

Community Homestead

Newsletter: Spring 2023

Mission: To establish and maintain a community where individuals with developmental challenges can reach their fullest human potential

501 280th Street, Osceola, WI 54020 715-294-3038 www.communityhomestead.org

Building the Future -Christine Elmquist

Innovation, Choice. Opportunity to flourish. Please join us in a mighty push to make this dream a reality.



Designed by the UW-Milwaukee Architecture dept. this is the future home for four people with developmental challenges needing support. Delayed by Covid, construction material backlog and serious inflation, now, finally, this dream seems possible, but only with your help! We have \$150,000 to go before we start, and Give Big will give us a big leap forward

This is a unique design, and a unique opportunity.

Embedded in a friendly community, with rhythm, friends, transport and a social life, these apartments are for people with developmental challenges who need to live individually, regardless of their ability. That is especially important in light of the chronic shortage of affordable housing in our area.



Give Big is a big, annual fundraiser for all the local non-profits here in the St Croix Valley.

How you can help?

Please donate online on TUESDAY APRIL 25th,

Your donation can be doubled on this day.

Every donation, any amount, helps us win extra prizes.

Help us win an extra \$1,000 for those apartments!

Community members show us how to be more accepting of all of our special needs. Now, some in the community have needs, interests, and abilities to live independently, to become more self-reliant within this supportive and caring community. Let's help them to show up in the world as who they fully are, when they have solitude, some privacy, and the confidence that develops from managing their days.
- Laurie Schmidt, Board Member

A mixture of independent and community living is a balance all of us naturally strive for, donations for the apartments would add value to the individuals still seeking this balance.
- Brigitte Schauls, family member

Winter Crafts ~Alex Felt

Each Winter as the weather pushes us indoors, many of us excitedly return to craft crews with renewed zeal. We further develop our skills in our areas of interest, learning and getting better practiced with new and old techniques. If you are someone who follows our craft work, I think this is apparent.

In Winter of 2021-22, with much focus on getting Scott and Steven Kicker into their apartments, the woodshop craft crew did not end up making it on the schedule-Brendan, who leads the woodshop crews, was in the apartments each day. This meant no new cutting boards or spatulas, and it also meant that the puzzle painting craft crews would not have the woodshop to receive them for finishing on the other side. This year, I'm happy to report that woodshop crew has been back in action, and so has puzzle crew by extension.

Another mentionable is that this winter we had the first dedicated book-making crew. While I'd previously diverted attention from our stencil card crew into book-making practices in 2021, we have now expanded our vision into 5 different styles of handmade books. Be on the lookout for those at our upcoming craft fairs, as well as the many other great crafts we have to show off this year (wait until you see the felted booties!).

You can find the listed craft fairs on the back of the newsletter. Some of these are pending acceptance into the shows; our website will have up to date information if these change.

Photo: New books



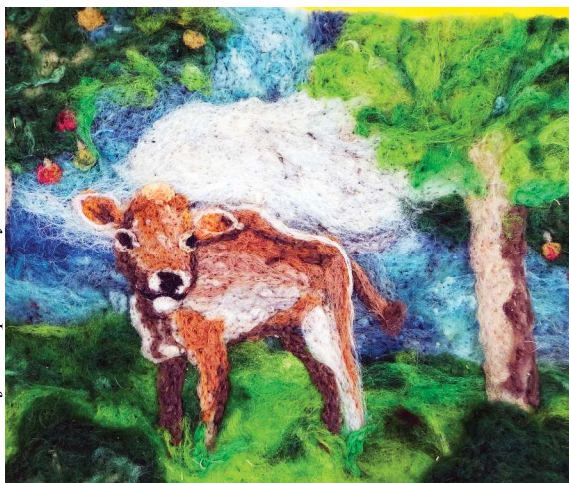
Photo: Alex



Photo: Candles



Photo: felted picture by Janette, Mil and Anne



Construction Crew on the Move ~Richard Elmquist

As part of our effort to expand alternative housing options we will build another new apartment in Orion. For this to happen, we need to move the bakery out. We decided to move it to the pole shed by Evening Star and the Community Center for lots of space and updates. At the same time we can move the remaining crafting, that happens still in basements, to some light filled crafts space in the same building.

