



## *AROUND THE PLACE*

*August 2016*

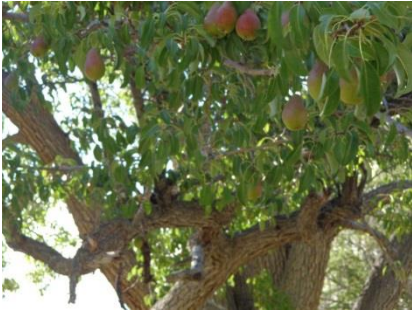
The past five weeks have been full of activity as well as many very warm days. As in other part of the country, July was exceptionally hot, and heat records were set throughout our area. We usually expect a week or so of hot summer temperatures, but July brought us almost four weeks of heat that drove us inside by mid-morning. We are grateful for many things in our lives, and lately we've included swamp coolers and air conditioners in this list.

Usually by this time of year, our monsoon season is in full swing, with its refreshing afternoon showers and lovely rainbows across the valley, but this year we are still waiting for these to occur. Nonetheless, thanks to our faithful springs, our lawns, landscaping and gardens are all thriving despite the heat.

Our garden harvest to date has included garlic (five varieties), lettuce, green onions, summer squash, basil, broccoli, and cabbage. We have enjoyed many meals made with produce picked fresh from the garden and appearing on our plates not an hour later.

The garden flowers have been lovely this year – tithtonia over five feet tall, statice, calendula, morning glories, marigolds, cosmos... bright spots of color interspersed with rows of green throughout the garden. Often these flowers find their way into the dining room arranged in spectacular bouquets of cultivated flowers, their wild cousins, and native grasses. In fact, we had so many volunteer cosmos, marigolds and calendula that reseeded themselves from last year that we've had to pull some of them up like weeds, 'explaining' to them that, no, you can't grow here, this space is for carrots this year. Gardening often involves some refereeing as well!





We expect an abundance of fruit this year. We had a nice crop of apricots, and the plums are ripening from green to purple

now. They should be ready in a couple of weeks. Following that we will have peaches, apples, and pears to enjoy. Seeing the trees so full of fruit is especially welcome since we had none at all last season.

Other projects are underway, too. The basement utility sink has a new faucet that doesn't leak and which makes washing big pots and sinks full of produce very easy. The tile in the meditation center bathroom is up on the walls, and it looks great, a big improvement from the old cracked tub surround that used to be there.

The pond looks absolutely wonderful these days. The cattails are gone, and the pond is filled with water once again. A few simple fountains that help aerate the water have been set up, and the water sparkles as it falls from level to level and finally into the pond.

Just a few days ago, the new dock was completed. It is built on the west side of the pond, and it is spacious, sturdy, and inviting. Its lines are dramatic and appealing, and it has already seen a good deal of use during seminar, sometimes just for sitting and enjoying the serenity of the surroundings, but more often as seminar participants took morning, afternoon, and sunset dips in the water.

The week of seminar brought us guests, presenters, and days filled with classes, discussions, and many opportunities to share time together. Each presenter had his or her own approach to getting functional with the teachings and using the teachings to continue to increase our own awareness and growth. This reconnection with the field, shared with other students, is dynamic and fills us with gratitude for all that we are offered and given.

We ended this week with a discussion about perhaps planning for longer seminars in the summer, and shorter ones periodically during the year. We will keep you posted!

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