



# Finding Common Ground

AUGUST 2024

## Up Front

This month, we're focusing on the fabulous [Full Table CSA](#), operated by our amazing Farm Team. **They've been helped this summer by Riley Moore**, an intern who joined them during her college break and is returning to Colorado next week. Riley wrote a letter of appreciation to the CSA members, encouraging them to visit the Farm and experience the abundant "wildlife who call the farm home." Here's part of her letter:

"The farm team putting together your boxes isn't only a group of humans, it is also a healthy ecosystem of soil microbes, pollinators, snakes, and many other friends of the farm. Being on the land has made me so much more appreciative of all the hands, paws, wings, and other little bodies who make food possible."

[See UP FRONT, next page](#)



Riley makes friends with an orb weaver spider in one of the "caterpillar tunnels" on the Farm.

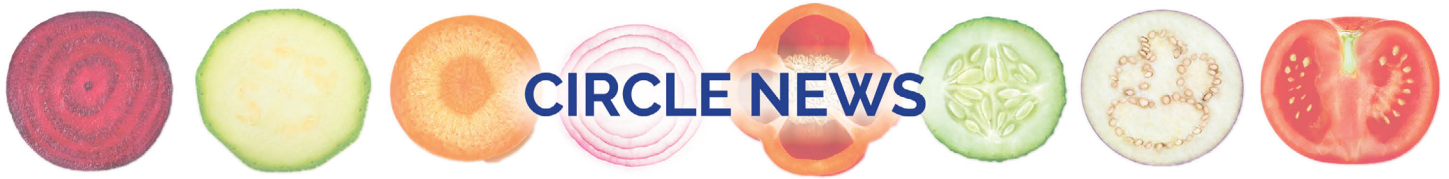
Photo by Kai

BANNER ABOVE: A caterpillar crawls on a leaf in the Garden. Photo by Kai.

## EVENTS & MEETINGS SNAPSHOT

See the All About Events and Circle Meetings sections for more details.

- ◆ **Racial Awareness Reading and Reflection Group**, Mondays, 7-8 p.m.
- ◆ **Weekly Farm Lunch**, Tuesdays, 1 p.m.
- ◆ **Tomato Canning Party**, Sunday, August 4, 3 p.m.
- ◆ **Planning & Development**, Tuesdays, August 6 & 20, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
- ◆ **Membership**, Tuesdays, August 6 & 20, 3-5 p.m.
- ◆ **Governance & Communication**, Thursday, August 8, 7-9 p.m.
- ◆ **Land Stewardship**, Tuesday, Aug. 13, 7-8:30 p.m.
- ◆ **Heart Share**, Friday, August 16, 7-9 p.m.
- ◆ **General Circle**, Sunday, August 18, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- ◆ **Tours of the land**, Saturday, August 24, 1:30 p.m., or by request. Contact [Lisa](#).
- ◆ **Community on the Ground**, Saturday, August 24, 3-5 p.m.
- ◆ **Community Potluck**, Saturday, August 24, 5:30-7:30 p.m.



### PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CIRCLE

**Big developments!** Members who intend to buy or share a lot at CGEV and are demonstrating or developing the financial capacity to do so will begin to meet as a group in early August, under the auspices of P&D. For the first time, we are going to know who is likely “in” and what kind of money we are going to be able to call on for the infrastructure investments to enable us to begin building houses in turn. Dedicated members have been surveying likely “Grounders” — formerly “Groundmakers,” formerly “Groundbreakers,” formerly “First Wave Working Group” — in preparation for this meeting. **Please be in touch ASAP** with [Anthony](#) or [Momo](#) for P&D or [Kara McCormack](#) for the survey proper if plan to be a “Grounder” and haven’t made your intentions known.

**Also**, P&D has been consolidating **Design Guidelines** for members thinking about design-

### UP FRONT, continued

“The experience of hearing the chorus of bees and watching as the ground seems to move with thousands of critters is a life-changing one. Watching nature’s cycles has grounded me, helping me realize how interconnected humans are with nature. I mentioned this once at a farm lunch (*a weekly event I highly recommend!*), sharing how the experience of being fed by the land and, in turn, feeding the mosquitos, opened my eyes to the fact that I have a place in the cycle of nature and on the land.

