



Finding Common Ground

March, 2023

Up Front

Our members continue to work tirelessly to find a path forward to building a residential village on the land. In February, we submitted an application for an **Orange County HOME grant** to assist our low-income members. At the **Community in the Round on March 25**, you'll hear a full development update and have a chance to offer your input to the options being explored.

On other fronts, the **Cooperative Skills Training on March 31** will focus on Nonviolent Communication. You can **make biochar** on March 4, learn all about potato planting at the **Potatopalooza!** on March 12, and tune into the **Spring Equinox** on March 19. Enjoy **two festive potlucks** on the land on March 11 and 19. You are invited to come join any of our Circles as they make all of this possible, and more.

A REQUEST: The Barn Beautification team is soliciting **donations of comfortable and cleanable furniture** for a multipurpose lounge area in the barn. [Click here](#) to read about what's needed. Thank you for your contributions!



We had a sweet time learning about winter tree identification, an event offered by Way of Belonging and guided by Hope (Photo: Jess)

MEETINGS & EVENTS



An enthusiastic Forest Workday crew collected wood for Biochar Banner above: Jane's glorious daffodil bouquet, (Photos: Hope)

GET INVOLVED

- ♦ **All events are open to everyone unless otherwise indicated, and you must RSVP** for details, links, and last-minute changes.
- ♦ **COVID Policy:** For your safety and others', bring a mask in case it is needed. At CGEV, we protect those most vulnerable.
- ♦ **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.

- ♦ **Forest & Tree Workday**, March 4, 1:00 onward
- ♦ **Racial Awareness Reading and Reflection Group**, Every Monday, 7-8pm
- ♦ **Heart Share**, March 10, 7-9pm
- ♦ **Community Potluck**, March 11, 4-6pm
- ♦ **Earth Connection Sunday—Potatopalooza! with Farmer Doug**, March 12, 1-4pm
- ♦ **Fresh Take**, March 18, 4-5:30pm

CIRCLE NEWS

Membership: Members participated in a variety of social/community building activities: a **potluck supper** preceded by a tour of the land led by Amy; a version of **Earth Connection Sunday** online led by Momo and Jess, and an energetic well attended **Barn Beautification workday** organized by Lisa and Jane. We can all look forward to more of each in March and in the coming months. A hearty thanks to **Margaret Anderson** for instigating the monthly potlucks which have been a cornerstone for bringing people together. Shells has now taken up that baton. ♦ As a community, we need to maintain a list of our members and their intentions: those who know they want to live in the village, those who are actively exploring to make a decision, or those who want to be part of the community but not live the village. It sounds simple, but it is not. **The membership circle is drilling down on the pieces that will result in an accurate picture of our membership as it evolves.** We are evaluating membership designations in order to accommodate the varieties of members, such as organizing the information gathered from the JOIN form and finding ways we can support exploring members. ♦ Lastly, the **Fresh Take Info Session** program is being rejuvenated and will be held on March 18. This is “Common Ground 101” for new members and those who are curious to know the basics about CGEV.



Jane, Vivian, and Lisa smiling at the potluck. (Photo:Shells)

Planning & Development: We are working diligently to forge a way forward for CGEV. This involves continuing to consolidate construction cost estimates and survey state and private grant and loan options

- ♦ **Spring Equinox—Two Ways to Celebrate**, March 19
3-5pm Ceremony; 5:15-onward Fire & Food Potluck
- ♦ **Community in the Round**, March 25, 3-5pm
- ♦ **Cooperative Skills—Focus on NVC**, March 31, 7-9pm
- ♦ **Tours of the land by request:** Contact Lisa, welcome@commonground.eco



Red Maple blossoms—one of Spring's first arrivals (Photo: Jess)

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, March 3 & 17, 1-3pm, Zoom
RSVP to Lisa with subject “Membership Circle”:
LBerley@yahoo.com
We would love to have you come and observe and then join us in this important work.

MC-HeartWeavers Subcircle

- Sunday, March 12, 5-6:30pm
RSVP to Theresa with subject “HeartWeavers RSVP”:
tjensen1952@gmail.com

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

- Wednesdays, March 8 & 22, 2-4pm, Zoom and in-person at the Nest in Mebane
RSVP to Anthony: weston@elon.edu

P&D-Financial & Legal Subcircle (F&L)

- Wednesdays, March 8 & 22,
5:30-7:00pm, Zoom
RSVP to Theresa with subject “RSVP F&L”:
tjensen1952@gmail.com

F&L/MC-Affordability Task Group

- Wednesday, March 15 & 29, 4:30-6:00pm, Zoom
RSVP to Theresa with subject “RSVP Affordability” for the Zoom link: tjensen1952@gmail.com

to determine the viability of our current “Plan A”—the village and site development as currently designed. Along with Robyn Heeks, our Development Manager, we expect to be able to bring detailed financial scenarios to P&D and the General Circle within a few weeks. It’s a slow process, as we’re still waiting for estimates to come in from contractors. ♦ We’ve also been focusing on clarifying conditions and criteria for moving ahead with Plan A as well as **developing and detailing an extensive list of other options** should we decide we must take another approach. Both of these projects are nearing completion at the same time that cost estimates are about to arrive. So, stay tuned for some momentous discussions and decisions, coming up very soon!

