



Finding Common Ground April, 2021

Up Front

This month there is very big news. Our years of diligent effort are finally paying off in the world of financing. CGEV is in serious discussions with two potential lenders who are very attracted to our project. One in particular is eager to advocate for us and work with us to prepare the best package deal to **fund a full build-out soon as a housing cooperative (!)** on very good terms (potentially <4% interest rate for 40 years) with Federal (HUD) loan guarantees besides. **Read more under Circle News, below.**

Cooperative Skills & Governance Training is happening on April 16-17 (Friday 5:30-8pm and Saturday 9:30-noon) via Zoom. This workshop is crucial for us to live and work together in harmony. It's also required for all new members and we highly recommend repeat attendance. **RSVP to Hope:** hopematrix@fastmail.com

Common Ground Participates in National Intentional Communities Open House Day

Saturday, April 24: 10-11am—Tours on the Land
1-2pm—Zoom Info Session

For details, RSVP to Welcome@commonground.eco



Leah and daughters prepping slip-straw insulation for the barn

COMMON GROUND CALENDAR



*Doug grows the best ever spring lettuce mix! (photo by Margret)
Banner above: lone crocus among the speedwell*

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!**

GOOGLE CALENDAR LINK, courtesy of Ren
<https://tinyurl.com/CGEV-Calendar>

MEMBERSHIP & MARKETING CIRCLE

Thursday, April 1, 7-9:30 pm via Zoom

RSVP to Lisa: Welcome@commonground.eco

Contact Lisa if you would like to observe a Circle meeting. We welcome new members!

MARKETING & BRANDING GROUP

Membership & Marketing Circle

Mondays, April 5, 12, 19, 26, 2-4pm

RSVP to Lisa: Welcome@commonground.eco

This group is for you if you'd like to help get the word out about CGEV. We're seeking new members

CIRCLE NEWS

Planning, Design, & Development: So, you read the great news above...and, **ultimate success depends on YOU!** Members and friends will soon be receiving an email with more details. There will also be a **Last Saturday session planned for April 24th, 3-5pm**, to share the news and action plans in more depth. Bear in mind that **nothing is a done deal yet**. Things could fall through, economic conditions could drastically change, etc. On our side there is still much to be done, too. Still, **we are hugely encouraged**. Suddenly we have real movement on financing our preferred plan. **This is a very big moment for us!** The picture is changing fast as conversations with the lenders develop. Still, all members and potential residents will need to ramp up your engagement and planning in order to **catch the wave!**



Viewing a straw bale home at Greg Allen's Mud Dauber School

Membership & Marketing: We have heard our community's need for more opportunities for deep sharing. In February we experimented with two **Heart Sharing Circles** (thanks for the great idea Doug Jones!). They were a great success! Here's what some participants said about them: *I listened to members connect their past life experiences to their present striving for community, giving me a much fuller sense of the individuals that make up CGEV; we share many experiences but also are each so unique.* -Lisa B. *I've found them to be very fulfilling. I've always wanted to share with other community members in a deeper way.* -Quai D. *I so enjoyed the heart sharing circle because it gave us a chance to get to know each other better and share more intimately, approaching topics like fears or quirks that many of us have in common but don't often get expressed in other contexts.* -Sonya S. *I liked the relaxed atmosphere and to have the space to get to know people more. The gathering had a sweet intimacy; it's valuable to just be with one another.* -Kira M. *"I came away from it with the feeling that everyone in the circle was someone I would like to know more. It felt*

for the website team and social media channels, among other initiatives. Contact Lisa for more information—this could be just the ticket for YOU!

RACIAL AWARENESS READING & REFLECTION GROUP

Membership & Marketing Circle

Mondays, April 5, 12, 19, 26, 6:30-7:30pm via Zoom

Contact Lisa at welcome@commonground.eco to

sign up & receive a link. *Free of charge, & donations requested once-a-month*

PLANNING, DESIGN, & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

Wednesday, April 7, 6:30-8pm via Zoom

RSVP to Anthony: weston@elon.edu

Observers are always welcome, with RSVP

HAPPY HANGOUT WEDNESDAYS

Membership & Marketing Circle

Wednesdays, April 7, 21, 28, 7– 8 pm via Zoom

RSVP to Ren for information and a recurring Zoom

link: renenberg.cge@gmail.com

We'll meet for an hour of unstructured social time

(Yay, no agendas!). All new and long-time members

are welcome so we can get to know each other.

(Come to the Meet and Greet event on April 14!)

MEMBERSHIP & MARKETING CIRCLE

Thursday, April 8, 7-9:30 pm via Zoom

RSVP to Lisa: Welcome@commonground.eco

Contact Lisa if you would like to observe a meeting.

We welcome new members!



A pileated woodpecker image (left) adorns the barn bathhouse sink, beautifully tiled by Anthony!

Now offered monthly!

HEART SHARING CIRCLE

Marketing & Membership Circle

Friday, April 9, 7-9:30pm via Zoom

RSVP to Ren: renenberg.cge@gmail.com

Join us for an opportunity to connect on a deeper

good to be in a meeting where the purpose was not to get work done but to get to know each other." - Laura L. We're so excited about this path of getting to know each other and nourishing our community's roots that **we're making it a monthly event on the second Friday, starting on April 9.** With our current format we only have room for 12 people each time (this may evolve) so be sure to RSVP early to renenberg.cge@gmail.com to secure your spot.



