



# Finding Common Ground

## March, 2024

### Up Front

**We're fired up about carrying out a prescribed burn on nearly 20 acres of woodlands and fields in February!**

The purpose was to reduce the danger of wildfire, improve forest health, and promote diversity and wildlife habitat. This was the Triangle Prescribed Burn Association's (TPBA) first foray as an organization, and it took over 100 person hours of work in advance to prepare the land for safe experience. Enormous thanks to dozens of CGEV and TPBA members who worked hard to achieve this milestone. There's more to come over time! [Here's an article](#) that tells the story. Robby Robbins and Roshana Ariel have supplied fabulous [drone videos](#) and [photos](#) that will take you there! [Click here](#) for info about prescribed fire and the TPBA.

**Attention, meeting and event planners!** It's Spring and ever more events are happening on the land and in virtual spaces. This month, we have opportunities to continue work on the Wash & Pack structure, plant potatoes together, and enjoy the Golden Hour under the Grandmother Oak, among others. Want to offer an event? [Here are some guidelines](#) to help you to get it on the calendar and include critical information.



Helpers patrolled the forest edge to keep the fire from spreading

### MEETINGS & EVENTS



This one-acre field went up in a whoosh due to wind gusts. (drone photo: Robby Robbins) Banner above: fire spreads fast in the forest

### GET INVOLVED

- ♦ All events are in Eastern Time and open to everyone unless otherwise indicated. **You must RSVP** for details & 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](mailto:ren.enberg2@gmail.com)

### COMMUNITY EVENTS SNAPSHOT

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

- ♦ **Racial Awareness Reading and Reflection Group**, Mondays, 7-8pm
- ♦ **Building the Wash & Pack Station**: Tuesdays, Saturdays, & Sundays beginning at Noon
- ♦ **Potato Planting Work Party**, March 9, 12pm
- ♦ **Heart Share**, March 15, 7-9pm
- ♦ **Community in the Round**, March 23, 3-5pm
- ♦ **Community Potluck**, March 23, 5:30-7:30pm
- ♦ **Golden Hour Magic**, Mondays & Tuesdays, 6:30pm, beginning March 25th
- ♦ **Tours of the land by request**: Contact [Lisa](#)

## CIRCLE NEWS

**Planning & Development:** In a major milestone for P&D, Katy Ansardi has stepped out of the Circle and its ER position. Katy has been one of our Circle's and our community's leading members for the past 12 years. She has consistently and liberally given her experience, creativity, and guidance through thousands of hours of thinking, planning, meeting and traveling to the project. She also has served as Treasurer for many years. In truth, she has been utterly invaluable to CGEV. But the time has come for her to focus on her own future planning. We will continue to call on her, though in as scaled-back a way as we can manage, for advice and support when needed. **Katy, we deeply appreciate all those years working shoulder-to-shoulder to you and will always hold you among CGEV's key founders and dearest friends!!** ♦ P&D continues to focus primarily on-site planning. In conjunction with our site planner and hydrologist Bobby Tucker **we have worked out a layout for the village using the new Flexible Subdivision-Conservation Cluster option.** Among the stickiest but



*Frog spawn gestates in gelatinous clumps, soon to become tadpoles. (Photo: Michelle)*

potentially most helpful changes is moving the septic to partly gravity-fed fields downslope of the village rather than pumping the "wastes" east to the Far Field. We are testing the feasibility of this new layout (soils testing, Orange County Planning Department, professional consults, etc.) Trusting that it succeeds, we will be jumping into higher gear to secure approvals as well as reliable cost estimates for the scaled-back but very specific infrastructure on the new plan. ♦ In the meantime, some P&D members are pursuing a variety of ownership and financing options with some interesting possibilities on the table. Both January and February Community-in-the-Round meetings focused largely on pod planning: forming co-buying groups and clarifying



*Bright, crunchy carrots are ready for happy CSA customers*

## 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!*

### PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

- Tuesdays, March 5 & 19, 6:30-8:30pm, Zoom and in-person at the Nest

**RSVP to Anthony** with subject "P&D":

[weston@elon.edu](mailto:weston@elon.edu)

