



Finding Common Ground

November, 2021

Up Front

Sign up NOW! Cooperative governance is everyone's business. Key skills must be learned and practiced by ALL to ensure that our community will succeed and thrive. A NEW training program begins on November 5 & 6 and details are in the Calendar. Even if you think you know all about it, repetition is important to grow your skills. **RSVP by Nov. 3 to Hope:** Hopematrix@fastmail.com

Mark your calendar for a **Gathering of Gratitude and Goodies** on Saturday, November 27—a time to wander, relax, reflect, play, and enjoy food, fire, and friendship.

CIRCLE NEWS



Planning & Development: Very Big News!! Over the past many months, we have experienced several worrisome delays while our lender cleared away what he felt could be significant hurdles to ensure that the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is sufficiently comfortable for us to commence the formal loan application process. We learned just last week that we can, at long last, **move forward with the formalities of our loan application** to fund construction of our dwellings and common house. Please understand that **this does NOT mean we've secured a loan** for our construction. We've been given the **Green Light** to proceed, and that alone is cause for much celebration! Thanks to generous matching funds from our Catalyst member, we are well on track to raising the money to complete key pre-development activities, but more LLC investments will be needed. This journey towards approval of our loan has many steps and benchmarks and some are listed here:

- ♦ Complete a formal Concept Meeting Proposal to meet with our lender and HUD representatives and pay a \$5,000 application fee.
- ♦ Hire a firm to carry out a Market Analysis

COMMON GROUND CALENDAR



Banner—A flaming cauldron for making biochar, fed by Randy and Bob.

Above—Circling up before the Fall Fest potluck (photo by Caleb)

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, masks are recommended for all and 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: Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 6:30 - 7:30 pm
- ♦ **Cooperative Governance Training,** Nov. 5, 6:30-8:30pm; Nov. 6, 9:15am-12:30pm
- ♦ **Heart Sharing Circle,** November 12, 7-9pm
- ♦ **2nd Saturday Ecovillage News,** November 13, 3-5pm
- ♦ **Fresh Take Info Session,** November 20, 4-5:30pm
- ♦ **Simpler Living: Earth Skills Sunday—Grapevine weaving,** November 14, 12-4pm

- ♦Re-initiate the process to identify members who are committed (and on track to becoming Engaged Members) to live at Common Ground. (Commitments for at least 36 of our anticipated 42 Living Units are needed to qualify for the loan.)
 - ♦Finalize our architecture plans and site design
 - ♦Complete pre-development site engineering
 - ♦Finish the process to write our bylaws
 - ♦Etc., etc., etc.
- For a more thorough explanation of what's ahead, [click here](#). Here's the latest [Timeline](#) to see how/when pieces need to be put into place. Contact [Anthony](#) for more.



♦One more P&D update: On October 7, three hydrological monitoring wells were drilled in our Far Field to better understand subsurface water table depth and the direction of water flow in our anticipated wastewater drip field. This work is required for further permitting of the system for development. The photo shows a drilling team from Quantex, Inc. under the supervision of a representative from Highlands Environmental Solutions.



Membership Circle: The Fall Fest Open House on October 30 attracted a large crowd! Organized by Margaret, Kathleen, Lisa and Jane, we welcomed dozens of members and newcomers (including a surprising number of black dogs on leashes!). All enjoyed lively

♦**Gathering of Gratitude and Goodies**, November 27, 3:00 pm on the land

Take a Hike! November 28, 10:30am, place TBA



Kathleen's pumpkin piñata was a real hit!

RACIAL AWARENESS READING & REFLECTION GROUP

Membership Circle

Mondays, November 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 6:30-7:30pm

This Group started reading a new book recently: 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

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

- Wednesday, November 3, 6:30-8:30pm
- Sunday, November 14, 6:30-8:30pm
- Wednesday, November 24, TBA

RSVP to Anthony: weston@elon.edu

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

MARKETING & PROMOTION CIRCLE

Weds., November 3, 10, 17, 24, 6:30-8:30pm, 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.

