



## Cohousing Now! More People Looking for Solutions



### Sky Blue, the Fellowship for Intentional Community



[Click here for Participating Communities](#)

For more and more people, the debate is over. Climate change is real. Wealth inequity is a problem. People need to stop killing each other.... Not that there's universal agreement about the nature of the problems facing the world, or their cause. But right or left, no one seems to think the world is in good shape. The fact that there are global problems facing humanity as a whole seems to be more or less taken for granted.

The good news is that, rather than sinking into despair and resignation, I see more people looking for solutions. And intentional community is one of the solutions people are looking at.

A clear indication of this is media attention. Among others, in the last couple years, pieces on intentional communities have appeared on Al Jazeera America, Cnn.com, New York Times, ABC Nightline, Yahoo! News and The Atlantic. Major news outlets like these don't run stories they don't think will be interesting to their audiences,

because they have advertisers to appease. They're clearly responding to something.

**Intentional communities have a lot to share with the world.** We show how changes in architecture reduce carbon footprints, how it's easier and cheaper to implement energy saving or producing technologies when you have more people involved. It's easier to recycle when you're coordinating with others. It's easier to grow a garden. It's easier to carpool when you know your neighbors. You don't have to personally own every single tool you might possibly need.

We're also showing how **much more satisfying life can be** when you're surrounded by people who care about you. We're showing that it's possible for people to make decisions collectively and manage collectively held facilities and resources, so that everyone has more than they would have had if they lived alone. We're showing that it's possible to address and resolve conflict and come out the other end better for it.

This is why I want you to participate in the second annual National Cohousing Open House Day, Saturday, April 29. For those who don't live in community, but who believe in what it has to offer the world, join a tour. For those who live in a participating community, thank you for putting yourself out there. Building community can seem like an impossible feat. **The world needs to see people attempting the impossible**, because seeing people attempt the impossible is how people realize that more is possible than they ever imagined.

### Conferences & Events



**Join us in Nashville on May 19-21, 2017!**

[Learn more here.](#)  
[Register Now!](#)

*Carolyn Salmon of Quimper Village shares:*  
Looking for the next steps in creating your Senior Cohousing Community? Sign up for the Roadmap to Starting a New Community at the National Cohousing Conference! Our motto at Quimper Village is "we don't buy green bananas." **Time is short, don't waste time and energy.** Building cohousing is exciting, risky, tiring and satisfying; no point in making it harder by not finding out what to do from experts.

### Thank you to our Conference Sponsors:



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### Classified Ads

#### Homes for Sale

[Santa Cruz, CA, Walnut Commons Urban Cohousing - Condo for Sale](#)

[2 Homes Available in Beautiful Shadowlake Village](#)

[Santa Cruz CA, New Brighton Cohousing -- Townhome for Sale](#)



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Join us as we share the joy of our collaborative neighborhoods during the **National Cohousing Open House Day**. Take this opportunity to visit a community near you, or plan a trip out of town!

[Click here for a list of Communities Participating and the Schedule](#)

**Californians** are excited to have 12 participating communities showcasing their neighborhoods, plus an organized bus tour of many planned for the day. [Learn more here.](#)

## Cohousing Blogs

### Common Meal Systems, What's Typical? An interview with Joani Blank Jenny of [CoHousing Solutions](#)

*I had the privilege of interviewing Joani by phone a few months before her passing. For part one, visit [Part 1: Common Meal Practice Run](#)*

Though common meal systems share similarities from one community to the next, each cohousing has unique approaches. Some trends emerged from [Joani's 2001 survey](#).

**How often?** The number of meals cooked per week varied greatly. ...It's key, she indicated, to decide early on what the target number of meals per week will be. It's very hard to increase that number once chosen, so set the bar high and lower if necessary.

**What about potlucks?** Some communities like Wolf Creek Lodge in Calif have weekly potlucks in the common house. Joani warned that potlucks don't facilitate the same type of bonding. If they're just an "extra meal" on top of what's already happening, it's not such an issue. "Cooking together is so crucial!"

**What's expected?** There's usually an unwritten rule in communities (but not a requirement) that every adult cooks, and the task rotates. Older folks may choose to contribute in alternative ways if cooking is hard for them. [Read more](#)

### The Art of Facilitating: Fishing at Deep Water Laird Schaub

Join Laird Schaub at the 2017 National Cohousing Conference where he is presenting, including [Building a Better Meeting: Facilitation Skills for Everybody](#).