Earthen heart from a Forest Temple gathering on the land for Elon University students, offered by Jessica Cudney and Michelle Rozek.

As we get closer to having a viable way forward to build this village, **it's more important than ever that members understand what this community is about and how to navigate relationships with others.** M&M is addressing these critical issues as well. [Click here](#) for the ways we're improving communication within CGEV, and [click here](#) about follow-up actions that resulted from the Integrative Facilitation Training in January. Please take the time to read these so that you are in the know!

Land Stewardship Circle: there was a great gathering of two-leggeds on the land for the Spring Equinox version of a workday. Notable activities included: a daylong visit and contributions from a group from Elon University; finish work at the barn; prep for getting both water and electricity to the barn; trail work and schlepping of cedar posts/logs and barn project refuse to more appropriate locations. All intermingled with harvest day in the garden, and capped off with a fire circle and more conversations and cross-pollinations. Electricity at the barn is imminent! Huge thanks to Paul for making it happen—and, we are quite optimistic that this electricity will be solar powered very soon thanks to financial support from about 10 folks (more contributions are needed—please chip in if you can). The garden is growing, in many ways! Spring is

level as we share what is in our hearts. We will supply prompt questions to help get started, and share whatever is alive for us in this warm and accepting environment. This is one of the ways we nourish our community's roots and shoots! All Members are welcome.

LAND STEWARDSHIP CIRCLE

Tuesday, April 13, 7-8:30pm, likely via Zoom
RSVP to Randy: doddDOTrandyATgmailDOTcom
Note that we may start moving meetings to the land soon, depending on who plans to attend and what we want to discuss, so please do give us some lead time if you would like to participate. We don't have a good internet connection on the land currently, so it's an either/or thing. Observers are welcome.

MEET & GREET

Membership & Marketing Circle
Wednesday, April 14, 7-8:15pm via Zoom
RSVP to Lisa: Welcome@commonground.eco
This is highly recommended for new members and their interested friends! We'll all share our stories about our desire for community along with maps and pictures of the land. Interested? Let's start getting to know each other. Feel free to invite any interested friends from your personal networks!

COOPERATIVE SKILLS & GOVERNANCE TRAINING

Governance & Training Circle
Friday, April 16, 5:30-8pm via Zoom
Saturday, April 17, 9:30-noon via Zoom
RSVP to Hope: hopenmatrix@fastmail.com
*This training is offered but twice a year, so be sure to sign up. It's **mandatory for new members** and crucial to understanding how our Circles work and the culture of radical cooperation we are trying to build at Common Ground. We strongly encourage ALL members to repeat this training!*



Handmade gift of gratitude to Anthony from a visitor, Danielle Lake

here, more people are involved, new beds and an expanded fence line are being built, fruit trees are being planted, Doug and others are actively looking into the potential to host an intern soon. Given the expanding interest in folks being on the land, LSC has begun to think about creating additional guidelines for camping and other activities. Stay tuned! And finally, we had a very well-attended, informative, and beautifully presented Last Saturday Zoom meeting on March 27th (during an incredible thunderstorm!) The goals were 1) to get everyone up to speed about our farm's history, current projects, and future hopes and needs, and 2) to gather information about volunteer offerings going forward. We are in the process of figuring out how to make best use of this information. Folks who were not able to attend, or did attend but would like to review what we covered, [click here](#) and use this passcode (SV@ckn2g) to find a recording of the meeting. Jeffrey, Doug and Margret would like to express their deepest appreciation for all who made this meeting possible. Thank you!



(Left) Clay, glorious clay (Right) Anthony insulates barn walls with slip-straw (straw coated with diluted clay)

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](#).

Thanks to Sonya for this poem by David Whyte, *CLOSE is what we almost always are: close to happiness, close to another, close to leaving, close to tears, close to God, close to losing faith, close to being done, close to saying something, or close to success, and even, with the greatest sense of satisfaction, close to giving the whole thing up...[read more...](#)*

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: hopematrix@fastmail.com

FRESH TAKE: An in-depth info. session

Membership & Marketing Circle

Saturday, April 17, 4:00-5:30pm via Zoom

RSVP to Lisa: Welcome@commonground.eco

This "CGEV 101" session includes an up-to-date overview of where CGEV is now, what's next, and how you can get involved and contribute. You'll hear from other members and have a chance to ask questions. It's a great way learn a lot, fast!



Doug and Caleb harvest spring mix lettuce

SIMPLER LIVING: EARTH SKILLS SUNDAY

Governance & Training Circle

Sunday, April 18, 11am-1pm on the land

RSVP to Hope: hopematrix@fastmail.com

You are invited to explore the beauty and bounty of the plant life on the land together. This event will not have a "leader," so bring your curiosity and knowledge as we explore the wonders of wildflowers, wild edibles, trees, and whatever else crosses our path or wades into our awareness. Who knows--we may compile a yummy salad to munch with our lunch! Donations for the land are appreciated.

