



Finding Common Ground

January, 2023

UP FRONT

This year-in-review issue harvests the gems of our community cultivation efforts—and there is a lot to tell! You'll find photos and personal reflections from members below the newsletter. We hope you'll enjoy taking it all in.

A 2022 reflection from Anthony, P&D Circle leader:

*A year ago, P&D projected loan closing a few months into 2023, with construction beginning soon thereafter. Instead, as readers will know, it's been a year of bureaucratic delays, stringent requirements for our HUD loan guarantee, skyrocketing materials and labor costs, and financial uncertainties on the community's side as well. But here's the thing: at every moment, we have stepped forward with the finest and most heartfelt energy, support, new ideas, and even sometimes a sort of joy in grappling with these challenges. A few—but only a very few— have quite understandably backed away. Many others have stepped forward instead, asking "How can we help?" "What are our best options now?" "How can we preserve what is so special about the CGEV community and build on our very considerable strengths going forward?" **Acceptance, flexibility, and persistence are our watchwords.***



*Our celebrations have felt deeper and richer as the year went on— and actually more people are showing up for them. New friends have appeared and joined with open hearts and minds towards whatever the future will be. **We don't know***

MEETINGS & EVENTS



Winter Solstice under the glowing Grandmother Oak (Photo: Shells)
Banner above: Keeping the fire burning

GET INVOLVED

- ♦ **All events are open to everyone** unless otherwise indicated, and **you must RSVP** for details, links, and last-minute changes.
- ♦ **COVID Safety:** Note guidelines provided in event announcements
- ♦ **Accessibility:** At this stage in our development, terrain is unpaved & uneven, & restrooms are not wheelchair-accessible.
- ♦ **Google Calendar Link:** <https://tinyurl.com/CGEV-Calendar>
To add/change an event, email Ren at ren.enberg2@gmail.com

COMMUNITY EVENTS SNAPSHOT

Scroll down to the **"All About Events"** section below for details.

- ♦ **New Year's Day Hike**, Sunday, January 1, 10:30am
- ♦ **Racial Awareness Reading and Reflection Group**,

what comes next, but it's very clear that we know what we love and care about, and we will continue to cherish this community and work for it through thick and thin. This is my precious memory of the year: how enormously cheering this kind of community response has been, again and again. And how energizing it is as the work continues. Thank you all!! Let's see what 2023 brings!

CIRCLE NEWS

Membership: What a big year this has been! Our passion and vision for growing and nurturing the people of this community draws us to this work. At times it felt like “not enough time and not enough people” to accomplish our cherished objectives, but looking back we have much to be proud of. Here are a few things that we did this year:

- ♦ **Re-vamped the Membership Process** with fewer levels, clearer expectations, and steps for advancement posted on the website.
- ♦ **Increased the buddy pool** with recruitment and training.
- ♦ Facilitated vaccine dialogues and conflict resolution conversations.
- ♦ Established an **Affordable Housing Task Group** jointly with the Planning & Development Circle.
- ♦ Hosted a **full year of Open Houses and Fresh Take Info Sessions** geared to newly interested people.
- ♦ **Labored to improve barn** so it can easily be used for events and also organized all the things needed to host a potluck in one place.
- ♦ What's next? **Members have needs to communicate with each other**, whether to announce a program, discuss community issues, look for a home to rent, or connect with others around a common interest. We urgently need to dialogue and share our thoughts, feelings



Lighting a candle for one another (Photo: Shells)

and ideas about the developmental stage we find ourselves in. To this end, the Communication and Membership Circles have worked together to launch a **website-based, members-only Forum** so that you can participate in virtual dialogues

Every Monday, 7-8pm

- ♦ **Forest & Tree Work Day**, January 7, 1-4pm
- ♦ **Trail Tending Work Day**, January 8, 9-11am
- ♦ **Heart Share**, January 13, 7-9pm
- ♦ **Community Potluck**, January 14, 4-6pm
- ♦ **Community in the Round**, January 28, 3-5pm
- ♦ **Tour of the land by request:** Contact Lisa, welcome@commonground.eco



A fresh Cranefly orchid leaf pops up out of last year's oak leaves.

