Cohousing Now!
Cohousing Kicks Butt for Women's March

From all over the U.S. and the world they came to DC. Singles, couples, groups. All stripes and colors. Very young and very old. Women and men. All genders. All faiths. All traditions.
They came to march.

There are many, many exciting stories out there about The March, the marchers and the message.

This is not one of those.

This is a story about how cohousing kicks butt when it comes to bringing people together.
In particular, this is a story about one community, Takoma Village Cohousing, in Washington, DC that opened its doors and its heart to 27 people coming to DC for the Women's March on Washington. In addition, seven households welcomed about 19 personal friends and family for the weekend so our community's population increased by more than half!

Here’s the tale. In November, we discussed hosting marchers among ourselves and on our email list. In December, we took the discussion to a membership meeting. Community Team took on the responsibility.
A point person networked with local March organizers, who gave tips for advertising ourselves and also directed guests our way. Other point people cooked and organized four meals, and everyone volunteered to clean up. Neighbors took in singes, couples and a group of three. More folks lodged in the Common House spreading pads, sleeping bags in available spaces. Our visitors told us they felt comfortable, welcome, well-fed, and actually got enough rest to make the long trip home. Those unfamiliar with cohousing became intrigued by our community and several want to visit and explore cohousing in their own lives.

How were we able to do all this?
We were able to do this because cohousing is uniquely positioned to undertake exactly these types of large scale events. Our innovative social structure makes it possible for us to take on BIG projects.

This is what cohousing brings to the table:
read more...

Ann Zabaldo, Takoma Village Cohousing (Washington DC)

PDX Commons Gathers Together for Portland Women's March - Gretchen Brauer-Rieke & Ann Lehman

The benefits of intentional community can sometimes come as a surprise - especially when the community is still in formation, not yet even living together. When members of PDX Commons learned about the Women's March on Washington and all of the sister marches around the globe, there was a strong spontaneous desire of wanting to gather together, joining forces to march with our community identity: At PDX Commons, we stand for kindness, compassion, fairness, justice, equality, human rights for all.... Many of us had never participated in a major demonstration march like this - others hadn't marched since the turbulent 60's - so the power of solidarity with this peaceful human mass of perhaps close to 100,000 people was amazing, as was the camaraderie of marching with other members of our own community.... When I (along with my husband) decided to join forces with PDX Commons last year, I had no idea that I'd be marching with our new friends among thousands of others on a cold wet January day. This community stands behind our values, and is willing to hit the streets to demonstrate that.... read more...
Cohousing Blogs

Joani Blank on Common Meals: Part 1 - Practice Run
Jenny of CoHousing Solutions

"My illness is messing with my brain, making things fuzzy. But this kind of stuff, I can't forget it." The cohousing world lost a pioneer and community mentor in summer 2016: Joani Blank of Swan's Market Cohousing in Oakland. A fierce advocate for the power of community, all who knew her have stories to tell. I had the privilege of interviewing Joani before her passing.... It was obvious, immediately, how crucial she considered breaking bread in community to be, saying "Cohousing without common meals isn't cohousing at all..." The biggest key Joani gave to establishing a successful common meals practice is to move into your community with a plan already in mind.... Joani is credited for initiating a "practice run" idea for forming groups to get a sense of the mechanics of well-run common meals..... So, how do you organize a practice meal? Here are Joani's step-by-step tips:

Read more
Power in Cooperative Groups, Part 1: Yourself
Laird Schaub: Laird's Blog

...In physics, power is defined as work accomplished over time, or force multiplied by velocity. In sociology, the lens I'm using, I define power as influence, the ability to get others to agree to something or to do something. I've chosen to examine the individual's relationship to power through a series of questions, the answers to which can help a person sort out where they stand in relationship to power in any given situation.

1. Do you want power? While that may be an easy "yes" for some, it's an easy "no" for others, with plenty of anguish in between whenever the answer isn't obvious. Yes, it's a opportunity to contribute and to influence results, but the obverse of that coin is that it's also an opportunity to mess up, and not everyone is comfortable with that weight on their shoulders. ..... Even if you are clear that you have power, care about the outcome, and know what you think, you may be hesitant to exercise your power.