The art of facilitation is analogous to a set of nested Russian dolls: it's as many-layered as an onion. Casual observers may not notice that meeting facilitators-especially skilled ones-are doing anything more than managing hand-to-mouth dynamics:

- Coming up with a clever opening.
- Making sure everyone has good sight lines.
- Deciding who's going to speak next.
- Determining when it's time to move to a new topic.
- Otherwise coping with what's unfolding in plain sight.

But there's a good deal more to it than that. **Good facilitators are expected to work at subtle levels, too.** Here's a dozen examples:

- o **Looking ahead of the curve** Projecting where the current conversation is heading and discerning whether they (or the group) will be glad to arrive there. If it looks like a dead end (or worse, a train wreck), it's probably time to tack now, before they hit the shoal water. When executed with aplomb, most group members may not even be aware that there was any danger.
- o **Busting ghosts** Is there a presence that's alive in the room even though the person triggering it isn't there? (perhaps the influence of a

[Rare opening in Greyrock Commons, Northern Colorado Community!](#)

[Two Lovely Cottages in Fantastic Vermont setting](#)

[Mosaic Commons: 1 bedroom homes for sale](#)

[Energy Star Home for Sale at Cobb Hill Cohousing, Hartland, Vermont](#)

[Washington Village in the Heart of Boulder](#)

[Homes for Sale in New Hampshire's Greenest Community](#)

## Seeking Members

[Looking for community? Aria Cohousing is forming in Denver!](#)

[Join Iowa's first cohousing community-- Prairie Hill, in Iowa City](#)

[Bristol Village Cohousing in Vermont to be ready for move-in this summer. Come join us!](#)

[Construction nears completion: Elderberry Cohousing](#)

[Village Hearth: Adult Cohousing on 15 Beautiful Acres in Durham, NC](#)

[Join a Green, Intergenerational Community near Sacramento!](#)

[Permaculture oriented community forming in stunning Vermont location](#)

## Senior Cohousing

[PDX COMMONS, Portland - Only 2 homes left!](#)

[Phoenix Commons a Cohousing Community on Oakland Waterfront --- 1 & 2 bdrm Condos](#)

[Wolf Creek Lodge, California - Home Available](#)

## Cohousing Professionals

[Cohousing Consortium - Join Us at the Nashville Conference](#)

[Caddis Architecture](#)

[CoHousing Solutions | Sustainable Neighborhood Consultants](#)

[Fitch Architecture & Community Design | Home - Community - Planet](#)

[Linda Herman Consulting](#)

[McCamant & Durrett Architects: The Cohousing Co](#)

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[schemata workshop | architecture & planning](#)



dead founder, whose charismatic and powerful persona continues to guide conversations from the grave; maybe it's fear of potential retribution by a bully who is on vacation but is bound to find out if anyone speaks critically of them). [read more](#)

## Architecture: Concepts that play a role in cohousing design

Charles Durrett, The Cohousing Company and Nevada City Cohousing



Reposted from The Cohousing Company: McCamant & Durrett Architects. Join us at the National Cohousing Conference, where Chuck will be presenting, including: [If it Doesn't Work Socially, Why Bother?](#)

Architecture plays a key role in the long-term success of cohousing, once the honeymoon phase is over. The activity around the common house is a key indicator of this. Some common houses, for example, have 100 people-hours (number of collective hours that people spend in a certain place) per week, some have 450. In each case, it cost the group \$400K to build it. For a group that hardly spends time in their common house, that is a lot of humanity left on the table and a lot of lost value. As an architect who has designed over 50 communities, I feel it's important to understand why either scenario happens and how to set a community up for success beyond move-in. [Read more...](#)

## Living in Community

### Congolese Refugee Family Helped by Cohousing

David Entin, Rocky Hill Cohousing (Northampton, MA)



Congolese refugees playing basketball at Rocky Hill Cohousing

..... In response [to the concern about Syrian refugees], the Northampton City Council passed a resolution welcoming international refugees. Catholic Charities, as a refugee resettlement agency, proposed 51 refugees for resettling. The City asked for citizen volunteers to form Circles of Care to assist each refugee family. **Two adjacent cohousing communities,**

