

Finding a *Life-Changing* Match

Flora, 89, is an upbeat, outgoing woman who came to HomeShare Vermont because she no longer felt safe living alone in her St. Albans home and needed help with everyday tasks. Flora had been living alone for seven years following the death of her husband. She lives in a warm home with interesting collectibles displayed throughout, but with limited mobility, it became difficult to keep up on cleaning all her treasures.

Angel moved to Vermont from North Carolina to be closer to her daughter and her grandchildren after caring for her brother for some years following a stroke that left him disabled. Angel was looking for a peaceful home convenient to her grandchildren and wanted to live with someone who was “happy with her.”

Both Flora and Angel found exactly what they were looking for. “I love her company. She’s just so good to me. It’s amazing. I couldn’t have asked for a nicer, better, more caring person,” Flora said. “Is that not sweet? How could you not be good to anybody who says that?” Angel added.



Angel and Flora

Photo by Karen Pike

Angel does the vacuuming, dusting, laundry, cooking, some of the shopping, and helps take care of Flora’s cat, Felix. “She does too much I think. I can’t make her sit down,” Flora joked. In exchange, Angel benefits from a rent-free situation within 10 minutes of her grandchildren, which is more than she could ask for. Angel also appreciates how much Flora is interested in Angel’s grandchildren. And when Angel’s daughter-in-law was having a baby, Flora was just as nervous.

Joking around has become the centerpiece of their relationship. The two admit that they crack each other up constantly. They are two very different people, Angel, the southern gentlewoman and Flora, the opinionated New Englander. Angel calls Flora her advisor, who is helping Angel stand up for herself more.

HomeShare also found exactly what Flora needed in order to remain in her home. Flora’s only nearby relative is a grandson in Burlington. Flora believes that without Angel, she would have to move to a nursing home, which she doesn’t want to do. But with only one functional arm and mobility issues from hip and knee replacements, she likely would not have a choice. Thankfully, she says, she now has an Angel.

Dear Friends,

Homesharing is about people helping each other. It is a common-sense approach to meeting the needs of two people at once.

This past year HomeShare Vermont helped 202 Vermonters experience the benefits of homesharing. As our program expands into central Vermont, we need your support more than ever to help meet the growing need for homesharing. We have an amazing team of staff and volunteers ready to assist more people this upcoming year!

Please give the gift of safety, happiness and affordable housing to our neighbors by supporting HomeShare Vermont. Help us to grow and expand our services to help even more Vermonters in 2020. Thank you for your ongoing support and best wishes in the New Year,

Kirby Dunn, Executive Director



HomeShare Happenings
November 2019

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COMINGS & GOINGS

One of the great strengths of HomeShare Vermont has been the people. We seem to attract the most amazing volunteers, board members and staff, all of whom work tirelessly for this unique organization. While it is bitter-sweet to say goodbye to great friends, we welcome our newest staff and board members.

Thank You Holly!

After 10 years as Office Manager, Holly Reed decided it was time to retire! In true Holly fashion she not only gave us a year's notice, she timed her leaving to be best for training a new person. Holly brought a depth of experience to HomeShare from her years in nursing, with the VNA, the Foster Grandparents Program and the United Way. At HomeShare she took the organization to a new level, improving all of our data systems, assuring our events ran smoothly and so much more. Everyone agrees that HomeShare Vermont would not be the strong organization we are today if it were not for Holly's incredible skills, her calm focus and thoughtfulness.



Photo by Karen Pike

Welcome Meg!

This year at our Annual Meeting in October, the Board of Directors elected Meg Pond to a three-year term on the Board. Meg joins the Board with a long career in affordable housing, housing management, financing and development. In addition, she had been on the Advisory Council of Project Home, the predecessor of HomeShare Vermont, in the 1990's! We are thrilled to have her expertise and enthusiasm on the Board as we move into our next phase of growth.



Photo by Karen Pike

Thank You Diana!

Diana Cotter has served HomeShare Vermont as a staff volunteer in Addison County for the past 10 years. A former educator from Los Angeles, Diana shared her time and energy after retiring in Vermont to interview new homeshare participants, support existing matches and host numerous volunteer meetings!



Photo by Karen Pike

Welcome Joyce!

We are thrilled to announce that Joyce Touchette joined the HomeShare staff in September as the new Office Manager. Most recently, Joyce was the Executive Director at the Converse Home where she had worked since 2008. Prior to that, she was Facilities Manager with the VNA from 1993. "This job is very appealing to me for many reasons, not the least of which is that it offers the chance to lend my skills to further a wonderful mission," Joyce noted.



