



Cohousing in Corvallis

An E Newsletter from CoHo Cohousing
in Corvallis, Oregon

Issue 5 March 2006



Remember when your best friend lived right next door?

The Path to CoHo Membership...

Membership in cohousing is by self-selection, so CoHo gives folks the **information, support, and time** to make this important lifestyle choice. [Steps in our membership process](#) are listed on our website.

Information

Reviewing the "[Goodness of Fit](#)" list helps interested folks see if cohousing might be a good match.

Our Vision and Values Statement and our Bylaws give an overview about the core beliefs of the community. For [Marcy and Robert](#), one key value is environmental consciousness. "It is very important to us to try to make the least impact that we can upon the Earth. It will also be much easier to share resources such as material items, services and transportation with other like-minded people in the community. We hope to get rid of an automobile and to donate and share items that can be used in common with the Coho community."

Much more in-depth information can be learned from our meeting minutes, decision log, membership binder, and current design documents (site plan, Common House and home layouts, etc.).

Our treasurer, [Xochil](#), meets with prospective members to review and explain the financial steps—prequalification letters, membership fees, down payments, and [financial assistance](#) available through Corvallis Neighborhood Housing Services.



Another important step in the membership process is having face-to-face time with members at general community meetings, committee meetings, and social events. Cohousing is all about the people!

Support

Folks interested in CoHo get a buddy to help with questions and concerns. Nancy (who was buddied by Juva and was, in turn, a buddy to April and Craig) says "Having a buddy builds a special connection. I felt encouraged and welcomed. Now that I'm a buddy, I feel connected in both directions."



Toward the end of the membership application process, prospective members have a "Clearness Committee." Valerie explains "This is a practice out of the Quaker/Friends tradition in which a person considering a decision meets with a small group of people to clarify whether this decision is something they want for themselves. In our process, the group reviews CoHo's Vision and Values Statement and the community's expectations of members. The prospective member discusses any remaining concerns with the goal of determining that their personal values and expectations are in line with the community's."

Juva has participated in many Clearness Committees and feels "it has been a great process to be a part of, learning what peoples' hopes are. So often it is a great match and we are all excited to find shared values. It feels good as so many of us have wanted this kind of connection and community for years. At times it has been disappointing to find out that some of the values are not shared and that our community wouldn't work for potential members. Even at these times, it is a relief to find out now and not after someone has put money, time and energy into the group."

Time

To allow ample time to make the decision about joining CoHo, prospective members spend a minimum of four weeks working through the information and steps listed above. If needed, folks can take an additional two weeks before signing the membership agreement and paying amounts due. If more time is needed, folks can write CoHo a note to get an extension on their review time.

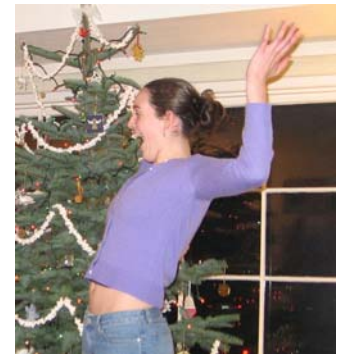
One Family's Journey to CoHo Membership....

Here's what Craig and April had to say about their path to CoHo: "Last year, when we began to seriously think of buying our first house, we talked about the kind of neighborhood we wanted to live in. As we dreamed and pondered, we realized that a community in which we knew our neighbors well was an important ideal. We also wanted to live around children and growing families. We'd heard of the cohousing movement,

and decided to investigate Coho in Corvallis, even though we live in Albany where Craig works, and April commutes to Sweet Home. The more we learned about Coho, the more we liked it. Its environmental values match our own desire to live lightly on planet earth. Its location near downtown appeals to our enjoyment of old-fashioned town centers while its nearness to Willamette Park satisfies our wish to be close to nature.



And then there are the people! Here are folks who strive to communicate well, who are open to spiritual values, and who enjoy playing and eating together. What more could we want in our neighborhood? A small home to escape to, a common house where we can be with others, frequent meals to share together, friends all around, a garden, cars out of the way—yes! Coho's for us."



CoHo Fun

CoHo neighbors gathered for a potluck at Karen's house. There was no shortage of chocolate, which may have contributed to the members' willingness to wear balloon sculpture hats. Folks played Human Bingo, mingling with everyone to get signatures in the blocks on their bingo card. Then we called out names and asked folks to tell us something about themselves we probably didn't know. Many earth-shattering secrets were shared-- especially childhood nicknames.



Check out the new HOMES AVAILABLE page on our website



10 of 34 homes available

To find out more about cohousing in general

visit the national cohousing website at <http://www.cohousing.org/default.aspx>

To find out more about CoHo Cohousing

Website: <http://www.cohousing-corvallis.com/index.shtml>

Email: info@cohousing-corvallis.com (answered by Mike) →

Phone: Susan Hyne @ 541-753-4453 →

Juva DuBoise @ 541-908-5882

→



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Membership Guidelines

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Becoming a Member

Deciding to live together is a big decision that doesn't happen instantaneously. Over time, we get to know each other, learn how to work together, and build trust. (View the [Membership Application procedure](#) for becoming a member.)

We suggest that you start by learning about [cohousing](#). The *CoHousing, A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves* (Ten Speed Press, 1994), by McCamant & Durrett is one good resource. Talking to other people in CoHo can also be useful. When you contact us about your interest in CoHo, you will be hooked up with a buddy. This person is available to discuss any questions or concerns you may have, and will help familiarize you with how we organize meetings and make decisions.

CoHo Membership

This avenue is appropriate for those individuals planning to purchase and live in a cohousing home and be a full, active part of CoHo. Find out more about [Member Rights and Responsibilities](#) and see the [Membership Agreement](#).

Friends of CoHo

This avenue is for folks considering becoming a member in the future or who want to support and be a part of the community but for various reasons will not be living in CoHo. Click on the [Friend of CoHo Agreement](#) to find out more.