



News of the Oaks Summer Events Capoeira at Twin Oaks

News of the Oaks by Valerie

After 2+ years of keeping **covid** out of the community, we finally had our first cases this spring. About 20 (of our roughly 100 people) got sick, everyone was vaccinated and boosted and overall had relatively mild cases. We are grateful it was as gentle as it was.

We had a fun **Beltane** celebration this year. The afternoon began with a dance recital by the kids, then we processed out to the field and danced the MayPole (with excellent friend drummers from Charlottesville). Since it was 95°F/35°C, we all jumped in the pond afterwards, then headed to the cookout, and those who wanted to continue to celebrate went to our rave in the woods that evening.

One thing that's true of community (and everywhere) is that since **conflict is inevitable**, it is not the presence of conflict



that indicates the health of a group, but rather how that conflict is dealt with. We have been noticing a dynamic of tension between new members and long-term members. To help address this, we held a “Fishbowl”, in which a couple of members from each demographic sit together in a group and discuss the issue, and everyone else sits around them and just listens. We had a very rich discussion with both new and long-term members sharing their different perspectives around community issues. More work is needed to address this, but the Fishbowl was a good start.

We are in a time of relatively high **comings and goings**. There is often a spring exodus here, as people get inspired to go elsewhere once the nice weather arrives. We also tend to get more visitors in the summer months, when people often are more available. We have 2 families taking long-term trips—one family will take a year to travel around the US and Mexico, and one father and adult son will travel together for several months on a cross-country trip to visit friends and ex-Twin-Oakers together.

Summer Events at Twin Oaks You Are Invited

Twin Oaks Queer Gathering August 5 – 7

Twin Oaks Women’s Gathering August 19 – 21

Twin Oaks Communities Conference September 2 – 5, Labor Day Weekend

Twin Oaks Queer Gathering August 5 – 7. Join us for a weekend of queertranstastic fun, learning, workshops, networking, revelry, and more! This is a participant-led/co-created event, so the content is largely up to YOU! You can lead a workshop, DJ some of the dance party, bring your instruments to jam, or offer an interest/identity-based meetup (BIPOC dinner, non-binary lunch, comic book breakfast, etc). Registration fee is \$80 (sliding scale – pay what you can : \$40-\$140) includes meals/tent space. Work trade available. BIPOC travel stipends available by emailing us at queergathering@twinoaks.org. www.twinoaksqueergathering.org

Twin Oaks Women’s Gathering August 19 – 21. Gather in the woods to celebrate creativity with women! Workshops around self-expression, healing, sexuality, positive relationship building, DIY music, art and movement. There will be performance spaces, as well as lots of free time to network, drum, dance and play. Registration fee \$85 (sliding scale – pay what you can: \$80-\$160) includes meals/tent space. womensgathering.org or email gathering@twinoaks.org

Twin Oaks Communities Conference September 2 – 5 Labor Day Weekend.

If you are looking for an intentional community, or if you are in a community looking for new members, this is the event for you. We bring experienced collectivists and communitarians together with seekers looking to learn more or find a home. We expect 30 communities to be represented. There are workshops on various topics related to intentional community living (decision-making, sustainability, conflict resolution and much more). We'll also offer Open Space workshops so you can bring your own content. There will be an opportunity to tour the communities of Louisa county. Registration fee \$125, includes meals/tent space. Work exchange and scholarships available. <https://communitiesconference.org/>



Liberation Arts at Twin Oaks by Gabriel

Here in Twin Oaks we have two weekly Capoeira classes, one for the younger children and the other for adults. Hosted by Macaco, who came from New York to Virginia six years ago to teach the expressive arts, he found Twin Oaks from people who lived in the communities nearby. He has recently begun teaching Capoeira classes for the younger kids in January of this year. In these classes Macaco teaches the kids expressive arts. Specifically the folkloric dance of Capoeira. an Afro-Brazilian art form that combines martial arts and dance. This dance is done in large community settings and is used to foster relationships among members through rhythm and motion. Macaco adds a



contemporary twist when teaching Capoeira here to celebrate his time growing up in New York City as a person of color.

Though he only started in January, there was much warmth received when Macaco began teaching in our children's program Unicorns. Many of the children have enjoyed their time learning the different dances and songs. Even the youngest member of Twin Oaks enjoys her moments playing on the drum and tapping her foot to the beat. The kids have been learning things from the range of the body's motion, their lefts and rights, and control all the way to the social and emotional aspects of interacting in a group setting. Even with pauses from life to the pandemic the will to continue the growth of learning.

Capoeira is not only about the physical, but of the stories told through singing and the act of being one as a community; where one learns from each other, and come together to express with their bodies and voices through the game and singing. The game is almost like a play, where both players are telling a story together with a call and response.

Macaco's goal for the future in Twin Oaks is to cultivate a Capoeira group. He told me that to have a successful group requires nine players who know what they are doing. His plan involves teaching all three generations; the children, adults and elders sharing wisdom songs (an Afro-Brazilian tradition used to teach wisdom). Anyone can join even if only in song, sharing wisdom through music and song. He intends for the future to be able to hold a circle in the community to bring the play to life.