

# Streams

No. 46 Summer 2013 A Newsletter of Crystal Spring Center for Earth Literacy

## ***Planted by the Water***

An array of candles in cleaned glass holders clustered on a tray. Beside the tray a wind chime had lain silent. On Summer Solstice day up the path past the tall purple phlox we walked to the well. There on the very southeastern edge of our land is Crystal Spring's well, named almost a century ago when the water ran crystal clear and a wooden handled pump drew it up to splash into buckets and jars of all shapes and sizes. Very "senior" citizens remember a simple framed pump house and the joy of lugging home a bucket of fresh water. Now from late fall into early summer the water seeps out from a seam in the well and runs down a thin stream bed into a small human-made pond. Throughout the night we can hear bull frogs and tree frogs; and early some mornings we watch a blue heron or a milk snake feed upon the members of the evening chorus. The past semester the home school children worked long and hard to develop a plan to aerate the pond and keep out algae and duckweed. It's been many decades since the water flowed clear.

We circled a rainbow of lighted candles on the well's cover, a simple ritual acknowledging the wonder of Earth's alignment with our Sunstar. Summer is the grand witness of the intimate relationship of plants and animals with the changing seasons.

Blossoming and movement abound. That same surge awakens our own psychic energy, yet, we alone among the species must ask – what's blossoming forth from our human interaction in the world?

We continued along the path into the high meadow and stopped at the grove of cedars. The grove, cedars that identify an early species of returning woodland, stands at the center of our agricultural easement. We hung a simple wind chime high up on a branch, the melodies of the universe reflected back to us here in this landscape. Our precious house pets, cats and dogs, are buried among the cedars where wild turkey, coyote, fisher and fox trot along paths of their own making. The movement of air stirring the chimes echoes the lands movement from once forested countryside, to farm, to suburban setting, to a dream unfolding.

The path led us down to the spaciousness of our backyard. We stopped at the unpretentious picnic area nestled under a spreading Norway maple. And there we placed a little pot of begonia on the picnic table to celebrate a relationship with our neighbor, Red Tomato, Inc., that now blooms in this blessed space we share. Our lives are organized, plotted and planned, in rhythm with the seasons.

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## Planted by the Water, *continued*

They shape our patterns and practices, rouse and relax our soul energy in the flow of lingering light or long night. Summer is the time for family cookouts, block parties, festivals and pro-cessions, fireworks and farmers markets, music in the park and outdoor theatre. Like the animal kingdom, we too are on the move – a vacation by the sea, a hike along a mountain trail, a leisurely rest at a lakeside cabin.

The ever-renewing cycles of the season have shaped our understanding of how things came to be. Even our religious rituals and liturgical celebrations are drawn out of

a profound understanding embedded in us from observations that have shaped our perceptions. From darkness comes light, new life, a blossoming and going forth, a maturation, a seeding, a letting go and a death that comes full circle in rebirth. Our worldview of how things came to be has determined our beliefs in what matters.

On May 11, in an article in the Boston Globe, the Associated Press reported that the federal scientists have said that worldwide levels of the chief greenhouse gas that causes global warming have hit a milestone, reaching an amount never before encountered by humans. The carbon dioxide was measured at 400 parts per million at the oldest monitory station in Hawaii. The last time the worldwide carbon level was probably that high was about two million years ago. Other scientist inter-acting with the report said it may have been ten million years ago when Earth last encountered this much carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. True, it was a daily figure recorded and the yearly measurement will no doubt be smaller. However, Princeton scientist, Michael Oppenheimer added, "As a symbol of our painfully slow pace of measures to avoid a dangerous level of warming, it is some-what unnerving."

Where are we? We are surely at an end time, not of the world, but certainly of the structures that have supported our economic and social systems, even awakened our religious sensibilities. We are also at a moment of great paradox. The ecosphere is altered. Yet, the technology that led to the altering, to destruction and extinctions, has also awakened us to a new understanding of time. The human eye has looked through giant telescopes and been amazed to discover we are planetary pilgrims in a galactic neighborhood traveling through cosmic space where time is experienced as a sequence of irreversible transformations.

The heart throbs for the familiar ~ the yellow warbler in spring, the first snowfall, a golden-red autumn. What now will quicken our psychic energy, will guide our course? In the past we celebrated seasons renewal; now we must also celebrate the sequential transformation moments in our ever-emerging universe. This is our sacred work and our faith in practice. Ready or not we are moving in our geological and biological period toward a greater manifestation of mystery. The terror and beauty require nothing less than primal archetypal energy, the Tree of Life, planted by the water. We are planted here seeking strategies, building networks, clarifying values, earthlings coming home to place.

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### Crystal Spring Receives Award!

In April, the Boston University School of Theology presented their **2013 Thecologian Award** for "outstanding thecological ministry" to the Dominican Sisters at Crystal Spring. The award, presented to those who "embody our vision of ecological healing and justice," was presented at the BU Chapel Service for Earth Day. Crystal Spring joins former recipient Bill McKibben in being honored with this award.

## Programs for Summer - Fall 2013

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### Summer Adventures July 22 - 26th 9 am –noon

Play ... from the point of view of a star!



... and a microbe  
a stone, an earthworm,  
water, forests, potatoes  
and mammals!!!

Be STAR PLAYERS in the games that come alive in our own backyard. During the week of July 22nd from 9 to noon, Crystal Spring Summer Adventures is the place to be. Imagine getting the rules of the game from stars... and then inventing ways to make the rules even more amazing. That's play in the universe....AND....that's the universe playing in you. All that free energy! This week of Summer Adventures will be more fun than you had ever imagined!



**For more information, email Barb at [barbarahop@comcast.net](mailto:barbarahop@comcast.net)**

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### Fall Homeschool Session SEED SAVING AT HARVEST TIME Tuesday mornings 9:30-11am September 10-October 29 Cost: \$45/child



Autumn seeds our imaginations and lives in our bodies. Earth smells different; woodland, rocks and gardens, even wind and water greet our noses in a fall kind of way. Ears perk up with all kinds of travel alerts from birds, raptors and abandoned nests. We salivate with each bite into juicy, crisp apples. We see what manages to hang on and what wants to fall away. Seeds, those sacred vessels of energy, shake free to share and to travel. Some are so rotund they roll away. The flat ones wait for a lift...on animal fur, by bird beak. Humans learned from birds and mammals the sacred economy of seeds. There's so much and so many to be thankful for!

*Goblins and Gardens for Ages 5-9  
Woodland's Harvest for Ages 10-15*



### What's New with our Friends at Red Tomato?

Red Tomato is a unique non-profit with the goal of helping family farms in the Northeastern U.S bring their fresh, sustainably grown produce to your local grocery – at a fair price.

#### What's fresh now?

Lettuce, asparagus, radish, strawberries... To see what's in season, how to choose and store it, and where to buy it, go to <http://www.redtomato.org/products.php>.

#### Super Food Goes Super Eco!

This summer, in the face of serious pressure from a fearsome invasive pest, the blueberry-munching (and other fruit) Spotted Wing Drosophila, we decided that the time was right to start testing an Eco Berry program. RT is working with a network of talented berry growers to maintain as much of their hard-won, beneficial **IPM ecosystem** while managing this threatening insect. Stay tuned for results.

#### New Generation of Farmers

Red Tomato grower Kaitlin Dye of Cedar Meadow Farm is featured in *Growing Produce's* "Meet the New Generation of American Vegetable Growers"

Visit the Red Tomato website for more information at: [www.redtomato.org](http://www.redtomato.org)

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