

Subject: Atchingtan - July Newsletter

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Photo Credit: John Guthrie

Atchingtan Newsletter Fifth Edition - July 2016

"We are at peace in this serene and private space where we, and invited guests, learn from one another and the land, connect with mother earth, and live in the moment. With help from earth-loving souls, we enable the land to care for itself and provide food, medicine, materials and habitat."

We have been very busy, and missed a newsletter last month, so this newsletter is longer than usual!

Recent Events



Firstly, our Tree Planting Weekend. This was a total success. To our amazement, and total gratitude, the volunteer team succeeded in planting all the trees in record time. We were so fortunate with the weather - it was cool and breezy, and perfect for all that hard work.

100+ trees (fruits, nuts, roses, etc) were in the ground in just a few hours. Seriously, we are emotional thinking about how hard everyone worked, and how fast it got done. In a couple of years, we should be harvesting from those trees, and everyone will literally be enjoying the fruits of their labors.

We were thrilled to welcome the Herbal Studies Program of MCTC (Minneapolis Community & Technical College) to Atchingtan for a weekend field event, which included camping, plant identification, medicinal herb harvesting and medicine making. Again the weather was wonderful, and everyone had a great time. We encourage other educational groups to hold similar events.



Thanks to the beautiful rain and sunshine we have been blessed with, the land turned high and green, seemingly overnight!

Unfortunately, due to the projects we have ongoing, we were unable to keep on top of it, and had to call an unofficial work weekend to clean up the overgrowth around the main house and the event space. Special shout out to Matt, Lynn, Amy, Tonya, Alex, and Kim for their super hard work - they rocked it. Thanks to them, the land is looking fabulous.



The Atchingtan Family is Growing!

We acquired bunnies. Unofficially nicknamed Sweet and Low, until a Facebook competition came up with their official names - Lady Pudge, and Dame Nibbles. Pudge and Nibbles for short. Two white Flemish Giants, they are expected to grow to about 20 lbs, +/- . They were 9 weeks old when we brought them home, so still babies, although they look like normal adult rabbits... Some friends came up for a lovely Memorial weekend of food and fun, and a beautiful outdoor hutch was built for the rabbits. They are now housed in this, and are very happy and healthy bunnies. We have to remember that they are still very young, as they are growing larger by the day.

Eventually, like the chickens, they will freerange and earn their keep by trimming the lawn

and eating weeds, but for now we are just enjoying their antics!



Speaking of the chickens, Gumdrop turned broody. We have two nesting boxes in their coop, and couldn't work out why there were no other eggs being laid, as we usually get 4 or 5 a day. A few days later, we lifted Gumdrop up and found her sitting on dozens of eggs, like Smaug on his gold - she had been sweeping all the eggs up and sitting on them. So we removed quite a few and left her to sit it out. Sadly, some of the removed eggs turned out to have had growing chicks in them, but of the ones we left her, she hatched out some beautiful black chicks. She turned out to be better at hatching them than at looking after them, so we will see what happens.

Human family!

Our WWOOFER, Jen, has been here for a few weeks now. Her Airstream fits beautifully in the field, and her two dogs, Dessa and Lulu, are loving exploring the land. She is here most of the week, and is incredibly helpful to us. On top of her mechanical expertise, and excellent way with the chickens, she is taking a special interest in the Memorial Garden.





We are also blessed with another helper, Paulette, who has set up camp in the woods, and, as well as being a wonderful baker, and helping us with all our gardening requirements, is creating a beautiful fairy garden in her camp.

Upcoming Events

We have two more planned Open Work Weekends coming up:

June 24th - 26th New Camp Site Clearing.

Atchingtan is expanding its camping facilities, with a new shaded camp area. The place we have chosen for this is mature, with beautiful trees and easy access. What we need to do is clear the area, pull a few logs, cut down some overgrowth and rake it up. We anticipate this new area being able to support a dozen tents, with easy access to the event space. We have some new tools now too, including a weed whacking mower which will clear the entire area in a couple of hours.

Two days of your help will benefit Atchingtan future events. As usual, we will feed you, and there will be plenty to drink. Bring boots and bug spray, and camp all weekend. We will then end the evenings with a campfire, conversation, and, if we have the energy, drum and dance. Please RSVP so we can make sure we have the necessary supplies. For more information, please [contact us](#).

July 8th - 10th Memorial Garden Construction.

We are very committed to the Memorial Garden, and are asking for your help to bring the vision to life. It is a lovely location, fairly secluded but accessible, and we are creating it to offer a space for people to commemorate loved ones, whether 2- or 4-legged. We encourage those who don't have their own space to bring a tree or something else to memorialize their beloved departed.

We have started planting trees here, and have cleared the area. What we need help with is the perimeter - building a short fence with beautiful oak logs. The fence will have several openings, to provide easy access, while remaining secluded. As always, we are not expecting superhero strength from those who help out – there are also tasks for little hands, or more sedentary people. The point is not to exhaust or hurt yourself, just to feel a part of building the Atchingtan community.

In return for your help, we will of course feed you, and give you Atchingtan swag, as well as facilitating drumming and dancing, etc. Bring boots and bug spray, and camp all weekend

for free, or just come up for the day if you prefer. We have plenty of room for tents, and electric for RVs. For more information, please [contact us](#).

Additionally, we are preparing to host an earth-based spiritual festival in August. The organizers will be sponsoring a couple of private work sessions to prepare for the Festival. [Contact them](#) for more information if you are interested in this.



Volunteer Opportunities

If you are interested in our volunteer program, please [contact us](#) and let us know what you are interested in, what skills you have to offer, and your availability. To see what benefits volunteering with Atchingtan provides, please see below!

Volunteers can expect a rewarding experience, working with new and old friends to create beautiful and useful spaces in an outdoor setting. You will learn new skills, feel the thrill of passing on your knowledge, and be immersed in a positive community setting. Projects may include a range of things: planting seeds, clearing trails, organizing events, and much more. Volunteers will share in food harvests, have access to special volunteer appreciation events, and enjoy contributing to a budding outdoor educational center.



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