“I still don’t enjoy being bitten, but I have a profound sense of appreciation for the creatures who remind me that I am part of a cycle, not the top of a hierarchy.

“On a final note of appreciation, I want to express my gratitude to the farm team and CSA members for making this experience happen for me and for supporting the magic that exists on the farm!”

— Riley Moore

ing and/or helping to build their own houses. Check the Forum [here](#) for a link and discussion. (Or access the Design Guidelines draft [here](#).)

**We continue to manage the rezoning of the land** back to R1 conventional zoning to enable us to develop an alternative site plan using the County’s new Flexible Development – Conservation Cluster framework. The County Planning Board hearing is August 7. The County Board of Commissioners approval (we trust!) will be September 5. In anticipation, we continue to work out a Conservation Cluster-based site plan and garner infrastructure cost estimates; a number of potential site contractors are interested.

Thanks to the good initiative of Randy Dodd and Becky Laskody, the Finance and Legal Subcircle is being revived, and another key job is being better addressed: more systematic sequencing and coordinating all of the many specific tasks that need to be carried out in order to move forward in the high gear now needed.

### LAND STEWARDSHIP CIRCLE

**The rains came this July**, and when they came, they poured. What initially began as a much-needed blessing after an extremely dry



Photo by Amy H.

Kids play on a hammock during the monthly potluck on July 27, held at the Barn.

## LAND, continued

June, the abundance of skywater falling quickly became stressful for many of the human-food plants in the garden—the tomatoes, melons, and eggplant were dealing with increased disease and fungal pressure. Nonetheless, July was a great month for taking it a little easier out on the land, in the shade of the Grandmother Oak for a picnic farm lunch, jaunts down to the wetlands to be snuck up on by an otter, to pausing with awe at the incredible proliferation of spiders and their webs, including the yellow orb weavers in the caterpillar tunnels!

Did you know that a spider's web is an extension of their mind? Keep that in mind when you encounter them and be extra mindful to minimize harm to their webs.

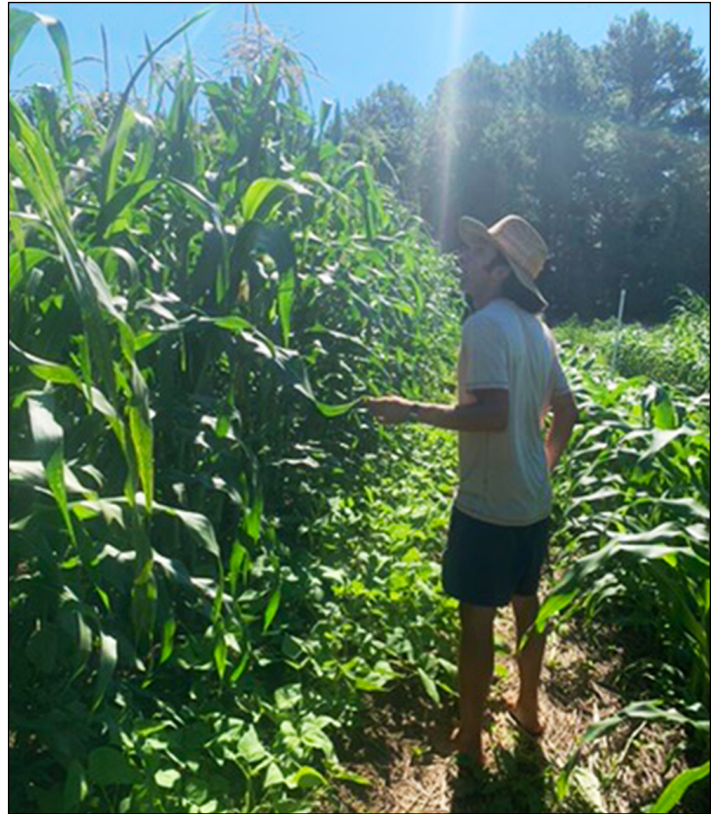
We'll say goodbye to our summer intern, Riley, after the tomato canning party on August 4. She was here for two months during her summer break from college in Colorado. The farm crew has especially appreciated her affinity for cherry tomato harvests, onion peeling, and sharing local Piedmont knowledge about the animals and plants on the land. Thank you for a great summer stint with us, Riley!

