

A Letter from HOME

All About Mom!

Ellen is a spunky 92-year-old who, with her wit and sense of humor, proves that age is just a number. After becoming unsteady and experiencing some memory loss, she no longer felt safe at night. Even so, Ellen had no intention of leaving her Williston home. "I want to stay right here," she told her children, "and don't think of anything else!"

Many years ago, when we were named Project Home, we helped Ellen find a caregiver for her husband Harold when he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. So, when Ellen decided to hire live-in care, she turned to us once again. Ellen was matched with Maria, one of two caregivers who provide continuous care in Ellen's home. Maria was looking for a more satisfying career and chose caregiving after her experience caring for family members. "I like the personal connections that come from caregiving. You don't get that with retail work," explains Maria. She helps with all of Ellen's daily needs and they have become friendly companions who enjoy taking walks and going for car rides together. Recent adventures include a visit to the apple orchard and a drive through West Bolton where Ellen used to teach in a one-room schoolhouse.

Ellen has a large family of six children all of whom

are very much involved with their mother's care. They keep an online calendar to track Ellen's schedule and have monthly phone conferences to discuss their mom's healthcare needs. "It's all about mom!" exclaims Vickie, one of Ellen's daughters.



Maria and Ellen

Photo by Karen Pike

Though some of her children live out of state, they take turns staying with their mom every weekend so she always has family members in the home during weekends. They appreciate having quality time with their mom rather than spending all of their family time doing chores and running errands. Instead of having to become their mother's caregiver, they can remain her children and enjoy their weekends together without the added responsibility of

providing care. "Mom makes me laugh every day," notes Vickie, who lives just a few houses away and visits daily.

Ellen's family benefits from the peace of mind knowing that there is always a helping hand in the home. "It's comforting to know that there is someone here," says Vickie. "Maria has become an extension of our family." It's clear that they want the best for their mother as Vickie lovingly jokes, "Mom has put up with all of us all these years so she deserves it!" 🏠

Holiday Giving

As the holiday season approaches we are grateful to this wonderful community for all the support you give to HomeShare Vermont. Our small and growing organization is thriving because of your generosity. Nearly one-third of our revenue comes from individual donations and fundraising events. Your gift will allow us to help our neighbors stay at home or find a home!

P.S. Gifts of all sizes are sincerely appreciated, but gifts of \$500 or more will receive a special thank you. See page 2 for details.





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A Wonderful Afternoon with Reeve

In late October nearly 100 people visited the Pizzagalli Center at Shelburne Museum on a sunny afternoon to hear Vermont author Reeve Lindbergh. She told heart-warming stories of growing up in a famous family and caring for her mother at the end of her life. The audience was treated to Reeve reading excerpts from her and her mother's books and answering audience questions.

Also at the event Reeve drew the winning ticket for a Vermont Folk Rocker. Congratulations to Anne Riddell from Essex Junction. A friend of Anne's gave her the ticket as a gift. What a great friend! We were so glad that artisan Jim Geier of Vermont Folk Rocker was able to join us at the event.

Special thanks to the following sponsors for making this event possible:

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A Special Gift



Reeve Lindbergh

Reeve has also donated signed copies of two books: her recent children's book, *Homer the Library Cat* as well as the 50th anniversary paperback edition of her mother's book, *Gift from the Sea*.

The first fifteen holiday donations to HomeShare Vermont of \$500 or more will get their choice of one of these wonderful books.

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It was a delightful afternoon and we want to thank everyone who attended and helped to raise nearly \$10,000 for HomeShare Vermont.

Estelle Deane, Volunteer Extraordinaire!

At our gathering at Shelburne Museum, Estelle Deane was recognized as an outstanding community volunteer and an inspiration to us all.

In 1996 Estelle came to our board, which was then the Project Home Advisory Board, from the board of our long-time parent organization, Cathedral Square Corporation. Estelle has been extremely active in many other non-profits during these years and yet she always found the time to offer her support and unwavering commitment to HomeShare Vermont.

Estelle's dedication to HomeShare Vermont is evidenced by the many hours she has given us and the multiple roles to which she gave her time. She served as president of our Board and has literally served on all of our committees at one time or another.

Estelle brings to each of these tasks a sense of dedication, considerable energy, wisdom and absolute dependability. She inspires all of us with her compassion, spirit and spunk. All of us have been blessed to experience not only her talent and skills, but also her warmth, sense of humor, wonderful laugh and charm.