♦ We expect to dedicate the March **Community in the Round** meeting to the question of development path. **Plan to join in on Saturday, March 25’ from 3-5pm**—we need to hear your voice in this conversation!



This Praying Mantis egg sac contains 100-200 babies (Photo: Jess)

Financial & Legal Subcircle: With Theresa’s tireless leadership, **we submitted an application for the Orange County HOME grant**—a remarkable achievement! We requested \$280,000 to help our lower-income members pay for their share prices. Theresa, Robyn and Jane had two meetings with the Orange County Housing staff who were excited about our project and encouraged us to apply. Thirty-seven pages and dozens of attachments later, the application was done and off. **Thanks to everyone** who filled out the surveys and supplied your bios, worked on other questions, and helped upload attachments! Thanks for reviewing documents and suggesting alternative language. Thanks for putting together budgets and unearthing elevations and all of the myriad attachments requested. Thanks to Paul and Katy for their wisdom and support, and to Robyn for creating a ProForma, and Timeline, and Funding Sources, and knowing the correct language for so many of their questions that were a mystery to the rest of us. [Here](#) is

GOVERNANCE & TRAINING CIRCLE

- Sunday, March 12, 6:30-8:30pm, Zoom
RSVP to Becky with subject G&T:
blaskody@gmail.com



Joanne and Erin ham it up at the Forest & Tree work day (Photo: Shells)

GENERAL CIRCLE

- Sunday, March 19, 6:30-8:30pm, Zoom and in-person at the Nest in Mebane
RSVP to Hope with subject “GC”, 2 days in advance: hopematrix@fastmail.com

LAND STEWARDSHIP CIRCLE (LSC)

- *The LSC and Subcircles are taking a pause this month. For information the LSC, contact Nell: hnkriesberg@gmail.com*

COMMUNICATIONS CIRCLE

- Wednesday, March 22, 6:30-8pm, Zoom
RSVP to Quai: quaifranklin@gmail.com

CommC-Website Subcircle

- Every Thursday, 6:30-8pm
RSVP to Zeke: bussykiel+community@gmail.com

CommC-IT Subcircle

- *Reach out to [Quai](#) if you have questions or are interested in observing a meeting or helping out.*

Marketing & Promotion Subcircle

- *We are taking a pause until key decisions about development & marketing needs are made.*

ALL ABOUT EVENTS

TOURS OF THE LAND—by request

Membership Circle

Contact Lisa with subject “Request a tour”:

welcome@commonground.eco

the cover letter for just the teeniest taste of what went into this. Stay posted for the results!

Governance & Training: February's Community in the Round focused on **developing creative methods for covering the monthly carrying costs to keep CGEV viable**—the mortgage on the land, insurance, loan repayments, and the like—amounting to about \$3,000/month. We had an energetic and inspiring session which netted several viable pathways towards generating income to keep the ground under our feet. You'll be hearing more about some of these initiatives soon. ♦ Members have been asking about when **sociocracy training** will begin again. Becky will be putting together a class in March/April. Interested folks can contact her at blaskody@gmail.com. ♦ We are excited to be offering a **Cooperative skills Workshop** for all CGEV members on March 31, 7-9 pm. This time, a guest will be introducing the principles of **Nonviolent Communication** as a bridge from competitive to cooperative culture. We'll practice some skills with each other as well. Contact [Hope](#) for information.



Kathleen, Paul, and Bill dig a trench at the workday (Photo: Shells)

Land Stewardship: The Farm Subcircle co-hosted a well attended **"Barn Beautification Day."** Projects included setting up a recycling station, digging a trench to lay some pipes for water drainage, and continuing to re-organize the barn for greater community use, including a multipurpose lounge area ([click here](#) to see the list of furniture donations we're seeking to make this comfortable). Thanks to all who joyfully toiled: Jane, Lisa, Kathleen, Paul, Bill, Shells, Anthony, Rachel, Erin, Doug, Caleb, Lucas, Ruth, and Jill! ♦ Work on the farm continues with our intrepid farmers - Doug, Caleb and Lucas. **Improvements to the vegetable washing area** are currently in the planning stages. ♦ The Forest Subcircle's First Saturday Forest & Tree Workday on March 4 will continue the focus on the **biochar project**.

Are you a new Common Ground member or a curious person who is thinking of joining? You can schedule a tour of the Land. A good time for a tour is in conjunction with a monthly potluck supper.



Shitake mushrooms will soon bloom on these logs. (Photo: Shells)

FOREST & TREE WORKDAY

Forest Subcircle

Saturday March 4, 1:00pm onward, on the land

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

Meet at the Barn. We'll focus on biochar. Weather dependent: check your email to confirm the plan.

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. Participants report significant changes in awareness of systemic and personal racism through the readings, meeting regularly, and sharing personal experiences in an environment of trust. We welcome additional participants from CGEV and the wider community.

HEART SHARE

HeartWeavers Subcircle

Friday, March 10, 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

We'll be firing up the kiln and making charcoal that sequesters carbon and can be used as fertilizer.