We started the process of converting the metal shed into a Bakery/Crafting area, we will slowly pick up the pace as the weather allows. Projects Crew: aka Richard, Brendan, Janika, Elvis, Scott, Alex H., Terra, Steve Fons, Anne, Ann Sophie, Goose, and Desi (but not all at the same time!) started by taking the big doors off and getting some initial materials ready, and hanging some ceiling purlins. Hopefully by the summer we will be done!

Felting ~Alex Hansen

Felting, we make gnomes. We got new wool, blue and purple and a kind of red. We make dryer balls. I do the machine with a crank. It spins and makes wool. I needle felt gnomes. New for me! It is kind of hard: You have to do the hat first. Turn it all the time or make a bubble and stick to the sponge! Christine remind me! We make pictures. I made a river. We make birds: cardinals! Booties-not hard, they are easy! We make sheep and landscapes. I like it. I like needle felting!

Stained Glass Crew ~Nastia Baerg, Hannah Gregor, Nadine Holder, Oscar Rauch-Borgerding, Desi Peterson & Tammy Schimschal

Nadine: I made stained glass many years ago with Douglas and Oscar. Just a few years ago I started the crew back up again.

Oscar: I started in 2003

Desi: I started this last year.

Hannah: This was my first time here

Tammy: I also started just this year

Nastia: Two months ago it was my first time doing it. It was interesting and I got used to it and I love it so I want to do it the rest of my lifetime!

Nadine: The best part is putting colors together and catching the light

Desi: I like the colors I am doing

Oscar: I like grinding the glass

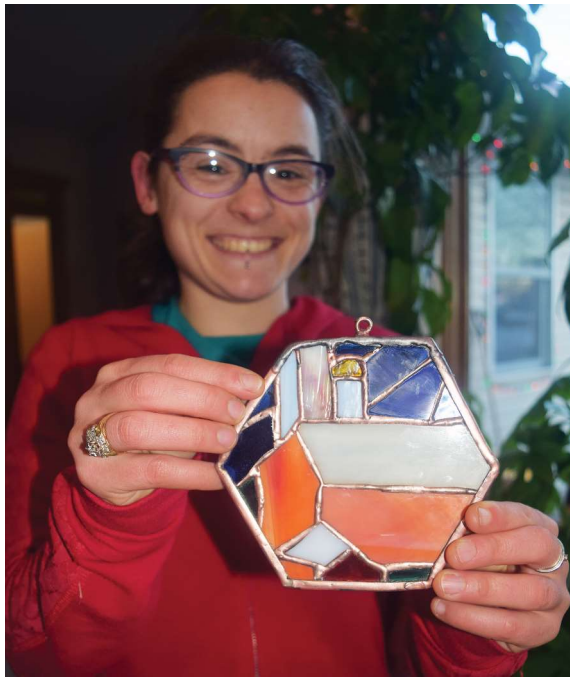


Photo: Nastia

Tammy: I like everything, except grinding!

Hannah: I like getting over my fear and doing something new

Nastia: I like all of it, grinding, cutting, taping and putting the clear stuff on and the metal between the glass to hold it in.

What design do I like most?

Nadine: I am partial to flowers and insects but I also enjoy mosaic

Hannah: My favorite is the flowers

Desi: I like the dragonflies

Tammy: The sunflower!

Oscar: Flowers!

Nastia: I like the barn design. Each one is different when I make it and each one is cuter, I think.

The Woodshop - A story of Renewal ~Brendan Bennett

It's a dusty place and on tours most people say it smells like their grandpa's garage. Smells and sights, ours can definitely seem to be grandpa's garage. I've found boxes of materials, hardware, and tools that are certainly older than me. The space holds this history with so many people coming along for longer or shorter periods of time. All with diverse visions which have helped make the space what it is. I am not new to the woodshop; although, I have had a sort of hiatus for about two years now.

We're back in there and we're doing it! Some major players this winter have been Oscar, Elvis, Steve, Janika, Dustin, Terra, and Goose. Several others have popped in for various projects as well. The woodshop serves our community for projects big and small not just as a craft space but also for the purpose of rough and fine carpentry. For example, Asger Elmquist made curtain rods for the Community Center. Adrian made a walk up bar for their teardrop camper. Altair used the woodshop this winter several times to reconfigure and enhance their kitchen. It's so valuable to have this space for any practical or creative project.

