



Finding Common Ground

August, 2023

Up Front

It's late summer, and crops are burgeoning, ripening, and going to seed throughout the farm garden. July's popular **tomato canning party** was just a taste of events to come. Keep an eye out for "pop-up" chances to help harvest and process crops like corn, squash, beans, and peanuts as well as learn about seed saving, permaculture basics, and more.

Sociocracy training is back! Becky will be leading a group through 4 rich sessions to become governance-literate at CGEV. Contact [Hope](#) for information.



Caleb made the whole event a pure pleasure! (Photos: Allie M., Hope)

CIRCLE NEWS

Land Stewardship:

As summer has heated up and the tomato harvests have gotten bigger and bigger. **Nearly 20 folks attended a super fun and informative tomato canning day** on July 22nd. Caleb organized and guided everyone masterfully through prepping and boiling tomatoes, garlic, onions, and herbs in huge vats, properly filling canning jars, and completing the critical water-bath canning process. While waiting for the jars to boil and seal, Lucas and Doug showed everyone how many

MEETINGS & EVENTS



A Green Heron alights on a wetland beaver lodge (Photo: Michelle)
Banner above: The tomato canning event included a fun farm tour to learn about how luscious tomatoes are grown here. (Photo: Hope)

GET INVOLVED

- ♦ **All events are open to everyone** unless otherwise indicated, and **you must RSVP** for details, links, & 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.

- ♦ **Racial Awareness Reading and Reflection Group**, Every Monday, 7-8pm
- ♦ **Forest & Tree Workday**, August 5, 9:30-noon
- ♦ **Heart Share (Zoom)**, August 18, 7-9pm
- ♦ **Sociocracy Training**, August, 19, 26, Sept. 2, 9, 1-3pm



It was lots of fun for people of all ages! (Photo: Hope)

varieties of tomatoes are cultivated and cared for in the garden. Everyone got to take home some fresh cherry tomato salsa, canned pasta sauce, and tomato sauce galore. It was a spectacular event! ♦ At July's Community in the Round, **Doug beautifully summarized the contributions the farm makes to growing our community** and dazzled us with a plethora of ways we can get involved. [Click here](#) to read about it. ♦ A **new well pump system** was installed towards the beginning of the month thanks to Doug's and Caleb's organizational efforts. We hope this one will serve the farm/garden well for the long term. The \$3200 cost was a bit less than expected but still took a big chunk out of Doug's pocket. **Your contributions to support this vital element of farm infrastructure would be greatly appreciated.** [Click here](#) to donate.

♦ Elsewhere on the land, Anthony and Michelle tackled the tricky job of **restoring a bridge across the wetland** that was challenged by a new beaver dam. This pathway helped on the day consulting forester, David Halley, came out to walk the land with 7 eager members and see our woods for himself. This was a major step towards **updating our forest stewardship plan in preparation for creating a conservation easement** on the eastern wetland portion of the land.



Several members joined Dave Halley for a forest walk (Photo: Hope)

- ♦ **Earth Connection Sunday**, August, 20, 10-noon
- ♦ **Community in the Round**, August 26, 3-5pm
- ♦ **Community Potluck**, August 26, 5:30-7:30ish pm
- ♦ **Acorn Flour Processing Party!** August 27, 1-5pm
- ♦ **Tours of the land by request:** Contact [Lisa](#)

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 August 4 & 18, 1-3pm, Zoom
RSVP to Lisa with subject "Membership Circle":
LBerley@yahoo.com

We are looking for new members and welcome Visiting Members to observe and join us in our work.

HeartWeavers Subcircle

- Sunday, August 13, 6:30-8pm, Zoom
RSVP to Joanne with subject "HeartWeavers RSVP":
wonderaware2@proton.me

Your creativity and enthusiasm is needed as we plan the events that keep the energy of our community alive. All membership levels are encouraged to attend.

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

- Tuesday, August 8, 2-4pm
- Wednesday, August 23, 2-4pm
RSVP to Anthony: weston@elon.edu

All sessions are hybrid, via Zoom and in-person at the Nest in Mebane. We encourage observers.

Potential Residents Advisory Task Group (PRAG)

- Sundays, aft. or eve.—contact Quai for a schedule
RSVP to Quai, subject "PRAG": quaifranklin@gmail.com

If you are a member who is seriously interested in living at Common Ground, this task group needs your voice, your energy, and your questions.

LAND STEWARDSHIP CIRCLE

- Tuesday, August 8, 7-9 pm
Contact Doug with subject "LSC RSVP":
dr.tobagopepper@gmail.com

This Circle's projects range from field to forest. Your involvement is needed and makes a difference.

