

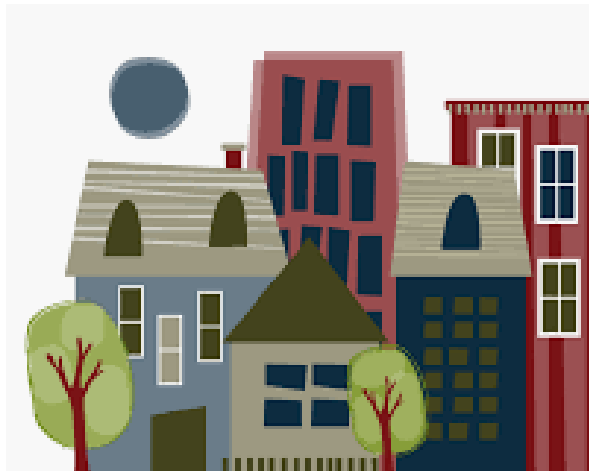


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November 2019

Cohousing Now!



Creative Affordability

written by Karen Gimnig

When I hear the old cliché, “Necessity is the mother of invention,” I imagine an inventor’s workshop, cluttered with gadgets and gizmos. I’m not sure that really captures it, though. More often, I think the necessity that fosters invention is far less pleasant than what I care to think about. This may be especially true when we are talking about the necessity that mothers the invention of community.

Most of the time necessity isn’t pretty. Necessity is about need and discomfort. In extreme form, hunger and homelessness, and not too far from those is insecurity of income, child care, and transportation to name a few. My understanding is that people who live in those spaces frequently form connections with neighbors, not because it feels good or they have some lofty idea of community, but because they have no other choice. I think of Erin Brockovich, in the movie of that name, leaving her kids with a neighbor she isn’t sure she likes because it is the only way to keep her job. For a lot of people, that is what necessity looks like, and it does indeed lead to creative problem solving.

In cohousing, necessity carries the name “affordability”. Every day at CohoUS we hear from people who long for the kinds of relationships and connections they read about on our website as standards of cohousing, but cannot afford the prices they see advertised. It’s uncomfortable. Rarely does a community form that doesn’t include “affordability” on its list of values. Diversity, including diversity of income and all the forms of diversity that are hard to achieve without it, is tied to the very identity of cohousing. And yet, when the daily message comes in from someone who has all the heart for cohousing and not the money to buy in, we don’t have good enough answers. This is the discomfort of necessity, and it’s probably my least favorite part of my job.

As a movement, it's time for us to lean in to that discomfort, to crawl around in it, to name the disconnect between our values and the reality we have so far been able to create. When we name that for all the good cohousing is doing in the world today, it could do so much more if all those who want it could afford it, we will begin to see how essential affordability in cohousing really is. We will enter the space of necessity where creativity arrives to bring invention.

There has been conversation about affordability in cohousing for a long time, but solutions have not kept pace with rising home prices. The need only increases. At our national conference in Portland the conversation was broadened and creativity began to flow. There are many ideas, and room for so many more. From partnerships with government and non-profits, to co-living and adaptation of existing housing stock, the ideas are flowing, and we need still more.

Fortunately, cohousers are expert at the very things that do the most to enrich creativity. We are natural and experienced collaborators. We know how to harness multi-mind thinking and find together the answer that none could find alone. We know that we are stronger and better together and that deep listening and holding space are key elements for collaborative creativity.

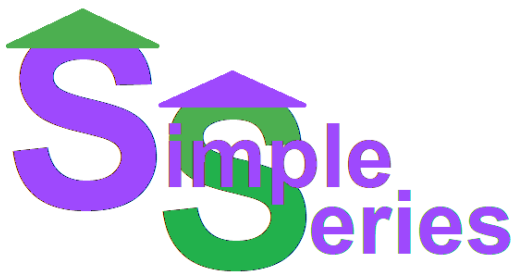
Creativity will be the key to our success. If there were easy answers to this problem, we'd have done them already. The solutions we seek are going to lead us to unfamiliar territory, and probably some scary new places that turn out to also be rich and fulfilling in ways we cannot currently imagine. We may have to let go of some of what we hold as ideals for cohousing in order to achieve a greater ideal of cohousing available to all.

