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BDANC
Biodynamic Association of Northern California

Spring 2010 Newsletter
Seek the truly practical, material life
But seek it in such a way that it does not numb you to the spirit that works within it.
Seek the Spirit, but not out of spiritual lust or spiritual egoism.
Seek it rather because you wish to become selfless in the practical life of the material world.
Turn to the ancient principle: Spirit never without matter, matter never without Spirit.
And say to yourselves, We will do everything material in the light of the Spirit, and will seek the light of the Spirit in such a way that it enkindles warmth in us For our practical deeds.

- Rudolf Steiner -

The Biodynamic Association of Northern California, BDANC

is a member-run organization that aims to promote the biodynamic approach to farming and gardening. We allow time at our meetings for planning. Decisions are made by those who show up. We happen to really like getting together and through BDANC we have the opportunity to:

- gather a dynamic interchange of people from many arenas of biodynamics
- spread our collective knowledge, learn from each other and grow together through study
- get reports of activities in the larger biodynamic and farming community
- learn about the preps by making them together
- ensure availability of the preps to the community
- experience other farms and gardens
- renew our spiritual intentions and our commitment to each other

We accomplish our goals through:

- quarterly meetings
- a quarterly newsletter
- a membership mailing and emailing list
- making and selling the preparations
- meeting expenses with income from dues and preps

Membership
Marney Blair, marney646464@yahoo.com

Newsletter
Laura Liska, lauraliska@cs.com
Steve Reynolds, slreynolds@sbcglobal.net

Internal Correspondence (email blasts)
Patrick Garretson, patrick@californiaflowforms.org

Financials
Marney Blair, marney646464@yahoo.com

Preparations
Harald Hoven, hhoven@steinercollege.edu

General BDANC Correspondence
PO Box 715, Penn Valley CA 95946

National Biodynamic Correspondence
Biodynamic Farming and Gardening Association
25844 Butler Road, Junction City OR 97448
phone: 541-998-0105 or 1-888-516-7797
email biodynamic@aol.com, www.biodynamics.com
New Year, New Initiative

As we gathered around the dining table at the Big House on Frey Vineyard for our cozy winter planning session, I remarked how far we’d come in manifesting many of our dreams for BDANC. The Winter meeting held so many aspects we’ve envisioned: talks by inspiring teachers, hearing from some of our diverse biodynamic practitioners, group discussions about work and research, a youth circle, a little eurythmy, great meals, visiting with old friends, making new ones. During the year we’ve made preparations together, visited biodynamic farms in our region, and attracted over to 100 people to our gatherings.

It is time, I proposed, that we acknowledge and formalize what we do as an educational organization. In my work both regionally and nationally I have become more and more aware of the need to bring biodynamics to a local audience in a way that connects us to the work and to each other. People new to biodynamics tell me they want to learn more, asking where can they go, who can they talk to? Those already involved express a longing to deepen their practice, as individuals certainly, but in the context of a community, learning from each other, growing together.

This year BDANC is taking up the initiative to begin to address these needs. I will be spearheading this effort with the help of an advisory group and some seed money from BDANC. In our vision are plans to schedule more farm visits, organize more educational offerings, bring more workshops to local events, work with the national apprentice training program, and find ways to fund and support our efforts through donations, grants, and our own creative endeavors. I will be keeping you, the members, informed of our progress through this newsletter and at our quarterly meetings. I welcome your comments and thoughts via email.

Laura Liska, Editor
lauraliska@cs.com

Laura Liska, helps coordinate biodynamic training and education efforts locally and nationally. She is the administrative coordinator for Biodynamic Education at Rudolf Steiner College and Interim Education Director for the Biodynamic Association of America. On her list of favorite jobs: teaching phenomenology to our apprentices and creating a forest garden in the woods around her Mendocino County home.
HELP WANTED

Eggs Available
For the next few months, we have duck eggs available if you want them. We think they are healthier than any you can find anywhere. If you want any now or on a regular basis, let me know how many dozen and for what time period. They are 25% heavier than large size chicken eggs. And they have a higher percentage of nutrients. They are $5 / doz. For the next couple months, we will also have a limited amount of goose eggs. They are $.50 each. At these prices, we pretty much break even.