GOVERNANCE & TRAINING CIRCLE

- Thursday, August 17, 6:30-8:30pm, Zoom
RSVP to Becky: blaskody@gmail.com

Heartily welcoming visitors and new members.

Planning & Development: In close consultation with the Potential Residents Advisory Group (PRAG), we have just put out a **detailed online survey** that should tell us how many members are ready to commit to moving forward, when, and at what financial levels. It is vital to know, concretely and specifically, what CGEV members are ready and eager for, and what our financial capacity is as a community to self-finance infrastructure and/or secure the needed loan. **If you haven't filled it out yet, please do so by Monday, 31 July!** ♦ As you know, some months ago we let go of our



A little nest near the farm houses precious eggs (Photo: Hope)

long-time vision of a housing cooperative built all at once with a blanket mortgage. We've gotten creative and are exploring two other ways to proceed. "CGEV 2.0" (which you heard about in June) laid out a path where the community provides only infrastructure and individual members or families or small groups design, finance, and provide for the building of homes. We continue to keep CGEV 2.0 formally in the mix – that is, building out the whole village infrastructure at once — but the number of members it requires to be ready to buy in upfront seems unattainable. **Now, we are exploring the feasibility of a scaled-back and phased plan, "CGEV 3.0" which seems much more do-able.** We need more cost and regulatory information, but it seems promising. Interested? **Listen to the July Community in the Round recording [here](#).** We're working hard to keep everyone informed and appreciate your input (and patience) with this complex process.

Governance & Training: Training in our governance system is a must for all of our members. **Becky will be teaching a 4-part sociocracy training beginning in mid-August!** Dates and times are in the calendar. Interested? Contact Hope for information and to register: [hopematrix@fastmail.com](mailto:hopenatrix@fastmail.com) And if these dates don't work for you, let Hope know for the next time.

GENERAL CIRCLE

- Sunday, August 20, 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](mailto:hopenatrix@fastmail.com)

Come and observe to find out what's happening with all Circles at CGEV—and how you can be involved.

COMMUNICATIONS CIRCLE

- Wednesday, August 23, 6:30-8pm, Zoom
RSVP to Quai: quaifranklin@gmail.com

CommC needs new members interested in helping to shape communications policy or support the systems we use to communicate and house our information. If you have experience or enthusiastic interest in marketing, promotion, compassionate communication, IT, or website please contact [Quai](#).

Marketing & Promotion Subcircle (M&P)

If you have an interest in or experience with marketing and/or promotion we need your voice, expertise, and creativity. If you are interested in working on the subcircle or any of its task groups, please reach out to [Quai](#).

Website Subcircle, IT Subcircle

Contact [Quai](#) if you are interested in the work of these subcircles and would like to learn more.



Everybody loves a zinnia! (Photos by Allie M.)

ALL ABOUT EVENTS

TOURS OF THE LAND—by request

Membership Circle

Are you a new Common Ground member or a curious person who is thinking of joining? You can schedule a tour of the Land! Contact [Lisa](#) with subject "Request a tour."

Membership: Interest in Common Ground stayed strong in July. We received many inquiries, led tours of the land, and met new members at the online Fresh Take Information Session and the Community in the Round all-member meeting where they learned about the options under consideration for village development. We are excited by their enthusiasm and passion. ♦ The Membership Circle is where it's at when it comes to welcoming, shepherding, and caring for members. **And we need people who enjoy connecting with others in a variety of ways.** For example, we have identified several routine tasks that take a short amount of time and can be done by any member willing to volunteer. The key elements are that they are easy to do and they make use of email templates written by MC members. **Watch out for an email where you can sign up to pitch in on this important work. Better yet, [Click here](#) to see a list!**



Lara and Jane thoroughly enjoy caring for the bees (Photo: Hope)

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

Kathleen Biernat offers the following on Agritourism:

I've been thinking about agritourism, how it's being done locally and our future at CGEV. I found this Tedx Talk to be thought provoking and inspiring: <https://youtu.be/HRzFXkZ1cTA> Seems like an opportunity to stack functions 😊: keep the farm going, get the word out, fulfill our urban neighbors'

RACIAL AWARENESS READING & REFLECTION GROUP

Membership Circle

Every Monday, 7-8pm, Zoom.

Contact Lisa to join with subject, "Racial Awareness Book Group": lberley@yahoo.com

The format is reading aloud and breaking between paragraphs to share personal reflections, questions, and ideas. Our current book is The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee: Native America from 1890 to the Present, by David Treuer. We welcome additional members any time.

FOREST & TREE WORKDAY

Forest Subcircle

Saturday, August 5, 9:30-noon, meet at the Barn

Contact Nell for info: hnkriesberg@gmail.com

Weather dependent: check your email for updates. *A couple of foresters have visited the land lately and offered some great suggestions for important interventions. Come work together in the shade!*

HEART SHARE

HeartWeavers Subcircle

Friday, August 18, 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.

