Abraham Paiss
& associates

Building Sustainable Communities through Media, Marketing and Group Process

National Cohousing Media Report

September 1-30, 2004

Total placements: 26

Newspaper Stories: 13
Website Stories: 11
Magazine: 1
Wire Service: 1

Total Print Circulation: 2,802,873
Readership: 7,007,183

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Highlights of National Cohousing Media Program
September 2004 Activities

Overview:
September was an active month for media coverage of cohousing. The extensive cohousing feature story we initiated with the *Rocky Mountain News* on July 17, 2004 "So Happy Together" was sent to the national news desk at *Scripps Howard News Service*. On Labor Day, Sept. 6, Scripps Howard distributed a condensed cohousing article emphasizing the benefits of raising families in cohousing. This positive cohousing story was picked up by 11 newspapers in seven states most of which also included several images of Colorado cohousing neighborhoods. This story alone has reached over 5 million readers.

Newspaper circulation to date: 2,250,240; Readership: 5,625,600.

In addition, 11 websites carried the cohousing story representing seven other states. During September *Natural Life Magazine* out of Canada ran our story about the environmental aspects of cohousing featuring Wild Sage Cohousing.

During September we also made a strategic change in how we are approaching the press in suggesting cohousing stories. After receiving several unexpected "no's" from national magazines, we spoke at length with an established national free lance writer about our strategy. We realized that we would be in a much stronger position to have a cohousing story be accepted in a national magazine as the national PR firm for the cohousing industry than as one of thousands of free lance writers who approach national magazines every day. We began this new strategy at the end of September by first producing a comprehensive Cohousing Information Kit, including: attractive color photos, a National Fact Sheet, Frequently Asked Questions, a List of Completed Communities in North America, and articles about cohousing. We sent out our first round of letters as the PR firm for cohousing to the in-flight magazines and will report our results in October. Details below.

Completed Activities

Scripps Howard News Service
Distributed on September 6, the *"It takes a village, or just co-housing"* story started getting picked up immediately, first by newspaper websites on Sept. 6 and then by the printed papers starting Sept. 9. Most media outlets ran this positive cohousing article along with two to three photos. The story has so far been carried in major daily newspapers such as Long Island Newsday and the Sunday Chicago Sun-Times and in medium and smaller papers in Augusta, GA, Schenectady, NY, Redding, CA, Wilkes-Barre, PA, etc. What makes the pickup impressive is the range of states that ran the story including: NY, CA, PA, GA, IL, FL and MD.

To follow is a current list of the papers running this story as of October 13. New clippings appear on the website every day as the clipping service needs 3-4 weeks to capture the story after it appears in print. This partial list only includes newspapers from Sept. 9-19, 2004. Newspaper clippings are attached.

Rocky Mountain (CO) News Circ: 309,938
Denver, CO 7/17/2004 **Original Story**
"So Happy Together" and *"It takes a village or just cohousing"*

Sunday (NY) Gazette Circ: 51,882
Schenectady, NY 09/19/2004
"Cohousing lets parents share raising of children"(1 photo)

The Record (CA) Searchlight Circ: 35,681
Redding, CA 09/14/04
"Under Many Roofs" (2 photos)

The Sunday (PA) Voice Circ: 29,608
Wilkes-Barre, PA 09/12/2004
"You can go home again" (2 photos)

The Augusta (GA) Chronicle Circ: 83,250
Augusta, GA 09/14/2004
"You can go home again" (2 photos)

The Sunday (IL) Sun-Times Circ: 1,002,398
Chicago, IL 09/12/04
"It takes a village, or just co-housing" (3 photos)

The Star (FL) Banner Circ: 49,660
Ocala, FL 09/11/2004
"It takes a village, or just co-housing" (3 photos)

The Villages (FL) Daily Sun Circ: 7,500
The Villages, FL 09/11/2004
"It takes a village, or just co-housing" (2 photos)

The Naples (FL) Daily News Circ: 66,976
Naples, FL 09/10/2004
"Co-housing offers family bonding, parental relief with its community child-rearing" (3 photos)

Newsday (NY) Nassau Edition Circ: 553,117
Long Island, NY 09/10/2004
"It takes a village – or a development"

Prince George's (MD) Journal Circ: 30,000
Lanham, MD 09/09/2004

"*It takes a village, or just co-housing*" (2 photos)

WEBSITE STORIES

In addition to appearing in the above printed newspapers, Jay Dedrick's cohousing story was carried on an equally impressive list of newspaper and magazine websites. *The Rocky Mountain News* and *Black Enterprise Magazine* ran the full cohousing feature article on their websites. Other newspaper websites ran the condensed cohousing story. Again the number of states that posted the story is noteworthy: NH, TN, DE, FL, WA, TX and CO, The following web clippings are attached:

Nashua NH) Telegraph
Nashua, NH /9/24/2004
"*Co-housing offers families instant neighbor bonds*" (1 photo)

