



# Finding Common Ground

## February, 2021

### Up Front

*So, friends, every day do something that won't compute...Be joyful though you have considered all the facts. —Wendell Berry, [Manifesto...](#)*

It's a critical time for Common Ground Ecovillage. Many members came together for several sessions of brave sharing last weekend (supervised by Laird Schaub and Maria Silvia Pini). It became clear that there is a keen thirst to know each other more fully, to know details about what is happening in the community, and to know when and how to be heard as we evolve. It's also clear that **this is a critical time for our community: is there enough support from members to build the farm-based village we collectively envision?** An idea emerged to hold an **ALL-MEMBER GATHERING on Saturday, February 6, from 2-4:30pm** to reckon with these issues and see what's possible. If you care about Common Ground Ecovillage and want to live here some day, it's critical to show up if you at all possibly can. Details are in the calendar. Let's "consider the facts" and continue to joyfully co-create Common Ground.

### JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS

**Membership & Marketing** has cooked up two new events for members to connect in February:

- ✿Heart Sharing Circle, Feb. 14
- ✿Request & Receive Community Gathering, Feb. 27

Also, the Circle would like to remind everyone that if you have any changes in your membership status or want to negotiate dues payments, we are the ones to contact! Email [Amy\\_Halberstadt@ncsu.edu](mailto:Amy_Halberstadt@ncsu.edu) Thanks all!



*First flower, January 10*

### COMMON GROUND CALENDAR



*Farmer Doug's winter greens (photo by Caleb)*

*Banner above: Snow lounging in the treehouse hammock*

### 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. You must RSVP!**

**NEW GOOGLE CALENDAR!** Here's the recurring link, courtesy of [Ren](https://tinyurl.com/CGEV-Calendar): <https://tinyurl.com/CGEV-Calendar>

### RACIAL AWARENESS READING & REFLECTION CIRCLE

Membership & Marketing Circle, Mondays, 6:30-7:30pm, weekly, Contact Lisa at [iberley@yahoo.com](mailto:iberley@yahoo.com) to sign up & receive a link.  
*Free of charge, & donations requested once-a-month*

### PLANNING, DESIGN, & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

Wednesday, February 3, 6:30-8:00pm, via Zoom  
**RSVP to Anthony:** [weston@elon.edu](mailto:weston@elon.edu)

**Financial & Legal:** Paul Voss, who has been Operational Leader of the Circle for most of the past 8 years, is stepping down from this leadership position to focus on some specific projects that desperately need more attention. **As a consequence, the Circle is facing the challenge of reorganizing itself for the balance of 2021 and beyond.** Anyone who has some past relevant experience and is interested in assisting Common Ground this year is invited to join this Circle. Please let Paul know how you would like to help out [voss@hawkweed.net](mailto:voss@hawkweed.net).

**Land Stewardship:** In addition to the many “on-goings”, the LSC: completed its review of 2020 and plans for early 2021; held a well-attended workday that included a mixture of stalwarts and new, bright eyed and bushy tailed co-conspirators that worked (mostly) on the barn, trails, muddy road, and new fence; continued with all things barn including planning for electrifying (figuratively and literally!) the barn, and hopefully including a photovoltaic array in the mix (stay tuned on how interested folks can support); and planted a few apple trees and planned for more plant companions. LSC also shared ideas with GC regarding a potential process for further articulation and exploration of membership support of the CGEV agrarian mission. January’s activities and focus will continue in February. And, the LSC will quite likely “press pause” with trying to schedule anything new to focus on to provide space both for follow up and everything else transpiring with CGEV at the moment.



*Cedar log brigade (photo by Margret)*

**Planning, Design, & Development:** In December 2020 and into January 2021, PDD has been meeting with the Finance and Legal Circle to help decide and consolidate an updated ownership and financing plan – the key to

## HAPPY HANGOUT WEDNESDAYS

Membership & Marketing Circle

Wednesdays, February 3, 17, 24, 7:00 – 8:00 pm

**RSVP to Ren** for a recurring Zoom link:

[renenberg.cge@gmail.com](mailto:renenberg.cge@gmail.com)