2. How can you assess what power you have?

Germantown Commons Hosting the 2017 Conference
Diana Sullivan, Germantown Commons (Nashville TN)

Your presence is especially requested! The National Conference promises exciting educational opportunities, networking and fun in Nashville. The Millennium Maxwell House Hotel is just minutes from Germantown Commons. This is a first for Nashville to host the conference, and Germantown Commons is the first cohousing community in Middle Tennessee. The urban community near downtown was founded in fall 2015 with 25 households. By spring 2016 the much awaited common house was complete and the festivities and dinners began. It's a story of commitment and perseverance. When the conference is held in May, the beautiful rain gardens that flourished last summer and fall will be in full, welcoming bloom thanks to our landscape team. Here's our video invitation to you!

Living in Community

Rural Cohousing: Being a real neighbor in the old-time country sense  Karolyn Mangeot, Elderberry (Rougemont, NC)

Several months ago there was a blog suggesting that seniors should look for cohousing communities in urban areas. I'd like to offer an alternative... My cohousing neighbors here in rural North Carolina will tell you that their goal is to continue "growing". By that I mean moving toward a more intentional lifestyle. This may include urban offerings (museums, concerts) reached by a 45-minute car ride. However, daily opportunities for "growth" here require really immersing one's self in what cohousing means - intentionally doing things with and for your neighbor...everything from trying out a new restaurant together to sharing errands. For those in our community who are still working, all of them have a commute. But they want to live in a place that is a rural respite from the bustle of their business lives: Walks in the woods, sitting on their front porch, sunsets and incredible stars replace honking horns, pollution and street views. For all of us here, whether working or retired, we have chosen a community where truthfully life isn't easy. There's grass to be mowed, a garden to tend, firewood to split, chickens to feed, landscaping to maintain. But every task is also a challenge to remain physically fit, to eat healthier, to learn new skills...
Coho/US Notes

Many Thanks to These Communities who Gave in 2016
Coho/US exists to nurture our communities, established and forming. Gifts from our communities enable us to provide programs that benefit you. We are grateful for these contributing communities. Sustaining Communities are in bold.

Acequia Jardin Albuquerque NM
Arboretum Cohousing Madison WI
Arcadia Cohousing Chapel Hill NC
Ashland Cohousing Community Ashland OR
Bellingham Cohousing Bellingham WA
Berkeley Cohousing Berkeley CA
Blueberry Hill Vienna VA
Burlington Cohousing East Village Burlington VT
Capital Hill Urban Cohousing Seattle WA
Cambridge Cohousing Cambridge MA
Cantine's Island Cohousing Saugerties NY
Casa Verde Commons Colorado Springs CO
Cascadia Commons Portland OR
Charlotte Cohousing Charlotte NC
Coho Ecovillage Corvallis OR
Common Place Cooperative Cambridge MA
Cornerstone Village Cohousing Cambridge MA
Daybreak Cohousing Portland OR
Doyle Street Emeryville CA
Durham Central Park Cohousing Durham NC
Fair Oaks EcoHousing Fair Oaks CA
Germantown Commons Nashville NC
Great Oak Cohousing Ann Arbor MI
Green Grove Cohousing Forest Grove OR
Higher Ground Cohousing Bend OR
Island Cohousing Vineyard Haven MA
Jackson Place Cohousing Seattle WA
Liberty Village Cohousing Union Bridge MD
Manzanita Village Prescott AZ
Milagro Cohousing Tucson AZ
Monterey Cohousing St Louis Park MN
Mosaic Commons Berlin MA
Mountain View Cohousing Mountain View CA
Nevada City Cohousing Nevada City CA
Nubanusit Neighborhood and Farm Peterborough NH
Nyland Lafayette CO
Oakcreek Community Stillwater OK
Pioneer Valley Cohousing Amherst MA
Pleasant Hill Cohousing Pleasant Hill CA
Raleigh Cohousing Raleigh NC
Rocky Hill Cohousing Northampton MA
Shadowlake Village Blacksburg VA
Shepherd Village Shepherdstown WV
Silver Sage Village Boulder CO
Songaia Cohousing Bothell WA
Swan's Market Cohousing Oakland CA
Stone Curves Tucson AZ
The Commons on the Alameda Santa Fe MN
Two Eco Cohousing Brunswick ME
Trillium Hollow Portland OR
Valverde Commons Taos NM
Village Hearth Cohousing Durham NC
Wasatch Commons Salt Lake City UT
Winslow Cohousing Bainbridge Island WA
Wolf Creek Lodge Grass Valley CA

Cohousing Directory Metrics
Established Communities = 163
---Completed = 147
---Building = 16

Forming** = 134
**Thirty two forming groups have acquired land they plan to develop