Star (FL) Banner
Ocala, FL 09/11/2004
"It takes a village, or just co-housing" (1 photo)

Wilmington (DE) News Journal Circ./Aud.: 117,859
Wilmington, Delaware 09/08/2004
"*It takes a village: Communal lifestyle a boon to parents*"

The Commercial Appeal (Memphis, TN) Circ./Aud.: 192,809
Memphis, Tennessee 09/06/2004
"It takes a village, or just co-housing"

San Angelo (TX) Standard Times Circ./Aud.: 27,827
San Angelo, Texas 09/06/2004
"It takes a village, or just co-housing"

Knoxville (TN) News Sentinel Circ./Aud.: 117,117
Knoxville, Tennessee 09/06/2004
"It takes a village, or just co-housing"

Sun (The) (Bremerton, WA) Circ./Aud.: 31,588
Bremerton, Washington 09/06/2004
"It takes a village, or just co-housing"

Wichita Falls (TX) Times Record Circ./Aud.: 33,552
Wichita Falls, Texas 09/06/2004
"It takes a village, or just co-housing"

TC Palm.com (FL)
Web Site, Florida 09/06/2004
"It takes a village, or just co-housing

Black Enterprise Magazine Circ: 315,000
NY, NY National website 7/29/2004

Ran full text of longer cohousing story
"So Happy Together: Cohousing Communities Work to Create Neighborhood Lifestyle of Past" (Article includes Wild Sage Cohousing)

Rocky Mountain (CO) News Circ: 309,938
Denver, CO 07/17/2004
Home and Garden Section
Ran full text of longer cohousing story: "So Happy Together"
(Article includes Wild Sage Cohousing)

Rocky Mountain (CO) News website
Denver, CO 07/17/04
Also ran the condensed *"It takes a village, or just co-housing" story*

NATIONAL MAGAZINE CONTACT

- **Natural Life Magazine** (bi-monthly, 25,000) September 2004
  On behalf of the Wild Sage Cohousing community, we distributed a news release about the environmental aspects of the neighborhood. Our story ran verbatim under the title *"Cohousing Sets Sustainability Standard"* along with two Wild Sage photos we supplied. The editor saw our story via PRNewswire. The article lists cohousing resources such as Wild Sage, the Cohousing book, and the Cohousing Association of the U.S. (Clipping attached).

Pending Activities

Associate Press (distributed to 8,000 media outlets)
A story about cohousing focusing on Wild Sage has been written and is sitting in the Denver Bureau of AP. The news editor recently let me know that he is working with editors on the national desk to request that the article go out nationally. We are maintaining contact and will let you know when the story crosses the wire.

- **The AARP Bulletin** (monthly 36 million)
  We worked closely with freelance writer Ben Brown whose story about Elder Cohousing has been moved to the November issue. According to Brown, his story will describe both the intergenerational and the elder cohousing model.

- **My House** (monthly, premier issue)
  We gave a lengthy interview to the columnist for this new magazine honoring different lifestyles and types of dwellings. Cohousing will be the focus of the "Ways of Living" column slated for the October issue to be distributed by mid-September to an initial test market of U.S. Western Mountain States.

- **Builder Magazine** (16/year, 141,000)
  We spoke at length with a freelance writer for Builder Magazine who is interested in pitching a story about the builders in the cohousing industry. We provided him with Jim Leach's contact info and three other cohousing builders in MI, MA and CA.

- **Lilipoh** (quarterly, 25,000)
  We wrote an article about the value of rhythm and ritual in cohousing community life. The editor is reviewing our story for the winter 2004 issue.

- **MetroParent** (monthly magazine based in Portland, Oregon)
  Article on cohousing scheduled to run in the October issue.

- **Ladies Home Journal** (monthly 4.1 million)
  We are awaiting final word on the acceptance of cohousing family in the "Habitat Families" section. We have supplied background info on Wild Sage Habitat family member Tara King. We will continue to follow up.

New Direction:

As mentioned above, we made a strategic decision to send query letters as the PR firm for the cohousing industry. Using this new approach, we have sent our first round of letters to the following in-flight magazines. We will follow during October.

American Way Magazine (American Airlines)
America West Magazine (American West Airlines)
Attache Magazine (U.S. Airways)
Continental Magazine (Continental Airlines)
Hemispheres Magazine (United Airlines)
World Traveler Magazine (Northwest Airlines)
Spirit Magazine (Southwest Airlines)

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tops and channel the rainwater to plants.

As is typical in cohousing, residents' vehicles are parked at the edge of the property. Homes are also clustered to make as small a building footprint as possible to help preserve the land in its natural state.

Because of the extra planning costs, group facilities and various environmental innovations, cohousing communities can be expensive. Wild Sage has attempted to accommodate a variety of family sizes and budgets. The cost of units range from just over $100,000 to around $450,000, with about 40 percent of them qualifying under the City of Boulder's affordable housing program.