Come and join us on the land at any opportunity you can. We will have a job board with tasks that can fit into any schedule or skill level. In the field or in the barn, there is always something to do. Make a commitment to support our farmers and our mission today!

## MEMBERSHIP CIRCLE

As we get closer to building the village, **the Membership Circle is asking members to think about our aspiration to be a diverse community where people of different identities feel welcomed.**

Recently, a new member, assessing whether CGEV is a community where she would feel comfortable, asked the Membership Circle a number of questions. The questions got to the heart of racial awareness, experience with interracial living, personal ancestral history and more. We turned the questions into a survey and sent it out to members; eleven responded. Thank you! MC would love to have more responses. [Here is the survey.](#)



*Photo by Kai*

Caleb checks out the corn in the Garden early in July. It's a far cry from "knee-high by the Fourth of July"!

The theme for the July 27 community-wide meeting, Community on the Ground (COG), was "Considerations for being a welcoming and inclusive community." The first part focused on listening to the families of CGEV and the second part on the answers of the 11 respondents to the above survey. Amy H. organized the answers and offered possible future actions, both for us individually and as a community.

Many people present at the meeting said in the closing round what a rich experience they had during the meeting. The elevating of these themes was important and very meaningful. Here is a link to the [PowerPoint slides](#).

Becoming a welcoming, inclusive community is an ongoing journey that we are in on together. If you enjoy person-to-person communication, we can use your help. Contact Lisa, [Lberley@yahoo.com](mailto:Lberley@yahoo.com), or Amy H., [amy\\_halberstadt@ncsu.edu](mailto:amy_halberstadt@ncsu.edu).

**Do you have news or pictures to share?  
Please send them to Roshana at  
[roshanamail@gmail.com](mailto:roshanamail@gmail.com).**

## GOVERNANCE & COMMUNICATIONS CIRCLE

**There has been a Decision Log mechanism in place for years** to keep track of decisions made by our Circles. However, the content is far out of date. Quai has updated the technology to make it simpler and more straightforward for Circles to update their Decision Logs. Riley Moore, a summer intern on the Farm, has focused on this project to fulfill the “community service” aspect of her internship. She’s made some good progress getting through a big backlog, and we really appreciate her work.

But there is so much more to be done! **G&CC recommends that all Circles now record decisions as soon as they are made in a meeting.** [This link](#) will take you directly to the instructions page. Thanks for getting on it ASAP!

If you have any trouble on the Forum, Only-Office, or any of our technical platforms or software, please send an email to [support@commonground.eco](mailto:support@commonground.eco) and someone will reach out to you with support. If you’re interested in contributing to the work of the IT task group, please email [IT@commonground.eco](mailto:IT@commonground.eco).