PLANNING, DESIGN, & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

Sunday, April 18, 6:30-8pm via Zoom

RSVP to Anthony: weston@elon.edu

Observers are always welcome, with RSVP

new time

GOVERNANCE & TRAINING CIRCLE

Tuesday, April 20, 5:30-7:30pm via Zoom

RSVP to Hope: hopematrix@fastmail.com

We are seeking new members and you are welcome to observe!



Cardinal among the redbud (photo by Margret)

Racial Equity Institute Training

We **strongly recommend** these 2-day virtual trainings as a way to begin a shared conversation about racism and social justice at Common Ground Ecovillage. Check <https://www.racialequityinstitute.com/new-events> for details.

White People Working for Racial Justice

Justice Leaders Collaborative
Saturdays, April 10 & 17; May 1 & 8, 10–3 pm via Zoom
Leaders: Autumn Campbell & Lois McCullen Parr
Cost: \$395, scholarships available
At this time in our nation, we are witnessing an alarming resurgence of white supremacy and state-sanctioned violence. It is imperative that white people do the deep work required to claim and embody an anti-racist identity, understand the privilege they carry, and interrupt racism where they live, work, study, and volunteer. This 4-week intensive is a space where white people can learn together, ask questions, make mistakes, work through defensiveness and guilt, and examine fears, without burdening People of Color. For info and to register, [click here](#)

Working Constructively with Conflict in Community

The Foundation for Intentional Community
5-week course, begins April 22
Skilled facilitator, Laird Schaub, will help you to learn how to embrace and navigate conflict so your intentional community can thrive when groups often struggle the most. [Register here](#)

Foundation for Intentional Community Resources

FIC offers many short events and continuing courses that are highly relevant to our work at CGEV. Visit this website (<https://www.ic.org/learn/>) and go to the “online courses” and “connect” tabs to see what’s on offer in the months to come.

GENERAL CIRCLE

Thursday, April 22, 7-9:15pm, via Zoom

RSVP to Bailey: baileygirly@gmail.com

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

NATIONAL INTENTIONAL COMMUNITIES OPEN HOUSE DAY

Membership & Marketing Circle

Saturday, April 24: 10-11am: Tours on the Land;

1-2pm: Zoom Info Session

For details, RSVP to Welcome@commonground.eco

Visit <https://www.bulldcitycommons.com/national-open-house> to find out more about this national event

LAST SATURDAY

Catch the wave towards breaking ground

Planning, Design, & Development Circle

Saturday, April 24, 3-5pm via Zoom

RSVP to Anthony: weston@elon.edu

*With real progress towards financing our CGEV housing cooperative, it’s essential to come together now and share steps and action plans. Remember, **ultimate success depends on YOU!** The picture is changing fast as conversations with the lenders develop. Still, all members and potential residents will need to ramp up your engagement and planning—your voice, heart, and participation are crucial. Keep an eye out for an email with more information—and plan to come to this event!*



Swing with a view: Jeffry and Margret gifted CGEV with this bench, set on the McGowan Creek ridge. Rocking here is sublime. Thank you!

WORK DAY ON THE LAND

Land Stewardship Circle

Sunday, April 25, 1-5pm

RSVP to Margret: earthbound52@gmail.com

Compassionate Connection (aka Non-Violent Communication or NVC): Wednesday, April 28, 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



(Left) Varun & Lisa slather on a sunny yellow paint on the upstairs barn walls (Right) Lewis & Kat touch up a ceiling



Relaxing after a rich day working on the land



Blossoms from a native pear tree

Come and see the latest with the ever-evolving barn/garden vortex! There are so many fun and useful COVID-compliant ways to engage for people of all inclinations & abilities. More details soon.

LAND STEWARDSHIP CIRCLE

Tentatively Tuesday, April 27, 7-8:30pm

RSVP to Randy for confirmation and location:

doddDOTrandyATgmailDOTcom

Note that we may start moving meetings to the land soon, depending on who plans to attend and what we want to discuss, so please do give us some lead time if you would like to participate. We don't have a good internet connection on the land currently, so it's an either/or thing. Observers are welcome!

PLANNING, DESIGN, & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

Wednesday, April 28, 6:30-8pm via Zoom

RSVP to Anthony: weston@elon.edu

Observers are always welcome, with RSVP

LOOKING AHEAD

Upcoming Festive Work Days

- Memorial Day weekend (May 30, 31)
- July 3 (Independence Day weekend)

What does it mean to be a 'localist'?

Sunday, June 20, 3-4:30pm

Paul Voss, in celebration of World Localization Day *Please join us (tentatively, virtual) for a lively conversation about what it means to be a "localist", and how you can increasingly bring localism into your daily habits and practice. Indeed, ecovillages are, by their very being, expressions of localism! If you're inclined to love homework and interested in getting a sense of one person's rich and accessible perspective on the topic, take a look at any of the many on-line video presentations by Helena Norberg-Hodge (just use your web browser to search "youtube Helena Norberg-Hodge)."*



Earth Skills Sunday with Gumby: Little one-match fires everywhere

