



Around the Place

Late August 2019

Our glorious summer days have seen us through the summer solstice and two-thirds of the way to the fall equinox. We have experienced blazing hot days, clear nights filled with the beauty of the Milky Way spread across the sky, sunrises in the cool morning accompanied by birdsong and early hummingbirds visiting our feeders, and sunsets that fill the sky with brilliant colors ranging from pale yellow to deep red.

Along the way we have had our share of spectacular rains, too—some gentle rainfalls and some real gully-washers, replete with streams of water rushing down our dirt roads and winds that lashed the trees with ferocity. Afterwards, if we are lucky, we have seen rainbows stretching across the entire valley.

During the day we can often hear mower activity, either the tractor or the new DR mower, working to mow down weeds in the meadow and orchard, and also around the pond and pavilion. The pavilion saw a lot of use during this summer's seminar and also during the healing retreat. The pond has been a hub of activity during these long hot days, with swimmers of all ages enjoying the dock, the clear pond waters, and the shade the willow trees are beginning to provide.

All our May moisture resulted in a bumper crop of cheatgrass throughout the school grounds. In the spring this grass is quite lovely when it is green and waves gracefully in the breeze. It is even pretty when the seed heads turn purple. But once we hit mid-summer, the cheat grass dries out and becomes a real fire hazard, and this year's crop has given us more fire fuel than usual. Our landscaping crew has been hard at work to mow this down all around the Home Farm perimeter to help abate the fire danger.

The garden vegetables are beginning to ripen. We have a community garden crew that includes students at the School as well as neighbors from the community at large. We do our best to stay ahead of the weeds. We have harvested lettuce, radishes, basil, and summer squash thus far—plus some lovely flowers. And we are looking forward to ears of delicious corn on the cob and sun-ripened tomatoes in the next few weeks. There are some good-sized pumpkins hidden

under the voluminous foliage of their vines as well as many unique and striking gourds that will provide wonderful decor on our fall tables.

And, although it's hard to believe that autumn is this close, our onions and potatoes look like they will be ready to dig by the beginning of September.

We have welcomed a new family to Home Farm. Loren and Billie Reinhold and their two boys are now living in the residence the Murrays built that also provided a home for Leo. We welcome them to our Home Farm community. It is such fun to have children running around the place again, swinging on the (newly rehabbed) swing hung from the huge elm tree on the front lawn and generally enjoying themselves as they explore their new home. We are also grateful for Billie's medical expertise (she is an RN) and Loren's ability and willingness to fix almost anything.

The School's new website is now up and running. We appreciate the efforts of the dedicated students who have been working on this project. Please check it out at www.sno.org.

The Board members have moved ahead with plans to upgrade the School's internet access with a dedicated frequency and new equipment. This is a big undertaking and we are grateful to the students who have volunteered to work on this complex project. We expect this upgrade will allow the School's classes and teachings to reach a much wider audience in a format that will be relevant and user-friendly.

At the annual meeting of the Board of Directors of the School in July, board members voted in some new members. Board members are: Corry Dodson (president), Brian Morrison (vice-president), Steve Anderegg (treasurer), Susan Wetmore (secretary), and Jeremiah Hess (member). Advisors to the board include Val Taylor, Robert Cozzie, Mike Schneider, and Dennis Reuter. Emeritus board members include Marj Coffman and Uma (Lynne Hoffman).

We are grateful to all of you who support the School financially and energetically. Your generosity enables us to upgrade our facilities and continue our work to disseminate Vitvan's approach to the wisdom teachings. Thank you.

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.

Susan Wetmore