Here's what we've done in an effort towards renewal: We replaced our furnace with the old packing shed furnace (formerly

the old farm house furnace), built a cabinet to extend the chop saw cutting surface and act as hardware storage, resurrected a router which we then installed into a table flush with our table saw, replaced the blades and tuned-up the planer and jointer, reversed the fence on the table saw to give it a second life, made wood inserts for table saw and jigsaw to reduce pullout and have a new flat cutting surface, set up a cutting station for puzzles which involved rehabbing a jigsaw. We've done an incredible amount



Photo: Elvis, Brendan, Terra & Dustin

of cleaning and organizing which to me seems endless, but we keep at it. The woodshop has an extraordinary history of storing leftover building materials and tools and it's amazing when we can put these things to use. However, I measure dust with feeler gauges on every box we unearth. Oftentimes if we don't have a use for it at this exact moment, I honestly try from deep within to find one, it fulfills its final destiny of being walked to a dumpster.

With a revitalized work space we've managed to make a large batch of cutting boards, some envelope holders, and work with the puzzle painting crew extensively to make an epic batch of puzzles for the upcoming

craft fair season. The renewal has taken a good amount of time and energy so our workflow has been limited. Further, we are only there for two activities a week. We all look forward to next winter storming into a space that is ready for action where we can get right into some projects.

Adoray ~Hannah Gregor

This winter, I switched from house crew to volunteering at Adoray which is a thrift store in Osceola.

I get to help out by hanging up clothes, bringing out ones from the back to put out in the store and pricing. You use wax paper for the metal bars that the clothes go on so they don't hurt your ears and they can move easier. Larger clothes need a fuzzy hanger so they don't fall off. There's ones with clips that are for pyjamas. There's kids size hangers. I know how to price clothes now using a price gun. I have to pick from \$1.99 up by matching the number and then we put the price between the collar and the tag so they are easier to take out.

Tia is a volunteer there and she showed me all what goes on around Adoray. She showed me how all the lights go on and called it, "the light tour"! There are other volunteers, Linda and Care who are older ladies who move things around and steam clothes that are wrinkled. Terra helps out too and Sonya is in charge.

I really like volunteering. It makes me feel like I am getting to use my job skills that I learned here for something where people won't always put things gently. I know I need to be trusted and keep to my word. I really enjoy it. I feel very happy with myself and my family are proud of me that I can do this.

Winter fun ~Tammay Schimschal



Photo: Desi

The first snow we had was in November and then we constantly had snow. It was so exciting to have so much snow and to experience a new side of community life. We had some sledding parties at Morning Glory's backyard with s'mores, good talks and a lot of fun. One time we made a big train with several sleds and went down the hill together.

There were also some snowmen you could admire around the community. Mil and I built one in the middle of the night while it was still snowing. Around New Years, we built a snow fort and had a snowball fight at Berry Grove.

The project crews worked for a few weeks on our ice rink and when it was finally done we had a lot of fun ice skating there. Luckily no one got hurt and we all could enjoy the rink.

My personal highlight this winter was the snow mobile sledding. Three sleds were carried by the snow mobile and we sat on them and drove through the fields of the community. I loved it when we drove really fast. Afterwards

you were mostly covered in snow.



Photo: Richard and snowmobilers



Photo: Kelly @ the Valentine's Sock Hop

Another highlight was when a group of people went to a place where you can do snow tubing. You sat or lay on a tube and go down a hill. There were different kinds of hills but my favorite was the monkey tail, which had a curve in it. Unfortunately I lost my hat on this trail and I really thought I wouldn't get it back. But we were like 10 people from the Community and we motivated everyone else in line to try and get my hat. In the end, Mil got it and I was so happy. This shows the support for each other in the community.

I really enjoyed the winter here, even though it was so cold. But after having snow for almost 5 months I'm looking forward for spring!