Glenn Perry
grlenn@floatation.com
530 477 1319

Permaculture/Biodynamic Edge
A new on-line discussion group for gardeners and farmers is forming, devoted to a deeper understanding of permaculture and biodynamics. Ask questions, offer your experiences and stories, grow through shared wisdom. This is NOT a bulletin board (no ads or announcements.)
gardenwise@yahoogroups.com

Dairy Herd Shares and More
BeeLoved Farm is a small, biodynamic farm located in the Sierra Nevada foothill community of Shingle Springs; just east of Rudolf Steiner College. Our production focus is on raw milk from our lovely Guernsey girls, biodynamic compost, eggs and heritage meat breeds of turkeys, ducks, rabbits, chickens and pigeons. Our animals are free-ranging and fed sprouted, organic grains and organic grass hay and/or alfalfa. We have a large vegetable garden, approximately 50 fruit trees, top-bar beehives and 30 bins of composting worms. Additionally, we plan to offer classes on making bread for wood-burning bread ovens.

We welcome inquiries about our herd share program (delivery available to Fair Oaks) for those who wish to participate in the benefits of real milk from grass-fed
Seeking Work Exchange

I am currently a part-time apprentice with Harald Hoven at Raphael Gardens in Fair Oaks, CA. I have an extensive background in horticulture, landscape management and herbology. I am an educator by talent and 30 years experience, and have most recently worked as a garden educator and therapist. I am looking for a place to do a second year of hands-on garden-based research in biodynamics. My interest is in deepening the use of the planting calendar for all aspects of plant care. As well, I would like to systematically explore the use of the BD preparations in evolving a healthy farm individuality at a particular location. My vision is to focus on perennial food and herb plants, as well as annual vegetables. I seek as exchange for this work: simple housing, food from the garden, and land to work that would not adversely affect production requirements. If you have a desire to collaboratively expand your understanding and use of biodynamics let’s discuss working together.

Rita Howard
Garden Therapy and Education
www.wellnessgardens.org
206-877-3545

Supporting Zinniker Farm; Pioneering New Consumers’ Associations

The Biodynamic Association has received a grant from RSF Social Finance to help develop a new type of consumers’ association and to help save one of the oldest biodynamic farms in the United States. This fall, Zinniker Farm of Elkhorn, Wisconsin, was shut down for distributing raw milk through a cow-share program. In response, a consumer group has come together to establish a member-owned LLC designed to purchase dairy cows or any other products from BeeLoved Farm. Please check-out our website localabundantcart.com to find out how you can “fill your cart” with local, biodynamic food.

Bee Blessed,
Kelly & Bill Hodgkin of BeeLoved Farm
530-306-8739 or 530-306-3838
info@localabundantcart.com
and hold agricultural assets in order to support family farmers and protect consumer rights. The Zinniker cow herd will be the first acquisition of this new entity, which is called Nourished by Nature, LLC. Currently, most cooperative consumer efforts take place either through an informal association, as is currently done through a CSA, or through a consumer-owned food co-op or buying club, which are two steps away from the actual farmers. In this new type of consumers’ association, however, consumers will actually invest in and hold agricultural assets in order to help farmers be economically viable, increase access to healthy food, and protect their rights to consume the foods of their choice.

The grant dollars will be used to help launch the new LLC and then share the model and lessons from its use with other groups around the country. For more information, contact RobertKarp@biodynamics.com or check out the BDA website www.biodynamics.com.

COW CARE

By Marney Blair

I am grateful for my cows. Certainly I adore the milk, manure and meat they provide, but I am truly grateful for one particular thing. When I sit to milk my cows twice a day, their large warm energy soothes me into myself again. Twice a day they create the space for such a restorative gift.

Therefore I feel the least I can do to give them the care I deeply believe they deserve. I would like to share with you my daily checklist that enables me to begin to deliver such care.