*The **NEW Land, Love, and Laughter** group is continuing its weekly event where we join together with smiles, sharing, laughter, and importantly, NO AGENDAS! We have so much fun it’s hard to stop at an hour! (February 10<sup>th</sup> is a Meet & Greet where we welcome new members—how about YOU come, too?)*

## ALL-MEMBER MEETING

Saturday, February 6, 2:00-4:30pm via Zoom

**RSVP Anthony:** [Weston@elon.edu](mailto:Weston@elon.edu) **SOON (how about now?)** to receive documents to prepare.

*We’ll discuss the current state of planning for building the village and especially the financial challenges and opportunities for going forward. As expressed at the recent facilitation training, many members feel like they do not know, or know enough, where we stand with this planning or why (or if) certain choices have been made or paths taken. We’ll try to remedy that! **Preparatory documents for this meeting will include a short general overview of the state of the village project.** We’ll trust that people will read any documents provided before the meeting so that we can begin immediately with back-and-forth rather than review or presentation. Please come!*

## LAND STEWARDSHIP CIRCLE

Sunday, February 7, 4:00-6:00pm

*Observers and prospective members are welcome*

**RSVP to Randy about participating and venue:**

[doddDOTrandyATgmailDOTcom](mailto:doddDOTrandyATgmailDOTcom)

## MEET & GREET

Membership & Marketing Circle

Wednesday, February 10, 7:00-8:15pm via Zoom

**RSVP to Lisa for a link:** [iberley@yahoo.com](mailto:iberley@yahoo.com)

*Have you recently heard about us? 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!*



many other decisions, and to pursuing outside financing to move forward . We'll report out where things stand at the all-member gathering planned for February 6th. With the help of outside consultants and experts, we also continue to consolidate specific decisions on core building materials, photovoltaics, and other key infrastructure questions. In early 2021 we expect to revisit our schematic design portfolio (architecture) and return to our work of setting parameters for a comprehensive site plan and making a unit mix determination.



*Creeping Cedar snuggling in the snow*

## 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](#).

Margaret Anderson offers this wise & calming poem: *Wild Geese*, by Mary Oliver.

*You do not have to be good.  
You do not have to walk on your knees  
For a hundred miles through the desert, repenting.  
You only have to let the soft animal of your body  
love what it loves.  
Tell me about despair, yours, and I will tell you mine.  
Meanwhile the world goes on.  
Meanwhile the sun and the clear pebbles of the rain  
are moving across the landscapes,  
over the prairies and the deep trees,  
the mountains and the rivers.  
Meanwhile the wild geese, high in the clean blue air,  
are heading home again.  
Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,  
the world offers itself to your imagination,  
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting —  
over and over announcing your place  
in the family of things.*

## MEMBERSHIP & MARKETING CIRCLE

Thursday, February 11, 7-9:30 pm via Zoom

**RSVP to Lisa:** [lberley@yahoo.com](mailto:lberley@yahoo.com)

*Observers are welcome; please Lisa several days in advance, to receive the Zoom link and documents needed to prepare for the meeting. Note that we will add a second meeting each month on a date TBD.*

## PLANNING, DESIGN, & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

Sunday, February 14, 4:30-6pm via Zoom

**RSVP to Anthony:** [weston@elon.edu](mailto:weston@elon.edu)

*Observers are always welcome, with RSVP*

## HEART SHARING CIRCLE

Sunday, February 14, 7:00-9:30pm via Zoom

RSVP Ren: [renenberg.cge@gmail.com](mailto:renenberg.cge@gmail.com)

*Many members have been yearning for a chance to connect on a heart level. May this be the start of something beautiful! We'll talk authentically about ourselves, our connection to this community, what draws and keeps us close to CGEV, what is alive in our hearts, and what currently holds us back from greater participation. Let this be an open and supportive sharing that builds trust and connection, strengthening our culture of caring and cooperation. Come with curiosity, respect for confidentiality, and willingness to listen compassionately while holding space for each other. All member levels are welcome.*

## GOVERNANCE & TRAINING CIRCLE

Tuesday, February, 16, 4:00pm – 6:00pm via Zoom

**RSVP to Hope:** [hopenatrix@fastmail.com](mailto:hopenatrix@fastmail.com)

*You are welcome to observe! If this time is difficult for you, please contact Hope.*

## FINANCIAL & LEGAL CIRCLE

Thursday, February 18, 6:30-9:00pm, via Zoom

**RSVP to Paul for a link:** [voss@hawkweed.net](mailto:voss@hawkweed.net)

*You are invited to consider joining in the work of our Circle. Enthusiasm is the only requirement. No need for deep background in either law or finance—just the desire to learn and contribute as you are able.*



Tracking in the trees with Gumby Montgomery (photo by Margret)

## 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 25<sup>th</sup> of each month: [hopematrix@fastmail.com](mailto:hopematrix@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](http://OARalliance.org) for details.