MEMBERSHIP CIRCLE

- Friday, November 5, 3-5pm via Zoom
- Friday, November 19, 3-5pm via Zoom

RSVP to Lisa: welcome@commonground.eco

New members are very welcome to visit!

conversation, tours of the land and farm, children's activities, buying home-grown veggies, sampling foods prepared from vegetables grown at CG, learning about foraging and natural medicines by [Melanie Yukov](#), and a fabulous potluck. The music of Mebanesville uplifted all



who mingled, while Ren and Quai gave an after-potluck performance with gorgeous vocals, flute, bass, keyboard and guitar. An event like this not only attracts

potential new members—it nurtures the bonds between all members and gives us a chance to have fun together! (photo by Caleb)

♦We now have a **directory of active members**. With this wonderful tool we can contact each other with ease, find birthdays, learn who the active members are, and more. There's also a new **Member Listserv** similar to those used in neighborhoods. Need to borrow a table for an event? Looking for a walking partner? Want to share some good or bad news? Here's a tool for reaching out and sharing. Thanks to Laura, Quai, Ren, Theresa and Amy for their work on these tools. Contact [Lisa](#) for a link! ♦We continue to have new people join CGEV as Visiting Members each month. To help new members learn about Common Ground and connect in a significant way, each is assigned a Buddy. We are expanding our pool of Buddies beyond our Circle, which is beneficial for all involved. Please let us know if you would be interested in serving as a Buddy.



Paul, Anthony, and Nate put the finishing touches on the privy

GOVERNANCE TRAINING

Required for all new members—RSVP by Nov. 3

- **Cooperative Skills:** Friday, November 5, 6:30-8:30pm
- **Distributed Power & Decision-making:** Saturday, November 6, 9:15-10:45am
- **Navigating OnlyOffice:** Saturday, November 6, 11:00-12:30am

RSVP to Hope: hopematrix@fastmail.com

The CGEV vision calls for a commitment to LEARN and PRACTICE new skills for relating to each other, growing and deciding together, and fostering a culture of cooperation. It's SO important to develop these skills and perspectives that **governance literacy is required for all new members!** You are invited to a powerful introduction to our governance principles and practices in three phases (via Zoom).



Two kinds of heatless habañero peppers from Seeing Stars Farm

GENERAL CIRCLE

- Sunday, November 7, 4:30-6:30pm
- Tuesday, November 23, 6:30-8:30pm

RSVP to Bailey: cgev.generalcircle@gmail.com

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

LAND STEWARDSHIP CIRCLE

Tuesday, November 9, 7pm via Zoom

RSVP to Randy: dodd.randy@gmail.com

Be sure to RSVP as meeting details may change! Interested in joining? Contact Randy.

GOVERNANCE & TRAINING CIRCLE

Thursday, November 11, 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.

HEART SHARING CIRCLE

Membership Circle

Friday, November 12, 7-9pm via Zoom

RSVP to Ren: renenberg.cge@gmail.com

Land Stewardship: The orchard is growing! Asian Persimmon trees will soon be planted in the area near the barn where we already have apples and pears and figs growing. ♦The “native bee crew” is plotting which pollinator crops to plant near the pond, the wetlands and farm. ♦What’s an agrarian ecovillage”? Stay tuned for a new posting on the website as we clarify and express what this means to us—and all CGEV members. ♦Our farmers continue to grow and provide gorgeous, seasonal produce—Doug, Caleb, and Lara with a year-round CSA, and Jeffry and Margret through the Chapel Hill Farmer’s Market. ♦And a very important new construction: Anthony and Paul have built a new privy complete with a bright blue door and housing CGEV’s first mini-library!



