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Notable Quotes

"Real wealth consists in things of utility and beauty, in things that help to create strong, beautiful bodies and surroundings inspiring to live in." - *Emma Goldman*

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November 19, 2009

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A warm welcome...

Last issue we had a poem from new Exploring Member Linda Buckmaster, but her introductory bio didn't arrive by press time. Linda moved to Maine in 1973 as part of the back-to-the-land movement but has been a Belfast "townie" for 25 years. She is currently the city's Poet Laureate, and is in school once again in the Stonecoast MFA program. Her "day job" is with the nonprofit Women, Work and Community, and she is Adjunct Faculty in the University of Maine system. She has one son, Eben, who is 28, and 3 adult stepchildren and 7 stepgrandchildren.

**Why Cohousing is Such a Great Way To Live -
A Slide Presentation by Annie Russell**

Mark your calendars! On Friday, December 4, from 7:00



- 8:00 pm, Belfast Cohousing & Ecovillage will host a presentation by renowned cohousing community development expert, Annie Russell. Annie is coming to Belfast from Boulder, Colorado to help our group re-engineer how we "get the work done" now that we number 53 adult members (and their kids). Annie helps developing cohousing communities get the community built while creating a sense of belonging among residents who start out as strangers and over time become friends with real connections to their neighbors.



Annie works with Wonderland Development Company, a leader in the cohousing movement and the largest cohousing developer in the United States. Wonderland has helped to create sixteen cohousing communities to date, and currently has four more in the works.

This event will be open to the public (specific location has yet to be determined - check our website for updated information).



The People's Neighborhood - Nessa Dertnig

"G is the people's key," smiled Steve as he finished tuning his guitar, and he and Barbara launched us into a rousing rendition of "Down by the Bay" to start off the November General Meeting. Everyone joined in, singing and laughing, and even my Austrian husband got the hang of the song pretty quickly. After the song and a hearty welcome the kids ran off to the playroom upstairs with Maya, who was in charge of babysitting

for the morning, while we grown-up folks got down to the business of neighborhood development.

As a family with two small kids, it's hard to resist the temptation of joining a neighborhood that will foster easy playtime for kids of all ages, as well as allowing for more adult interaction. Our current cultural practice of living so separated from each other, often without extended family nearby, is lonely for kids who long for free, unstructured playtime with other children. But it's also really hard for parents who have little opportunity for spontaneous interaction with other adults. There are so many times when we might have a few minutes for tea or a chat but we're too far away from friends or neighbors to make use of that time. And what about those long, long days when patience and sanity are losing their grip and you're bargaining with the universe about just what you might be willing to give in exchange for a few minutes PEACE?

For me it's not only the proximity of interesting neighbors that makes the idea of living in cohousing appealing; I think the Common House is the genius behind the

whole Cohousing idea. The Common House is a place where you can go when you can't stand the sight of your own four walls any longer, when your kids are driving you nuts and you're likely to find a neighbor there with energy to read *The Cat in the Hat* eight (more) times in a row, or a pile of other kids for your darlings to play with while you have time to just sit with a friend and drink a glass (or bottle) of wine. It's a place to go for community dinners and someone else is in charge of planning a wholesome meal and cleaning up, so you have more time after work to have special time with your children-or someone else gets to play with the kids and you get the luxury of cooking with a neighbor without a wailing ball of discontent attached to your leg! To me, living in the kind of neighborhood where you get a private house and yard and have access to a warm and welcoming place to go when the last thing you want is to be alone AGAIN is one of the things that makes cohousing seem like the perfect place to live and raise kids.

So here we are in Belfast-singing and sharing and creating a great place for families to live!



**Member Profile -
Dan Capwell**

After graduating in 2004 from Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota, with a major in Spanish, I moved back to my home town of Seattle. Until two years ago, I was working for a Spanish and German wine importer there doing administrative and logistical work. While there were many things about that lifestyle that I enjoyed, I found myself craving work that more was hands on and creative, with more time

to spend away from electronic communication and desk work.

I had been an avid sailor for years, and had also acquired some basic woodworking skills through a class I took in 2002. In somewhat of a leap of faith, I decided to follow these personal interests and move to New England and learn how to build wooden boats. After a yearlong training in Arundel Maine, I began to examine the work opportunities in the area. My girlfriend, Susan, was finishing up a master's degree in education at the time in Seattle, and after looking at a variety of options we decided to move to Belfast. For the last year, I have been working at French & Webb Inc., a local boatshop on the Belfast waterfront. Susan now teaches history and social studies at Ellsworth High School.

While changing careers was in itself a transforming experience, I have found something else that I did not anticipate: having spent almost our whole lives living in urban areas, both Susan and I were optimistic but really quite anxious about coming to a small town to live. What would we do without all those people around? Would there be any hope of artistic, intellectual, or social pursuits outside of work? Could we cope with the isolation? In retrospect, these fears, which were pressing at the time, have come to seem humorously unfounded. Indeed, outside of the city, I

found myself more at ease, more inspired, and more engaged with life than ever before. I can't imagine going back.

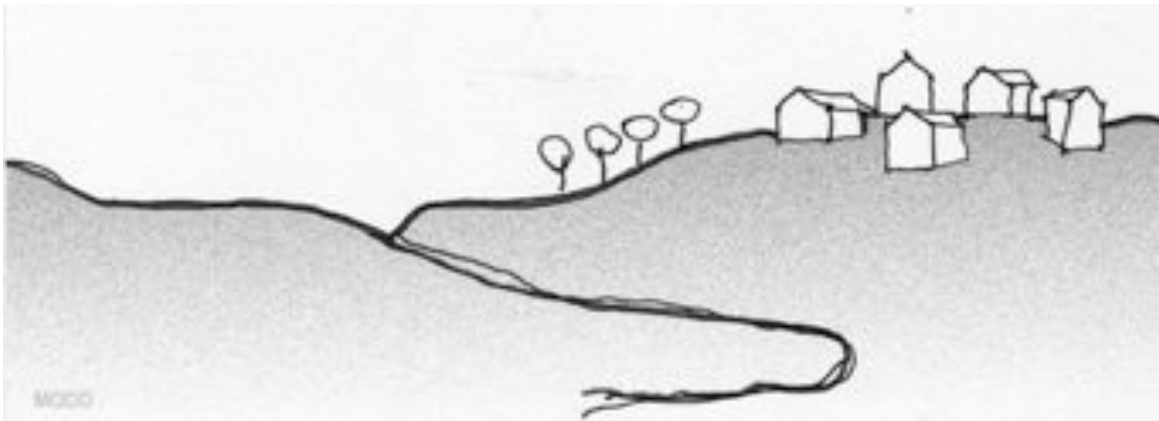
In 2008, we were excited to discover Belfast Cohousing & Ecovillage being formed only a few miles away from our rental in town. Through a family connection to Puget Ridge Cohousing in Seattle, we were familiar with the model and are happy to be a part of the process. We look forward to being part of a project which links households together as a community, but which provides an alternative to the urban model of environmental displacement.

Membership Information

Equity Members are those households who have already committed to purchasing a home in the community. There are currently eighteen of a projected thirty-six Equity members. Exploring Members are those households who have an interest in becoming Equity Members, but are not yet ready to fully commit. Friends are those who are interested in our project, but are not members. See the [Membership](#) section of our website for further details.

Our Mission

To be a model environmentally sustainable, affordable, multi-generational cohousing community that is easily accessible to Belfast, includes land for agricultural use and open space, and is an innovative housing development option for rural Maine.



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