CIRCLE MEETINGS DIGEST

*All Circles are welcoming new members. Visitors are encouraged to attend **with RSVP in advance**. Contact the leaders listed—they'll be glad to talk with you!*

MEMBERSHIP CIRCLE

- Fridays, January 6 & 20, 1-3pm, Zoom
RSVP to Lisa with subject “Membership Circle”:
welcome@commonground.eco

MC-HeartWeavers Subcircle

- Sunday, January 15, 3-4:30pm
RSVP to Theresa with “HeartWeavers RSVP” in
subject line: tjensen1952@gmail.com

GOVERNANCE & TRAINING CIRCLE

- Thursday, January 12, 7-9pm, Zoom
RSVP to Becky with G&T in the subject line:
blaskody@gmail.com

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

- Wednesdays January 11 & 25, 2-4pm, Zoom
and in-person at the Nest in Mebane
RSVP to Anthony: weston@elon.edu

P&D-Affordable Housing Task Group

- Wednesday, January 18, 6-7:30pm, Zoom
RSVP to Theresa with “RSVP Affordability” in
subject line: tjensen1952@gmail.com

on a variety of topics. We're excited about this because it's the only place we have as a community to voice an opinion or idea that everyone else has access to and can respond to. WE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE YOU TO CHECK IT OUT! If you are an active member, **keep an eye out for an email with an invitation and instructions to log in.** We believe this will be a powerful tool for members staying connected. ♦ Yes, we are in uncertain times but we have heard the community say "in this time of uncertainty let's focus on getting to know each other better; let's have workable avenues for communication; let's continue to educate new members and bring them through the membership process; let's find a path that fits the people that we are." The members of MC are excited to be working on all of these important things. **Please join us if this excites you, too!**



Medicinal Reishi Mushrooms appear in several places on the land

HeartWeavers Subcircle: This Circle was created in 2022 to bring forth balance and relational health with our members and the land and weave together the threads of interconnection. We're giving thanks and celebrating all of YOU and our shared experiences: Juneteenth Exploring Racial Justice with Corn Candle Circle at the Barn, monthly Potlucks, the Fall Fest, Sunday Hikes with Margaret, & the Winter Solstice Gathering. Earth Connection Sundays were all so powerful, educational, bringing us closer to the land, its waters, creatures, trees, and edible and medicinal plants.

Land Stewardship: In a nutshell (you can decide on whether it's black walnut, acorn, or something else), our Circle kept on keeping on and also "laid the common ground" for future unfoldings. The "keeping on" means that Doug, Jeffry, Margret, Caleb, Lara, Natalie and others kept the farm and garden production running. Meanwhile, Randy and Nell (with support) made sure the Circle continued with its meetings, deliberations, administration, and integration with the rest of CGEV. Lots of guests and supporters Zoomed in to check us out. ♦ We continued with our **Tree of Heaven taming project** (many thanks in particular to Hope). ♦ We supported gatherings and visitors on the land, including a group of Elon Students who took on a fall semester project to thoughtfully study

GENERAL CIRCLE

- Sunday, January 15, 6:30-8:30pm, Zoom
RSVP to Hope with "GC" in the subject line, 2 days in advance for materials:
hopenatrix@fastmail.com

COMMUNICATIONS CIRCLE

- Wednesday, January 25th - 6:30-8pm, Zoom
RSVP for details to Quai: quai@franklin@gmail.com
Quai is requesting all CommC Subcircle members to attend as well. This will be a regrouping meeting.