*There may be more meetings called as development decisions emerge. Email Anthony for updates and links. We encourage observers.*

### MEMBERSHIP CIRCLE

- Thursdays, March 7 & 21, 4:30-6:30pm, Zoom

**RSVP to Lisa** with subject "Membership Circle":

[LBerley@yahoo.com](mailto:LBerley@yahoo.com)

*These are the dates for our policy meetings, and we set aside alternating Thursdays for taking care of tasks (optional). We are very interested in having new circle members and welcome Visiting Members to observe and also join in the work of the Circle.*



*This field burned in about 3 minutes! (Drone photo: Robby Robbins)*

preferences and possibilities for alternative living arrangements. **This is a crucial effort to join for everyone who is serious about living in the village in the near future!**



Randy wields a drip torch to ignite the forest floor

**Membership:** We are focused on helping members qualify to live in the village by advancing through the membership process! The steps are easily accessed on the website: [Step by Step Guide - Visiting to Exploratory](#) and [Step by Step Guide - Exploratory to Engaged level](#). The membership process is a vehicle for you to share about yourself, learn how you come across to others, and give your feedback to the community to help it improve. **Most members find it to be a very positive experience.** If you find yourself unsure of what is right for you at this time, consider these points:

- ♦ If you want to live in the village you must advance to the Engaged level.
- ♦ You don't need to complete all the required forms at once. You can submit the forms one at a time and we will keep them together for you.
- ♦ If you are already involved in tasks and meetings that help the community move forward, you are probably ready to advance. **If you could use encouragement to move forward to the next level, there is help available from the Membership Circle.** Reach out to [Lisa](#) or [Amy](#). We stand ready to nudge and hand hold!



CGEV hosts a chainsaw class to build skill for the prescribed burn

## LAND STEWARDSHIP CIRCLE

- Tuesday, March 12, 7-8:30 pm, Zoom and in-person at the barn

**RSVP to Doug** with subject "LSC RSVP":

[dr.tobagopepper@gmail.com](mailto:dr.tobagopepper@gmail.com)

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

## GOVERNANCE & COMMUNICATIONS CIRCLE

- Thursday, March 14, 7-9pm, Zoom

**RSVP to Hope:** [hopenatrix@fastmail.com](mailto:hopenatrix@fastmail.com)

*These two Circles have merged and our domain now includes collaborative culture, IT, the website, and more. We welcome visitors and new members. Come check us out!*

## GENERAL CIRCLE

- Sunday, March 17, 6:30-8:30pm, Zoom and in-person at the Nest in Mebane

**RSVP to Becky** with subject "GC", 2 days in advance: [Blaskody@gmail.com](mailto:Blaskody@gmail.com)

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



Hope sets the field ablaze (Photo: Roshana)

## POTENTIAL RESIDENTS ADVISORY TASK GROUP (PRAG)

- Alternate Sundays, dates/times vary.

**RSVP to Momo** with subject "PRAG" for dates:

[momo@commonground.eco](mailto:momo@commonground.eco)

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

**Land Stewardship:** The new **Wash & Pack prep station** is well underway. Thank you to the crew of folks who have been coming out each week to help! Contact [Caleb](#) if you'd like to pitch in and help to build this game-changing structure for the farm CSA! ♦ The farm team has finished crop planning for the year and is looking ahead to hosting an intern(s) beginning this April and expanding the CSA membership. We're also looking for ways to connect with our more immediate neighbors. The work to create a more just and resilient local foodshed is complex, but we keep showing up and putting the best our hearts and minds can offer into skillful action to lead to positive change. ♦ Talks continue amongst the perennial team about how to make the land at Common Ground even more lush and verdant, while also growing more food and medicine in less labor-intensive ways. **Let the Land Stewardship Circle know what plants you would like to see more of on the land!** More wildflowers? Fruit and nut trees? There's a proverb that says the best time to plant a tree was 30 years ago. The 2nd best time is now. ♦ **The Bee Team** has lovingly nurtured 3 hives over this past year. **We are now seeking assistants!** If you'd like a hands-on way to learn about beekeeping, we've got a bee suit for you! Contact [Hope](#) for information.