I believe affordable cohousing can be a reality, and that making it so will accelerate the good that our movement does in the world. I also believe that making it so will require not only the work of those who have no choice but to experience necessity, but also those who currently enjoy the abundance of cohousing community. **We need the skills cohousers learn by living in community to create enough community for all.**

So what can we do? Here are some possibilities:

- Join us for [An Affordable Conference on Affordable Cohousing](#) online on February 22, 2020.
- Make your common house and other community resources available for communities that are trying to form in your area, or even interested folks who are just starting to talk about it.
- Rent a room of your home to someone who can't afford a home of their own in your community.
- Contribute your stories, your wisdom and your talent to the broader movement through the website (send submissions to Karen at karencohous@gmail.com), our Cohousing US facebook group, or our Cohousing - L list serv
- Make [regular financial contributions to CohoUS](#) so that we can continue to pull together ideas and creativity from across the country.

Cohousing has a bright future in the US, and I believe it includes affordable options for all the community hearts that are looking for it. I can only imagine how the abundance they bring will enrich our movement and our nation.



As a part of our Simple Series 2020:
CohoUS's first ever online conference

**An Affordable Conference
on Affordable Cohousing**

February 22, 2020

Coho US's first ever online conference will be on a topic that is at the forefront of conversations about how to expand cohousing in the United States. We will gather from around the nation to discuss this challenging and vital topic in the cohousing movement.

[Click Here](#) for information as it becomes available

Here's what's coming next:

Thursday, Dec 5 , 5pm Pac, 6pm
Mt, 7pm Cent, 8pm East

Karen Gimnig
**Personal Growth: The most
important reason for cohousing.**

Cohousing is sometimes called the longest personal growth workshop ever. At the same time, we're sometimes afraid to mention this to potential cohousers we don't want to scare off. In this WebChat, Karen will celebrate the tremendous power of cohousing to make us better humans. She'll also explain why growth is such a reliable part of cohousing, share strategies for getting the most growth out of our cohousing experience and give us some tips on what to do when it is someone else's growth we'd like to make happen.

5pm PT, 6pm MT,
7pm CT, 8pm ET
<https://zoom.us/j/202941610>

Full WebChat Schedule

View Recordings

Spotlight

Spring Comes in November

By CohoUS Staff

With winter approaching and the days still getting shorter, it can be hard to remember that life continues to thrive in all its cycles. Most communities experience winter cycles where energy wanes, growth slows, and connection is harder to



grasp. This is particularly true for forming communities where the cold winds of winter take the form of zoning challenges, finance hiccups and building delays and isn't limited by the physical path of the earth around the sun.

For one community in Eugene, OR, the winter of struggle has been particularly long and stormy. Oakleigh Meadow Cohousing was hit with more than their share of chilly delays and icy obstacles, making it all the more joyful that spring has arrived in community this November with a promise of new growth lasting throughout 2020.

One new bud is a whole new name celebrating their location along the river and bike trail. River Song Cohousing will offer easy access to nature's beauty, exercise, and all the city of Eugene has to offer. A 69-mile network of bike trails and lanes for easy access to downtown, to the University of Oregon, and so much more in Bike City USA.

Another branch of new growth for River Song is an agreement to partner with UD+P Development company. UD+P has partnered with many cohousing communities, including PDX Commons in Portland and Adams Creek Cohousing in Hood River. Their professionalism and excellent track record have River Song members feeling confident in their future.

Perhaps the cutest bit of springy new life is a new baby amongst River Song's explorers. The meal train to help out mom and dad in these first weeks of life is only the beginning of the love River Song intends to shower on this little one. Soon she'll be passed from person to person around the potluck table, and before you know it, she'll be toddling from one pair of loving arms to another in a brand new common house.