I have found that the best time to check my cows is right before I milk them. They are generally relaxed and very happy to come into the milking barn where I have the usual molasses treat waiting for them. This treat gives them a great dose of iron but it is also a way for me to conduct my first test. If a cow does not
come running into the stanchion and eat up her treat with some vigor, I know something is wrong with her.

While she is finishing off her treat I toss in her flake of hay. I bend down and place my head practically in her food bin. I take a big inhale. Fantastic, her breath smells just like the sweet fermented grass. As I raise my head, our eyes meet. Are your eyes sparkling today? I hope they are moist and alert. "Just one more check sister", I say as I look at her big wide nose. Her nose should glisten with moisture and the breath should not be labored.

I remove my head from her stanchion and with an appreciative presence stroke her long back. Her coat needs to be shiny and leave an oily residue. I give her a brushing, noticing any unusual cut or abrasion. I set the brush down and pick up the wash pail.

I fill the pail full of hot water; add a pinch of white clay and a capful of hydrogen peroxide. I have found this cleans the cows udder efficiently without harming her skin. While I am washing I feel her udder with my other hand. Gently I move over the entire bag. While I do this I am feeling for unusual lumps or hard spots. Finally I check to make sure all nipples are uninjured.

I sit and wait for her to drop the milk. While I wait I listen to her eating, again I make sure she is happily eating, hopefully humming. Suddenly the milk fills each teat and I am ready to start pulling the milk from her. I quietly fall into myself and can hear only the milk echoing in the pail. I close my eyes and smell the milk. It should have a good smell, one that smells just like the cow you are milking. The color of her milk should be as expected (white or pale yellow).

Once I have milked her out and dipped her teats in an iodine solution (10% iodine, 90% water) I again check how her udder feels. It must be loose and feel much like a wet paper sack. I also watch to make sure she is in no pain as I rub her bag. Now I stand and thank her for this wonderful gift.

In the dairy house I immediately strain the milk. I am careful to watch what is caught in the filter and to

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May Rain

By Una Kobrin

I am enchanted by this May rain,

Which has magnified the beauty of the earth like a giant lens upon it.

This watery reflection has cleared my burdened head,

Overwhelmed by the force and fury of Spring

And the weed work that it brings.

It has slowed my steps, as walking through water would

The earth’s body fragrances hypnotize and seduce me

Each scent and view stops me in my tracks.

And I stand new as a bud swelling open.
Things You Must Have on Hand

- Thermometer (for livestock)
- Ketosis Strips
- Cow Quench (from Crystal Creek)
- CPK paste
- Stethoscope
- Anti-bloat medicine
- Aloe pellets (from Crystal Creek)
- Super Boost (from Crystal Creek)
- Sea Kelp
- Molasses
- Trace minerals (great recipe in “Biodynamic Farming Practices” by Sattler and Wistinghausen page 248)
- Electrolyte fluids
- California Mastitis Kit

measure the rate at which the milk flows thru the filter. If it is slow I look for any sign of mastitis. This means the next milking taking a California mastitis test. Every dairy cow owner must have one.

As the milk fills the pail I again smell and check its color. Now I must check the volume of the milk. It must be constant day to day and from milking to milking. What an amazing liquid.

At this point I have nearly finished my daily meditative check on my cows. The last thing I must check on is the result of her digestion. In the morning before I bring her around to the milking barn, I grab my pitchfork and remove the cow patties from the night before. As I spy one I notice its shape. The cow pie should be like a mound of manure that is firm enough to hold a definite round shape, but loose enough to create one large shape and not individual small round pies. I shove the fork under it and notice the smell and texture. The patty must have no offensive odor and texture should be uniformly green. I do not want to see any undigested chunks.

One final check that is not a daily check, but it is vital to her health. I write on the calendar when my cow calves, when she is due to calf, when she had her last heat and when I expect her next heat. I check the cow to make sure she sticks to these dates. A cow ovulates every 21 days like clockwork. If she does not something is terribly wrong. If she does not calf when I expect her to, then something is wrong. Cows are very regular creatures.