- NL -

Cohousing Sets Sustainability Standard

Across North America, a growing number of cohousing neighborhoods are leading the move toward sustainable lifestyles. They are, according to research, driving 30 percent less than the rest of us, paying 50 percent less in utility bills and using 40 percent less water.

But the new Wild Sage Cohousing community in Boulder, Colorado goes beyond the typical environmentally friendliness of similar neighborhoods. The community recently received an EPA energy rating of Five Star Plus – the highest rating given – on all 34 of its attached townhomes.

Cohousing communities are small-scale neighborhoods that provide a balance between personal privacy and living among people who know and care about each other. The concept began in Denmark over 25 years ago. Individual dwelling units enjoy convenient access to shared space including a common house with facilities such as a gourmet kitchen, dining room, a children's play room, laundry facilities, guest rooms, library, sitting areas and workshops. Each home is entirely self-sufficient, complete with a kitchen, but residents often prepare meals together in the kitchen of the common house.

Cohousing developments are designed, planned and managed with a high degree of resident participation. Most major decisions are arrived at through a consensus decision-making process. To make Wild Sage as environmental as possible within their available budget, green building architect and future resident Bryan Bowen and 70 community members met for two years before construction began and agreed on a number of solutions. Among the features chosen by the neighbors were active and passive solar design, airtight housing construction and a car-free interior courtyard.

"Our houses are so tightly built that air is retained 12 times more efficiently than in a typical U.S. home," says Bowen of the EPA's independent air blower door tests. "We designed and placed the homes to stay cool and light in the summer and keep maximum heat in the buildings during the winter."

Energy conservation features standard in all the Wild Sage townhomes include shared walls and double-paned windows, south facing buildings for strong solar gain, air blown non-toxic insulation, and fittings for photovoltaic panels. In addition, active water conservation measures collect runoff from the roof-



Group discussion and consultation are an important part of life in a cohousing project. Above, Dayna Himot (center) shares an idea with her fellow members during a community meeting at the recently-completed Wild Sage Cohousing neighborhood in Boulder, Colorado.

Cohousing Resources

Wild Sage Cohousing, c/o Wonderland Hill Development Co., (303) 449-3232, www.WildSageCohousing.org

Cohousing Association of the United States, c/o 1460 Quince Ave., #102, Boulder CO 80304, www.cohousing.org

Canadian Cohousing Network, #24-20543 96th Ave., Langley, B.C. V1M 3W3, www.cohousing.ca

Cohousing: A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves by Kathryn McCamant and Charles Durrett, (Ten Speed Press, 1993)

The Cohousing Handbook: Building a Place for Community by Chris Hanson (Hartley & Marks Publishers,1996)

Communities Magazine, c/o Fellowship for Intentional Community, 138 Twin Oaks Rd. Louisa, VA 23093 http://fic.ic.org/cmag

Cohousing Newspaper Coverage

This section begins with the *Rocky Mountain News* feature story on July 17, 2004.

What follows are newspaper clippings from newspapers around the country who picked up the cohousing story distributed by *Scripps Howard News Service* on September 5, 2004.

This section only covers stories which appeared from Sept. 9-19, 2004. Newspapers continue to run the story.

Newspaper Placements: 12

Circulation: 2,250,240

Readership: 5,625,600

Burrelles Luce

We regret that the legibility of this clipping is reduced due to the imperfect printing by the newspaper.

Rocky Mountain News - 7/17/04
Denver, CO circ: 309,938

So happy together

1949 ED



Cohousing communities work to create neighborhood lifestyle of past

By Jay Dedrick
ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

They gather over platters of teriyaki tuna steak and rice, mango salsa and tossed salad, piling their plates high, but saving room for fresh-baked pie. The patter of raindrops on windows and a swinging Glenn Miller tune from a boom box add a secondary soundtrack to the din of laughter and conversation among 30 or so friends and family members.

The occasion? Tuesday night.

It's one of two weekly group meals that residents at the Hearthstone community rotate preparing for one another. The Common House serves as cafeteria, town hall, rec room, laundry room and guest cottage for the 66 residents of the 33 surrounding townhomes, tucked tightly together in this northwest Denver development.

The lifestyle is one that requires work. In a lot of communities, people don't want to know their neighbors; Hearthstone isn't like that.

"We say the Common House is an extension of our living rooms," says Kellie Teter, 38. She, her husband, John Connell, 40, and 6-year-old son David Teter moved into the neighborhood 2½ years ago in search of community. They found it, as have about 800 people living in 10 cohousing developments throughout Colorado.

At Denver's Hearthstone cohousing ommunity, 6-year-old David eter enjoys a hammock ride on a neighbor's front porch. **John Connell,** his wife, ellie Teter, center, and their friend and neighbor Sheana ull, right, fill their plates at a community dinner in the Hearthstone Common House. Residents rotate cooking and cleaning responsibilities at group meals, which take place about twice a week.

