



Finding Common Ground

October, 2021

Up Front

October is pulsing with life-giving opportunities to learn, engage, contribute, and **receive the gifts of Autumn** in all her manifestations. To name a few: offer your input to the **Common House** design on October 9; learn about **Pine Power** on October 17, get up-to-speed on the **housing cooperative bylaws** project on October 23; celebrate at the **Fall Open House** on October 30; and save the dates for **NEW governance training** on November 5th and 6th. Here's to building CGEV together!

CIRCLE NEWS

General Circle (GC): Members of the GC coordinate the work of all Circles and uphold the interests of the whole community. But often our meetings feel rushed and there's not time to fully discuss and process all the issues. **Your servant leaders have agreed to meet twice a month through December** as an experiment to see how this might help us to enhance our work and deepen our relationships. Please come and observe!

♦The GC also extends **gratitude to Theresa** who so ably and effectively facilitated the "Exploring Community Voice" event on a lovely late September afternoon on the land. It was a marvelous experience of sharing and co-creation among members who could come in person. Next time we'll endeavor to include everyone!



COMMON GROUND CALENDAR



*Banner—An Arabesque Orb Weaver dancing on Sugarcane Plumegrass
Above—Farmer Doug picks plump persimmons*

GET INVOLVED!

- ♦Contact any of the Circle leaders listed below—they'll be happy to talk with you! **All events are open to everyone unless otherwise indicated, and you must RSVP!**
- ♦Most (but not all) Circle meetings are happening via Zoom. For in-person events, we keep our distance, and **masks are required** for those who are not vaccinated.

♦Google Calendar Link: <https://tinyurl.com/CGEV-Calendar>
To add an event, email Ren at ren.enberg2@gmail.com with "Google Calendar Request" in the subject line. Thanks, Ren!

COMMUNITY EVENTS SNAPSHOT

- ♦**Racial Awareness Reading and Reflection Group**, Every Monday: October 4, 11, 18, 25, 6:30 - 7:30 pm
- ♦**Heart Sharing Circle**, October 8, 7-9pm
- ♦**2nd Saturday Ecovillage News**, October 9, 3-5pm

Marketing & Promotion: The new Marketing & Promotion Circle is up and running, with Ren Enberg as the Operational Leader. If you are interested in **helping with events** such as our monthly open houses/tours on the land, writing content for social media or helping with writing ads, or have a general interest in marketing, outreach, photography, graphic art, website work (WordPress) etc, please contact Ren at renenberg.cge@gmail.com. We're also welcoming **those interested in becoming Circle members** to help with plans and strategies! We meet weekly on Wednesday nights from 6:30-8:30 and all members are welcome to RVSP and observe!

Governance & Training: We've been giving a lot of thought to the **governance training program** and will be making some changes based on member feedback and requests. Get ready to learn about **cooperative skills, the CGEV Circle governance structure, and our OnlyOffice administrative portal** in early November—see the “Look Ahead” section in the calendar for more details. And we'll likely offer a whole new approach to sociocracy training which will combine both theory & practice; something members have been clamoring for.

♦The **Earth Skills Sunday** offering on Fall Foraging was a great success, with about 20 people enjoying samples from black walnuts and muscadine grapes to elderberry syrup. We rambled past the wild persimmon tree to visit “volunteer” wild greens at the farm and sample passion fruit at its peak. Thanks to Hope and Margret for creating this multi-layered feast. On **October 17, come out for herbalist and flower essence practitioner, Melanie Yukov, to learn about Pine Power!**



Fall foraging goodies laid out by Hope & Margret (photo by Lara)

Land Stewardship: The highlight of September was time on the land over Labor Day weekend. To start things off, **Jane Meadows gifted Common Ground with a canoe and kayak!** Michelle and Jess cleared and uplifted the space around Cob Haven. Other crews prepared for,

- ♦**Fresh Take Info Session**, October 16, 4-5:30pm
- ♦**Simpler Living: Earth Skills Sunday—Pine Power**, October 17, 10am-noon
- ♦**4th Saturday: CGEV bylaws**, October 23, 3-5pm
- ♦**Fall Open House**, October 30, 3-6:30pm on the land



Fall farm panorama (photo by Doug, perched precariously in a tree)

Change

MEMBERSHIP CIRCLE

- Friday, October 1, 3-5pm via Zoom
- Friday, October 15, 3-5pm via Zoom

New members are very welcome to visit!