SOCIOCRACY TRAINING WITH BECKY

Governance & Training Circle

August 19, 26, September 2, 9, 1-3pm, via Zoom

Contact Hope for info and to register: hopematrix@fastmail.com

*In just four, two-hour Zoom sessions, you'll LEARN and PRACTICE the fundamentals of sociocracy; explore the Circles at Common Ground; experience the powerful meeting processes that help us to make decisions; and **have a great time getting to know other CGEV members** through working together! This is your chance to get up-to-speed on how we operate at CGEV.*

need to relax and restore, build local economic opportunities, provide experiential learning experiences, build relations between farms and hospitality experts, possibly provide income and employment in the future and just plain have fun. What do you think? Anything spark for you? **Contact me for a conversation:** 1mymessage@gmail.com

Herbalicious Explorations with Melanie Yukov, Sunday, September 10, 9:30 AM -12:30 PM, at a farm in Franklinton, NC. [Click here to register.](#) Imagine frolicking among the farm animals in a picturesque setting. Sipping on a cooling medicinal beverage while connecting and making new like-minded friends. Learning a ton about the medicinal and edible plants around you so YOU could survive the next apocalypse. Making medicine with and learning about the magic of Goldenrod (*Solidago* spp.) which is one of my favorite plants. Taking your sacred medicine home along with receiving plant notes on the other allies all around. **For Ages 5 and up.**



Enjoying conversation while saving corn seeds (Photo: Hope)

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

Northern Orange NAACP, Conversation with Gene Nichol, August 6, 3pm, Orange County Public Library
Join the NAACP and the Orange County Community Remembrance Coalition for a discussion with UNC Professor of Law, Gene Nichol, who shines a spotlight on the enduring struggle to protect democracy, equality, and truth in his latest book, *Lessons from North Carolina*. Contact [Jody Smith](#) for information:

ForestHer Statewide Gathering, Thursday, August 24, 10-3pm, Chatham Agriculture and Conference Center 1192 US 64 W Business Pittsboro, NC 27312 [Click here](#) for information and to register.



Melanie offers a cooling tea after July's Plant Walk (Photo: Hope)

EARTH CONNECTION SUNDAY

HeartWeavers Subcircle

Sunday, August 20, 10-noon, on the land

RSVP to Melanie: melanie.yukov@gmail.com

Come join Melanie as we connect with Trees and Leaves.

We will engage in a fun botany leaf scavenger hunt learning qualities for proper leaf identification and engage in a spiritual tree connection practice. Let's bask in the glory of trees as we embrace the loving shade they provide us and seek to learn their messages.

COMMUNITY IN THE ROUND

Governance & Training Circle

Saturday, August 26, 3-5pm, Zoom & in-person

RSVP to Hope, subject "CIR":

hopematrix@fastmail.com

These all-member meetings are reliably informative and connecting for all involved. We'll speak to what's most relevant when the time comes. Stay and enjoy a Potluck supper afterwards!



Canned or fresh, tomatoes taste like summer! (photos: Kara, Hope)

7 Directions of Service (7DS) is an Indigenous-led environmental justice and community organizing collective based on Occaneechi-Saponi homelands in rural North Carolina **dedicated to canceling the Mountain Valley Pipeline/Southgate Extension**, advocating for legal Rights of Nature and developing a land, language and cultural center based on traditional teachings. We carry a responsibility to be a strong voice for the lands, waters, and more-than-human world. Many actions are planned for August. [Click here](#) to learn more and get involved.

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.



Caleb tends to the pasta sauce brew (Photo: Hope)

COMMUNITY POTLUCK

HeartWeavers Subcircle

Saturday, August 26, 5:30-7:30pm under the shade of the Grandmother Oak, or at the barn if it rains.

Contact Lisa for information: iberley@yahoo.com

Weather dependent: check email for updates

Let's enjoy camaraderie after Community in the Round. Bring kiddies and chairs plus lawn games, board games, and musical instruments if you wish. No RSVP needed

ACORN FLOUR PROCESSING PARTY!

Land Stewardship Circle

Sunday, August 27, 1-5pm at the Nest in Mebane

Contact Nick for information: 610-203-1392

RSVP to Hope for directions:

hopematrix@fastmail.com

Come out and help make super nutritious flour from native acorns! We'll be cracking and grinding the acorns into flour to be used in many future baking projects. Once the acorns are fully processed after the event, everyone will be able to collect their own batch of flour.



A pollinator garden patch thrives at the farm (photo by Lucas)