This easy “sensory cow meditation” should be done every time you milk your cow. Remarkably this deliberate watchful eye helps the farmer keep many problems from becoming a very large problem. It has enabled me not only avoid some really serious problems, but also to really get to know each on of my cows. They are all different from each other. I have found that cows are very responsive to immediate and scheduled care. In other words a little bit of prevention goes a very long way.
Like all mammals this check enables us to look every day at the various systems of that animals. Those systems are Digestive, Nervous, Immune and Endocrine. Each test is a window into that system. If there is something wrong, then look to your vet book under that system and perhaps call your vet.

The breath test, appetite test, manure test and milk smell test are all tests of the digestive system. If you look into her eyes, her nose and rub her back you are checking her nervous system. If something is working adversely on her immune system you will notice changes in her milk, in her manure, her udder, and in appetite. An infection will usually create a temperature change in the animal (above 102.5 in cow's). A window into the world of hormones (endocrine system) can be found by looking at the cow's milk production and the timing of her “heat” (ovulation). Every cow has a marker on my calendar when I expect she will come into heat. This is my only tool to tell if she is having endocrine problems.

**Resources**

1. Crystal Creek: an on line source of excellent remedies. The staff is very helpful on the phone too.
2. Hubert Karreman who wrote an excellent book, “Treating Dairy Cows Naturally”. (This is my bible !! )
3. “Keeping a Family Cow” by Joann S. Grohman
4. “Keeping Livestock Healthy” by N. Bruce Haynes

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**May Rain II**

By Una Kobrin

The rain whose mouth has kissed the earth countless times

Left love jewels - magnifying orbs to heighten the senses,

Bejeweling the blossoms, as if they needed ornamentation.

No, these drops are intoxicating liquid,

The blossoms are drunk, they can't keep their heads up.

This same rain made a perfect bed for the seeds of wildflowers.

I'll scatter them for this sabbath wine

And this be my prayer.
Dennis Klocek is Founder of the Coros Institute for the promotion of dialogue between individuals in the sciences, the arts and business with a common commitment to spiritual values arising from the contemplative life. He is also Director of the Consciousness Studies Program at Rudolf Steiner College, CA; international lecturer; author of many books including, The Seer’s Handbook; Drawing from the Book of Nature; Biodynamic Book of Moons and Weather and Cosmos; and known as Doc Weather to those who visit his website Docweather.com for weather predictions and articles on climatology.

Alchemy & the Natural World

courses in the Biodynamic approach to agriculture, with DENNIS KLOCEK

Scientific Research, Spiritual Research
March 16th 2010 9:30–3:30
Benziger Family Winery in Glen Ellen, CA
Work with the land, plants, and animals is greatly enhanced when one eye is kept on the practical aspects and one on the spiritual. This workshop highlights research techniques that use the alchemical mandala of the four elements to gain insight into patterns of the physical world. These same research techniques can then be used in contemplative approaches to problem solving through the development of enhanced imaginative capacities.

Music of the Spheres: Formative Forces in Plants
May 1st 2010 9:30–3:30
Fulcrum Farm in Grass Valley, California
The great harmony behind the forms of Nature is known as the Music of the Spheres. In this workshop we will work with the contemporary evolution of the music of the spheres known as projective geometry. Beginning with demonstrations of the Pythagorean monochord, chladni plates and other instruments that have traditionally been used to reveal harmonic forms in sound, we will create simple geometric thought experiments and make drawings that reveal the sublime experience of the infinitely distant plane. These experiences will be used to illustrate the formative forces in plants. Bring a compass and a ruler to the workshop.