RSVP to Lisa: welcome@commonground.eco

RACIAL AWARENESS READING & REFLECTION GROUP

Membership Circle

Mondays, October, 4, 11, 18, 25, 6:30-7:30pm

This Group started reading a new book last week: My Grandmother's Hands, by Resmaa Menakem. This is a perfect time to join. To sign up & receive a Zoom link, contact Lisa at welcome@commonground.eco

Change

MARKETING & PROMOTION CIRCLE

Weds., October 6, 13, 20, 27, 6:30-8:30pm via Zoom

RSVP to Ren: renenberg.cge@gmail.com

Seeking creatives and those with interest in outreach, visibility and marketing to share this essential work. RSVP for Zoom link and meeting/work plan. All are welcome to observe!



fired, and harvested charcoal from the biochar kiln. There was a lovely pot luck with a centerpiece being a dish with wild mushrooms from the land. Afterwards, a few took the opportunity to jump in the pond!

♦Another focus of attention was a continuation of the **discussion of Common Ground's "agrarian vision."** What does this phrase mean to us, individually and collectively, and how might we best articulate and share this? To get a full flavor of our agrarian aspirations, look at [The Farm at Common Ground Ecovillage](#), posted on YouTube. A shout out and thank you to Caleb Buchbinder for this beautiful and engaging film! For October, plans are still in development for a workday, perhaps on the last weekend. Stay tuned!

Membership:

We are happy to report that seven new people have joined Common Ground as Visiting Members in the past month. The Membership Circle is enjoying forming relationships with the new members through the Buddy program, monthly Open Houses and the many programs offered by our community. Two Visiting Members have moved on to the Exploratory level!

♦Other big news is that we are on a path to hiring the **Diversity Consultant, Crystal Byrd Farmer**, to guide us through community conversations and trainings about how we can "walk our talk" concerning diversity, racial equity, and social justice. Your participation will be key, so be on the lookout for further information.

♦The Racial Awareness Reading and Reflections Group began reading a new book last week: **My Grandmother's Hands** by Resmaa Menakem. This is a perfect time to join. Check the calendar to register.



Group wisdom emerging at the Exploring Community Voice gathering

Planning & Development: P&D continues to move our architecture forward. A complete and consistent set of schematic design floor plans are in process from our very own Katy Ansardi. We are engaging with a young, local architect to produce elevations and 3D illustrations. In October we return to our existing Common House schematic design to determine the needed changes so that we can begin a conversation with our local architect for Common House redesign.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

- Wednesday, October 6, 6:30-8:30pm
- Sunday, October 17, 6:30-8:30pm
- Wednesday, October 27, 6:30-8:30pm

RSVP to Anthony: weston@elon.edu

All meetings are via Zoom. We are seeking new members and observers are very welcome.

HEART SHARING CIRCLE

Membership Circle

Friday, October 8, 7-9pm via Zoom

RSVP to Ren: renenberg.cge@gmail.com (Note: new email address)



October's facilitator is Lara Struckman. This is an opportunity to get to know other members on a much deeper level as we practice both compassion and vulnerability. We will offer question prompts to help us get started, and we also

share whatever is alive for us in this warm and accepting environment. If you thirst for genuine connection, join us when you can. (Photo: ripe spice bush berries)

2nd SATURDAY ECOVILLAGE NEWS

Planning & Development Circle

Saturday, October 9, 3-5pm via Zoom

RSVP to Anthony: weston@elon.edu

Now that the residential designs are nearing completion, P&D has turned its attention towards reviewing the Common House (CH). It's been some time since there's been a community conversation about this. Are you game for offering input on what's important to you and yours in a CH? Then please come if you can.

change

GENERAL CIRCLE

- Sunday, October 10, 4:30-6:30pm
- Thursday, October 28, 6:30-8:30pm, via Zoom

RSVP to Bailey: cgev.generalcircle@gmail.com

Double the fun this month! We welcome observers. RSVP two days in advance to receive the agenda, Zoom link, and documents.

♦On the engineering front, a road survey for our entrance design is underway, and we anticipate further perc testing to support increasing the permitted size of our wastewater system. A contract for the bulk of the site and engineering planning, to begin shortly, will come before GC in October.

Meanwhile we are awaiting the latest outlook from our potential loan originator at Centennial Mortgage.

♦A summary of the **state of the development as a whole** was widely shared via email and presented at length at our Last Saturday session on September 25th. The session was recorded but is not yet available. In October, P&D will offer a 2nd Saturday Ecovillage News session on October 9th to **receive input on the Common House**.

♦P&D is sponsoring a "Fourth Saturday" CGEV ByLaws discussion on the 23rd—see details in the Calendar.