LAND STEWARDSHIP CIRCLE

There are no meetings scheduled for LSC and its SubCircles at present. Please come to the Work Days scheduled on January 7 & 8! For information, contact Nell: hmkriesberg@gmail.com

ALL ABOUT EVENTS

NEW YEAR'S DAY HIKE

HeartWeavers Circle

January 1, 10:30am, the Eno River Confluence, 4214 Highland Farm Rd, Hillsborough, NC 27278

RSVP required to Margaret: bktitle@gmail.com

Meet up and take a lovely hike where two branches of the Eno come together. Enjoy warm drinks and snacks after.

RACIAL AWARENESS READING & REFLECTION GROUP

Membership Circle

Every Monday, 7-8pm, Zoom.

Contact Lisa to join: welcome@commonground.eco

This Group is reading a new book: The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee: Native America from 1890 to the Present, by David Treuer



Elon seniors circle round and talk with members about their project

aspects of the land, and make suggestions about options we could pursue. ♦ Michelle and Margret made **beautiful trail signs**, lovingly carved, stained, and posted in strategic places. Anthony spearheaded the building of an amazing privy, and many hands and hearts uplifted the barn.



♦ About mid-year, a couple of things became clear: the Circle was bursting with new members, and we needed to focus on two major areas with very different needs—the farm and the forest. Consequently, we formed two Subcircles to segment the work and to involve members who mostly want to work on projects rather than make policy. Jess stepped up to facilitate our meetings, and Michelle and Bill started offering trail tending work days. Randy will be coordinating forest work days in 2023. ♦ Farmer Doug somehow found the time to pull together some forward-thinking ideas for growing the farm while dealing with Caleb's absence due to an injury and while navigating community uncertainties and some very trying weather. ♦ Last but not least, Jeffry and Margret (aka Seeing Stars Farm) decided to stop their market production work at the end of 2022. Their pioneering work with getting the garden going, running the LSC, and much more has made so much possible for all of us at Common Ground. We are deeply grateful to them.

Communications Circle: This Circle was formed in August of 2022 to coordinate all things related to internal and external communication, policies and practices. It now includes three Subcircles under one umbrella: Marketing & Promotion (M&P), Website Design, and Information Technology (IT). As a group, we've achieved a lot this year. ♦ M&P collaborated to achieve compelling and consistent branding and messaging that reflects the core values and aspirations of this community. You can see all available marketing materials in the "[Spread the Word](#)" page on the website. We are getting the word out widely through advertising and a much-enhanced social media presence. ♦ M&P under Ren's direction conducted brainstorming sessions with community members to discuss CGEV outreach, visibility, and promotion, and to solicit feedback

FOREST & TREE WORKDAY

Saturday January 7, 1-4pm, on the land

RSVP to Randy for details: dodd.randy@gmail.com

For winter/spring, these will be recurring with a focus on clearing and thinning young trees in the fields, along the forest edge, and on the pond dam.

TRAIL TENDING WORKDAY

Land Stewardship Circle

January 8, 9-11am, on the land

RSVP to Bill: striderbill46@gmail.com

The land has about 4 miles of meandering trails from the pond to the wetlands and beyond. These mostly wooded pathways enjoy being touched by feet and groomed by gentle hands, which is why we are so grateful to you for offering your loving support by tending these trails!

HEART SHARE

HeartWeavers Circle

Friday, January 13, 7-9pm, Zoom

RSVP to Ren: renenberg.cge@gmail.com

Come and get to know other members on a much deeper level as we practice both compassion and vulnerability. We 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.



Coming together under the Common Ground Banner

COMMUNITY POTLUCK

HeartWeavers Subcircle

Saturday, January 14, 4-6pm (winter hours), on the land. Kid friendly! No RSVP needed.

