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**Notable Quotes**

"I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I live."  
- George Bernard Shaw

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**January 25, 2010**

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**Membership Update**

We're delighted to welcome two new Equity Member families into the fold-Susie Shea & Dan Capwell, and Geoff & Abby Gilchrist and their children Noah & Claire. We're now up to twenty-three Equity Member families, and the level of serious interest among current Exploring Members makes ground-breaking in the spring seem less and less like wild optimism and more and more like a real possibility.

We'd also like to welcome some new Exploring Members: Pam McKeen is a massage therapist and nutrition counselor in Belfast, and is soon to become a grandmother for the second time! Gemma Peretta and Michael Scott also live in Belfast. Michael is a student working towards an accounting degree who also works at the Belfast Co-op. Gemma is with Northeast Historic Film in Bucksport, collecting and preserving video relating to Maine and northern New England.

**Here, Hold My Baby - Arielle Bywater**



There are many ways in which living in cohousing challenges contemporary American norms: smaller-than-average homes, shared resources, making decisions by consensus, community meals. But I think perhaps the most subversive, radical and wonderful thing about cohousing is its potential for a truly intergenerational living experience... and the opportunity to put the adage "It Takes a Village to Raise a Child" into practice.



In the urban and suburban experiences I've had growing up and into adulthood, I rarely get an opportunity to have meaningful relationships with anyone other than my own family and my peer group. I don't really hang out with people who are much older than I am, nor do I often have ongoing interactions with children other than my own. Actually, even finding time to hang out with family, or with friends my own age is hard, since everyone is so spread out, and so busy with their work and families!

So I relish the opportunity cohousing gives me to form lasting intergenerational bonds. In our own community, there's so much to enjoy from the folks from previous generations: I hope to learn to knit and hook rugs from Coleen and Marion, talk long into the night with Jeffrey, contradance with Jim and Edie. And I'm excited to sit around chatting with Maya or Pia or Soren or the other kids, each so different from one another and from my own, and to watch them become the adults they're going to become. This seems like an enormous gift to me, to know these families almost as deeply as I know my own.

*Editor's Note: This article is excerpted from a longer piece. [Click here to read the full post on our blog.](#)*



#### **Member Profile - Mika McKinney**

I have lived on a nineteenth century farmstead in the rolling hills of Montville, Maine, ever since I was adopted from China at six months old. My father, Paul McKinney, has raised me as a single parent ever since I was five. Five was my age when my mother, Dianna Becker, passed away. I am very fortunate because I have had many people over the years encourage me to create my dreams and help to make most of them a reality for me.

My interests are quite diverse. I enjoy physical activity, hanging out with friends, listening to music, sailing, skiing, and my favorite... horses! I have had a passion for horses for as long as I can remember. I ride and care for horses at a barn located a quick stroll from our Cohousing land. I have been taking lessons and leasing there for about four years now. I have learned a lot about horses, their health, and how to ride dressage.

I love living on the coast of Maine! Each spring, in Belfast Harbor, my dad and I launch the wooden gaff rigged sailboat we built. We have many sailing adventures over the

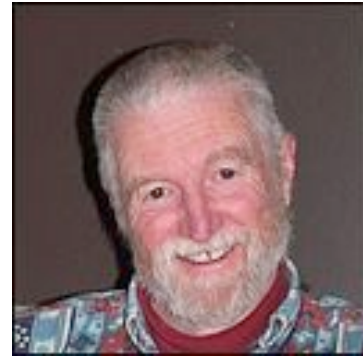
summer, with my favorite destinations being visits to Isle au Haut and Frenchboro.

Cohousing members are in a very busy time period right now, trying to cram much effort into short amounts of time. I have only participated in a few meetings so far, which seem productive and positive. I am one of the babysitters that watch all the younger children while the parents/grown-ups meet. I enjoy watching the kids-it's a great way to know them and their families.

I am in the eighth grade at the Ashwood Waldorf School in Rockport and enjoy it immensely. I have attended Ashwood since the second grade and it has been a great school for me. I am at the end of this chapter in my life now that I am seeking a high school and getting ready to leave my nest at Ashwood. I am not sure where the path will lead me-I am taking one step at a time.

