



Forming an Instant Bond

Not everyone makes it to 96 with a smile on their face, but Beverly exudes a positive energy that she credits to her genes and her upbringing in the Northeast Kingdom. Her four children worried about her living alone in the rural Colchester home and wanted to make sure someone was there in case of an emergency, so they turned to HomeShare Vermont to find Bev a responsible housemate.

They found that in Meg, a semi-retired 64-year-old, who has worked professionally in everything from nursing and caregiving capacities to catering. Meg exudes warmth and has a lively, upbeat personality. Bev could probably get along with anyone, but she and Meg knew it was a match right away. The two family-oriented women enjoy watching Jeopardy and old movies, listening to good music, and drinking the same tea.

Having gone ziplining for her 90th birthday, Bev doesn't



Photo by Karen Pike

Meg and Beverly

hesitate to try new experiences! Meg and Bev like planning meals together. Meg enjoys cooking, and that's the biggest help for Bev because by late afternoon she's tired.

Along with cooking, Meg keeps the kitchen tidy, takes care of the trash, recycling, and compost, picks up the mail and newspaper, completes little tasks around the house and contributes financially to utilities.

However, the cherry on top of the match is Meg's cat, Mattie. Bev loves cats but can't take care of one on her own, so this situation is perfect. And Mattie loves Bev, too. You'll frequently find Mattie sleeping near Bev's head. "It's kind of an extra bonus. I love cats," Bev said.

The situation is also perfect for Meg, who, nearing retirement age, realized she wouldn't be able to afford her Burlington apartment much longer. When the pandemic hit, she thought it was an ideal time to downsize. Having learned about HomeShare Vermont's program from her days working at Cathedral Square, Meg applied in order to find an affordable place to live.

"My mother is gone, but living here with Beverly, I kind of feel like I get to live with my mother again. It's just nice to live with somebody who has the wisdom of years. It's a real gift," Meg said.

Dear Friends,

As some of you may recall, last April we had to postpone our 4th Annual **An Evening of Storytelling** event due to the pandemic. While it may not be safe to gather just yet, we have decided we all need an evening to laugh, celebrate and welcome the spring that is on its way! Which is why, this year, we are offering an online live hour of stories and music to warm our souls. The theme for the evening is appropriately "A Shot in the Arm!"

This will be a free event with many people donating their time and talents to bring us all together. Sue and Kevin will again be headlining the event. RETN will be filming live from the Double E performance space in Essex. We are pleased that all of our wonderful sponsors from last year are with us again this year! See inside this newsletter for more details!

We hope you will join us on April 14th for a fun evening of storytelling and live music.

Stay safe,
Kirby Dunn



HomeShare Happenings
March 2021

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Have You Considered Homesharing?

Below are just a few of the homes we currently have available to share. If you know someone looking for a place to live and able to help someone else, please send them our way. Our application is on our website and it is free to apply. Background checks, references and in-depth interview required. Most homes are no new pets, no smoking, with no security deposits.

Adamant: Beautiful, older farmhouse to share w/ independent artist in her 60s. Seeking neat & tidy housemate to help w/household chores & provide a bit of companionship. Shared BA. \$300, all inc. Must be cat-friendly!



Burlington: Share a home w/ a woman in her 70s interested in classical music & travel. Prepare 3-4 meals/week, share companionship, & help around the house. \$200/mo. Private BA, shared kitchen. Some experience with memory loss ideal but not necessary. Due to health concerns, seeking housemate with limited in-person interaction outside of home.

Burlington: Woman in her 70s who enjoys swimming, meditation, and the arts, seeking female housemate to share a home that's a short walk to the bike path & lake. Private BA; shared kitchen.

Ferrisburgh: Enjoy a peaceful rural setting, sharing a farmhouse w/ artist in her 70s who enjoys jazz & folk music. Provide assistance w/ organization projects (8 hrs/wk) in exchange for reduced rent of \$400/mo. Must be pet-friendly! Shared BA.



Johnson: Share a newer rural home w/ active, professional couple. \$550/mo. plus occas. help with pet care. Private BA.

Montpelier: Lovely home, walkable to downtown, to share w/active senior gentleman looking for companionship & help w/ household chores. Shared BA. \$400/mo.

Orwell: Musical senior gentleman with a home to share 25 min. to Middlebury. \$300/mo. plus light help w/ snow removal & companionship. Must be dog-friendly!

Randolph: Share a home w/ woman in her 90's seeking a companion to help w/ household chores, snow removal and light gardening. \$300/mo. + small utility share. Shared BA. Cat considered!

Salisbury: Share a home with a woman in her 90s. Seeking a cat-friendly female housemate to provide companionship, cooking 3x/week & help w/ housekeeping. Minimal rent. No add'l pets/no smoking. Shared BA.



