

To us, summer represents a season of increased activity, and the past few months have certainly borne this out.

Looking at the garden now, it is hard to remember that just two months ago we were coaxing little seedlings along and nurturing fragile transplants.

Now we see jungles in the squash patches, rows of towering sweet corn, healthy beans spiraling up the stalks of heirloom corn, luxuriant broccoli and cabbage, sweet and hot pepper plants laden with peppers of all colors (red, orange, yellow, and green), and tomatoes beginning to ripen. The gardens are verdant and bountiful, and working in them is a joy.

Much of June and July has been devoted to preparing Home Farm, outdoors and inside, for our summer seminar. Our goal was to make our guests feel welcomed and comfortable.

A small but dedicated crew worked on the north end of the garden units. This involved repainting and re-flooring in the bedrooms, and completely renovating the bathroom, a laborious and painstaking task.

Another crew spent time coordinating all of our guest rooms, making sure sheets, towels, and furnishings were pleasing and comfortable.

Our grounds received loving care, too, including mowing, pruning, watering, raking, and general "sprucing up." The

front lawn was lush and green, and the leaves on the elm trees regained much of their early summer vitality after an application of oil/soap spray that slowed the elm beetle infestation.

A few weeks prior to seminar, each room, from the meeting rooms to kitchens to bathrooms and bedrooms, was given a thorough cleaning. The library's computerized catalog system was updated, new labels were added to shelves, and returned books were re-shelved.

As has been the practice for the past few years, a seminar binder was prepared for each seminar participant, with handouts and notes contributed by each presenter along with a schedule for the week.

The arrival of our guests marked the beginning of a dynamic and exciting week.

Our participants came from as far away as Arkansas, and included old friends as well as 'first-timers.'

The weather, which had been uncomfortably hot this summer, was perfect. The cool mornings were just right for our pre-breakfast meditations under the shade of the elm trees. Even our late-morning reading and discussion classes, held outside near the rock wall, were comfortable as well as inspiring.

The gardens and orchard shared their bounty with us during the week. We

grazed on pea pods and green beans while we weeded and cultivated. The walk between the Main House and the Centrum took us past plum trees loaded with fruit, some of which are already sweet and juicy.

Our meals used as much local food as possible. Neighborhood chickens provided delicious eggs. Cabbage was turned into yummy coleslaw, beans and squash were picked fresh and steamed for dinner, and our Tronchuda cabbage (aka Portuguese kale) was transformed into the wrappings for our cabbage rolls.

The theme for this year's seminar was "The Spiral and the Helix: Journeys through the Real Whirled." Our classes were interesting, exciting, and stimulating. The presentations were well-organized, diverse, and informative.

Spirals play a central role in Vitvan's teachings, appearing in life on levels from microscopic to macroscopic, including our own inner development. These patterns were not only intellectually satisfying and visually beautiful, but psychologically reassuring as we applied them to our own lives and experiences. As the days went by, the dynamic nature of the world/whirled became an increasing reality.

And to cap it all off, the nighttime skies put on a terrific show for us. Our Great Basin night skies are renowned for their darkness and clarity, so we are used to seeing the Milky Way make a spectacular arch in the sky. This year we were treated to the Perseid meteor

showers as well, with streams of light streaking down toward the horizons in our valley.

"Everything is swirling, everything is dynamic, including our respective selves. Any given 'this' to which you can point in its ultimate structure represents a spinning helix, a dynamic process."

Studies in Psychotherapy, Lesson 6,
by Vitvan

Susan Wetmore

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