My First Year in Altair ~Goose Macaulay

When I left Community Homestead after a 6 month stay in 2020, I knew it was a place I would always hold in my heart. But as I finished college and joined my peers in the pursuit of a career in a big city, I didn't expect to return in a long-term way. That is, until I was told that Altair, the house right by the orchard, was seeking a householder - and it could be me. I quit my job, moved from the city, and knew almost instantly that this wasn't going to be just another 6 month stint. I've been living in Altair for a year now, and don't have plans to leave any time soon.

Altair is a young and bubbly house. Desi, Dustin and I enjoy having young volunteers come in and out, bringing energy and spirit (and some shenanigans). It's been a big adjustment for me in taking up the role of householder. Before, I had just been a short-term volunteer. Now, I was managing a house budget, attending meetings, and coordinating all the house goings-on. It took me a while to get the hang of



Photo: Janette and Goose

All About Arizona ~Hillary Schauls

My sister Sally took me to the airport. I got a first class ticket at South West airport so I got a free drink and a free snack! I met my Mom and my Aunt Linda at Arizona Airport. They have two houses and we went to Phoenix and it was a really nice, big, house.

Linda has two dogs. Maggie came to the door and barked at us, "we are coming, we are coming!" My aunt has a golf cart. I visit with Chris and Lisa who are sister in law and brother in law to John. John is my Uncle John. I got a dinner invite in their house. Lisa gave me a picture and some snacks too. I got a haircut in Arizona. I made puff for desert. I made orange cake too from my Aunt's backyard and home made squeezed lemonade. I picked some grapefruit also. I did crystal art which is putting stars on a pin and push down and make a picture of a peacock. I got a new jacket from Arizona.

Thank you Aunt Linda for having me!

it, and I am still getting my footing. But the challenges and learning curves have been made easier by having an experienced community around me, people who have been eager to give me guidance and generous in their support.

I am excited to look at Community Homestead and see a place for myself in its future. I am still deciding where exactly I fit in - where are my skills and interests? What can I help create? - but I am so happy to be in a place where that process of self-discovery is supported. As

I reflect on this past year, I am in awe of how much I have grown, how much I am capable of that I didn't imagine. I am excited to continue to learn and grow, to make mistakes and find the things that work, to face each new challenge with curiosity. Every time I come back from a long day to a warm and loving house filled with laughter, I am reminded I'm on the right track.

Trip to North Carolina ~Janette Schauls

I went on two vacations! Two! I went to Florida with Shannon, Eric and Aldo. Walking around, swimming, see the puppet show, the big monsters. That's over now.

I went to Carolina to see Claire. Big Van, you been there?



Photo: Hillary picking lemons

I went with Brendan Alex, Steve, Tammy, and the other ones, Mil too. Her parents live there in Carolina. It was good.

It was warmer. I saw fish. I hang out at her parents house. It was nice. Sandy. Sea Shells. Spaghetti, Tacos the night before. I saw Ceci at her school farm. Animals, Baby pigs-I love it!

Went shopping. Pink T-shirt, I am wearing it, not today. Best thing? Cheese toast!

Vacation in Portland, Connecticut ~Kelly McDaniel

On vacation, I went over to Claire's house and saw her two cats, Nilly and Siri and her dog Nikei. The airport was called Hartford/Springfield, in Hartford and I met two Jeffs, one on the way there and one on the way back.

I went for a walk every day with Claire and her dog Nikei. I baked bread and made oatmeal raisin cookies with Arwyn. I went to the Science Museum in Hartford Ct. I saw the movie Train Time with different models of trains. I also went to a plant show and saw different kinds of plants which wasn't too far from the Science Museum. I also celebrated my Dad's birthday: In memory of my Dad I had chocolate ice cream!

I also helped Claire vacuum her rugs. I do this at Evening Star too so I know how to do this. I also went through her pens because she has some that work and some that did not work. I tested them out like I do here!

I sent a postcard to my housemates at Morning Glory. I wrote her a nice card and thanked her for hosting me for two weeks!