Weather dependent: check email before coming out



on the current website. She created dedicated task groups, designed and ordered cool Common Ground t-shirts, and got our community “on the map” with Google where we are now registered as a housing coop. ♦ The website has been updated and enhanced. Ren worked with Caleb to produce a [stunning new CGEV video](#) for the home page! Ezekiel (Zeke) Bhasker joined the Website Subcircle as project manager for the website redesign project and to advise us on other tech-related concerns. There is now a more substantial member bios section, an updated home page, and links to social media among other effective changes. Keep an eye out for an exciting new development— a discussion forum accessible through our website’s Members Only area! ♦ The IT Subcircle has also been busy under Quai’s direction. It is now easy to find a folder of CGEV Zoom recordings (circle meetings, expert consultations, community discussions and gatherings, etc.) in OnlyOffice (OO). IT is reviewing our mailing list strategies and evaluating how we organize and use OO. We are also attending to many other technical issues that are behind the scenes, yet vital to how our community operates and communicates. These are all big leaps forward for CGEV, and we thank all who helped along the way!

Governance & Training: Becky and Hope provided basic training in Sociocracy for about 40 members in 2022. We used the Sociocracy for All (SoFA) Empowered Learning Circle curricula which helps participants learn by doing. **People appreciated putting concepts into practice**, such as nominating leaders, creating proposals, experiencing consent decision-making, and giving/receiving feedback. Many folks found this to be a great way to get oriented to sociocracy while bonding with other CGEV members—and having fun in the process. ♦ **Learning how to cooperate** is fundamental to creating the justice and harmony we seek at CGEV. G&T provided three Cooperative Skills Trainings, including one session focused on power. Ahmed Avais, a SoFA trainer who now lives close by in Apex, helped us to explore how personal power, power over, and power with dynamics can show up and affect our interactions. ♦ A major part of our work this year was to **assume leadership of the General Circle** until some other pathway becomes clear. We create agendas, facilitate the meetings, keep minutes, and archive all meeting materials. We are still looking for a GC administrator to help keep us all on track. ♦ **Our governance system, sociocracy, is designed to help organizations grow and evolve as circumstances change.**

This is an excellent way to get to know members, see the land, learn about the community, and enjoy delicious dishes!

COMMUNITY IN THE ROUND

Governance & Training Circle

Saturday, January 28, 3-5pm, Zoom and in-person

RSVP to Hope: hopematrix@fastmail.com

This is an opportunity for the full community to come together, connect with one another, and focus on emergent issues that affect us all. January’s topic is TBA. More information will be coming soon.



Ren’s cat finds the CGEV tee irresistible

MEMBER HAPPENINGS

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

From Way of Belonging—Jess & Michelle

January 6: [Cancer Full Moon Ritual](#), 7 - 8:30pm, Zoom

January 21: [Aquarius New Moon Ritual](#), 7 - 8:30pm, Zoom

January 22: [Intuitive Birding](#), 10am - 12pm, In-person (Mebane, NC)

January 26: Intro to the Wheel of the Year - Mini Course, 7 - 9pm, Zoom

January 29: [Imbolc Seasonal Celebration](#), 3 - 5pm, In-person (Mebane, NC)

G&T guided a process to evolve our Circle structure by helping our Functional Circles (FCs) to create Subcircles and Task Groups to focus on specific activities. This has enabled FCs to stay “right sized” while including more members in their work. And it’s a work in process. ♦ G&T organized the new **monthly Community in the Round**, where all members are invited to share information, offer feedback on topics, get to know each other small groups, and learn about ways to contribute to Circle tasks and projects. With help from Theresa, we also led a December General Circle retreat to consider 2023 priorities across the Circles and to regroup after the discouraging costs estimates received in November. ♦ We’re grateful to our small but mighty group—Becky, Hope, Quai, and Ruth—for keeping this governance ship afloat in our own unique and invaluable ways.