New buds thrive best when supported by strong seed stock and deep roots. So it is for River Song. Eugene seems destined for cohousing. It makes sense that cohousing would find its way to a city with such fertile ground for new ideas, one that takes pride in its rich quality of life, strong civic participation in neighborhood communities, walkable neighborhoods, and protection of farmland. There are so many values in common with cohousing, it's a bit of a shock there isn't already cohousing in Eugene.

Over the years River Song members have worked hard to engage with the broader community, working with others to support the environment, address homelessness, and shape the future for the city and local neighborhood.

The heart of this community has been evergreen throughout the dark times, carrying a spirit for community, an intention for sustainable living and a determination to see it through to maturity. Like most cohousing communities, River Song has an abundance of caregivers, musicians and gardeners, not to mention cats and dogs.

“We’re coming together and rising again,” says member, Katherine Lavine. “With a new name, an exciting partnership with UD+P and a lot of excitement among our newest members, we are ready to meet the rest of our members. With a lot of hard work out of the way, now is a great time to join our community.”

CohoUS



CohoUS Annual Report Webinar

Join the CohoUS Board of Directors and staff for details of what new and exciting things The Cohousing Association of the US has been up this year of 2019!

Monday Dec 2, 2019 6 PM MST

Please [Register Here](#)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar held on **Zoom video**.



What are you grateful for this season? Great neighbors? Common meals? The sound of children playing outside? The security of knowing help is available should you need it? The opportunity to help others just outside your doorstep? Maybe you are grateful for the life lessons and personal growth you have experienced as a result of living in cohousing. Or maybe for the growth of your neighbors! Or perhaps your gratitude is for the community yet to be and the people with whom you are building it.

Whatever you are grateful for in community this season, this is the moment to pay that benefit forward. By [making a Giving Tuesday gift](#) to the Cohousing Association, you are helping the next generation of cohousers experience the same benefits you enjoy every day and sharing the lessons learned from one community to the next.

[Click Here](#) to make your Giving Tuesday donation before the holiday rush. It's not too early to have it matched (up to \$10,000) by our anonymous donor, bringing twice the good to the cohousing movement.



How can you leave your home?

By Suzy Sharp

When people learn I'm moving into cohousing, they often ask, "How can you leave your home? It's so lovely and has so much character. And, you've made so many memories here."

Yes, it's true. I love my nearly 90 year old house in Florence Park, a mid-town neighborhood in Tulsa, Oklahoma. I've lived in it 30+ years. I grew up 2 blocks from where I now live. I sold Girl Scout cookies to every house in the neighborhood. I raised my daughter here.

And, it no longer serves my needs.

[click here](#) to read more



We Welcome Your Stories

by CohoUS staff

Some of our favorite blogs are stories by people just like you. Tell us about your favorite community experience, your biggest learning, the beautiful thing your neighbor did. We'd love to share it.

Submit to: karencohous@gmail.com

In the News



Relocate to Sacramento? For these Bay Area "cohousers" the math is simple

A sense of community and a more relaxed way of life beckon to Peninsula homeowners



A different kind of condo complex

Years in the making, Mountain View's cohousing project forms community through cooperation

If you ask Al Lampell of Woodside why he's leaving the Bay Area after living here for 30 years, the first thing he'll say is: "I love the Bay Area!" Lampell had a successful career as an electrical engineer at various local startups, raised his children in Santa Clara and his son now works at a tech company in Cupertino. He happily built his family's life on the Peninsula, but it won't be where he lives out his retirement.

Instead, Lampell will be moving into a newly built condominium along with a group of like-minded people who plan to share a common house, a spa, and an orchard along with companionship and upkeep efforts. This unusual living situation, often referred to as cohousing or an intentional community, is growing nationwide. In Northern California cohousing has particular appeal: it allows Lampell and others to opt for a more affordable retirement while providing instant community.

