

The

ROCKSPIRIAN

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NORTHWEST ARKANSAS PERMACULTURE STUDY GROUP returned to Rockspire, April 23rd after taking a few months off due to pandemic precautions. Attendees enjoyed a 2-mile hike along Joan’s Angel Trail where many plant species revealed their springtime splendor. The dogwood tree’s blooms along the trail were at their peak as were many of the wildflowers.

The hike was followed by a presentation by D’Coda, a local expert on resilient living with nature. Drawing on her Choctaw grandmothers’ knowledge of herbal medicines, she’s relied on botanicals to resolve several serious injuries and health issues for over 65 years. As a young woman she lived alone for 10 years in the wilderness, learning to live in concert with the natural environment.

D’Coda recently started the **Ozark Herbal Academy** and created the Ultimate Herbal Database with over 29,000 topics and half-a-million articles, studies, videos on all aspects of medicine and gardening. She recently established the **Ozark Farmer’s Network** which is part of the Community Exchange System, an internationally recognized database whereby local farmers link to their communities and vice versa. To learn more about D’Coda, the Resilience Project, and her workshops, visit her website at: herbalknowledge.org



D’Coda speaking to the NWA Permaculture Study Group
Photo by: D. Myers 4.23.22



NWA Permaculture Study Group
Photo by: G. Myers 4.23.22



Creating Community at Rockspire

A community is based on shared interests and/or experiences. At its most mature stage, it represents balance between individual, independent power, and humanity’s need for belonging. Feeling a part of a group is the draw. Like anything worthwhile, it takes commitment and practice. According to Andy Eninger, co-founder Fairplay Communications, there are three aspects to community: *belonging and agency, caring and communication, and shared narrative*. As you read the Rockspirian, you are engaging with us as a community. The Rockspirian newsletter shares the narratives we hear from visitors, neighbors, friends, and partners in the projects serving the sustainable lifestyle approach. Whether you’re here in the present or connecting with us virtually, we value your contribution to building community.

Left:
Hikers at Joan’s Angel Trail
Right:
Flowers blooming along the Trail
Photos by: D. Myers 4.23.22



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THE SHOP COMPLEX ADDITION, a 3,200 square foot addition to the existing shop, is underway with completion planned this summer. This addition will service the construction of all buildings and homes at Rockspire. Eventually, it will house the tools needed to build shelter as well as finishings such as cabinets, floors, and furniture. The construction process will be as sustainable as possible by, among other things, recycling materials. Trees that need to be removed for homesites are surgically and strategically cut, dried, milled, and prepared for sorting for maximum re-use. Tree trunks are milled into boards, smaller limbs are sorted, and mulched for permaculture gardens and orchards, while the cedar mulch is spread along Joan’s Angel Trail to help control bugs. Even tree root balls are made into fine art sculptures or table bases. Truly little goes to waste.



A load of cedar logs from the homesites to be milled.
Photo by: G. Myers 4.7.22

Workers are using the crane (pictured below), the latest addition to the equipment pool, to erect wall panels and speed up the fabrication and installation processes. By adding industrial quality machinery, construction will be safer and more efficient. Another tool coming soon is a large *Computer Numerical Control (CNC)* machine which can precisely cut shapes from multiple materials, including wood, plastic, and soft metals. The CNC can accurately duplicate component parts, adding speed, accuracy, and quality to finished construction projects.

Rockspire’s Construction Project Manager, Eric Chapman will be overseeing the shop’s construction, organization, and use. He will also teach classes in the use of the tools and the methods by which participants can assist in the construction of their projects. Once the Shop Complex Addition is complete, we will be announcing upcoming classes and projects on the Rockspire website and Facebook page. If there’s a special project you would like to learn about and construct at Rockspire, please let us know.



Just a few of our toys.

Left:
Digging Shop Complex foundations,
5.11.22.

Below, from left:
Rockspire’s Crane, Sliding Saw, and
Shaper Cutters

Right:
37” Planer-Sander

Photos by: E. Chapman & G. Myers

