

A Letter from HOME

HomeShare Vermont Focuses on Best Practices

In November, Executive Director Kirby Dunn attended the National Symposium on Shared Housing in California and made a presentation on linking homesharing with caregiving services. Conference sponsors Affordable Living for the Aging released a comprehensive report on best practices, challenges and recommendations for shared housing. The report "Strategies for Scaling Shared Housing" highlighted ten critical components which homesharing programs should include:

- Screening Process
- Written Homeshare Agreements
- Trial Periods Preceding a Match
- Ongoing Monitoring
- Adequate Staffing Levels
- Data Collection
- Risk Management
- Fair Housing Compliance
- Complementary Alliances
- Volunteer Support

The report goes on to note that the most important element for success is an intensive screening process.

HomeShare Vermont has all of these ten program components including a rigorous screening process. We start with in-depth interviews of all applicants. We perform five different background checks

including a national criminal background check. We require at least four positive references from employers, landlords, roommates or others who have known the applicant for at least the last five years and recommend them for the program. We do not admit anyone into the program if there is any history of any crime against a person or property or an active drug or alcohol problem. This intensive screening process, coupled with our emphasis on the other nine critical components, allows our clients to know they are in good hands. ♠



From left, Kirby Dunn, Laura Fanucchi, David Grunwald, Rebecca Sheppard and Ryan Cowmeadow

Training Series Offered

The first of a five-part training series was held in February at the HomeShare Vermont office. The training, "Hospice and End of Life Care" was presented by the VNA Hospice Program team members, Dina Child and Michele Deneault-Reynolds and was extremely well attended. Dina and Michele provided information on how the hospice program works and offered guidance around providing compassionate care to clients at the end of life.

Those in attendance had the opportunity to ask questions, share experiences and confirm the value of providing respectful end of life care. They learned that the Hospice program is available 24/7 to caregivers and families for support and guidance and that the VNA Hospice program offers bereavement counseling not only to families but also to caregivers who have cared for a dying client. HomeShare Vermont thanks Dina and Michele for such an inspiring training on a sensitive topic.



Dina Child, RN

Upcoming trainings include:

March: "Providing Care for Clients with a Developmental Delay" Alysia Chapman, Intake and Clinical Services Coordinator from the Howard Center, will discuss developmental delay and how it affects caregiving.

April: "Transfer Training" Gena Bramen, PTA from Poulin Performance, will teach proper transferring skills, body mechanics, and bed mobility.

May: "Communication and Dementia" Ellen Gagner, VNA Adult Day Grand Way Manager, will explain communication as it pertains to clients with dementia.

June: "Professionalism 101" MaryLou Thorpe and Lisa Meyer will give tips and suggestions to promote success for caregivers in the home workplace.

Our trainings are offered free of charge to all of our matched caregivers and homesharers. ♠





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Welcome Lisa!

Join us in welcoming Lisa Meyer, our newest staff member! Lisa is a Registered Nurse and her experience in the nursing field makes her an exciting addition to our team. Initially, Lisa is focusing her efforts on our caregiving services and she will be working closely with Mary Lou Thorpe. Of her new position, Lisa says, "I am very committed to helping people remain at home and advocating for that choice. I met HomeShare Vermont clients while at the VNA and I am excited about working with the community."

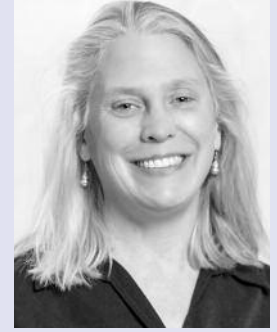


Photo by Karen Pike

20th Annual Vermont Inns Raffle A Success!

Thanks to the wonderful Vermont inns and hotels that donated overnight stays, the hard work of our board and other volunteers, and the generous ticket purchases from hundreds of supporters, the HomeShare Vermont Inns Raffle raised nearly \$9,000 for our Homesharing and Caregiving programs. Kudos to Kate Baldwin for selling over 100 tickets and Julie Burger Pierson for selling over 200 tickets!

Congratulations to our winners! Please think of these Inns for your Vermont vacations or when you have friends visit.

Inn	Town	Winners
Arlington Inn	Arlington	Stewart Pierson
Back Inn Time B & B	St. Albans	Judy Huetz
Blueberry Hill Inn	Goshen	Ann Lipsitt
Brandon Inn	Brandon	David DiElsi
Catamount B&B	Williston	Mary Davis
Charleston House	Woodstock	Joan Palmer
Charleston House	Woodstock	Josh & Tiff Shaw
Courtyard Burlington Harbor Hotel	Burlington	Dr. Richard & Allene Pierson
Couture's B & B	Westfield	Bob & Mary Coburn
Dorset Inn	Dorset	Linda Berlin
Echo Lake Inn	Ludlow	Rose Feenan
Elliott House B & B	Shelburne	Theodore Boniface
Ferry Watch Inn	Grand Isle	The Rev. Diane Nancekivell
Firefly B & B	Lincoln	Stewart & Becky Arnold
Heart of the Village Inn	Shelburne	John Cronin
Hotel Vermont	Burlington	Jim & Barb Wolvington
Inn on the Green	Middlebury	Maureen Pidgeon
Lang House on Main Street	Burlington	Thomas Little
Middlebury Inn	Middlebury	Jane Goodman
North Hero House	North Hero	Ann McKay
Sleepy Hollow Inn	Huntington	Michele Hadeka
The Essex	Essex Junction	Carolyn Petite
Thomas Mott Homestead	Alburgh	Stephen Donahue
Thomas Mott Homestead	Alburgh	Brian Reed
Timberholm Inn	Stowe	Jim Abbott
Willard Street Inn	Burlington	Cathy Chamberlain