Winterberry holly in the wetland

Planning & Development: P&D continues to carry forward the current Concept Plan for village and land development, while systematically re-viewing “big picture” alternatives also. Realistic cost estimates for site work and construction are in sight, as Robyn Heeks, our superb Development Manager, is building partnerships with potential general contractors to generate realistic cost estimates for village construction. She’s also pursuing an alternative estimate for the site work. We are still looking at significantly reducing costs by scaling back some aspirations both for natural building and land projects outside the village proper. At the same time, Robyn and our own Affordable Housing Task Group are exploring multiple possibilities for financial support for low-income housing, senior housing, self-help DIY building, and others through grants, subsidies, and low-interest loans. Robyn estimates that perhaps half the housing in the village could be financed in this way, with the other half financed as planned through CMI with HUD/FHA backing. The current plan is to consolidate a realistic overall financial picture in January and then consider whether and how to move ahead or possibly change directions. *If* we can arrive at plausible cost numbers that are in some way financially manageable, we will (re)submit the Concept Plan to Centennial Mortgage and HUD for review and first-stage approval to keep the loan process moving. This is a dynamic and creative time—we’ll keep everyone posted as best we can as possibilities emerge. Stay with us!

January 23rd: [Herbs for the Mind, Body, and Gut](#) Hosted by Melanie Yukov from Root 2 Rise Wellness, 6:30 to 8:30 pm, in –person, 1:1 Healing Art Space Durham, NC.



Warm flames and glowing orbs at the Winter Solstice ceremony

OUTSIDE EVENTS/WEBINARS/READINGS TO EXPAND OUR SOCIAL & CULTURAL HORIZONS

Is something happening that you want our members to know about? Supply title, date, time, location, links, and description by the 25th of each month to [Hope](#).

Introduction to Beekeeping

[Orange County Beekeepers Assn.](#)

Tuesday nights, January 17th, to March 21st, 7:00 – 9:00pm, in-person and via Zoom

Orange County Agricultural Center, Hillsborough

This is a great way to begin if you are interested in learning about beekeeping. Several CGEV members have taken this course in the past, and Hope & Jane plan to attend this one. Let’s get beehives back on the land!

Organizing Against Racism

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 here](#) for information and to register.

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



Click on the image to watch a beaver swimming in the wetland

Members Reflect on COMMON GROUND ECOVILLAGE

Photos by Margret Mueller, Shells, Jessica Cudney, Michelle Rozek, Becky Laskody, & Hope Horton

COMMUNITY IS MY RELIGION

Doug Jones, December, 2022

Sun, my source! I bow down.
Teeming Life, my temple, everywhere I step
You inhabit every crack.
We are tiny seeds, then giants.
Plants, my miracles,
And my health insurance policy.

But Community, You are my Religion.
My People are my thriving.

Buffy Saint Marie sang
God is Alive, Magic is Afoot
I sing
God is the Mystery of our brief existence.
Magic is.....Community.
Community is our playground
Where we delight in shifting paradigms
Where we bring it all back Home
Where we reinvent the Tribe.

Deep in our chromosomes
For 100 million years
Grew genes of cooperation, love,
compassion.
We fed each other
Sharing the Commons.
Belonging.
We pooled our wisdom
Kindness prevailed
We handed it down
We survived.

But then, a mutation happened.
We got smarter, not wiser.
A Narcissism gene appeared.
Soon, we played the Zero Sum Game.

No longer "I prosper when I help Us".
Now, a few prospered while many suffered.



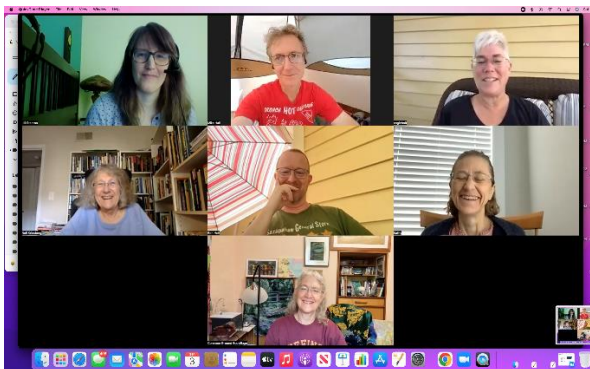
Something I have learned: Food does not easily arrive on a conveyor belt! Every time I go to the farm, and something is being covered, uncovered, recovered, I am amazed about how much work goes into food production. From my own garden, i am aware of how much time digging and picking veggies take, but a real farm involves so much more. It is not just the sun, the water, the soil; it's the expertise, the wisdom, and the work. I may "know" this in a cognitive way, but the deep body sense of this smacks into me when I am on the farm and living it, even for a few hours and watching all the Doug does. —Amy H.