PHOTOS BY EVAN SEMÓN/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS



The word cohousing comes from "community housing." The movement strives to recapture the small-town or neighborhood lifestyle of the past, transplanting it primarily into large metro areas.

Across the country, some 5,000 people have taken up residence in 73 cohousing communities, according to the Cohousing Association of the United States. The association charts an annual growth rate of 12 percent, based on 27 cohousing projects in 1998 and 64 last year.

Colorado is a cohousing hotbed, ranking fifth behind California, Massachusetts, Washington and Oregon. One of the major developers nationally, Wonderland Hill Development Co., is based in Boulder.

In the planning stages of a cohousing community, residents come together to imagine the community they want to live in. It might be a group of acquaintances with a common background — they attend the same church, or their kids go to the same schools — or home buyers who discover the community in an

Flip to COMMUNITY on 4E

"Not everybody is going to love each other. But there's a respect and openness among everyone in the community. Our relationships are the most important thing."

Sheana Bull, Hearthstone resident

"I love seeing how people can transcend their own self-interest and take on the interests of the community."

John Connell, who, along with his wife, Kellie Teter, and 6-year-old son, David Teter, moved into the neighborhood 2½ years ago in search of community

Community: Interaction encouraged

Continued from 1E
advertisement.

Families share some living spaces, like a common building and playground. They also share responsibilities, managing the properties themselves. Besides helping to buy groceries and cook a group meal about once a month, Teter orders all paper products for the community.

Misconceptions about cohousing abound. "One man here was asked if there's wife-swapping. And my dad is always asking, 'How's life at the commune?' " Teter says, rolling her eyes.

Communes vs. cohousing

Residents of communes and cohousing may share similar spirits of cooperation and togetherness, but the differences in execution are wide.

In cohousing, residences are privately owned, unlike collective ownership in communes. There's no income sharing among cohousing residents, and each home has its own kitchen.

As in communes, though, shared meals and child care are a routine part of life in cohousing. Work days, with chores for everyone throughout the complex, are scheduled once a quarter, at least. And you can't get away with only seeing your neighbors as they exit and enter their garages. Developments such as Hearthstone are designed to encourage interaction among neighbors.

The biggest demand on cohousing residents: policy decisions. Choices and rules — from the color of window trim and style of cabinets to whether neighborly visits should be preceded by a knock at the door or a phone call — must be reached by consensus. You're free to disagree with your neighbor, but holding a grudge might make for long-term misery, given that issues discussed at two-hour, monthly meetings call for participation.

"Not everybody is going to love each other," says Hearthstone resident Sheana Bull, 39, whose family is friends with the Connell-Teter clan. "But there's a respect and openness among everyone in the community. Our relationships are the most important thing.

"I don't know that it's any more challenging than living in a traditional neighborhood, but I know there's more at stake."

An old-fashioned feel

It's been a decade since the official opening of Lafayette's Nyland, the first cohousing community in Colorado and only the fourth in the country. Colorado's newest cohousing development, Wild Sage, officially opened last month in Boulder; plans are under way for a nearby cohousing community for residents over age 50, Silver Sage.

"We're re-creating the old fashioned neighborhood, the notion of village life that goes back 200 years — or 10,000 years," says Neshama Abraham, a six-year resident of Boulder's Nomad cohousing and president of Abraham Paiss and Associates, a business that works with cohousing communities early in their development.

Living in cohousing

- **Versus communes:** Residences are privately owned. No income sharing. Separate kitchens.
- **Versus regular neighborhoods:** Regularly scheduled common meals. Sharing of some living spaces, like common house with kitchen, and playgrounds. Cohousing residents manage property themselves and take part in scheduled maintenance days. Informal shared child care.
- **Home costs:** About 20 to 30 percent higher than comparable non-cohousing home. Monthly dues for community upkeep and common meals.
- **Environmental responsibility** built into communities with gardens and chores for everyone, including kids.
- **Committees govern** policies on everything from home cosmetics to visiting etiquette.
- **Safety:** Residents say crime and safety concerns are less than elsewhere because homeowners all know one another.

This spring, Hearthstone's Common House hosted a weekend workshop reflecting on lessons learned during the first 15 years of U.S. cohousing, which migrated here after beginning in Denmark in the late '60s. Connell gave a presentation on informal community meetings, a practice adopted at Hearthstone after several residents complained of too much structure, too many rules.

Cohousing inhabitants derive primarily from three groups, Abraham says: young singles, families with children and retirees. Each group makes up about an equal third of the population.

"It offers intergenerational support," Abraham says. "It's a very healthy way to spend the last part of your life, because you contribute. You count. And if you're single or a young couple, your social life is right here."