Lara is thrilled to see that all three hives have survived the winter!

**Update! Governance & Communication (G&CC):** Recognizing their complementary and synergistic aims, the Governance & Training Circle and CommC Subcircle have merged under this Domain: *Provide oversight, coordination, and training for CGEV's governance,*

## 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? We regularly hold tours of the land on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the month at 1:30pm. You can schedule a tour at another time. **Contact Lisa** with subject "Request a tour": [lberley@yahoo.com](mailto:lberley@yahoo.com)*



Seed potatoes are ready for planting at the March 9 Potato Palooza!

### 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](mailto:lberley@yahoo.com)

*Our current book is How to be an Antiracist by Ibram X. Kendi. This group was formed in 2021 to help increase our awareness and understanding of racism in its many forms. This is a safe place to learn together. The weekly format helps build trust and a habit of paying regular attention to this work. People attend as much as they can. The book group is for CGEV members as well as the larger community. The format is reading aloud and breaking between paragraphs to share personal reflections, questions, ideas. Please join us!*

### BUILDING THE WASH & PACK AREA

Land Stewardship Circle

Tuesdays, Saturdays, & Sundays at noon

**Reach out to Caleb** with interest in participating: [calebbuchbinder@gmail.com](mailto:calebbuchbinder@gmail.com)

*CGEV has received a \$10,000 grant to upgrade our current area for washing and packaging healthful and fresh produce for customers of Full Table CSA. Want*

collaborative culture, and communications, including administration of the systems that support these functions. ♦ We now manage Common Ground's [website](#) and our new [Community Forum](#). The forum is our central place for members to discuss what's alive for us now, what's on our minds, and what's in our hearts. There are also sections dedicated to Functional Circle work and an area for general community topics, along with a section containing helpful instructions. If you're a member of Common Ground and you don't have access to the forum, contact [support@commonground.eco](mailto:support@commonground.eco). ♦ To get involved with IT work, or for any non-support questions, contact [IT@commonground.eco](mailto:IT@commonground.eco). ♦ For any IT-related support needs or questions including our [Community Forum](#), [website](#), [OnlyOffice](#), RiseUp listservs, requests for [@commonground.eco](mailto:@commonground.eco) email addresses, or other CGEV system(s) please email [support@commonground.eco](mailto:support@commonground.eco).

## MEMBER HAPPENINGS

*Is there something that you want to share with the community? If so, contact Hope by the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month: [hopematrix@fastmail.com](mailto:hopematrix@fastmail.com)*

**From Paul Voss—Vote on March 5!** It's an **election** for critical School Board positions as well as a **primary** for important races up to the governor's level. Voter turnout will decide outcomes. Make your voice count!

**From Ren Enberg and Quai Derr**—Do you want to learn and also experience the practice of Non-Violent Communication (NVC) in a community setting? Ren & Quai have had the joy of doing both and you can too! Consider Steve Torma's compassionate and warm teaching style through his REALationships courses at [theREALcenter.org](http://theREALcenter.org). And/or enjoy a compassionate community experience with many chances to deepen your understanding of NVC at Earthaven through SOIL's [Compassion Camp](#) coming in August. If you have questions about either, write to [Ren](#) or [Quai](#) and we'll be happy to share our experiences. Compassion Camp is filling up quickly, so move fast! Let's get a whole group of us going this year so we can bring it home to CGEV!



Quaye staunches flames threatening to spread (Photo: Roshana)

to help construct it? Various skills and talents are needed, and no experience is necessary. Come and be a part of this big upgrade to our barn.