In recognition of Estelle's incredible contributions to HomeShare Vermont during her sixteen year tenure, the Board of Directors is pleased to have elected Estelle Deane to the position of our first Board Member Emeriti. **Many Thanks Estelle!**



Discovering Vermont Together

Bernice moved to Vermont last year to be nearer her daughters and grandkids. She settled in quickly finding friendships and partners for weekly bridge games but found that rural Colchester felt very isolated in the winter. Bernice decided to look into homesharing for added presence in the house and maybe someone to share a meal or swim together in Lake Champlain in the summer.

HomeShare Vermont found the right match in Susan. Also new to Vermont, Susan relocated from Maine to start a graduate program at Saint Michael's College. Susan was in transition after the company where she worked for nearly 20 years eliminated her position. Since her grown children were out of the house, Susan decided it was the right time to pursue her passion to teach English as a second language. She came to HomeShare Vermont looking for an affordable place to live while she studied at SMC.

Bernice recalls the unusual start to their homeshare. "The day Susan arrived from Maine to move in

I ended up being in the hospital. Someone else might have run the other way, but Susan stayed and pitched right in! She took care of my dogs!" Bernice is back at

home and doing well. She enjoys having an extra hand with little things like cleaning up the yard, getting the mail and taking out the garbage. More than anything, though, it's nice to have someone around "just in case." Bernice speaks fondly of her wonderful, attentive children who are always there for her. She knows that it gives them peace of mind to know she is not alone. "I am so pleased to have Susan here. She's neat and clean and easy to be around. There are lots of pluses. I would absolutely recommend homesharing."

Susan is grateful that homesharing has provided her a safe, beautiful place to live during a period of transition in her life. "Bernice has blessed my life by opening her home to me; I, in turn, want to be a blessing and help to her in any way I can." 🏠



Susan and Bernice (and dogs Ginger and Rascal)

Photo by Karen Pike

Homes Available

If you know of someone looking for a great place to live, here are just a few of the homes we currently have available. If you know someone who would like to share their home, send them our way!

- Share a cozy Milton home with a woman in her early 90s who is interested in genealogy, playing cards, cooking and conversation. Seeking a tidy, female "homebody" to provide evening companionship and night-time presence, as well as help with errands and cook 3-4 meals/week in exchange for housing at no cost.
- Share a spacious Salisbury home with a woman in her 50s who enjoys healthy cooking, travel and walking her dogs. Just 10 minutes from Middlebury. \$400/month; utilities negotiable. Must be dog- and cat-friendly.
- Having just celebrated her 90th birthday, this Burlington senior is looking for the right person to share conversation, help with housekeeping, and give her peace of mind by being there at night. Baking and going out for lunch are her favorite hobbies. \$200/month, including utilities. Internet can be added at a homesharer's expense.
- An active South Burlington woman in her 30s with Down syndrome is seeking a housemate to do activities together, give schedule reminders, and encourage healthy eating. Pay no rent—just a share of utilities—in exchange for 15 hours per week of support. An upbeat female with some evening and weekend availability would be ideal. Must be cat-friendly.



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United Way of
Chittenden County



HomeShare Vermont: bettering the lives of elders and people with disabilities by helping them remain in their homes. We match them with people who are looking for affordable housing and/or caregiving opportunities.

Inns Raffle Tickets Available December 1

The HomeShare Vermont Inns Raffle will kick off December 1! By entering the raffle you could win a stay at one of Vermont's best country inns, hotels, or bed and breakfasts. Tickets will be 1/\$10, 3/\$25, and 15/\$100. Our goal is to raise \$11,000 to support our homesharing and caregiving programs. Below is a note from last year's winners who recently enjoyed the stay she won at Echo Lake Inn.



"We had a wonderful time at Echo Lake Inn in Ludlow. Here we are with Inn owner and wonderful host Laurence. Our room was so cozy with a big jacuzzi and gas fireplace. Breakfast, cooked to order each morning by Laurence himself, was just wonderful. Hiking and canoeing in the area was perfect and we really enjoyed the outdoors (we even saw a bald eagle as we canoed at Napp Pond). Thanks to HomeShare and Echo Lake Inn for coordinating and participating in such a worthwhile fundraising event!" –GERRY AND ROSE FEENAN

To purchase tickets visit our website at:
www.HomeShareVermont.org or call us at 802-863-5625