Photo by Karen Pike

HomeShare staff: Joyce, Kathy, Kirby, Aaron R., Amy, Aaron G.

Welcome Aaron G!

Aaron Guman joined the HomeShare Vermont staff in November as a Case Manager in our new Montpelier office serving the central Vermont area. Aaron had worked for the past four years at Home Share Now. His work included intake, outreach and making and supporting homesharing matches, which he will be doing in our new office!

Thank You Kate!

Anyone who knows Kate Baldwin knows what a powerhouse she is. For the past 9 years, Kate has led our fundraising efforts on the Board. She graciously coaxes everyone she meets to support HomeShare Vermont and leads by example. While on the board, Kate also headed up board recruitment efforts. She regularly reminded us all of what's on the "to do" list, but most importantly, she focused on celebrating our successes and always acknowledged everyone for their help.



Photo by Karen Pike

Celebrating 10 Years Together

It takes a truly special homeshare match to navigate nearly a decade of living together, but that's what Barbara and Elizabeth have done in Barbara's home in Burlington's New North End. Elizabeth has no plans on leaving and said she doesn't want Barbara living alone or to have to "break in" a new housemate.

Now 88, when Barbara originally came to HomeShare Vermont, she didn't want to live alone. She also doesn't drive, so someone willing to take her to the grocery store or other outings was beneficial. While Barbara and Elizabeth have their own hobbies, they share enough interests that they've formed a strong bond. They go out to dinner and the movies, enjoy craft fairs and the farmers market, and both love a good cider donut. They recently took a painting on tile class together. They've also done some traveling, including a trip to Mt. Rushmore, and two years ago they went to New York City around Christmas time.

Barbara remains active by volunteering at the Chamber of Commerce one day a week but gave up ushering at the Flynn a few years ago because it was too much standing. Barbara likes how Elizabeth keeps her up to date on what's occurring in Vermont and is a big helper with Julian, the 15-pound rescue cat, who likes to go for walks.

Now in their 10th year living together, they both agree their match has been successful because they both try to accommodate each other. It also helps that Elizabeth isn't expected to always join Barbara if Barbara would like to do something on her own. Along with companionship and rides, Elizabeth contributes a small amount for rent and is a conscientious and caring presence in Barbara's home.



Photo by Karen Pike

Elizabeth and Barbara

Elizabeth's favorite part about living with Barbara is that she gets to come home to a comfortable home and relax. She feels like homesharing should be a good option for more people. "I've told a lot of people about HomeShare Vermont. If I were a UVM grad student or doing my residency here, this would be nice to come home to," Elizabeth said.

20 Years of Volunteering & Still Going Strong

In 1998, Julie Burger Pierson and her husband retired back to her home state of Vermont. Having volunteered all her adult life, she was naturally looking for volunteer opportunities. Hoping to engage her clinical social work skills and simply have the pleasure of giving back to the community, HomeShare Vermont was the perfect match. "The organization and group of colleagues offers a challenging and fulfilling experience like none other," according to Julie.

For the past 20 years, Julie has volunteered 5-10 hours a week working directly with HomeShare hosts and guests. Julie and 12 other Staff Volunteers interview clients, introduce potential matches and provide ongoing support throughout the entire process and once a match is made. Being a Staff Volunteer at HomeShare has

enabled Julie to utilize professional social work skills "without all the paperwork."

Julie has also served on HomeShare Vermont's board of directors. Although her least favorite task is fundraising, she does it with gusto because she knows it's important for the organization. Her boundless energy for volunteering is also shared with Habitat for Humanity, Hinesburg's Affordable Housing Committee and her church. For Julie, it's about giving back. She feels fortunate and this motivates her to give back to the world in a variety of ways.



Julie retired from the board this year but will continue as a Staff Volunteer. Her skills and input are priceless to HomeShare Vermont. Thank you, Julie!

Holiday Appeal!

HomeShare Vermont: Improving lives and communities
by bringing Vermonters together to share homes.



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

SAVE
the
DATE

For an **Open House**
at our new office in Montpelier!

WHEN: Tuesday, January 28 from 1:00-3:00pm

WHERE: 149 State Street

WHAT: Have refreshments, meet our staff,
and learn more about homesharing.

Please RSVP at (802) 863-5625



Make **Homesharing**
Your New Year's
Resolution!

In 2020, do you want to:

Save money

Eat better

Feel happier

Feel safer

**Find a better place to live, or
Simply help someone else?**

If so, consider homesharing!
Let us help you find just the right match.

Call us at (802) 863-5625 or visit our website at
www.HomeShareVermont.org
to complete an application.