Grasshopper's okra snack; Cardinal Flower (photos by Lara & Hope)

MEMBER HAPPENINGS

Is there something you are offering that you want the community to know about? If so, contact Hope by the 25th of each month: hopematrix@fastmail.com

From Jessica Cudney, Michelle Rozek, Lara Struckman:

♦Moon Ritual & Yoga

October 9 & 22, 7-9pm, outdoors at the Nest

RSVP for details and directions: 10/9 [RSVP](#); 10/22 [RSVP](#)
Bring a yoga mat, water, bug repellent, journal & pen.

♦Forest Walks

October 10 & 24, 4-5pm on the land

For details & directions: 10/10 [RSVP](#); 10/24 [RSVP](#)
Forest Walks are for those who want to experience the healing power of nature and strengthen our connection to the "felt presence" of the living Earth.

♦Forest Temple

Sunday, October 31, 3-5pm

RSVP for details and directions to Common Ground
Join us as we celebrate *Samhain*, a Gaelic festival marking the end of the harvest season and Nature's new year. This is a time to remember and honor our ancestors as the veil between worlds is thinnest.



Can you see those green balls (black walnuts) hanging way up there?

LAND STEWARDSHIP CIRCLE

Tuesday, October 12, 7pm via Zoom

RSVP to Randy: dodd.randy@gmail.com

As of press time, we haven't changed our meeting date/time for the second Tuesday although we are thinking about making a change, so be sure to RSVP! Interested in joining? Contact Randy.

GOVERNANCE & TRAINING CIRCLE

Thursday, October 14, 5:30-7:30 via Zoom

RSVP to Hope: hopematrix@fastmail.com

We're seeking new members, particularly those with training, facilitation, and administrative skills.

FRESH TAKE: An in-depth info session

Marketing & Promotion Circle

Saturday, October 16, 4-5:30pm 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!

SIMPLER LIVING: EARTH SKILLS

SUNDAY—Pine Power

Governance & Training Circle

Sunday, October 17, 10am-noon on the land

RSVP to Kathleen: 1mymassage@gmail.com

From [Margaret Anderson](#):

Sponsored by the M&M Circle.

I'm organizing hikes to local areas for CGers to enjoy the outdoors and get to know each other. Next one is

Sunday, October 24. Check the [google calendar](#) for place and time or email me. [RSVP](#) is essential if you plan on going. Also, I am looking for a few folks who might be interested in fall gardening with me out on the land. I have one row— maybe two rows if there is interest.

[Email me](#), please.

From [Marilyn Grubbs](#):

Compassionate Connection (aka Non-Violent Communication or NVC): Wednesday, October 27, 7:00 - 8:30pm 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 [Marilyn](#).



Autumn on the farm (photo by Doug)

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

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. Click <https://www.racialequityinstitute.com/new-events>

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/>) to see the array of intriguing options for the months to come.

Stagville Historic Site Tour: Understanding the Lives & Work of Enslaved People, [October 19](#), 11am-1pm, 5828 Old Oxford Highway, Durham, NC

This historic site includes remnants of one of the largest plantations in NC and is dedicated to teaching about the lives and work of enslaved people who lived here.

Herbalist and flower essence practitioner, Melanie Yukov, will offer an up-close-and-personal encounter with pine (pinus spp). She will discuss the benefits of this evergreen from wound healing, immune support, reducing inflammation and more, as well as go over spiritual uses and medicines made with this tree. You'll sip pine tea, learn how to make medicinal oil, and meditate with this plant to connect with, and gain knowledge about, the wisdom they share.

CGEV CO-OP BYLAWS DISCUSSION

Planning & Development

4th Saturday, October 23, 3-5pm

RSVP to Paul: voss@hawkweed.net,

*Bylaws describe the internal rules governing the management of a housing cooperative, and it's critically important for members of a co-op to feel they understand their Bylaws, agree with them, and have had a "voice" in their creation. If your future home is in the Village, **you really must try to attend** and participate in this important event. A formal invitation is in the works. Reserve the date!*

FALL OPEN HOUSE

Membership Circle

Saturday, October 30, 3-6:30 on the land

RSVP to Lisa: welcome@commonground.eco



*Save the date for an all-out, fun-filled **Fall Open House**, Saturday, October 30th. We'll share our beautiful land and farm with new folks (tours and information) and have a good time together: pumpkin carving, children's games, music, storytelling, seasonal snacks and a piñata. We will end with one of our famous pot lucks. More information will be forthcoming as we enlist your help in getting the word out, especially to families. **If you have ideas or want to help with the event**, contact Lisa: welcome@commonground.eco*

Looking ahead...

Governance & Training is offering:

- Cooperative Skills, November 5, 6:30-8:30pm
- CGEV governance structure & OnlyOffice training, November 6, 9:30-noon

Juicy details coming soon! Contact Hope for early information: hopematrix@fastmail.com

