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Notable Quotes

"What should young people do with their lives today? Many things, obviously. But the most daring thing is to create stable communities in which the terrible disease of loneliness can be cured." - Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

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January 7, 2010

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Alan Gibson wants us all to breathe easier, and he's a guy who knows exactly how to make that happen

- [Member Profile](#)

Contra-dancer, physician assistant, community-builder, and Portuguese Water Dog aficionado Edie Konesni could use help with her socks...

- [Good to be Back](#)

Even though you might be able to get good sushi 24/7 in San Francisco, Susie Shea is glad to be home and ready to bloom...

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Jim & Paula Wheelock think Italy, Ireland, California, Virginia and North Carolina have nothing on Belfast...

- [Membership Information](#)

Where we are now, and how you can become a part of this amazing community.

Could we have two minutes of your time?

As we approach the home stretch, development-wise, finding and reaching out to families who might want to grab one of the few remaining Equity Memberships has become a very high priority for us. You can help us focus our outreach efforts by completing a super-simple, three question survey. [Please click here.](#)

Visited our blog lately?

Here are a couple of delightful holiday-themed entries that are well worth a look:

[Halloween in Cohousing - by Arielle Bywater](#)

[Cohousing Christmas - by Emily Gable](#)

What Makes a Healthy Home? Alan Gibson



Once at a building conference I heard about the results of a study on air quality. The study said the air quality inside the average new home in rural Wisconsin was 8 times worse than the air quality outdoors in New York City. This blew my mind. How could that be true? And then I heard more and read more about how toxins and pollutants can build up inside a home and, if there's poor ventilation, reach unsafe levels in the air.



Rates of asthma and other respiratory diseases have been on the rise in this country, and while industrial pollution is certainly a factor, the way houses are built and furnished is probably a bigger factor in the decline of respiratory health. As part of the team designing and building the homes for Belfast Cohousing and Ecovillage, I'm working to ensure all the homes are as healthy to live in as possible.

How can a home be less toxic? Conceptually it's very simple-reduce the nasty stuff inside and bring in plenty of fresh air. Practically, though, it's *not* that simple...

Editor's Note: This piece is continued on our blog. [Click here to read the full text.](#)

Member Profile Edie Konesni

Edie Konesni is mostly a rural gal. She was raised in a tight knit farming town in northeastern Connecticut, spending hours riding her horse over hill and dale to friends' homes. As an adult she has continued her love of rural community as a Physician Assistant on Islesboro, running the Rural Health Center there. She was a founding member-and has been co-chair-of the Islesboro Community Center, launching an organization with a mission to promote a sustainable island community. She and her family built their home in Appleton, Maine (another small town). Although they did get past the covered basement stage, it took a number of years of living in semi-completed bliss before their house was finished. The family still fondly remembers building the house around their tent, that first winter without plumbing, watching the glitter of the Christmas tree lights reflected off the aluminum backed insulation, and playing games around the wood stove.



Daughter, Annadeene Fowler, is co-owner of Aarhus Gallery in Belfast. She and her husband Tom are founding leaders of the Belfast Flying Shoes monthly contradance series. Edie is excited to think of living just over the river and through the woods, within walking distance of their warm home.

Son, Bennett, is known to the Belfast area as a musician with a love of traditional music which he has tracked around the world. He has started an educational farm on Shelter Island, NY, blending the love of good music, good food, and community.

Murphey, her happy, bouncy Portuguese Water Dog sidekick, keeps Edie outdoors, hiking and exploring the woods and fields. He hopes to be able to frolic with other like-minded pups in community, and promises to work hard at becoming a model citizen as long as Edie will work with him.

Cooking and working on projects in community is a great attraction for Edie. She looks forward to meal preparation together, and finding someone(s) to mentor her in finishing a pair of socks that she started four years ago.

Edie and Jim met contra dancing two years ago when, as rumor has it, he "picked her up and carried her off." They continue to dance at least monthly, and enjoy hiking, canoeing, and camping together. They are excited (and challenged!) to think about blending their present separate busy lives, two cats, one dog, and too much furniture, into one small home with neighbors who also enjoy the beauty of the land and community (and a good challenge).

