



Finding Common Ground November, 2020

UP FRONT

- **NEW MEMBERS:** Want to get connected and oriented FAST? Then the **Meet-and-Greet** on November 11 and the **Fresh Take** on Common Ground on November 21 are just for you!
- The **Simpler Living: Earth Skills Sunday** event on November 15 will focus on tracking skills.
- **A Gathering of Gratitude & Goodies** will happen at our **NEW BARN** on Thursday, November 26, from 2-5pm. Come celebrate the gifts in our lives, together.

OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS

Land Stewardship: The barn complex continues to emerge with big October achievements being: finishing the roof, beginning painting...AND hosting an **extraordinary event: a natural building and group learning workshop at (and for) the barn!** An eager team of students trekked over from the continental heartland to share their gifts and become acquainted with CGEV during the last week of the month. Hearty thanks to Brandon, Leah, and their fantastic student team, with hosting support from CGEVers (special kudos to Anthony).



Working the wood

COMMON GROUND CALENDAR



*Natural building students from Iowa lay down pine-slash siding and slip straw at the bath house
Banner above: Turnip washing line*

GET INVOLVED!

Contact any of the Circle leaders listed below—they'll be happy to talk with you! **Note: all events are open to everyone unless otherwise indicated. Most (but not all!) Circle meetings are happening via Zoom. Observers are encouraged and **RSVP is essential!****

RACIAL AWARENESS READING & REFLECTION CIRCLE

Membership & Marketing Circle

Mondays, November 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 6:30-7:30pm

Free of charge, & donations requested once-a-month

Contact Maria for information on how to sign up:

mariasilviapini@gmail.com

Governance & Training: The first Simpler Living: Earth Skills Sunday with Gumby Montgomery brought an enthusiastic group into the beauty and mystery of edible and medicinal plants on the land. on November 15 we'll try on tracking skills. We welcomed 20 people to our foundational **Cooperative Skills and Governance Training**, and our reputation is spreading—a local community has asked our Circle to offer this training for them after the first of the year.

Planning, Design & Development: Ta-Da!!! We are very pleased to announce that *at long last* we have been issued a **Wastewater Improvement Permit** with state and country approval for our community wastewater system—probably the single most important remaining approval necessary to be sure that we can build the project we envision.

This has been a very long process involving extensive design work by Bobby Tucker of Bodhi Land and Design associates and his subcontractor, AWT (Agri-Waste Technologies), costly and extended soils testing throughout and beyond the proposed disposal field, and seemingly endless queries, objections, and delays. Both Bobby and AWT have gone well above and beyond the usual work to ensure that this approval finally came through.

For our part, we scaled back our request from the full planned village size to around two-thirds of the full village as planned—the maximum that we could get approved at this time without more soil tests and another round of applications. The main sticking-point is that the regulators use quite high estimates for anticipated wastewater flow, while we expect to use much less water due to careful design, low-flow fixtures, and consciously conservative water usage. The thinking is that once we are partly built out and approaching the currently approved limit, we'll have hard data to establish that our actual usage rates are well below the conventional rates, allowing an expansion of our permitted size at that time.

Along with the Financial & Legal and Membership & Marketing Circles, we are organizing to prompt and support the planning work of the people who hope to be among the first to move onto the land in the first or second phases of village build-out. There is much to be sorted out together. A definite site layout establishing the placement and size of all buildings needs to be laid out for the whole village. Site engineering and sitework construction needs to be done for the whole village. Site layout in turn

PLANNING, DESIGN, & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

Wednesday, November 4, 6:30-8:00pm, via Zoom

RSVP Anthony: weston@elon.edu

Observers are always welcome, with RSVP

LAND STEWARDSHIP CIRCLE

Saturday, November 7, 3:30pm on the land

Observers and prospective members are welcome.

Contact Randy: dodd.randy@gmail.com about participating.

MEET & GREET

Membership & Marketing Circle

Wednesday, November 11, 7:00-8:15pm via Zoom

RSVP Lisa for a link: lberley@yahoo.com

This is designed for people who have recently heard about us and for those who want to meet other new members. We'll get to know each other and review some history and basics about CGEV. Interested? Let's hang out!

MEMBERSHIP & MARKETING CIRCLE

Thursday, November 12, 6:30-9:00pm via Zoom

RSVP Marilyn: marilyngrubbs@gmail.com

To observe, contact Marilyn several days before the date to receive the Zoom link and agenda/attachments



Not so itsy-bitsy spider (photo by Margaret)

requires us to finally decide on Unit Mix: how many of which kind of units we will build. This is the focus of much of our current work. And, we're awaiting a report from consultants on planning our solar energy strategy, also critical to size planning.



Hope helps Doug harvest the first sesame seed crop

Financial & Legal: The past month, we engaged outside consultants for professional assistance and re-opened conversations with the community regarding home ownership and financing. (Details can be found in our monthly meeting minutes posted on Only Office.) We're particularly excited about working with other circles to successfully launch the Phase-1 partial build-out of our residential community. We know of several members who are committed to being among the first residents in the first 10 (or so) homes. This is such an important unfolding of our long-held dream. If you want to be part of this first phase development and feel that the community isn't aware of your wish, now is the time to send Paul a note (voss@hawkweed.net) indicating that you want to be brought into the process of planning your community—your new home!