Teeming Life: now merely resources.
 We consumed the Earth,
 Now we are starving, lonely, lost.
 But it's not too late to save Us
 Because we renew and grow the Tribe
 each day,
 Remembering.
 Love will get us out of bed in the morning.
 We turn again to the Sun.



My advancement ceremony to become an associate member was sweet and moving. I jumped over the 'water' and tied a very long colorful ash around the Grandmother Oak as a symbol of my connection to the land. I feel an extra connection to those who advanced in membership with me that day: Gonzalo and Theresa. I also really enjoyed leading several Sociocracy Empowered Learning Circles this year online. Each group made special connections with each other as they learned and practiced the basics of sociocracy. It was great for folks to get to know other folks interested in living and working together at Common Ground. —Becky L.



My most profound learning from the past year has to do with expressing appreciation. I find myself thanking friends and family, and also people I don't know well, for the ways they make my life better, for the talents that they share, for the good job that they are doing. It has begun to feel natural to express myself in this way and it feels good. I have been mentored in this behavior by members of CGEV. It's part of the culture. Initially, the expressions of appreciation felt a little too personal but now they are becoming second nature and I am loving it. —Lisa B.



My fondest memory from being on the land in 2022 is, no contest, the arrival and metamorphosis of numerous Monarch butterflies. This year they not only stopped by to sip nectar from our wild milkweed, they apparently also found CG hospitable enough to lay eggs, which became leaf-munching caterpillars, which became beautiful hanging chrysalis jewels, which hatched out new butterflies for the next leg of the migratory journey south. Hooray for CG's part in assisting this ever-dwindling species! —Margret M.

I volunteered at the Common Ground farm throughout 2022, and it was definitely one of the best parts of my week, every week. Doug is so generous with his knowledge. Lara, Caleb and Natalie anchor such a joyous, loving, conscious energy around engaging with nature that every visit felt therapeutic. Not to mention all the amazing food I got to harvest and take home every week. Such a blessing! I also particularly enjoyed Michelle and Jess's offerings for the Solstice and Equinox. Their circles are creative, fun, inclusive, and supportive. More than anything, every single human I've met at CG is so loving, kind, and committed to their values. It is a joy to be a part of this community in every way. —Caitree



I was surprised and delighted to learn from Melanie and Natalie at the Plant Share, of the rich array of ways we can eat and drink and use Goldenrod, and Pine Needles!
—Barbara J.



September's Earth Connection Sundays about water were great adventures. The Medicinal and Edible Plants Sunday was very enlightening. Melanie and Natalie really brought us into the weeds that day!
—Shells

Midnight, May 30th, 2022: a dozen or so intrepid CGers plus an astronomical friend or two are lying flat on their backs or leaned back in lawn chairs in the Far Field under a clear dome of stars, awaiting what just possibly could be the Meteor Storm of the Century... so the hype said (but it's hard to tell in advance, and who'd want to miss it if it were?). In fact it turned out to be a pretty ordinary meteor shower – a few bright ones now and then, a lot of waiting... some of us until 2 am... but we got to tell a lot of stories and enjoy the (cool!) evening together in the process... plus not one but two pass-overs of the International Space Station, specially arranged (just kidding). Jeffry and I brought our telescopes, so we could see Saturn's rings, the surface of Mars, etc. A few of us camped over... then up before dawn, with the eastern sky beginning to brighten, all five of the naked-eye planets were in view, spread out across the whole southern sky, and in order out from Sun, too. A starry delight! May we have many more watch parties together! —Anthony W.