Good to be Back Susie Shea

Dan and I spent the week between Christmas and New Years in San Francisco, visiting family. It was such a great change to be back in a big city after a year and a half in Belfast (and wonderful to be in the mostly sunny 50 degree weather). There was so much to see - monuments, people, restaurants, bridges, cable cars, people, redwoods, wild parrots, beaches, people... it was amazing, but a tad overwhelming. Over a cup of coffee in the Haight, I found myself reflecting about what made me so excited about our growing cohousing project, and why I'll probably never move back to the big city (as much as I may miss the availability of a million kinds of cuisine at almost any hour of the day).



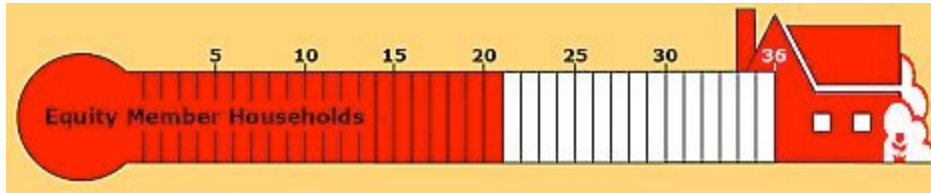
The thing I'm most excited for is to be part of a community that is grounded-not only in the land itself, but in each other. Surrounded by all the urban hustle and bustle is fun, but I couldn't wait to get back to our seaside town (where people actually smile and wave at you in the street instead of just avoiding your eyes) and to the community we're building. At the end of the week, we bade farewell to our family and sunny California, simultaneously sad to be ending vacation and happy to be heading home. When we got back to our house on a snowy afternoon, I was pleasantly surprised to see the narcissus bulb we got from the last cohousing open house had bloomed. The white blossoms in their clear jar, complete with the little tag that says "watch our community grow!" made for an excellent welcome home, and a reminder that, despite the snowy weather, spring is around the corner and that our cohousing project, too, is ready to bloom.

Welcome New Exploring Members

For years now, Jim and Paula Wheelock have been looking to settle down permanently-exploring Italy, Ireland, California, Virginia, North Carolina and Maine in search of a lifestyle that would give them a sense of community in the truest sense while providing a comfortable and sustainable home. It was a chance meeting with exploring member Mary O'Herin-while they were in Maine investigating the possibility of buying property near Portland-that introduced them to Belfast Cohousing & Ecovillage. Some things are just meant to happen.

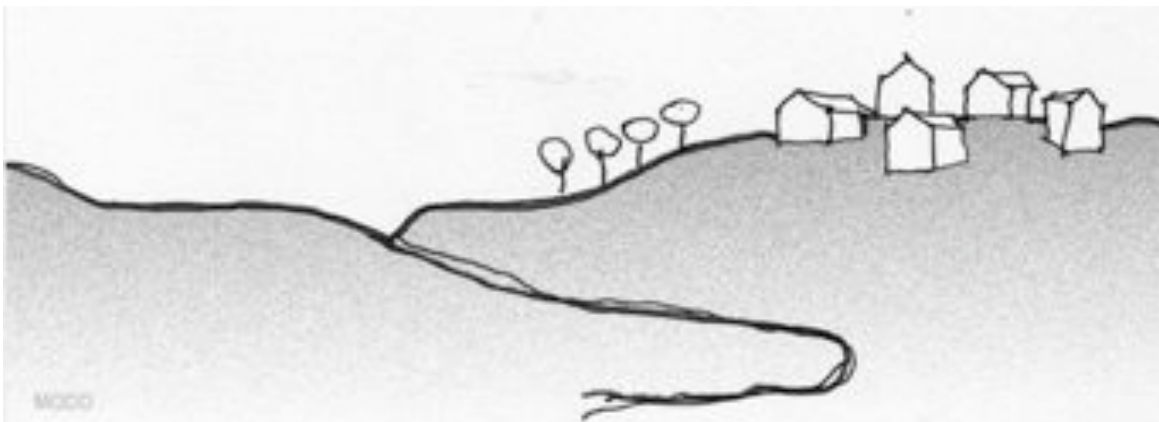
Membership Information

Equity Members are those households who have already committed to purchasing a home in the community. There are currently twenty-one 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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