Fee $85 per workshop
($45 students/apprentices)
Includes lunch. Pre registration required
Register online at www.DennisKlocek.com
Questions? contact LauraLiska@cs.com
The Cosmic Nature of Water
A day-long workshop with Patrick Garretson
April 24, 2010 Saturday, 9:00am-5:00pm
Rudolf Steiner College

Water is the medium through which all life emerged. It is the sculptor and blueprint of organic form, and the elixir that sustains every living being. Cultures throughout the world have venerated water as a divine substance, imbued with not only the essential energy for life, but also wisdom and knowledge of our true nature. Through the unique invention and art of flowform sculpture, a new understanding of water, and its relation to the infinite, has emerged. This way of perceiving water reveals our relationship with life, the universe, and ourselves. Aside from being a beautiful water feature, flowforms have numerous applications in agriculture, waste treatment, and perhaps most importantly consciousness and paradigm shift. In this workshop we will discover the hidden qualities of water and its relation to the greater universe, eliciting a deeper understanding of flowforms and their uses.

We will begin with simple observations of waters structure, its fluid motion, and its various expressions of vital quality. Then from the scientific perspective, we’ll take a brief tour of water’s role in mythology and culture, and cross-reference it with further scientific findings. Examples of different flowform styles will be present for exploration.

Fee: $75. Students/Seniors: $60.
Pre-registration is required.

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<td>Horn Silica [501]</td>
<td>$3 / $4</td>
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<td>Compost Prep Set [502-507]</td>
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<td>Compound Prep [Barrel Compost]</td>
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To purchase preparations at the next meeting, contact Harald Hoven SEVERAL DAYS in advance.
916-965-0389 or hhoven@steinercollege.edu
BDANC Spring Meeting

A Weekend of Biodynamics
APRIL 10-11, 2010

Hosted by
GENA NONINI
Marian Farms in Fresno, CA
CHRIS VELEZ & JAMIE CARR
Stella Luna Farm and CSA in Prather, CA

Schedule of Events
SATURDAY APRIL 10 at MARIAN FARMS
9:00 Farm tour and talk (Gena Nonini)
11:00 Making horn silica or orthoclase
   (Harald Hoven and Luke Frey)
12:30 Potluck Lunch
1:00 BDANC planning session
2:00 Digging up the preps (Gena Nonini)
5:00 Tree paste (group study led by Daphne Amory and Andy Scott)
6:30 Catered Dinner
Stargazing, socializing and movie night
(Peter Proctor saves the world)

SUNDAY APRIL 11 at STELLA LUNA FARM
7:30 Breakfast (catered at Gena’s)
8:30 Drive to Stella Luna Farm
9:30 Farm tour and talk (Chris Velez)
12:00 Tour of Intermountain Nursery
Join us for lunch at Don Fernando’s on the way home

Cost
We invite you to attend at no charge, except for meals.

Meals
Saturday lunch is potluck so please bring what you can to share. Saturday dinner and Sunday breakfast are catered. Cost is $12 per meal ($9 for apprentices). Meals are paid for at the door. YOU MUST RESERVE MEALS BY APRIL 5th. Send your reservations to Chris Velez at stellalunacsa@netptc.net. PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN PLATES AND UTENSILS.

Our Hosts
Gena Nonini is a 3rd generation San Joaquin Valley fruit and nut grower. Her operation, Marian Farms’ is an 80-acre Demeter certified Biodynamic enterprise which produces table grapes, sun dried raisins, distilled spirits, citrus, almonds, and mixed vegetables. Gena also teaches workshops and courses on biodynamics and is president of the Demeter Trade Association.

Chris Velez and Jamie Carr run Stella Luna Farm, a Demeter Certified family farm with vegetables and cows on 5 acres in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. They run a 30-member Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program and supply food to local restaurants and markets. After managing Intermountain Nursery where he introduced practical Biodynamics to a horticulture operation, Chris left to farm full time, consult, teach, and be home for their two young children. Jamie has an agriculture degree from Fresno State and works as an organic and biodynamic farm inspector. Chris is also on the Board of the national Biodynamic Association.
Accommodations
Rustic camping is available on both farms. Bring all your own gear and be prepared for rain. For nearby hotels and other accommodations, google Highway City or Herndon, near Fresno, particularly at Highway 99 and Shaw (about 6 miles from Marian Farms).