Parents enjoy a built-in support system of neighbors who can share sitting chores. "There are other people to help," Abraham says. "You don't have to be totally exhausted all the time."

Though statistics are elusive, anecdotally, cohousing residents say their communities are safer than most, thanks to residents all knowing one another. When outsiders step into a community, residents are quick to approach and ask who they are. Cohousing communities tend to have lower turnover rates than most neighborhoods, too, developers say.

Cohousing communities typically comprise 15 to 35 households in single-family homes or townhomes. Hearthstone consists of 33 townhomes housing 51 adults and 15 children. Home styles range from a 1,300-square-foot unit with one bedroom and one bath to a 2,100-square-foot unit with three bedrooms and 2½ baths. Some have attached garages. The townhomes are clustered in groups of three to five, and form a horseshoe around a yard and playground.

Nyland's 42 households and 140 residents make it the largest cohousing community in the state. "That's about the maximum number of people you can get to know well," says Abraham, explaining the limit. "You also don't want to overload the common facility."

High cost of cohousing

Fledgling cohousing communities often enlist the help of a developer, and Boulder's Wonderland Hill has carved a niche by offering a streamlined process of establishing a cohousing community. Wonderland has completed 11 cohousing neighborhoods in Arizona, California, Washington and Colorado — including Nyland, Hearthstone, Nomad and Wild Sage — and is working on six others across the country.

Entering into cohousing isn't cheap, at least not up front, with prices running about 10 percent to 20 percent above market, according to Wonderland Hill president Jim Leach. Sizes and prices vary widely, even within one community: Silver Sage plans call for affordable-housing units around $107,000 as well as luxury homes topping out around $650,000.

The Connell-Teter family's three-bedroom, 2½-bath townhouse at Hearthstone cost $225,000. Teter says a few Hearthstone residents have had to move away because the cost was too high. Besides the initial investment, monthly dues are collected from all households, much like a traditional homeowners' association, for upkeep of the common property. Cost of the common meals averages about $4 each.

For her family, Teter says, the expense is worthwhile, with the 4,800-square-foot Common House's availability for laundry (though each house has washer-dryer hook-ups, about a third of the community does laundry at the Common House) and other functions a big plus. Once the basement is finished, it will provide a guest room for visitors to Hearthstone residents.

Hearthstone's housing units also were built for energy efficiency. Environmental responsibility is another factor attracting folks like Connell and Teter; many cohousing developments, especially those in rural settings like Nyland, incorporate community gardens and farms to provide for the residents.

"And we share resources, from help loading the car to borrowing a ladder or ski equipment," Teter says. "We help each other out."

Spirit of community

That's the kind of interaction the Connell-Teter family sought while living in a traditional neighborhood in northwest Denver, their home for the five years prior to moving to Hearthstone. Natives of the city's suburbs, the couple welcomed the diversity of their neighbors, and assumed that they'd find the spirit of community that they craved.

"We invited a neighbor over for dinner, and she said, 'Oh, that's sweet, dear, but we're not that kind of neighbor,' " Teter re-

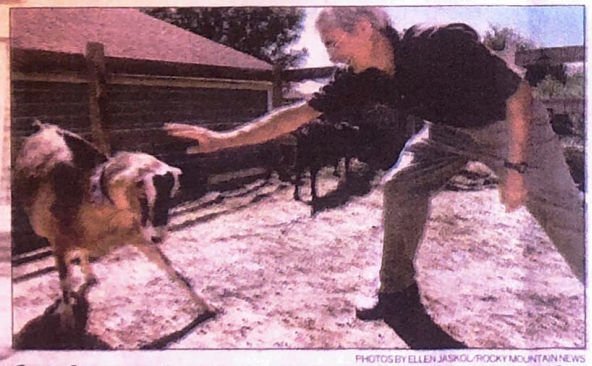
Flip to COMMUNITY on 5E





JONATHAN CASTNER/BOULDER DAILY CAMERA

Singer-guitarist Brian Joseph performs during a concert at Lafayette's Nyland cohousing development last year. Community events bring residents together, as do group meals, which can take place several times a week to a few times a month, depending on the neighborhood. At common buildings, residents can house guests, do laundry and prepare meals.



PHOTOS BY ELLEN JASKOL/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

Gretchen, a pet goat at Nyland, plays with resident Dave Schneider. He takes care of two pet goats for the cohousing community in Lafayette.

Nyland is the first cohousing community in Colorado and the fourth in the country. The Lafayette community's 42 households and 140 residents make it the largest cohousing community in the state.



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ills. "We were friendly with
lks, and they were very nice,
ıt it became clear that they
ere not going to be interested
the same kind of community
ıd relationships that we were."
Teter, a social-work adminis-
ator, and Connell, an EPA en-
rcer, had read about cohous-
g, and Connell was sold on it af-
r a visit to Golden's Harmony
llage. They learned of plans
r Hearthstone — a small part
the Highlands Village redevel-
ɔment at the old Elitch Gar-
ens site — a week before
oundbreaking, joining just in
me to take part in community
anning.

