

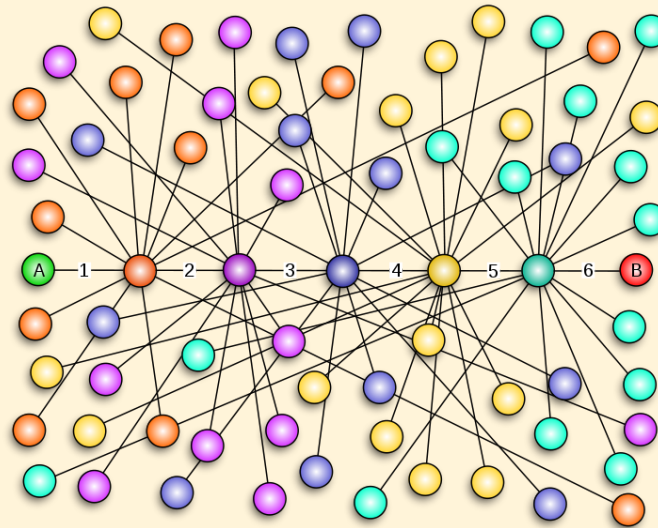
Cohousing Now!

Growing the Cohousing Movement



Six Degrees of Separation...or is it 4.26 degrees?

by Karin Hoskin, Wild Sage Cohousing Boulder, CO



dw 2010

The six degrees of separation theory was first proposed in 1929 by the Hungarian writer Frigyes Karinthy in a short story called "Chains." Six degrees of separation is the idea that all living things and everything else in the world are six or fewer steps away from each other so that a chain of "a friend of a friend" statements can be made to connect any two people in a maximum of six steps.

In the short story, Karinthy's characters believed that any two individuals could be connected through at most five acquaintances; the characters create a game out of this notion. He wrote:

A fascinating game grew out of this discussion. One of us suggested performing the following experiment to prove that the population of the Earth is closer together now than they have ever been before. We should select any person from the 1.5 billion inhabitants of the Earth - anyone, anywhere at all. He bet us that, using no more than five individuals, one of whom is a personal acquaintance, he could contact the selected individual using nothing except the network of personal acquaintances

This theory has continued to be discussed in social science circles as well in popular culture. The game "Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon" was invented as a play on the concept: the goal is to link any actor to Kevin Bacon through no more than six connections, where two actors are connected if they have appeared in a movie or commercial together.

Recent studies have presented an idea that with popular social networking platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn, the steps it takes to connect two people has decreased to 4.26 degrees.

You might wonder, how does this relate to cohousing? In the continued talks of how to grow the cohousing movement, the leading question often is *'how can we create more of them?'* To create more of them, we need more people to know about them. It sounds so simple, yet is a huge undertaking. So how can we do it?

The most basic way we can educate people about how we live is to use every little opportunity to tell them. When someone asks me where I'm from, I don't simply say Colorado. Instead, I tell them that I live in a cohousing community in Boulder, Colorado. If I get a response such as "oh, what's that?" I tell them my short elevator speech, which goes something like this:

"It's like the old-fashioned neighborhood that I grew up in. We all have private homes, but we have shared spaces as well. We have monthly celebrations or gatherings of some sort, and we eat a meal together a couple of times a week, so I know all 80+ of my neighbors really well. It's a great place to raise kids as we really support each other, and we can collectively live a little more consciously on the earth by sharing resources. We can easily reuse or upcycle household items and clothing, and and we can car share among the 34 households."

We are a small part of the larger world populated by 7.6 billion people and we are all connected by some degree. Though cohousing may not be for everybody, wouldn't it be fantastic if *everyone* knew that it is an option? Share

your story, help grow the cohousing movement. Together we can...

Create community, one neighborhood at a time.

Conferences & Events



Regional Conference in Spring of 2018 Colorado
Regional Conference in Fall of 2018 Massachusetts
National Conference in Spring of 2019 Portland, OR

Please send your proposals or topic requests
to conference@cohousing.org

Cohousing Blog

Elephant Journal Talks Community and Cohousing with Steven Ablondi and Bryan Bowen

Jenny Godwin, Coho/US Outreach Associate



The U.S. Cohousing Association is a national organization but strives to acknowledge relevant happenings in the wider world related to cohousing. Last week, Elephant Journal, a grassroots news organization with a focus on mindful living, interviewed Steven Ablondi and Bryan Bowen about their work with Memel.Global based in South Africa. Of course, cohousing principles radiated throughout the conversation.

Steven provided a background for his work in the town of Memel, an area still suffering the aftershocks of apartheid in South Africa. Steven's career with the UN placed him in challenging, rewarding situations, a far cry from his previous career path as an investment broker studying Law in Vermont. His time in Africa afforded him meaningful opportunities to work with refugees, who even among chaos and poverty, still lived with dignity and a deep-seated resilience.

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Classified Ads

Homes for Sale

[Beautiful Condo in Vibrant Durham NC
Urban Cohousing Community.](#)

[Emerson Commons - Cohousing near
Charlottesville, Virginia](#)

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

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

[Welcoming new members, selling new
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Seeking Members

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Community near Sacramento!](#)

Senior Cohousing

[Wolf Creek Lodge, California - Home
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[Fitch Architecture & Community
Design | Home - Community - Planet](#)

[Linda Herman Consulting](#)

[Mary Kraus, Architect](#)

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

[schemata workshop | architecture &
planning](#)

In the News



There is an inherent human need to fuel one's purpose, and Memel.Global continues to provide opportunities for locals, visitors and volunteers to contribute to community building. Most who have attended past National Cohousing Conferences have had the opportunity to hear first-hand from Steven or Bryan about this organization's transformative work.