More Than Just a Roommate

If our homes are a reflection of us, then Barbara's sunny kitchen gives a glimpse of her bright, outgoing personality. The dozens of magnets on her refrigerator reflect her love of cats and the places she's visited. Retired from 35 years as a program supervisor at what was then the Mary Fletcher hospital, Barbara is busy these days with volunteering, reading, and visiting with a large group of friends and extended family.

Elizabeth enjoys everything from riding motorcycles to creating detailed cross-stitch artwork. She had homeshared in the past so when faced with a relationship change and in need of housing, Elizabeth eagerly joined the household of Barbara and her cat, Sadie.

Both women are independent and active; they have their own lives but are quick to include one another in their plans. Barbara recalls that they saw the movie *Lincoln* together and attended a benefit supper last week. Like anyone, they have their differences, too. Politics, for example, aren't Elizabeth's cup of tea, but Barbara is



Elizabeth & Barbara

fascinated with them. "And she drives me to yard sales, but she's pretty uninterested in those!" says Barbara. Going out to restaurants is something they appreciate equally!

This living situation has been beneficial for both women. Barbara is a frequent rider on the public bus in Burlington, but also appreciates having her homesharer help with transportation. "The only thing I ever drove was a tractor!" she quips.

Barbara also feels more secure having someone else in the home. "I've had a couple of health scares, and it's a comfort to know Elizabeth is here. I can count on her." For Elizabeth, she is able to save greatly on housing expenses while enjoying a comfortable home.

Sharing a home as well as a friendship continues to be a positive for both of them after two and a half years. Barbara sums up why she continues to share her home after all these years—"I enjoy being around people. I'm happy and so is my cat." 🏠

Hiring Help to Stay at Home

George has established many friendships over the years and when he could no longer drive he wanted to continue his active social life. Over the past twenty years, George has met with twelve friends for Friday breakfasts and did not want to give up these special get-togethers. The breakfast adventures happen anywhere from the Sugar House Restaurant in Quebec to the Champlain Bridge Restaurant in Addison County. Bruce, a HomeShare Vermont caregiver, has been a welcome addition to the group and drives George to meet with these friends regularly.

George knows the exact date Bruce entered his life: July 18, 2011. Bruce works for George six mornings a week. George says Bruce "helps with everything" including shopping, cooking, cleaning and companionship. Bruce says of all the jobs he has had, George is "the best boss." Bruce is upbeat, dependable and devoted to George. George has lived in Burlington's New North End for many years with his wife Lois whom he met on a blind date. They were just shy of their 50th wedding anniversary when Lois passed away. George was living alone and struggling with Parkinson's disease when his doctor, Frank Landry, suggested he contact HomeShare Vermont to hire caregiving help so that George could remain safe at home.



George & Bruce

George also knows the exact date, July 20, 2011, that his other committed caregiver, Kim, started coming. She helps George six evenings a week to cook dinner and help with the evening routine. Kim has been a HomeShare Vermont caregiver since 2008. Kim started caregiving when she cared for her grandmother. She and Bruce work as a team and will cover for each other when needed so George never has to worry that someone won't show up.

George says he would "absolutely recommend" HomeShare Vermont caregivers. "I have the best caregivers and they are the reason I can stay at home." 🏠



412 Farrell Street, Suite 300, South Burlington, VT 05403

Webinar on Shared Housing

On **Thursday April 11th** the Enterprise Foundation is sponsoring a nationwide webinar “Exploring Shared Housing: A Flexible Model for Increasing Affordable Housing Options.” Kirby Dunn of HomeShare Vermont will be one of the presenters on this online training, the first of its kind about homesharing.

Rising housing costs and shrinking public subsidies require us to consider a variety of approaches for meeting our community’s housing needs. Shared housing is a flexible model for increasing affordable housing options. This webinar will provide an overview of the field and highlight shared housing’s role for maximizing the existing housing supply while stabilizing households and neighborhoods.

A link to register for the webinar can be found on the HomeShare Vermont website at www.HomeShareVermont.org. Hear from agencies in Vermont, Maryland and California that use shared housing to serve vulnerable populations.

Upcoming Informational Sessions

Do you have friends or neighbors who might benefit from homesharing? If you or someone you know is considering sharing a home or might benefit from our caregiving services, learn how HomeShare Vermont can help at our thirty-minute informational sessions. It is an opportunity to learn about our programs and services while getting your questions answered.

Upcoming informational sessions are scheduled for:

Wednesday, April 10th at 4:00 pm

Wednesday, May 8th at 4:00 pm

Join us at our office, 412 Farrell Street in South Burlington. All are welcome and refreshments are provided. Please pre-register at (802) 863-5625 or home2@sover.net.