### A Case for Green Burial, with Anne Weston

Thursday, February 11, 4:00-5:15pm virtual meeting  
Orange County Dept. on Aging, 919-968-2087  
[Click here](#) to register by February 10.



Broccoli sprouts in the cozy tunnel (photo by Caleb)

## FRESH TAKE: An in-depth info. session

Membership & Marketing Circle

Saturday, February 20, 4:00-5:30pm via Zoom

**RSVP to Lisa:** [iberley@yahoo.com](mailto:iberley@yahoo.com)

*Want an up-to-date overview of where CGEV is now, what's next, and how you can get involved and contribute? Hear from other members active in our Circles? This session is for YOU!*

## SIMPLER LIVING: EARTH SKILLS SUNDAYS

### Grass mat-making with Gumby Montgomery

Governance & Training Circle

Sunday, February 21, 11:00am - 1:00pm

**RSVP to Maria is a must:** [mariasilviapini@gmail.com](mailto:mariasilviapini@gmail.com)

*Come on out for some craft time in the fields following the guidance of Gumby Montgomery. We'll be learning the simple technique of making **grass mats**, which can be used as sleeping pads, rugs, seats (with a tripod), a door, a blanket-sleeping-bag-thingie, insulation, a dog bed, or Gumby's personal favorite, a meditation cushion. Since Broom Sedge is so abundant at Common Ground, we'll use that, but this technique can be used with all kinds of grassy plants. Time permitting, we'll have a mindful sit using our grass mats at the end. Gumby says, "There's really nothing like it!". 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. Your RSVP to MARIA is a must: [mariasilviapini@gmail.com](mailto:mariasilviapini@gmail.com).*

## PLANNING, DESIGN, & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

Wednesday, February 24, 6:30-8pm via Zoom

**RSVP to Anthony:** [weston@elon.edu](mailto:weston@elon.edu)

*Observers are always welcome, with RSVP*

## GENERAL CIRCLE

Thursday, February 25, 7:00-9:15pm, via Zoom

**RSVP to Bailey:** [baileygirly@gmail.com](mailto:baileygirly@gmail.com)

*We welcome observers. RSVP two days in advance to receive the agenda, Zoom link, and documents*



### Bringing Your Authentic Self to Community

The Foundation for Intentional Community  
Wednesday, February 17, 4:00-6:00pm via Zoom  
Join us and Teri Grunthaner for an interactive workshop on how to co-create community with authenticity. [Register here.](#)

**Compassionate Connection (aka Non-Violent Communication or NVC):** Wednesday, February 24, 7:00 - 8:30 pm via Zoom. This is the "Chapel Hill" NVC training/practice group, held online until further notice. Facilitated by Marilyn Grubbs and Lila Rosa. For more information, email [marilyngrubbs@gmail.com](mailto:marilyngrubbs@gmail.com)



*A tracery of snow forms around the pond*



*Shelf shrooms (photo by Margret)*

### LAST SATURDAY

#### Receive & Request Community Gathering

Membership & Marketing Circle

Saturday, February 27, 3:00-5:00pm

**RSVP Ren:** [renenberg.cge@gmail.com](mailto:renenberg.cge@gmail.com)

*We're learning new lessons about giving and receiving feedback, and part of that is asking questions, getting answers, and asking for help.*

**Part I:** Q&A: *What are you curious about, what have you wondered, but not known who to ask? We'll do our best to answer you. (Keep an eye out for an email asking for your questions about the community prior to this gathering).* **Part II:** *Circle members will let you know what help we're needing to make this community thrive and get this village built! There is an opportunity for everyone that wants one, big or small. It takes a village to create a village. We hope to see you there!*



*Gumby points out identifying marks on a female racoon skull (photo by Margret)*