"We've been very happy. We
ɛt our life out of living here,"
eter says. "You can have as
uch privacy and time away
om the community as you
ant — just close the door, close
ıe blinds.

"Or you can have as much par-
cipation and involvement as
ɔu want. There's rarely a time I
ın't go outside or to the Com-
on House and interact. I was
ɔt a person with a lot of friends
ɛfore, and now I have a lot. I
ın call on these people for ad-
ce or feedback or support — a
ck in the butt when I need it."



WONDERLAND HILL DEVELOPMENT CO.

Golden's Harmony Village comprises 27 households. The Santa Fe-style development is one of 10 cohousing communities in Colorado.

Ethnic diversity a goal

One shortfall, Teter says, is that Hearthstone hasn't become ethnically diverse.

"We would like the community to look like a little cross section of Denver," Teter says. "We want diversity, but we don't want people who aren't interested in community. Even political diversity is a challenge. Most of us are fairly left-leaning. So someone might state as fact that 'George Bush is an idiot,' and then realize they've offended their neighbor."

Striving for tolerance is part of what appeals to Connell. He says he's inspired by cohousing's "experiment in inclusiveness" and making decisions by consensus. "I love seeing how people can transcend their own self-interest and take on the interests of the community."

He can look to his wife for an example of making that leap. Last summer, she had grown unhappy with the neighborhood's unpainted porches, and spearheaded an effort to get them painted. She collected bids on the work and hired a contractor. The only problem: Her neighbors were happy with the porches as-is.

"A lot of people were worried about how I would react, and told me, 'We don't want you to be mad,' " Teter says. "I said, 'I'm not mad — I just want to paint my porch!' And I could, but it would stand out. So my porch still needs painting, but it won't get it, because that would cause concern and conflict. It's not worth it. I'll wait until the community is ready to paint the porches."

That lesson in patience is invaluable, says Connell, who adds that living in cohousing provides ongoing opportunities for personal growth. "You learn how to communicate with others," he says, "and question your own assumptions."

Not a fit for everyone

Bruce Swinehart says he got an education of his own during two years living at Nyland.

"Sometimes I think I should have left with a graduate degree," says the 46-year-old consultant. "I learned a lot about decision making and organizing, and it was an important experience in my life. Neither of us regret moving there."

Swinehart and his wife, Daphne Chellos, were part of the Nyland community during the four years of planning, then moved in as founding residents in 1992. They moved out in 1994, just as the community was officially completed.

Longtime Boulder residents, the couple found that the Lafayette location — and community responsibilities, such as working to maintain Nyland's 35 acres — made for greater distance than they expected.

"As wonderful as that community was, and it included good friends, we already had an established social network in Boulder that we were missing," Swinehart says. "We felt like we were a little isolated from our friends."

Community living also brought the pressure of expectations from neighbors. For someone whose career entails sitting at home alone with a phone and computer, or who stays busy with homemaking and child-rearing, the community interaction of cohousing can be a welcome, vital part of a social life, Abraham says. She estimates about a third to a half of cohousing residents work at home.

But for those who work outside of the house and with the public — Swinehart worked for Boulder human services at the time; Chellos is a teacher and psychotherapist — the home's role as retreat from the world is important.

"We were looking for a lifestyle in which we could get home at the end of the day and have a sense of privacy, and not feel a sense of obligation and responsibility to a larger community," Swinehart says. "That expectation was an extra challenge for us."

Still, Swinehart misses the days when he could pop in at the next-door neighbor's and grab an avocado off the kitchen table, or enjoy occasional after-school visits from neighborhood kids.

"I felt it worked well on a micro level, day to day, in terms of informal interaction," Swinehart says. "But on a macro level, how do you get a community of 100-some people to move in the same direction? That was hard work."

Like Swinehart, David Schneider, 56, and his family also moved into Nyland at the very beginning. His two children have grown up and moved out, but he and his wife, Sheila, remain. Besides the idea of intentional community, they were attracted by the goal of living gently on the land and maintaining an organic garden. An insurance agent, Schneider makes his 3-mile commute to work on a bicycle.

The pluses of cohousing outweigh the minuses, he says, likening the lifestyle's difficulties to those encountered in family life.

"It's like a very small town, and a lot like an extended family. Sometimes you depend on other people and things don't happen," Schneider says. "Or you'll have disagreements because of different expectations. In a community with 125 people, there's always going to be someone who has a different style.

"I mean, we'll have two or three meetings on roof colors, and it seems ridiculous. But it's those kinds of things that brought us together as a community."

Longtime friendships

Their satisfaction with the community they found has Teter and Connell convinced that their family will be at Hearthstone for the next 20, 30, maybe 40 years.

