

The School of the Natural Order, Inc.  
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# RESONANCE

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*May / June 2011*

## Around the Place

Despite the unsettled spring weather, which has included rain, sleet, hail, snow and icy cold winds, we were able to get lots done around the place in the last two months. We are slowly but surely making our way through the repair and maintenance projects outlined at the buildings and grounds committee meetings.

We cleaned out three of the four carport bays and patched the leaky roof. We removed dead trees, branches and brush from several areas around the grounds. and smoothed and raked the driveways that were disturbed by winter snowplowing. Shop doors and wood trim have been scraped in preparation for new paint. Residents chose a new color to paint the south units which won't happen until the weather improves.

Lawn and garden equipment have been repaired and readied for the season and a new garden tiller has been purchased. The "main" garden fence perimeter has been cleared of debris and weeds, then burned and encircled with new chicken wire to keep out the rabbits. Both gardens have been tilled and planting has begun, although we are running a little behind schedule due to the chilly spring weather.

We have purchased new blue and gold signs which have now been attached to most of our buildings to help visitors and guests find their way around and give a more campus-like feel to the place. We also posted new signs on the two roads leading into the Farm advising travelers not to trust their GPS directions which indicate that our roads are highways leading to towns and businesses.

The unusually wet weather (the national park figures show 150 to 200% of normal precipitation), has been a mixed blessing. While the grounds are beautifully verdant from all the spring grasses, it means that more, almost constant, mowing is needed. Often it has been too wet to mow to keep ahead of the growth and also too wet to till or plant in the gardens. Water has also been seeping into the basement of the Main House which will continue to be an issue until we can repair our drainage ditches around the house.

On the brighter side, the weather seems to have drawn more beautiful birds into our area. Tanagers, orioles, lazuli buntings, yellow hooded blackbirds, hummingbirds, hawks, and grosbeaks flash around the Farm and call from the pond. Wildflowers also

promise to be particularly abundant and brilliant.

We got a great response from our invitation to include local community folks in our gardening efforts this year. To date we have had three group planting sessions and accomplished a lot in just a few hours of sustained work. Several other people came in on their own at other times to weed. We were able to “pay” some of our volunteers with rhubarb plants and cuttings and hope we can do more of this trading and sharing as the season progresses.

All of the seeds started under the grow lights have been transplanted into larger containers and we estimate that at least 800 baby plants ranging from herbs to flowers to vegetables are being cared for.

A very welcome inside project, new bright lighting in the south room of the Centrum library, has been completed as well. This room is now much easier to use for book borrowers as well as the librarian. With better lighting, more books that are now in boxes and in piles can be sorted and catalogued. Duplicate books and donated books not appropriate for our library will once again be given to the Snake Valley Water Festival fund raiser. SNO volunteers will again manage the book sale which will also include donated magazines, puzzles and movies.

In the next few weeks we will be focusing on our retreat scheduled for June 26<sup>th</sup> – July 2<sup>nd</sup>. This year we have

people attending from as far away as New York and Virginia. The week’s schedule is complete and we can now focus on room preparation, meal planning and food shopping. Serving organic meals makes food preparation a little more challenging than in years past but our food shoppers are fanning out in all directions looking for the best prices and sources for organic food.

We have almost finished reading and discussing *The Practice of the Way* in our Tuesday night class. Throughout the class we have chosen selections from the lessons that we thought would be most appropriate for discussions during the retreat. Once we finish this lesson series we will take a break for the summer and start another class in the fall. Nightly meditations, Sunday class and Sunday community meetings continue. Several residents continue to digitize Vitvan’s taped lessons and more lesson series are slowly being made available in MP3 format.

This time of year it is easy to tune into and draw strength from all the Spring energy surrounding us. It is a beautiful time in the high desert with much activity on many levels. We are so grateful that while we get some weather that really gets our attention, it does not wreak the kind of destruction that other parts of the country and world are experiencing. May the blessed ones assist them in their healing.

– Jane Murray, 2011