

By the time daylight savings appeared this year, it seems we 'lost' not only an hour but an entire month. Winter was half-hearted this year, and signs of spring appeared in late February, first with greening vegetation, then with dandelions here and there, and finally, by the "official" first day of spring, lilacs and elms had leafed out, the daffodils had bloomed, fragrant blossoms covered our apricot trees, and little cilantros began to poke up in the garden.

Since then, of course, we've had the usual unsettled lion-and-lamb of spring – wind, snow, rain, and warm sun, all on the same day! Several nights have been cold enough that the delicate blossoms on the fruit trees have turned brown, which doesn't bode well for the fruit crop later this summer. However, spring is now well and truly here, about a month ahead of normal in terms of what's growing and blooming and which birds have arrived. Several fields have even had an early partial mowing to knock down the vigorously growing tumbleweed and horehound.

Already we have many birds on the property, sometimes flying singly and other times in flocks large enough to cause shadows across our windows as they fly by. The meadowlarks, robins and killdeer have returned, filling our trees and fields with their songs, and down on the pond a pair of grebes has built a nest in the weeds along the bank, constantly calling to one another as they swim in and out of sight. Today, an exceptionally hardy hummingbird zipped across the Centrum lawn – truly an 'early bird'!

The energy of the season has inspired lots of spring cleaning activity here at Home Farm. We are cleaning out cupboards, corners, drawers, and storerooms that haven't been touched in many years. Some of our discoveries are useful treasures

worth keeping, but many are long-forgotten items that need to find new homes, which we are hoping will happen at the yard sale we are hosting here at Home Farm in mid-April.

All this furniture moving, cleaning, and organizing have been wonderful opportunities for our entire group to work together toward the satisfying goals of simplification, less clutter, more space, and re-purposing of items and living arrangements.

A natural extension of this activity has been getting our guest rooms ready for spring and summer visitors. Linens and décor for each room have been considered carefully and in some cases spruced up with things found during our spring cleaning – a pretty lamp, or a nice side table. Seeing the rooms take on their refreshed looks as a result of our efforts is satisfying for us, and we have gotten very positive feedback from our guests.

Many of our rooms were used this past week by members of Peter Ford's family, who arrived here for Peter's memorial which was held on April 5. Peter, a dear friend, long-time Baker resident and former member of the SNO board, passed away on February 13. We were very pleased to be able to make his family feel so comfortable and welcome during their stay here.

Much activity has been going on out-of-doors, too. One of the culverts under our road had, over decades of use and snow-plowing, become completely covered with dirt and gravel. Both ends were dug out and cleaned, an extension was added to increase the length, and a lovely rock drainage was constructed on the downhill side.

Although the weather is still too unsettled to do much planting, the garden has been tilled. Beds are being prepared for planting onion sets, the compost pile has been revved up, and the garlic

that was planted late last summer is already eight to ten inches tall, standing strong and straight in parallel green arrays. Seeds have been started under the grow lights.

Many of the fruit trees have received an early pruning, and the pruned branches have been collected to be added to the next compost pile. The springs are running, and work on the ditches in the lower orchard has commenced to irrigate the fruit trees there.

We are also planning some remodeling projects. One of our rental trailers is being repaired, painted, and upgraded for a new tenant, and in May, we will undertake the re-siding of the meditation center, a project which has been on the drawing board for several years. A work crew of students from Colorado and California will be arriving to take charge of this project. The old stucco will be removed and replaced by vinyl siding. The single-pane windows, which date back over fifty years, will also be replaced with more energy-efficient ones. We are looking forward to finally getting this

project underway, and we are very grateful to our experienced work crew for their willingness to undertake this project.

A devoted crew of editors and proofreaders has been hard at work on the final proofreading of *The Natural Order Process, Volumes 1, 2 and 3*. The proofs have arrived, with a perfect binding and a completely new look. The books are a pleasure to look at and hold as well as to read, and we are looking forward to getting the final printing done.

These longer spring days give us more time and infuse us with more energy to get things done. We sometimes feel tired at the end of a strenuous work project, but we are feeling a renewed sense of harmony and participation. We realize that we are 'cleaning our house' on many levels, and we are inspired by Vitvan's closing words in *Cosmology*, Lesson 4: "Let us not become weary in well doing: for in due season we shall all reap, if we faint not....May peace and joy attend your efforts."

Susan Wetmore, April, 2014

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