"Knowing that you're going to see your neighbors for most of the rest of your life really makes a difference, both in how you work at the relationships and in terms of what you're willing to let go," Teter says.

"The spontaneous encounters, spontaneous picnics in front of our house — those are the best," Connell says. "And I really like the group meals. Those are pretty much where the community really happens."

Schneider says that Nyland already feels like an old neighborhood where residents have known one another for decades.

"At the very least, we're a very close, safe neighborhood to live in," he says. "If that's the worst-case scenario, it's pretty darn good."

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ELLEN JASKOL/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

Children's toys cluster in the back yard of a home at Wild Sage, a new cohousing community in Boulder where the yards are open to each other. The cohousing lifestyle can provide lots of playmates for young children and pinch-hit parenting from neighbors.

Colorado's cohousing communities

- **Nyland,** Lafayette, 42 units, completed 1993
- **Highline Crossing,** Littleton, 40 units, 1997
- **Greyrock Commons,** Fort Collins, 30 units, 1997
- **Harmony Village,** Golden, 27 units, 1997
- **Nomad,** Boulder, 11 units, 1998
- **River Rock Commons,** Fort Collins, 34 units, 2000
- **Heartwood,** Durango, 24 units, 2000
- **Hearthstone,** Denver, 33 units, 2002
- **Casa Verde,** Colorado Springs, 34 units, 2003
- **Wild Sage,** Boulder, 34 units, 2004

Others being developed in Boulder, Carbondale, Fort Collins, Lyons and Longmont

Cohousing resources

For more information on cohousing and to learn about communities in development, contact the Cohousing Association of the United States, www.cohousing.org.

- **Presentation:** Wonderland Hill Development Company will present a slide show and information session on cohousing at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Lyons Soda Fountain, 400 Main St., in Lyons. Jim Leach, founder and president of Wonderland, will speak. A proposed 18-home cohousing site in Lyons will be previewed with audience participation and opinion encouraged. Call Annie Russell, 303-449-3232, ext. 115 for details.

Other resources on the Web

- www.whdc.com, the site of Wonderland Hill Development Co.
- www.cohousingresources.com
- At bookstores and libraries, look for these titles: *Cohousing: A Contemporary Approach to Housing Ourselves*, by Kathryn McCamant, Charles Durrett, Ellen Hertzman ($29.95, Ten Speed Press)
- *Creating a Life Together: Practical Tools to Grow Ecovillages and Intentional Communities*, by Diana Leafe Christian ($22.95, New Society Publishers)

"We're re-creating the old fashioned neighborhood, the notion of village life that goes back 200 years — or 10,000 years."

Neshama Abraham, six-year resident of Boulder's Nomad cohousing and president of Abraham Paiss and Associates

It takes a village, or just co-housing



Colorado's first co-housing development opened in 1994. A decade later, the state has 800 residents living in 10 such communities, which strive to recapture the neighborhood lifestyle of the past, with families sharing living spaces and responsibilities. Hearthstone is one such community in Denver. –SCRIPPS HOWARD NEWS SERVICE PHOTOS

BY JAY DEDRICK

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"Today, parents can find it difficult to meet all of a child's needs. Co-housing is a sane, healthy way to raise children and to be a parent," she said.

For instance, Abraham said, she doesn't worry about scheduling play dates for her kids. Playmates and supervision are usually just outside in the courtyard.

Rather than trying to find a sitter at the last minute when running an errand, she can ask a neighbor to watch the kids — and she'll return the favor.

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Scripps Howard News Service



David Teter, 6 (right), spends an afternoon drowning ants with his water gun as his mother, Kellie Teter, helps him find his target outside their home in the Hearthstone co-housing development in Denver.



Residents of the Hearthstone development gather for a meal at the Common House, where neighbors meet once a week for fellowship and dinner.

Chicago, IL - 9/12/04
circ: 1,002,848

The Sunday Sun-Times

CO-HOUSING

It takes a village — or a development

BY JAY DEDRICK
SCRIPPS HOWARD NEWS SERVICE

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Co-housing, which began in Denmark in the late 1960s and spread to North America in the late 1980s, is characterized by private dwellings with their own kitchen, living-dining room, etc., but also extensive common facilities, which may include a large dining room, kitchen, lounges, meeting rooms, recreation facilities, library, workshops and children's space.There are now more than a hundred co-housing communities (typically with 20 to 30 families) across the United States and Canada.

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Their presence is welcome, even if it means some tracked-in mud. "I've had to give up the concept of a sterile, clean house," Okner says with a smile. "But it's wonderful to have them as visitors."

Long Island, NY - 9/10/04 (553,113) Newsday Nassau Edition

SCHENECTADY, NY - 9/19/04 (51,882)
SUNDAY GAZETTE

Co-housing lets parents share raising of children

By JAY DEDRICK
Scripps Howard News Service

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See SURROGATE, Page H2

Sunday Gazette cont.