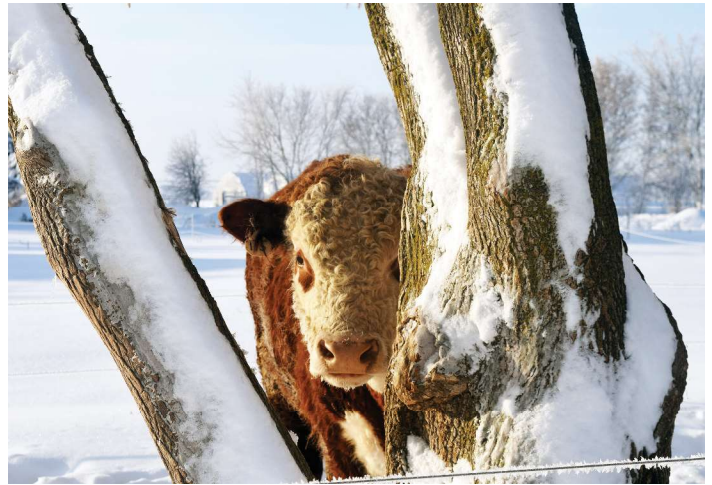
Thursday Cooking ~Elvis Cormican

The things we do for Thursday morning cooking can be set in three categories. 1: preparing meals for work. 2: learning new recipes and techniques to make them your own and to add seasonings if needed. 3: reflecting on how far you can take the skills you learned and using them in every day life to be able to cook on your own.

The things I enjoy about cooking with Goose and Steven every Thursday is the quality time we have to talk and cook because we always have fun and we always make the best food. I have learned a lot from when I first began cooking with Goose, like how to make a good tasting red sauce and how to make stir fry and also how to make ready-to-freeze burritos. I could go on with a huge list of what Goose, Steven and I make but that would most likely take up your time and I sure wouldn't want to do that. Tell the captain this time I will go down with the ship.



Photo: Elvis and Steven



Almost Spring on the Farm ~Shannon Kulig

One can't doubt looking around that winter still has a bit of a hold on the farm. Large piles of snow linger, melt pools in deep tire tracks only to refreeze into little ice skating rinks every night, and the animals still have the characteristic fluff that comes with sub-zero temperatures. All that being said, this week walking home from early morning milkings the farm smelled like spring. A promise of warm, green earth rests just above the horizon with the sun. Field plans are made, seeds are ordered, tractors are cycled through the shop for maintenance, and the farmers ready for a new season.

This year begins promisingly. We put many corn fields into a rye cover crop last fall that hopefully took advantage of the warmer, wet winter. The cows are eager to participate in this climate friendly practice, grazing and fertilizing the soil stabilizing rye grass before it is tilled in to replenish nutrients used up by the corn crop planted last year. Something readers who live close enough to drive by a Community Homestead field may notice this year is the lack of corn. We have decided to take a break from row cropping (when plants are planted with wide enough spacing to allow for tillage and cultivation during their growth cycle - think corn, soybeans, cotton). We are hopeful this change will reduce weed pressure in our perennial hayfields, minimize tillage, and save a considerable amount of labor and diesel. On the dairy farm, we are constantly learning and adjusting to be as sustainable and conscientious as possible. Now, we look forward to warm summer rains and longer days.

People coming and going ~Christine Elmquist

We have had a number of very short term volunteers. It is not much time to acclimate to a bunch of new people and new ways of doing things but Raphael Sebalon from France made it look easy back in the fall! In 2023, we were joined by Maud Molloy, also from France for three months, and by Mil Laursen from North Carolina for two months. Thank you to both for adding a lot to our craft and social life. Post Covid (kinda) we are also happy to see local friends; Lynne Schauls, Lois Peterson, Maureen McElrath and Peggy Geskermann back volunteering. Throw in a few wonderful visits from family; Maya, many Elmquists who created a great sledding hill on our back trail, and old friends, Zack Grand for a great Winter season

Meanwhile we welcome back Jess Palmer for the day program, and look forward to being joined by several other new friends this Spring!

We look forward to Spring arrivals: Astrid Craig from Minnesota via Iowa for the growing season, Mel Zens part time from the Spooner area, and three Hibernia German students, Nick, Luca and Tobias for 6 weeks of service. And we are still open to other Summer folks who want to learn about gardening, farming and community life from people who have been doing it for a long time now! Happy to share!

Donations March 1 - September 30, 2022

Thank you Everyone for Building Homes and Lives!