So. Burlington: Active woman in her 40s with Down syndrome who enjoys sports, crafts & family time. Pay no rent (small utils. share) in exchange for cooking 1-2 x/week, sharing housekeeping & companionship. Shared BA.

So. Burlington: Comfortable townhouse to share with a woman in her 70s interested in VPR, art & theater. Reduced rent of \$200/mo. in exchange for errands, light gardening, housekeeping & daily dog-walking. No add'l pets/no smoking.

Waitsfield: Seeking companionable female to share a cozy home w/senior needing help w/grocery shopping, occas. transportation & simple meal prep. Private BA, shared kitchen. Minimal rent.

...And many more!



It Takes a TEAM

Years ago, Thelma, who is now a feisty 91-year-old, made her daughter Marie promise that she would remain in her Brandon home for as long as possible. A nursing facility was off the table. But when Thelma began suffering memory loss, Marie knew it would take a team to fulfill that promise, especially with her living more than an hour away.

Four days a week, home health aides come in to make sure Thelma exercises and eats her lunch. Marie helps out and spends quality time with Thelma Tuesday afternoons and Wednesday mornings. Thelma's son and daughter-in-law live next door so they can regularly check-in and watch out for any deviation from Thelma's daily routines. But they aren't in Thelma's house at night, so Marie turned to HomeShare Vermont in order for the family to achieve some peace of mind.

"We've surrounded mom with enough helpers now that I don't feel so stressed being up in South Burlington because they can let me know if there's something wrong. We're all communicating with each other in order to keep Mom's quality of life the best that it can be," Marie said.

When Anna interviewed with HomeShare Vermont, it was clear right away what a compassionate and warm com-

panion she would be. Anna, a 24-year-old licensed nursing assistant and med tech, moved into Thelma's upstairs living space that Marie renovated specifically so Thelma could homeshare. Anna, a self-described homebody, feels the match is perfect because Thelma is also quiet but with a spunky flair, and Thelma's family has been extremely supportive and generous.

In return for a private living area and an affordable rent, each morning Anna makes sure Thelma has her hearing aids, eats breakfast, and is safe. Anna also provides a safety presence at night when she returns home from work. She usually does a cooking project with Thelma once a week and likes to work on knitting projects while she visits with her. They always sit on the sun porch and "watch the world go by" as Thelma says.

Since Thelma's grandchildren and great grandchildren cannot visit due to COVID-19, Anna's companionship is especially important to the family. "For me, that was a big load off my shoulders because someone else would be in the house. It has been a Godsend for me to have a companion in the house for my mother even though she will tell you she is pretty independent. But at times when Mom's needed something, Anna has been there," Marie said.



Thelma and Anna

Photo by Karen Pike

An Evening of Storytelling

Rescheduled (from 2020), Reformatted (online but still live)
Pandemic Edition

This Year's Story Theme: A Shot in the Arm
Wednesday, April 14, 2021 7-8 PM



Storytellers: Moth award-winning storytellers Sue Schmidt and Kevin Gallagher will again headline the event along with some HomeShare stories interspersed.

Music: Live music by *The Brevity Thing*. Dave Ball (guitar, harp), Jom Hammack (mandolin), Steve Goldman (upright bass). This will be filmed live before a small audience of masked, socially distanced tellers, musicians, film crew members and staff at the Double E in Essex.

Cost: Free! Donations welcome.

You can view this **live, online** but you must register ahead of time so we can send you the link!

You can register directly on our website or call us at our office.

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

ROCKER RAFFLE!

Would you like to win a beautiful Vermont Folk Rocker designed by artisan Jim Geier? Simply donate \$100 or more to HomeShare Vermont between March 1 and May 31 and you will be automatically entered into the raffle!

This Shaker inspired chair was developed out of a desire for a simple classic aesthetic in 1974. The design has been well tested throughout the years, resulting in a hand-crafted rocking chair with a rich wood texture of the highest quality, intended to last for generations.

The rocker's seat and back conforms to your body. The all-wood seat and back feel like a quilted cushion because of the lively support of interlocking blocks that are suspended through the frame with nylon rope.



As a result, you will relax in exquisite comfort. Your back will love it! The arms are designed with knitting and holding babies in mind and the placement of the arms makes getting up easy.

The chair being raffled is cherry-finished and comes with an adjustable cushioned headrest is valued at over \$1,500.

Donations can be made on our website using Network for Good, our online fundraising partner.

The fine print... HomeShare Staff and board members cannot be entered into the drawing. Winners from outside of Vermont will have to pay for delivery charges.

Thank you for supporting HomeShare Vermont.