Persimmon profusion (photo by Margret); Margret on high

SIMPLER LIVING: EARTH SKILLS SUNDAYS

Tracking skills with Gumby Montgomery
Sponsored by Governance & Training Circle

Sunday, November 15, 11:00am - 1:00pm

RSVP Maria is a must: mariasilviapini@gmail.com

*The other side of developing fantastically green architecture for our community is learning to live more simply. Join us as we learn ways to bring our lives to alignment with this piece of land we are care-takers of. This month we'll explore "native literacy" (the art and science of reading the world we are a part of), i.e. **tracking** -although footprints are only the beginning! We'll practice the ancient methods of identification, interpretation, trailing, aging, ecology, and empathy to understand and realize that EVERYTHING is a track. Cash contributions and a barter gift for our guide are required, although no one will be turned down due to lack of funds. Due to COVID restrictions of physical distance this event is limited to 15 people. **RSVP now.***

PLANNING, DESIGN, & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

Sunday, November 15, 4:30-6pm via Zoom

RSVP Anthony: weston@elon.edu

Observers are always welcome, with RSVP

GOVERNANCE & TRAINING CIRCLE

Tuesday, November 17, 4:00pm – 6:00pm via Zoom

RSVP Hope: hopenatrix@fastmail.com

Please RSVP for a link. If this time is difficult for you, please contact Maria: 919-444-1193

FINANCIAL & LEGAL CIRCLE

Thursday, November 19, 6:30-9:00pm, via Zoom

RSVP Paul for a link: voss@hawkweed.net

Observers are welcome with RSVP. We encourage members to join in the work of this Circle.

A FRESH TAKE ON CGEV!

Membership & Marketing Circle

Saturday, November 21, 4:00-5:30pm via Zoom

IN THE KNOW...

Have you read/seen/heard something inspiring lately that you'd like to share with the community? Please send in your recommendations to [Hope](#).

Ren brings this book to our attention this month: *The Token: Common Sense Ideas for Increasing Diversity in your Organization*, by Crystal Byrd Farmer. This no-nonsense, provocative, humorous, and accessible guide is for all well-meaning people leading progressive organizations who acknowledge the need for diversity but don't know where to start.



Happiness and love for the barn (painted by Rielle, aged 10)

LOCAL EVENTS TO EXPAND OUR SOCIAL & CULTURAL HORIZONS

Is something happening that you want our members to know about? Please send your listing to Hope by the 25th of each month: hopenatrix@fastmail.com

Racial Equity Institute Training

Sponsored by Organizing Against Racism (OAR)
We **strongly recommend** these 2-day trainings as a way to begin a shared conversation about racism and social justice at Common Ground Ecovillage. Check OARalliance.org for details.

Foundation for Intentional Communities

November Events—[click here](#) for details
November 5, 4:00-6:00 pm EST, \$10-\$48
Discernment as an Essential Skill for Community Living
November 18, 4:00-6:00 pm EST, \$10-\$48
Learning the Art of Listening – an undervalued game-changer!

Contact Lisa for a link: lberley@yahoo.com

Want an up-to-date overview of where CGEV is now, what's next, and how you can get involved and contribute? This session is for YOU!

change

GENERAL CIRCLE

Tuesday, November 24, 7:00-9:15pm, via Zoom

RSVP Bailey: baileygirly@gmail.com

We welcome observers, with RSVP

A GATHERING OF GRATITUDE & GOODIES

Thursday, November 26, 2-5pm

Common Ground Ecovillage NEW BARN

*Call us crazy to try this, but there's so much to celebrate as our community continues to grow, gel, and thrive in these challenging times. On this traditional feast day, we offer an "open house" for folks to come to the land, wander, rest, and connect safely with other Common Grounders and their families. We'll converge at the beautiful barn around 3:30 to share a meal together in some fashion that is healthy for all. (If anything's going to spread, let it be only our stomachs!). Since this will be weather-dependent, **RSVP to Margaret is essential** so we can let you know what's happening. And, if you've got any juice to help shape this event, **please contact Margaret: bktittle@gmail.com** It takes a village!*



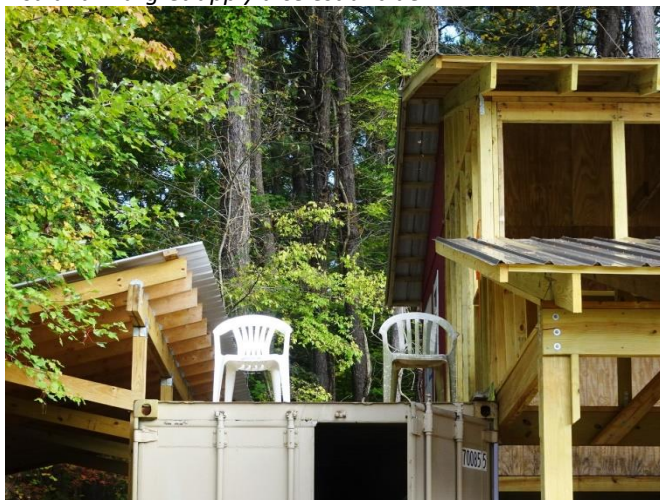
Shrimp of the woods mushrooms—dee-lish! (photo by Margret)

Save the Dates for future ForestHer workshops:
November 12, 1 to 2:30 p.m. Managing Woods for Wildlife; Managing Fields for Wildlife
December 10, 1 to 2:30 p.m. Human-Wildlife Interactions Identifying Wildlife: Tracks, Markings, Scat

Compassionate Connection (aka Non-Violent Communication or NVC): Wednesday, November 25 (yes, the night before Thanksgiving!) 7:00 - 8:30 pm, via Zoom. This is the "Chapel Hill" NVC practice group, held remotely until further notice. Led by Marilyn Grubbs and Lila Rosa. For information or to sign up, email Marilyn at marilyngrubbs@gmail.com. FYI, we will not be meeting the 4th Wednesday in December.



Lisa and Margret apply a celestial blue



Rest, relax, and enjoy the view! (photo by Margret)



Delicate mushroom patch (photo by Margret)



Raising the roof! (photo by Margret)



Anthony at the tippy-top