Kathleen pitches in to help secure the roof (photo: Anthony)

## POTATO PLANTING WORK PARTY

Land Stewardship Circle

**RSVP to Lucas** with any dietary restrictions:

[lucas.babinec@posteo.net](mailto:lucas.babinec@posteo.net)

Saturday, March 9, 12pm; Rain check: March 10th

*It's spring 2024. That means another potato palooza! Come dig in the dirt, plant some potatoes and sing songs of spring! We'll share a meal ready after all the potatoes are planted!*

## HEART SHARE

Membership Circle

Friday, March 15, 7-9pm, Zoom

**RSVP to Ren:** [Heart\\_Share@commonground.eco](mailto:Heart_Share@commonground.eco)

*Come and get to know other members on a much deeper level as we practice both compassion and vulnerability. **This month's theme is Dream Out Loud, Part II**, a continuation of sharing our feelings and thoughts about living and building together.*

*Co-facilitated by Ren Enberg & Quai Derr*

## COMMUNITY IN THE ROUND

Governance & Communications Circle

Saturday, March 23, 3-5pm, Zoom & in-person at the Nest in Mebane

**RSVP to Becky**, subject "CIR": [Blaskody@gmail.com](mailto:Blaskody@gmail.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 and follow the meeting with a potluck supper. You'll get*

**From Melanie Yukov—Conquering Emotional Eating, March 16, 10-1, Hillsborough.** Root 2 Rise Wellness, LLC, is presenting this amazing transformational class, combining it with medicinal herb sipping and yoga to release all that we discover. There are limited in-person spots. Email [info@root2risewellness.org](mailto:info@root2risewellness.org) for a virtual option. [Click here](#) for details and registration.

**From Lara Struckman—Spring Equinox Emergence Circle, March 17th 9-11am at My Muses Card Shop in Carrboro.** This is a gentle space to explore seasonal reflection, connection, and joy. Gather in community to revel in what might be and what is on the way, while enjoying the beauty of right now. There will be guided meditation, space for sharing, reflection, and an activity to cultivate a freshness of spirit and mind. Contact Lara with questions, 484-542-3636, or [register here](#).

**From Hope Horton—[A Concert of Harmony and Healing](#), Saturday, March 30, 7pm, Baldwin Auditorium on Duke's East Campus. FREE admission!** This is a collaboration between SONAM, the Duke Chorale and the Durham Medical Orchestra. The evening will take you on a profound journey through the experience of a cancer patient and her family, a funeral procession for a father and son fallen in battle, and a mass for peace.

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

### **Foundation for Intentional Community**

FIC offers many short events and continuing courses that are highly relevant to our work at CGEV. Visit their website (<https://www.ic.org/events/>) to see the array of intriguing options for the months to come.

### **[7 Directions of Service \(7DS\)](#)**

#### **"Halting the Harm" Virtual Call**

We'll break down the recent rush of methane gas project proposals in the Southeast, including a new multi-state Transco pipeline, the largest East Coast pipeline proposed in a decade. This call centers Tribal leaders and BIPOC impacted community members, but is open to all. [Register here](#)

### **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.

*to know each other and learn a lot! Make it a habit to come to these events.*

## **COMMUNITY POTLUCK**

### **Membership Circle**

Saturday, March 23, 5:30-7:30pm, location TBA—watch for an announcement or contact Lisa:

[iberley@yahoo.com](mailto:iberley@yahoo.com). No RSVP required.

*Potlucks are our time to break bread together and socialize, play, sometimes chew over the Community in the Round meeting content. Please bring something to share. Typically vegetable dishes predominate but all sorts of food are welcome. Just bring a list of ingredients or jot them down when you come. Location will either be on the land or at an indoor location. Watch for an email announcement.*



## **GOLDEN HOUR MAGIC**

### **Land Stewardship Circle**

Mondays & Tuesdays, 6:30pm, beginning March 25<sup>th</sup>

*Lucas will be holding space for whomever wants to participate in golden hour magic under the Grandmother Oak. Could be a shared yoga practice, nature appreciation, or any other activity that encourages us to be present with the wonder of life around us. Contact [Lucas](#) for information.*



*After the burn...wondering what will sprout this Spring?*

