Treatise on Faith

And now, may the peace and 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