Rachel and Lucas pitch in to beautify the barn (Photos: Shells)

Communications: You'll notice in the calendar that the weekly **Website Subcircle sessions** are starting up again in March. We extend a lot of gratitude to Zeke for lending his time and expertise to this critical communications vehicle for CGEV!

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

Events offered by Way of Belonging, Jess & Michelle

March 6: [Virgo Full Moon Ritual](#) | 7-8:30pm EST | Zoom

March 19: [Spring Equinox Celebration](#) | 3-5pm EST | In-Person (Mebane, NC)

March 20: [Aries New Moon & Spring Equinox Ceremony](#) | 7-9pm EST | Zoom

March 26: [Intuitive Birding](#) | 10am-12pm | In-person (Mebane, NC)

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](#).

Readings: Margret recommends *The Forest Unseen*, by David George Haskell. Mr. Haskell visits one specific meter of earth in a Tennessee forest weekly for a year, and records what he notices. The book could just as easily apply to CG's woods. His observations really reinforce how interconnected all living things are.

Living Futures Saturdays is a monthly event series (February through May) in Durham, NC, featuring climate-engaged local presenters from a variety of

in this warm and accepting environment. If you thirst for genuine connection, join us when you can.

COMMUNITY POTLUCK & FIRE

HeartWeavers Subcircle

Saturday, March 11, 4-6pm (winter hours), on the land. Kid friendly! No RSVP needed. **Contact Shells for information:** IMShells2@gmail.com

Weather dependent: check email before coming out *Dress warmly. Weather permitting there will be a fire! Come and dance around it together. Bring the kiddies, marshmallows, a dish to pass, and chairs.*

EARTH CONNECTION SUNDAY— Potatopalooza! with Farmer Doug

HeartWeavers Subcircle

March 12, 1-4pm on the land

RSVP to Doug: dr.tobagopepper@gmail.com

This will be an experiential way of learning a LOT about these wondrous root vegetables. Doug will share wisdom gained over decades of growing potatoes including botany, varieties, how to plant, tuber formation, and harvesting tips. Best yet, we'll actually be planting 12 long rows of potatoes in the big veggie field along the way! This is a kid-friendly activity, probably age 8 on up, but if parents are bringing youngers, let us know in advance, so we can figure out something entertaining for them. No obligation to stay all 3 hours.



Luscious purple broccoli kissed by the morning sun (Photo: Doug)

FRESH TAKE INFORMATION SESSION

Saturday, March 18, 4-5:30 pm

RSVP to Lisa with subject "Fresh Take":

Iberley@yahoo.com

This is a general overview of CGEV: the membership process, governance, stewardship of the land, and plans we are considering for building the village. It is

disciplines. Listen, learn, and create community and new knowledge. Jess and Michelle of *Way of Belonging*, are on the program for March 4, along with Crystal Cavalier. [Click here](#) for information.



Ruth, Vivian and Shells are excited about the new peacock whirligig!
(Photo: Ruth)

ForestHer 2023 Theme: All about Pollinators

March 16, July 27, October 26, 1-2:30pm, Zoom webinar
Want to catch the buzz about pollinators? In this introduction we'll go beyond honeybees to learn the astonishing diversity of native pollinators and the vital roles they play in healthy ecosystems. [Register here](#).

Call for Fiber, Dye, and Textile Workshop Proposals!

The [Piedmont Fibershed](#) is a community organization dedicated to building a regional fiber system in the Piedmont of North Carolina centered around local fibers, local dyes, and local labor. They are soliciting proposals for workshops to offer in 2023 which focus on the production or use of local fibers. [Submit a Workshop Proposal](#)

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.

geared to visiting members and those who are considering joining.

SPRING EQUINOX—Two Ways to Celebrate

HeartWeavers Subcircle

Sunday, March 19, 3:00pm onward, on the land

Weather dependent: check your email on the day of
At the Equinox, we stand on the threshold between Winter and Summer, from darkness to light. Let's invite the enlivening energy of Spring in two ways:

- **Forest Temple Ceremony, 3-5pm**
RSVP to Way of Belonging [here](#)
Come together to break free of Winter's dormancy and awaken the life force within.
- **Fire & Food Potluck (or BYO), 5:15pm**
No RSVP needed-kid friendly
Bring a dish to pass or food for yourself. Enjoy the sights and sounds of Spring while connecting with each other during this beautiful time of new life emerging.

COMMUNITY IN THE ROUND—All about the Village

Governance & Training Circle

Saturday, March 25, 3-5pm, Zoom

RSVP to Hope with subject "CIR":

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. March will be centered on village development issues, offering updates and new possibilities for consideration. We hope that all members will make an effort to attend.

COOPERATIVE SKILLS—Focus on NVC

Governance & Training Circle

Friday, March 31, 7-9pm, Zoom

RSVP to Hope: hopematrix@fastmail.com

Learning to cooperate is a foundational skillset for all members. But how we learn how to do it effectively? We'll be inviting an NVC practitioner to explore some principles and practices in order to gain new ways to shift from a competitive to cooperative culture.