Cosmos & cabbages on the farm

Marketing & Promotion: Much energy in the past month has been spent organizing ourselves as a new Functional Circle. Ren is providing leadership and Circle administration with Quai as the elected representative and facilitator. Lisa is stepping down from Circle membership to focus on leading the Membership Circle but will continue to be involved in projects that spark her interest. As we move into November, we are busy getting multiple new initiatives underway. Among these is formalizing our Marketing Plan and the production of a new CGEV video for our website home page. Look for Caleb Buchbinder gathering footage at CGEV events! We are actively seeking folks to help create content for both the blog and social media, such as simple write-ups before and after events. Contact Ren if interested:

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 Lara Struckman

♦New Moon Meditation: November 4, 12-1pm
♦Full Moon Meditation: November 19, 5-6pm
Guided meditations drawing on mindfulness, visualization, and the world around us.
Location: Grandmother Oak, if weather permits.

October’s facilitator is Kathleen Biernat. 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.

2nd SATURDAY ECOVILLAGE NEWS

Planning & Development Circle

Saturday, November 13, 3-5pm via Zoom

RSVP to Anthony: weston@elon.edu

Starting the loan application process is a game changer for CGEV. All that we’ve worked for can come to fruition IF we all pull together to meet an ambitious timeline with coordinated tasks involving ALL of our Circles. EVERYONE who wants to help build the vision needs to come. Thanks for showing up!

FRESH TAKE: An in-depth info session

Membership Circle

Saturday, November 20, 4-5:30pm via Zoom

RSVP to Lisa: [Welcome@commonground.eco](mailto>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

Vining the chandeliers! (Whaat?)

Governance & Training Circle

Sunday, November 14, 12-4pm at the barn

RSVP to Paul: voss@hawkweed.net



How about helping to craft gorgeous chandeliers to hang from the barn rafters? We have two large metal frames just waiting to be festooned with native grape vines and fairy lights. Learn from Margret Mueller the skill of vine-weaving and hear the back-story of this barn beautification project from Paul. Can’t come on the

RSVP to Lara for details: struckman87@gmail.com

From Jessica Cudney & Michelle Rozek:

♦[Forest Walks](#), November 14 & 28, 4-5pm on the land
For details & directions: 11/14 [RSVP](#); 11/28 [RSVP](#)

Experience the healing power of nature and strengthen our connection to the "felt presence" of the living Earth.

♦[Grieving Earth: An Eco-Grief Support Group,](#)

November 24, 7-8:30pm via Zoom—[RSVP](#)

Talking about and sharing in grief rituals helps us to channel the energy of anger, fear and anxiety into empowering practices and expressions.



Forest Temple Samhain altar by Jess & Michelle

From [Marilyn Grubbs](#):

Compassionate Connection (aka Non-Violent

Communication or NVC): Wednesday, November 24, 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](#).

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.

14th? Help to collect vines from the land to prepare—a fun task that Paul will organize soon. Oh, and did we mention treats and warm apple cider?



Singing around the festival fire (photo by Caleb)

GATHERING of GRATITUDE & GOODIES

Membership Circle

Saturday, November 27, 2pm onwards on the land

RSVP to Margaret: bkttitle@gmail.com

There's so much to celebrate as our community continues to grow, gel, and thrive. We're offering an "open house" for folks to come to the land, wander, rest, and connect with other members, family, and friends. We'll converge at the beautiful barn around 3:30 to share a celebration potluck meal together.

RSVP to Margaret is essential so we can coordinate the meal and keep you in the loop. Want to help create the event? Contact Margaret to plan the fun.

TAKE A HIKE!

Sponsored by the M&M Circle.

Sunday, November 28, 10:30am, place TBA

RSVP to Margaret is essential: bkttitle@gmail.com

Enjoy the outdoors and get to know other CGer's and friends. Check the [google calendar](#) for place and time or email Margaret. She's also all ears if there's a special place you'd like to go next time.



Michelle & the giant sweet potato; Randy & Bob tend the biochar flame

