



AROUND THE PLACE

August 2017

Summer is in full swing here at Home Farm, glorious, busy, and full of beauty just about everywhere we look. The long days (shortening now, but still lots of daylight) begin with a few notes of birdsong as the sky lightens across the valley, and end with spectacular sunsets behind Mt. Wheeler and the soft hooting of an owl.

Our monsoon season has given us some spectacular clouds, rain, and rainbows this year. "Monsoon" may be a bit misleading, since our monsoons are not the drenching, flooding rains that occur in other parts of the world. Our summer monsoon pattern typically includes moisture streaming up from the south which precipitates down on us in the form of twenty or thirty minutes of rain (or drizzle) in late July/early August afternoons, followed by the return of sunshine and leaves and flowers sparkling in the sunlight. Rainbows (sometimes double rainbows) over in the eastern skies are a common occurrence. The fresh smell of the desert even after such brief rains as these renews the soul. The plants, of course, love the moisture, too.

Our dining room tables are graced with lovely bouquets almost every day – zinnias from the garden, wild sunflowers and native grasses, pretty leaves. What a pleasure it is to walk into the dining room and discover fresh arrangements on each table. The porch on the meditation center has been transformed this year into the Garden Room, filled with plants on shelves and hanging from the ceiling. The sitting area at the north end provides a

lovely place to rest, visit, and enjoy the peace and beauty there.

The garden is busting at the seams! Just about everything is growing with great enthusiasm this year. The plants that we set in the ground six weeks ago, which seemed so far apart at the time, have filled in those spaces and then some. Now they are crowding each other for space. This is especially evident in the winter squash patch, which is growing with gusto down into the flower areas and up into the summer squash and tomato plants. In fact, our zucchini plant is visible only by its slightly taller height and greener leaves since one of the winter squash vines has grown completely around it. Almost daily we go out and clear a space for the zucchini by redirecting those huge trailing winter squash vines. We do the same for the tomatoes, giving them their own space while trying to make sure that the winter squash has room to expand, too.

We are expecting a bumper crop of pumpkins this year. Our pumpkin patch has three very large pumpkins, and another four or five smaller ones beginning to grow. It is fun to check out the pumpkin patch, since it seems that the pumpkins increase in circumference on an almost daily basis.

Along the periphery of the garden and in the utility area east of the road we have several compost piles working away, turning sticks and leaves into rich compost to feed garden plants and landscaping. When Vitvan talks about studying the book of nature, compost piles and growing seeds

come to my mind. They both demonstrate nature's forces at work, transforming, enriching, and expanding.



Seminar week was a full and active time. Classes began early in the morning with meditations on the front lawn, and ended after sunset with meditations at the Centrum to close the day. In between our presenters offered us many opportunities to learn, reflect, and grow... and have fun, too! Meals were delicious and gave us a chance to continue discussions started in class as well as catch up on one another's lives.

The Pavilion, too, has been a focus of much creative energy this summer, as the old dairy barn has been transformed into an open space to invite coming together for dance and other group activities. Work on the Pavilion is not completed yet, but the walls have been removed, the roof reinforced, and the earthen floor leveled. This space was used for dance in the summer seminar this year, and the next step is to complete the basic flooring before late autumn.

Now Home Farm seems very quiet, which is not to say that there isn't lots still going on! Our own version of Animal Kingdom is reasserting itself now that there is less activity to keep critters away. This morning we watched a coyote walk past one of the houses up on the hill, just checking things out on its way down toward the pond. Several fawns, their spots almost gone, are grazing more bravely around the Main House. Three or four families of quail, each with eight or ten chicks ranging in age from almost newborn to adolescent, spend time each day on the front lawn and the rock walls. And the rabbits are reclaiming that nicely watered green grass as their morning and evening buffet.

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,
Early August 2017



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