Please Note
MARIAN FARMS IS A NO-SMOKING/NO-DRINKING FACILITY. We ask that you please respect the wishes of our generous hosts and refrain from smoking or drinking alcohol while on the farm.

Contacts
Chris Velez at stellalunacsacctnetptc.net for meal reservations and inquiries
Harald Hoven at hhoven@steinercollege.edu to order preps in advance

Directions
To MARIAN FARMS,
2305 Rolinda Avenue, Fresno
Hwy 99 Southbound to Shaw Avenue exit. Turn left and head west for about 6 miles. Turn on Roland Avenue and head south for about 2.5 miles.
OR Hwy 99 Northbound to Hwy 180 West. Head west for about 10 miles. Turn right on Roland Avenue and head south for about 2.5 miles.
You’ll see a metal shed with white roof, a bulldozer, wooden bins with “Marian Farms” on them, and a blue house. Park in front of the building, preferably on the south side. DO NOT park in the driveway for the blue house!

To STELLA LUNA FARM,
30961 Blue Heron Lane, Prather
From Hwy 99 take 180 East to Hwy 168 Huntington Lake/Clovis. Head east into the foothills. Proceed about 25 miles east of Clovis to town of Prather. Go about 1.5 miles and turn left onto Auberry Road. Go less than 0.5 miles and make first left onto Blue Heron Lane. Cross the railroad bridge, and turn in at first left.
Newsletter and Calendar submissions

We welcome calendar items, articles and photographs for the newsletter. Submissions should be related to local biodynamic farming and gardening activities. Inclusion is subject to editor’s discretion and space available.

Items need to be submitted electronically, in the simplest format possible (no formatting please).

Deadlines are:
- Spring: Feb 15th
- Summer: May 1st
- Fall: August 15th
- Winter: Nov 15th

Please email our editor, LauraLiska@cs.com

BDANC Events

Apr 10–11, 2010 Spring Meeting at Marian Farms in Fresno with a visit to Stella Luna Farm in Prather
June 2010, Summer Meeting
Location to be announced
Sept 25–26, 2010, Fall Meeting
Mendocino Organics/Heart Arrow Ranch

Rudolf Steiner College Workshops

www.steinercollege.edu, 916-961-8727
biodynamics@steinercollege.edu

Biodynamic Farming & Gardening Series

Harald Hoven, Saturdays 9am–5pm
- April 17: Plant Propagation, Weeds
- May 8: Pests, Insects, Beneficials
- June 9–13: Advanced Intensive

Natural Beekeeping Workshop Series

David Basile, Saturdays 9am–5pm
- May 22: Care of the Hive
- September 25: The Harvest

Special Events

April 24 The Cosmic Nature of Water
with Patrick Garretson, details at www.steinercollege.edu

Other Upcoming Events

Biodynamic Workshops with DENNIS KLOCEK
March 16 Scientific Research, Spiritual Research
a CLIMATRENDS event at Benziger Family Winery,
contact LauraLiska@cs.com or visit DennisKlocek.com
May 1 Music of the Spheres: Formative Forces in Plants
a CLIMATRENDS event at Fulcrum Farm,
contact LauraLiska@cs.com or visit DennisKlocek.com

Save the Date

The Biodynamic Association’s Annual Conference will be held at the Threefold Educational Center in Chestnut Ridge, NY from Thursday, Sept. 30 through Sunday, Oct. 3, 2010. Details and a call for workshop presenters will available soon on the BDA website.
Thank you!

Your support contributes to the health of biodynamics in northern California, and allows us to offer this newsletter and special discounts.

BDANC membership includes quarterly issues of the BDANC newsletter, attendance at quarterly meetings and discounts on the purchase of preparations and on special events.

Membership is for one year.

National BDA membership includes the quarterly Biodynamic Journal and other member benefits.

Join BDANC and the BDA at the same time, and save! The $60 fee covers both memberships.

Are You Due to Renew?

Membership is for one year. The last year for which you paid dues is indicated on your address label. IF YOUR LABEL DOES NOT SAY 2010, please use this application to renew your membership.
address correction requested