[Memel Cohousing](#) is currently a community of 15, with 30 homes in the works under Bryan Bowen of Caddis Architecture's direction. The community will be constructed with locally-appropriate earth-building techniques and permaculture gardens. A social component was needed to accompany the environmentally conscious one, and so cohousing ideals were expertly folded into the plans.



Currently favorable exchange rates mean architect-designed garden cottages there can be purchased from \$39,000, and there are no restrictions on foreign ownership. There are plans to subsidize half of the first-built units to foster affordability for local buyers. The team is in the process of looking for investors and construction loans.

[Watch the full Elephant Journal Interview here.](#)

Living in Community

Sharing Experiences About Living in Community



Karin Hoskin, Wild Sage Cohousing (Boulder, CO)

On a windy fall day in Colorado, 18 people from eight different cohousing communities gathered to share experiences and glean wisdom from one another; we celebrated our success' and talked about our challenges.

We discussed topics such as buying things in bulk (like insurance), pets and parenting, the resale of units and how to get great neighbors and how to (socially) build community. We shared a meal together and plan to gather again a couple of times a year.

Housing That Lessens Loneliness



Pictured here - Mountain View Cohousing in California (photo credit to McCamant & Durrett Architects).

A recent article on aging investigates cohousing's potential to address the loneliness dilemma many older adults encounter when faced with the prospect of aging in place, isolated. "What if your housing choices in later life could mitigate that isolation? What if loneliness were to be replaced with meaningful connections?" the piece asks.

These days, 1 out of 3 people aged 50+ are divorced, widowed or never married. This makes creating a meaningful community around one's housing choice more vital than ever. Home is so much more than a house tailored to aging - it's a resonating belonging - an accountability to and agreeable reliance on others as friends. "As the number of older adults swells, there will undoubtedly be more creative housing options to keep them socially engaged. Perhaps feeling valued is the greatest antidote to loneliness."

Senior cohousing is suggested as a growing alternative - and in fact, there are now 13 completed communities, 2 building and another 13 forming (full list here).

Read the full piece from Longevity Network, founded by AARP and United Healthcare [here](#)

National trend involves private homes clustered around shared spaces



Work continues stacked flats building (left) and Common House building (right) at the Prairie Hill Cohousing complex in Iowa City on Monday, Oct. 30, 2017. (Stephen Mally/The Gazette)

When almost a decade ago a group of friends from the Iowa City area realized their children were getting older, they began to imagine what their lives would be like once they became empty nesters.

Instead of downsizing their homes or moving to a warmer climate, the friends discovered a concept started in Denmark called

Strengthening these local regional relationships can strengthen CoHoUS as a national organization which can grow the cohousing movement. Would you like to spearhead your own local workshop gathering? Please contact me karincohous@gmail.com and I will happily share with you templates to create a gathering!

Coho/US Notes

Making Connections While Touring

Karin Hoskin, Coho/US Executive Director

I highly recommend visiting other communities when you can. You will most certainly meet some really great people. People that understand when you say something about needing to get back to cook dinner for 30 people (and they'll notice that you're not panicking). Or people who understand when you ask about their success in participation, while completely understanding how important this concept is. You might see some unique ideas in the kids play area, or some new concepts on how to organize the kitchen cabinets in the (industrial) large kitchen. Check out the [CohoUS community directory](#), make some inquiries and have fun!

Front Range Colorado

This fall I traveled within an hour of my [Wild Sage Cohousing](#) community to visit other Colorado Cohousing communities. [Hearthstone Cohousing](#) felt like a little oasis in the urban city of Denver; the gardens and orchards of [Harmony Village](#) were bountiful; it was so fun for me to see the up-cycled wooden floors in the common house of [Grey Rock Commons](#); it was lovely to see [River Rock Commons](#) nestled in Old Town as if it had been there forever.

Sacramento Area

I had the opportunity to have lunch with the people of [Fair Oaks](#), and afterwards tour the land where construction begins this fall; I visited [Wolf Creek Lodge](#) (and even saw the 'hidden' hallway); I enjoyed dinner with Katie and the folks of [Nevada City Cohousing](#); I was in Davis on the anniversary weekend of [Muir Commons](#); I stopped and talked life experiences with members of [Glacier Circle Community](#); I toured and learned the history of [N Street](#) (a retrofit cohousing community); I enjoyed a daydream (future reality?) with a person from [Southside Park Cohousing](#) about starting a cohousing community in Costa Rica!

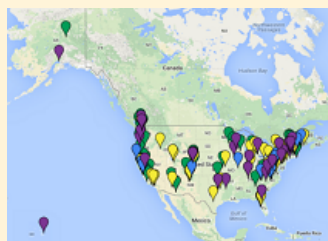
Cohousing Directory Metrics

Established Communities = 166

--- Completed = 149

--- Building = 18

--- Forming = 140



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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!

"cohousing," or community living with private homes built around a common space.

Read full piece from Iowa City Gazette [here](#)

## cohousing.org



By Catya Belfer

It's that time again... This website has grown, and it's time to think about the next iteration of the site. To do that, we ask ourselves, and you:

Who is coming to the website?  
What do they want to find?  
How could we organize things so that it all makes sense, and all the different people who are coming to the site can find and do what they want here?

To that end, we have a survey for you to fill out. Feel free to pass it around your communities!

[SURVEY IS HERE!](#)

## The Cohousing Directory

Updated listing:

[Truckee Cohousing \(Truckee, CA\)](#)

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

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