[click here](#) for full article

If you didn't know what you were looking at, the Mountain View Cohousing Community appears to be like any other apartment complex in the city. It's located on Calderon Avenue, just across the fence from Landels Elementary School and a short walk downtown, and proposes a kind of intentional living and sharing of community resources that is relatively rare in Silicon Valley.

Jenny Bixby and her husband Ken Rosenfeld have been members of the MVCC since September 2018, and raised their children in a cohousing community in Massachusetts before they moved to the Bay Area. Bixby said that she prefers cohousing because she wants to be connected with her neighbors.

[click here](#) for full article

Classified Ads

Forming Communities and Communities Seeking Members



[Heartwood Commons – a new 55+ Community in Tulsa, OK. Won't you be our neighbor?](#)



[One Opening Remains in Silverton Oregon](#)



[Multigenerational, environmentally responsible, cottage homes, 4.75 acres with organic garden](#)



[Riverside Living in Eugene, OR Growing rapidly - come aboard now!](#)

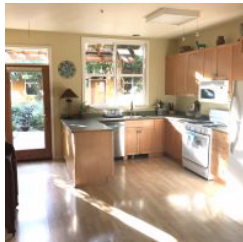


[First Cohousing in Connecticut!](#)



[Skagit Cohousing -- our design is in process!](#)

Homes for Sale



[SF Bay Area - 2 Bed/1.5 Bath Townhome - Beautiful two-story with ample storage and carport](#)
[Area - 2 Bed/1.5 Bath Townhome - Beautiful two-story with ample storage and carport](#)



[Two homes for sale at Wolf Creek Lodge Senior Cohousing in Grass Valley, CA](#)



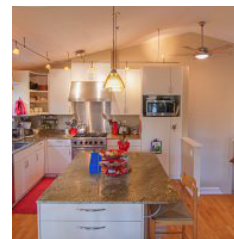
[Homes in Prairie Hill Cohousing Iowa City, IA](#)



[Fair Oaks EcoHousing, near Sacramento and Lake Tahoe, has a few homes available](#)



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



[Rare Trillium Hollow Townhouse for sale 4 Bedrooms / 2 Baths](#)



[5 condo units for sale at Bull City Commons Cohousing – Join our urban Durham community: walkable, diverse, and vibrant.](#)



[Reserve a home at Juniper Hill Commons – a multigenerational community in a progressive small city located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia.](#)

Homes For Rent



[2BR 1.5BA rental 6 months SF Bay Area](#)

Cohousing Professionals



McCamant & Durrett Architects
The Cohousing Company

[McCamant & Durrett Architects](#)
[The Cohousing Company](#)



[Caddis Collaborative](#)

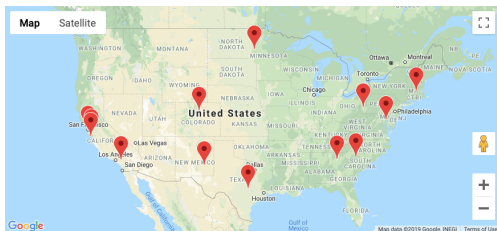


[Fitch Architecture](#)
[& Community Design](#)



[Cohousing Solutions](#)

Directory - Find your community now!



I see some new Seekers listed in our [Seeker section](#) of the Cohousing Directory!

Whether you are a person seeking some type of community somewhere or you are a person seeking people to join in creating community ... this is the place to list, for free, your information to help you make connections!

[Click Here](#) for the Cohousing Directory

Thanks for reading

[Cohousing Now!](#) provides news and events on Cohousing... Now! provided by The Cohousing Association of the United States. Please forward to your friends, communities, and other lists to spread the word about cohousing!

The Cohousing Association is funded by donations from people like you. Thanks so much for your support.

Donate to Cohousing



www.cohousing.org

