

With the electronic age upon us, including millions of websites, and the abundance of every type and quality of online information available to almost everyone, we sometimes wonder if our remote, rural SNO headquarters location is still relevant. But as we listen to Vitvan's teachings, and re-read his admonition to the board of directors, and the School's articles of incorporation and by-laws, we become more committed to his message of working toward group functioning and participating with nature's formative forces.

The following is a quote from Vitvan, An American Master by Rick Satriano. *"On the day they took possession of the property (Home Farm) he (Vitvan) told them. 'You may look around you and tell me that you see broken-down buildings, a withered orchard, parched fields and a barren garden. If this is what you see, then raise your consciousness and see with my eyes. I can only see the Mother—The Great World Mother. She is asking us to hold out our hands to her, to sow her earth, to channel her springs, to prune her fruit trees, to direct the strength of our limbs to building. She will share in every task. Her love for us is boundless. She calls to us to thrill with her to the pulsation of the eternal genetrix.'*

With this in mind, our small group, with planning from the garden and buildings and grounds committees, works to keep our desert oasis maintained, functioning, and upgraded. The elm trees have been treated with soap spray and compost enzymes to help them recover from last year's beetle

invasion. The lawns, pasture and orchard have been mowed and receive their regular watering. The community garden is in full swing with a packed green house, flowers and vegetables planted and much more still to go in. We are already harvesting radishes, spinach, lettuce and pak choi. Several compost piles are working away in convenient locations close to where the rich soil amendment can be spread. Leggy geraniums that have been kept inside all winter have been put out in the sun where they will fill out and brighten up the outdoor spaces with their brilliant flowers.

Unfortunately for us, the unusually dry winter and spring weather has decreased the food supply for the neighboring rodents who have moved into our oasis in great numbers. The garden is fenced against rabbits but pack rats, voles, squirrels and mice have had a field day chomping down our new plantings. It seems that each year we get an overabundance some sort of wildlife from rabbits to rodents, to birds, to insects depending on the weather conditions during the previous winter and spring. We attribute our large jackrabbit and cottontail populations to the lack of a farm dog and the elimination of coyotes by government trappers to reduce domestic sheep predation. These are just a few examples of how our rural location allows us to be more aware of the interdependencies and interconnectedness of nature's formative forces.

We are very grateful that after several years of requests, the county has just completed a full scale upgrading of Home Farm Road. New road base was laid down, and the shoulders were banked and cleared of brush. In addition, the old cattle guard was replaced and a culvert was installed across the road to divert seepage from a spring.

Another challenge this year, besides the lack of precipitation, has been the wind. Overhead watering is inefficient and hard to target in almost gale force winds. So far we have only lost a few branches and nests from the trees and no structural damage. One local farmer has told us that he cannot remember a drier year where he has had to struggle so hard to keep his fields hydrated.

Inside, many of our guest rooms have received a spring cleaning and we will be getting them ready for the summer seminar in July. The refurbishing of the TV room in the main house is almost complete. New curtains and a good cleaning of the rug and wood floor are all that is needed now. It promises to be a nice lounge area for reading, visiting or watching TV.

During the last month, boxes and boxes of books have been dropped off at Home Farm in preparation for the SNO book sale at the annual Snake Valley Festival. All of the proceeds from the booth are donated to the Great Basin Water Network to help fund

efforts to stop the Southern Nevada Water Alliance from piping the valley's water to Las Vegas. Several Home Farm residents volunteer to work at this booth and several other residents have been in charge of putting together a 2013 Snake Valley calendar that will be sold as a fund raiser. (Contact Home Farm if you would like to purchase the calendar for \$15.00 plus shipping).

Reservations are coming in for our summer seminar in July. We are excited about this year's theme and are so grateful to Michael Schneider for suggesting it! His classes have always been fascinating and fun and this year should be no different, whether you relate to gardening or not! Conscious awareness of and working with energy systems is one of our major goals at the School and this is a theme that will be touched on by each of our presenters at the seminar. We have placed ads in several alternative publications in nearby cities in hopes of attracting some new folks and we will be distributing flyers inviting local people to attend also. Due to the extra costs for transportation to our out of the way location we have lowered the cost from \$650 to \$475. Please check the website for more detailed information. We would love to have you share this great week with us!

Jane Murray  
June, 2012

### **GO GREEN!**

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