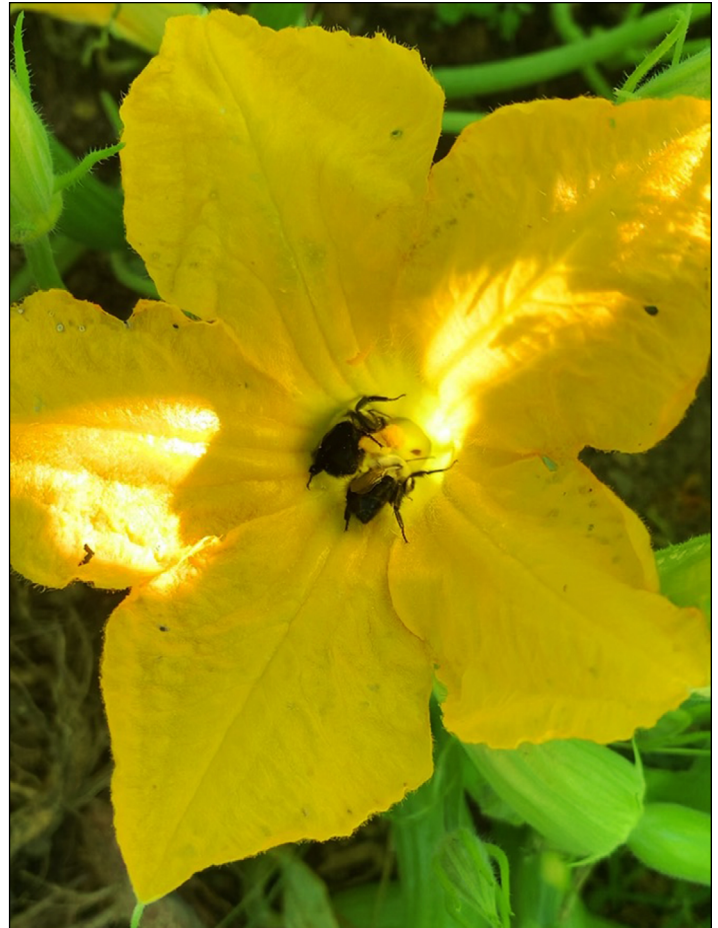


Photo by Kai

Bees cuddle in a summer squash flower.

## CIRCLE MEETINGS DIGEST

### PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

**Tuesdays, August 6 and 20, 2:30-4:30 p.m., via Zoom or hybrid.**

*Hybrid meetings (often having lunch at the Barn first). Observers are welcome. Email Anthony for updates and link with subject P&D: [weston@elon.edu](mailto:weston@elon.edu)*

### MEMBERSHIP

**Tuesday policy meetings are set for August 6 and 20, 3-5 p.m. via Zoom, with task meetings as needed on alternate Tuesdays.**

*RSVP to Lisa with subject “Membership Circle”: [LBerley@yahoo.com](mailto:LBerley@yahoo.com)*

### LAND STEWARDSHIP

**Tuesday, August 13, 7-8:30 p.m.**

### GOVERNANCE & COMMUNICATIONS

**Thursday, August 8, 7-9 p.m., Zoom**  
*RSVP to Quai with G&CC in the subject line: [quaifranklin@gmail.com](mailto:quaifranklin@gmail.com)*

*If you’re interested in observing or helping with G&CC work, please send your request to [gov-com@commonground.eco](mailto:gov-com@commonground.eco).*

### GENERAL CIRCLE

**Sunday, August 18, 6:30 p.m., Zoom and possibly 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.*



Photo by Kai

Rachel and Avalon do a threshing floor dance in the wash-and-pack area next to the Barn.

## ALL ABOUT EVENTS

### GET INVOLVED

- ◆ All events are in **Eastern Time** and open to everyone unless otherwise indicated. **You must RSVP** for details 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 and uneven, and restrooms are not wheelchair-accessible.
- ◆ **Google Calendar Link:** [CGEV Calendar](#)
- ◆ To **add or change an event**, email Ren at [ren.enberg2@gmail.com](mailto:ren.enberg2@gmail.com)

### TOURS OF THE LAND

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 fourth Saturday of the month (August 24) at 1:30 p.m. You can also schedule a tour at an alternate time.

Contact Lisa and put "Request for Tour" in the subject line: [Lberley@yahoo.com](mailto:Lberley@yahoo.com).

### RACIAL AWARENESS BOOK GROUP

Membership Circle

**Every Monday, 7-8 p.m., 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



Photo by Kai

There are some sweet spots on the Land to just ponder life's beauty.

together. The format helps build trust and a habit of paying regular attention to this work. The group is for CGEV members as well as the larger community. The format is reading aloud and sharing personal reflections, questions, ideas. A good time to join is when we begin a new book; this will likely be in October; an invitation will be sent out.