### **Giving Up and Getting Back - Jeffrey Mabee**

I woke up to another beautiful sunrise the other day. All I need do is open my eyes and I gaze out to witness another beautiful sunrise over Penobscot Bay. When I lie on my back I look up and the sun's rays are reflecting off the water and onto the ceiling. You can watch the waves roll across the ceiling... Who in their right mind would leave this?



Who indeed! There really is only one thing that I would leave this for, and that is Belfast Cohousing and Ecovillage. The idea of living in a house that is virtually energy self-sufficient is so appealing to me that I can actually decide to leave one of the most beautiful spots on the coast. And the idea of living in close community with people who share similar values is such a comforting thought. Judith and I have been here at Little River for 19 years. I often have said that the only way I could leave this place is if we found something or somewhere I could get really excited about. Well, we found both!

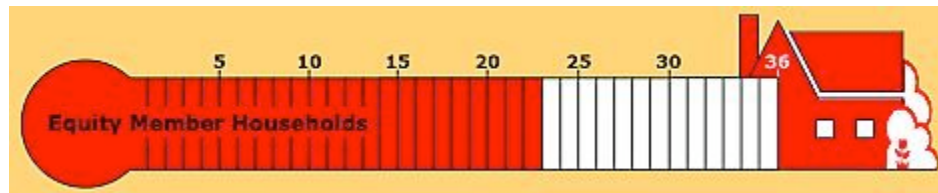
I just returned from a potluck dinner with my fellow cohousing cohorts and I feel energized! The excitement is building and people are showing up from all over the state and the country to check us out! We've just taken on households number 22 & 23, with perhaps as many as 6 more exploring families teetering on the brink. The momentum is strong and it is all so exciting! It almost makes me forget about my looming issue. WHAT AM I GOING TO DO WITH ALL OF MY STUFF?!

I know that anyone reading this, if they are laughing, are not laughing at me. It is a major issue amongst the cohousing community. Many of us have too much stuff and we've got to figure out what to do with it. The reason I need a night like tonight, connecting with my community, is to counteract the grief I feel on a daily basis about all I must let go of. Judith and I both come from long lines of collectors. We have generations' worth of stuff. So, often when I look at something that may have to go I feel a little sad.

I truly believe that it is only a matter of time before I start feeling the relief of letting go. All this stuff weighs on me. It takes my precious time and attention. Its comfort value is being negated by maintenance requirements. It does not give me the pleasure I get from a good conversation, playing with a child or sharing a meal. The biggest treasures in my life are not things. I feel so fortunate to be discovering this at an early enough time in my life that I might experience this freedom for some time to come. I hope to be one of those who spend lots of time at the common house or out in the field flying those kites I will choose to keep.

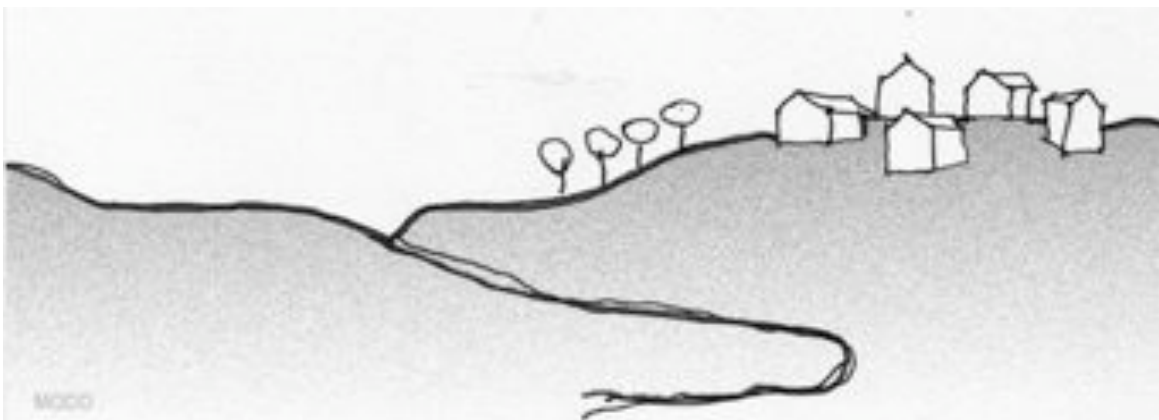
### Membership Information

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