EVAN SEMON *Rocky Mountain News*

Members of the Hearthstone community gather for a meal at the Common House, where neighbors meet once a week for fellowship and dinner.

Surrogate granddad likes visits by kids

Continued from Page H1

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How we raise children

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Stayed for the kids

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Augusta, GA - 9/14/04 (89,250)

the Augusta Chronicle



EVAN SEMON / ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

Colorado's first co-housing computer community opened in 1994. A decade later, the state has 800 residents living in 10 such communities, which strive to recapture the neighborhood lifestyles of the past.

You can go home again

Co-housing developments try to capture life as it once was

By Jay Dedrick
Scripps Howard News Service

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EVAN SEMON / ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

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Co-housing offers family bonding, parental relief with its community child-rearing

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See **CO-HOUSING**, *Page* **3G**

...



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NAPLES, FL - 9/10/00 (66,970)
The Naples Daily News

It takes a village, or just co-housing



EVAN SEMON/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

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PLEASE SEE **SENSE** ON **PAGE 10**

OCALA, FL - 9/11/04 (49,660) The Star-Banner

The Star-Banner, Cont.

Sense of community drives co-housing developments



EVAN SEMON/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

The Teter family – Kellie, left, David, 6, center, and John, right – stand on the front porch of their home in the Hearthstone co-housing community in Denver.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

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EVAN SEMON/ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

Members of the Hearthstone community gather for a meal at the Common House, where neighbors meet once a week for fellowship and dinner.

REDDING, CA - 9/14/04 (35,681) The Record Searchlight



Evan Semon / *Scripps Howard News Service*

ALL TOGETHER: Residents of the Hearthstone community in Denver gather for a meal at the Common House, where neighbors meet once a week for fellowship and dinner.

Under many roofs

Co-housed kids spend a lot of their time with the neighbors

By Jay Dedrick
Scripps Howard News Service

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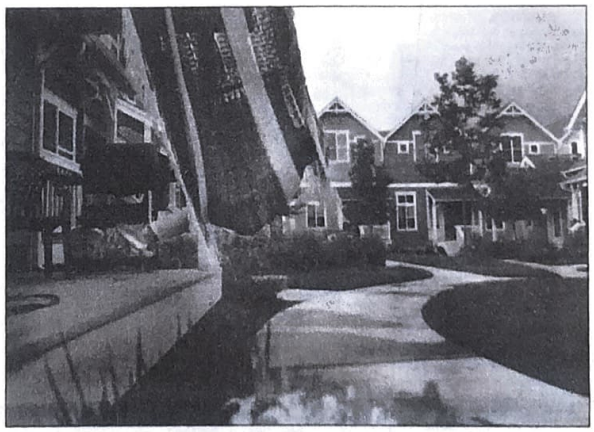
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THE GOOD LIFE: David Teter, 6, relaxes in a friend's hammock at the Hearthstone co-housing community.

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WILKES-BARRE, PA - 9/12/04 (29,608)
The Sunday Voice



EVAN SEMON / ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

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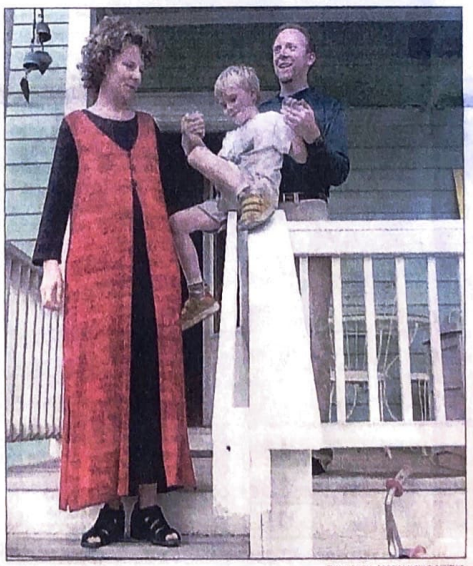
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EVAN SEMON / ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS

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"The kids grow up feeling really loved," Abraham says.

Children take part in work days at Nomad, which Abraham say teaches children that they are an integral part of the community. "Gardening for kids is a great way to teach values," she says.

Arthur Okner, 62, a resident at Nomad, had planned to eventually move to Silver Sage, a planned co-housing community of seniors in Boulder.

"But I really stayed for the kids," says Okner, who has become a surrogate grandfather for Abraham's two daughters, Halonah, 6, and Zipporah, 5. It's not uncommon for them and others to bound into Okner's home, maybe to ask for a bandage for a scraped knee or a Popsicle. Their presence is welcome, even if it means some tracked-in mud.

"I've had to give up the concept of a sterile, clean house," Okner says with a smile. "But it's wonderful to have them as visitors. When you get to know them, they're delightful. Children each have their own special personality."