### WEEKLY FARM LUNCH

Land Stewardship Circle

**Every Tuesday, 1 p.m.**

Please RSVP to Lucas ([301-767-6720](tel:301-767-6720) / [lucas.babinec@posteo.net](mailto:lucas.babinec@posteo.net)) by Monday evening if you plan to attend, and let us know about any dietary restrictions. All are welcome!

### TOMATO CANNING PARTY

**Sunday, August 4, beginning at 3 p.m.**

Get in on the good work of preserving the flavor of summer for months to come. Some jars will be provided, but it would be rad if many folks brought a couple of their own!

### MONTHLY HEART SHARE

HeartWeavers Subcircle

**Friday, August 16, 7-9 p.m.,**

**Zoom.** Organizers Ren Enberg & Quai Derr, [Heart\\_Share](#)

[@commonground.eco](mailto:@commonground.eco), are handing the reins over this month to Robby and Roshana to facilitate.

This month's theme is **What are your reservations and your hopes about living in community?**

**Keep an eye out:** We're looking to organize a monthly Heart Share on the Land, and hope to find folks who would like to help facilitate it on a monthly basis. Please get in touch with Lucas ([lucas.babinec@posteo.net](mailto:lucas.babinec@posteo.net)) or Robby ([robertarobbins@gmail.com](mailto:robertarobbins@gmail.com)) if you're interested. We're looking tentatively at Saturday, Aug. 10, probably in the morning.

### COMMUNITY ON THE GROUND

Governance & Comms Circle

**Saturday, August 24, 3-5 p.m.,**

**Zoom and in-person at a location TBA.**

RSVP to Becky, subject "COG": [Blaskody@gmail.com](mailto:Blaskody@gmail.com)

## EVENTS, continued

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

## COMMUNITY POTLUCK

Membership Circle

**Saturday, August 24, 5:30-7:30 p.m., following Community on the Ground. Location TBA.**

Watch for an announcement or contact Lisa: [Lberley@yahoo.com](mailto:Lberley@yahoo.com). No RSVP required.

Potlucks are our time to break bread together and socialize, play,



Photo by Kai

Sunsets on the Land are stunning.

sometimes discuss the Community on the Ground meeting content. Please bring something to share. Typically vegetable dishes pre-

dominate, but all sorts of foods are welcome. Just bring a list of ingredients. Watch for an email announcement for location.



Baby grasshoppers peek out from garden leaves.

Photo by Kai

## MEMBER HAPPENINGS

*CGEV Members may list their events not sponsored by CGEV Circles as an FYI. Supply title, date, time, location, links, and description.*

**Common Ground member Melanie Yukov of Root 2 Rise Wellness** has a FREE virtual class on Top Plants to Eliminate Reflux available on her [website](#). This 30-minute class covers Melanie's top

natural remedies for eliminating pharmaceuticals for reflux and other gut-related conditions!

### **A peek into Tamera Ecovillage.**

On August 7 at 7 p.m., Hope and Paul will share their impressions of this fabled ecovillage in Portugal which they visited in May.

A reminder note with Zoom link will be sent to all members and friends by August 3.

## OUTSIDE EVENT

**REALationship 101 Class by Steve Torma: [A two-day Saturday class](#)**, ONLINE ONLY, will be held August 3 and 10, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Eastern time.

## ONE MORE THING ...

At the June 29th Community On the Ground, **Quai and Ren gave a presentation on NonViolent Communication**, featuring a short video by Earthaven communitarian Steve Torma ([at 1:30:00 in the COG meeting](#)). Quai and Ren did a short role play to demonstrate the effect NVC can have on a stressful interaction. Afterward, they gathered questions and concerns. You can join the conversation about compassionate communication in our community forum. The topic is "[NVC - Starting the discussion as a community](#)". Kathleen B. put together [NVC Resources](#). Reach out to [Quai](#) for details on other opportunities to learn about and practice NVC.