In Memory of Tom Rauch

Margy & Gary Balwierz
Oscar Rauch-Borgerding
Kevin & Ann Commers
Alice & Joseph Cova
Rose Ann Foreman
Diane Hurtgen
Kim Kiskinen
Matthew & Danell Rauch
Patty Rauch
Keith Rodli
Vicky Weis

Henry & Jennifer Gordon In Honor Nastia 29th Birthday
Dennis Leehan In Honor of Michael Leehan
Rebecca Busch In Memory of Shari Wagner

Judy & Noel Beninati	Peggy & Tom Geskermann
Vincent Bohlinger	Paul & Pamela Grand
Joyce Borgerding	Stephen Greenwood
Laura & Bill Briggs	Sherry Hansen
Elizabeth Coffey	Diane Herman
Jeff Comins & Lauri	Jim Herold
Schmidt	Madelon Holder
Charles Davis	Melody & Shawn Horn
Elizabeth Fetter	Kelvin & Ann Kobernick

In memory of Tom Rauch March 11, 1954- November 30, 2022

We have many good memories of Tom Rauch, as a board member, a friend to all and, in his most famous role around here, "Oscar's Dad".

Clever, observant, with a twinkling good humor, Tom stepped up to board president because the rest of us were apparently smart enough to recognize that all of these qualities, plus natural humility makes for rare and precious leadership! Tom was a board member for many years, navigating us through some rocky points with his calm presence. He stepped down only in the last couple of years when Alzheimers prevented him from participating fully. Even then, we were lucky enough to enjoy him in his other roles here, craft fairs, events, picking up Oscar, and a gentle and friendly face at Pig Roast where his band continued to play even when he was unable to do so. Tom added a great deal to this community and we all miss him.



Paula Lugar	Elizabeth Templin
Kathy & Ron McBroom	Stephen Tierney
Tracy McCutcheon	Ken & Mary Tomes
Susan Meyer	Paul & Mary Torgerson
James Nester	Evelyn Valen
Bette & James Overmier	John Villerius
Kathleen Papatola	Beth Voigt
Rose Peterson	Vicky Weis
Ruth Peterson	Brian Wickerts
Cecilia Poehls	Gisela Wielki
Troy Reichard	Thomas Williams
David Sowatzke	

American Online Giving Foundation
Charities Aid Foundation of America
Circle of Life Foundation
Merrill Lynch
Partners In Community Support
Schwab Charitable Fund
The Benevity Community Impact Fund
The Blackbaud Giving Fund
Thrivent Financial for Lutherans
Tisbest Philanthropy

Upcoming Craft and Art Fairs

Come visit us:

Sunday, May 14th 12-4 - River Road Farm Crawl - 519A 280th Street Osceola, WI

Saturday, June 3rd 10-5 St Anthony Park Festival, St Paul, MN

Saturday June 10th 10-4 Rhubarb Fest Osceola, WI

Saturday, July 15th 10-5 Stockholm Art Fair Stockholm, WI

Saturday and Sunday August 5-6th 10-5, 10-4 Powderhorn Park th and 6th

Saturday August 19th Community Homestead's Pig Roast - 519A 280th Street Osceola, WI

Saturday September 9th Harvest Bazaar Osceola, WI

Saturday and Sunday September 23-24th Spirit of Saint Croix Arts Festival Hudson, WI

Saturday and Sunday October 7-8th Sogn Valley Arts Fair Cannon Falls, MN

Saturday and Sunday October 14-15th Red Wing Arts Fall Festival Red Wing, MN



CSA

Who is looking forward to fresh organic vegetables this summer?

Did you know you can get your larder stocked right here with farm fresh food all summer?

Deliveries come weekly to a site near you (from local to throughout the twin cities/metro area) for about 20 weeks, June through October.

We have the choice of 3 size boxes, choose to add a bakery box, a meat box, an extended winter box, or just get them by themselves.

We are grateful for this lovely land that has been farmed for over 100 years and, with the aid of our wonderful gardeners and farmers, gives back so much bounty to us all.

We have about 25 spaces left so please get in touch online! www.communityhomestead.org and click SHOP.



Photo: Anne, Janika, Ann Sophie



Photo: Chelsea & Scott

Photo: Rainy & Nastia



Photo: Hillary

Photo: Jess