**Rocky Hill and Pathways, joined to form a 10 member Circle of Care with 33 other cohousing members serving as support.** The community reached consensus on a resolution for this project that included, "Whereas the Mission and Values statement includes 'giving our care, time and work' to both ourselves and 'the wider community and the world.'" ..... On April 5, two Congolese brothers aged 23 and 26 were met at the airport by members of the Cohousing Circle of Care with welcome signs decorated by our children. In the first week we helped them select clothes from donations collected; enjoy a first pizza meal; observe a cohousing children's Easter Egg hunt; have several meals in our homes and a common meal; high school lacrosse game; and basketball, Frisbee, soccer, and bicycle riding in our community.... We are very excited to be assisting these refugees in this time of such turmoil and fear in the world. The two brothers are curious, observant, intelligent, respectful, and very appreciative of this opportunity. The cohousing communities have rallied around this effort and extended their help and warmth in so many ways. The experience is at least as meaningful for us as for them. [Read more...](#)

## Coho/US Notes

### Coho/US Executive Director - Seeking Applications

Diana Sullivan, Vice President, Coho/US Board of Directors

Cohousing as an innovative model of sustainable neighborhoods is on the move with new communities under development, new groups forming and cohousing

## In the News

### Good genes are nice, but joy is better from Harvard Gazette



"....our relationships and how happy we are in our relationships has a powerful influence on our health," said Robert Waldinger, professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. "Taking care of your body is important, but tending to your relationships is a form of self-care too."

### A big family: Growing up in a cooperative community.



Martina Compain is the first to return to the community after growing up there. She's back with her baby, living in her parents' home for the time being. "The thing I loved the most about the community is that it was just a big family," she said.

### Creating Cohousing in Southern Nevada



It's not easy building or growing anything in a desert, and southern Nevada is no exception. But what manages to survive here, thrives and outlasts its more ephemeral counterparts. That describes a small but determined group of future cohousers. [Learn more here.](#)

## New Resources

### [Storing Community Documents Online](#)

### [Reserve Studies: Why Every Community Needs One](#)

### [Community Co-Care Agreements](#)

### [Ten Tips for Success in Building a Cohousing Community.](#)

### [Resale Strategies & Turnover](#)

### [Tag Cloud](#)

members initiating creative solutions for resiliency and future growth. This growth in the Association has been led for over three years by Alice Alexander, Executive Director, and the Association's impact has steadily expanded. Under her direction many of the Association's goals have been achieved in excellent ways. At the upcoming National Cohousing Conference, the Association will be celebrating the achievements of Alice as she moves forward to other interests. The Board of the Coho/US is soliciting qualified applicants for the position of executive director. If interested in this full time position please send a letter and resume to [editor@cohousing.org](mailto:editor@cohousing.org) and visit [http://www.cohousing.org/Executive\\_Director](http://www.cohousing.org/Executive_Director)

### News from Alice Alexander, Coho/US Executive Director



With a bittersweet note, I will be stepping down as Coho/US Executive Director, effective June 30. I have loved my job! The work involved however is too much for me at this point in my life. I'm being pulled in too many other directions. I am extremely proud of what we have accomplished during my tenure. From an organization that was not doing well, we have established a strong board and staffing structure; achieved financial stability; renewed credibility and relevancy as a professional organization; significantly raised the visibility of cohousing; and assisted in creating, growing or rejuvenating many dozens of communities. The Coho/US

Board will be recruiting for a new Executive Director. Visit [here](#) for information. PS I am not disappearing! Just evolving.

### Cohousing Directory Metrics

Established Communities = 165

---Completed = 148

---Building = 18

Forming\*\* = 136

\*\*Thirty two forming groups have acquired land they plan to develop



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## The Cohousing Directory

New listings:

**Common Ground Community** (Knoxville, Tennessee)

**Screen Door Community** (Asheville, North Carolina)

**Loblolly Greenway Cohousing** (Gainesville, Florida)

**Greater Hartford Cohousing** (Hartford, Connecticut)

Disbanded Group:

Placitas Sage (Placitas, New Mexico)

[Edit your Community Profile here..](#)

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## Thanks for reading

**Cohousing Now!** provides news and events on Cohousing... Now! From **Coho/US**, the Cohousing Association of the United States, Cohousing Now! is emailed monthly. Please forward to your friends, communities, and other lists to spread the word about cohousing!