It is impossible to summarize what this soul and its bones have gained from being in 2022. My favorites are the learnings—what one variety of plant requires to maximize nutrient absorption, how it defends itself; the life cycle of a carbon molecule through hundreds of living forms; feeling my heart expand when a companion reveals a layer of their self, sharing the heat of fire, song and working together towards our shared purposes; admiring our members' courage and tenacity; watching old scars soften; absorbing the joy and unknowable good while carrying forward my ancestors' work. Gratitude to it, for it all :) —Kathleen B.



We have had many opportunities to deepen & nurture our relationships with each other and learn how to support these relationships as the “glue” that holds our community together. Beyond meetings and architecture and logistics (which are all needed to keep us on track & organized), we are learning to listen to each other in a way that connects and brings forth what each member is longing for and what makes their heart sing! Weaving our threads together helps us in hearing and experiencing all the creativity & talents & inspirations each person has to offer. Collaborative Relationships are the juice that lifts me up and fills me with the energy to grow and trust & take next steps! —Janey M.



We have tremendous gratitude to this community for so many growth experiences we've had in the last couple of years, not just in how we work with and relate to other CGEV members, but also in our family, friend and work lives. Quai has gained facilitation skills and the awareness of how great it feels to be acknowledged and appreciated, and now gives that to coworkers during meetings at his day job (often to their great surprise and pleasure!) Ren has found the communication skills she's learning to be helpful in her relationships with family members whose social and political views are very different from her own and practices approaching those difficult conversations with curiosity and non-judgement. The areas of increased self-awareness, thanks to those moments of feedback and open communication with other members has been invaluable for our growth as people, and awareness of how others experience us. —Ren E. & Quai D.



For me, the deepest pleasure of 2022 was working the entire year with Hugh Jeffers, the highly respected loan originator at Centennial Mortgage, Inc (CMI). Prior to contacting him in 2021 to see if he might be interested in representing us to the underwriters at CMI, I had followed for many years his achievements in educating people about housing cooperatives, especially from a financing perspective. Hugh has made extraordinary contributions to the cooperative housing movement through the National Association of Housing Cooperatives (NAHC) and he was honored last year by receiving NAHC's President's Award recognizing those who are tireless advocates for cooperative housing. Hugh understands our project, he likes what we are trying to accomplish here in NC and is doing everything within his power to help us succeed. He is serving us well, and I'm delighted to be part of this effort. It's support from people like him that makes me believe, daily, that we can succeed. —Paul V.

I want to thank this community for its generosity of spirit! I had a pretty terrible, no good, very bad autumn, and I completely fell off from my responsibilities to CGEV. And the Membership Circle, instead of judging me, worked hard to support me and cheer me on. This is something I learned about our community—we work together to create and inspire our vision, and instead of judging each other we build bridges to help each other along. So a big thank you to Lisa, Theresa, Shells, Shari, Margaret, Jane, and Julie, and the amazing Kathleen who swam into the deep water of advancements to re-energize the process!
—Amy H.



My fondest memory of the time spent here in North Carolina as a member of Common Ground Eco Village is undoubtedly learning to run the Farm's tractor to take on some of the maintenance work that was being done by too few of us. I've always wanted to drive a tractor and with excellent training by Jeffry it went off without a hitch. Cutting the meadow grasses was only the start. I know there are other maintenance projects that have been identified that need to be done and I'm looking forward to joining in on them also. —Bill S.



The members of CGEV are reshaping our whole idea about what aging means just by being themselves. This is the recent learning about Aging Gracefully in Community (an FIC course) that Ren has taken to help move discussions about this topic forward at CGEV in 2023. It really has us thinking through things we didn't have the courage to think about up to this point. We have a whole new perspective and look forward to sharing what we've learned! — Ren E. & Quai D.

