

PROVIDING *Stability* THROUGH *Life's Changes*

Nancy and Ken have been married for over 50 years. Nancy, an artist and retired teacher, and Ken, a retired engineer, have deep roots in Vermont. In fact, they have visited all 251 towns, and Nancy created a book of paintings to capture these adventures. A few years ago, Nancy noticed Ken's Alzheimer's disease was progressing. He enjoyed country living too much to move from their rural Williston home. However, Nancy was feeling overwhelmed by the big house, and Ken seemed challenged by the 21 acres of outdoor work on their property.

So, Nancy and Ken turned to HomeShare Vermont to find a compatible housemate who could help with home maintenance, provide companionship and some rental income.

Jason, a sociable man in his 40's, new to Vermont and going through a divorce, came to HomeShare Vermont in search of affordable housing. HomeShare staff thought Jason would be great company for Ken and Nancy.

When they all met, the conversation was filled with laughter, covering topics from poetry, politics, family, and their memories of international experiences. "It was like two

books that were opening up and they had similar chapters," Nancy said of that meeting.

The day after, the three agreed to start a two-week trial, during which Jason's ex-wife said she hadn't seen him smile that much in a year and a half. Nancy felt the same way since learning of Ken's diagnosis. "Jason is so considerate and thoughtful, and he really tunes into how Ken is feeling in the moment. They often end up in a silly word-play that has us all laughing," Nancy said.

Eventually Ken realized the property needed too much care, so they began looking to downsize. Last fall, they found a new home in Williston that had a mother-in-law unit downstairs, and it only

felt natural to invite Jason to move with them.

After about two years together as a homeshare match, Nancy and Ken's needs changed once again and Jason was there to ease the transition. Nancy and Ken tapped into their long-term care insurance to hire day-time companionship, so Nancy could have a break and Ken could receive some stimulation beyond his computer. Since the insurance didn't cover car rides, Jason now uses his day off from work to take Ken on adventures, which he loves, and it also saves Nancy and Ken from using up the insurance too quickly. And providing the extra help lowers Jason's rent, so it's a win-win for both sides.



Nancy, Jason & Ken

Photo by Karen Pike

The Year of Starts & Stops

Understandably, this has been a challenging year for homesharing. Many more people came to us in desperate need of housing. However, sharing one's home during a pandemic is something that most people were not comfortable with. The year started with very few new homesharing matches. Once vaccinations began, applications increased. We found that most of those looking to share their homes wanted only vaccinated homesharers, and they were few and far between until late spring.

For the 191 people who did homeshare this year, their outcomes were dramatic and life altering (see back page). Thank you to all the volunteers, homesharing participants, and supporters who have stood by us this year.

Stay healthy,
Margaret Cicchetti, Board President





Annual Report
July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021

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Thank You Peter!

Most recently, Peter Cameron joined the HomeShare board of directors in 2012. Prior to this, he was an advisory board member when we were known as Project Home from 1995-2000. Peter knows first-hand of the benefits of the homesharing. In 1992, he found himself homeless after dramatic personal and professional life changes. At the time, a friend of Peter's suggested he homeshare. Soon after applying, Peter was matched with "Monty" who was able to stay in her Jericho home through the end of her life, thanks in part to Peter's help. Sharing a home with Monty enabled Peter to start a new life, new career, and provided a safe and comfortable home for his children during a difficult time of transition. "Homesharing changed my life, and I became committed to giving back," Peter explained. "Today, hearing the wonderful stories of matched participants which start all board meetings reminds me of the struggles and opportunities people face every day and of my good fortune in finding HomeShare Vermont." We hope to have Peter again rejoin the board in the not-too-distant future! Thank you, Peter, for ALL you have done and continue to do for HomeShare Vermont!



The Polly Rowe Society: *A Legacy of Caring*

Thanks to bequests received from Polly Rowe, Estelle Deane and others, HomeShare Vermont has been able to seed a growing endowment fund to generate a modest annual income for HomeShare Vermont. It also provides assurance that HomeShare can weather the inevitable ups and downs of the economy as well as the ability to make wise programmatic decisions when opportunities arise. Our current



endowment of \$1,272,280 is the combination of these bequests, some targeted donations, and a strong investment history.

HomeShare friends have told us of their plans to include HomeShare Vermont in their will or estate. We acknowledge the wonderful contributions of these and future donors with the Polly Rowe Society, in memory of one of our founders.

Members of the Polly Rowe Society

Becky & Stewart Arnold
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David Porteous
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David Ryan
James Sunday*
Anonymous *(2)
* Gifts Received

Please join us to assure that HomeShare Vermont is here to help future generations share housing and create friendships. For more information or to let us know of a gift you have made, please contact Kirby Dunn at (802) 863-5625.

Waiting for that *Right Fit*

Two and a half years ago, Brenda underwent major spinal surgery and is still working on getting her strength, balance, and stamina back. Following her surgery, she struggled to bend over and realized she could use some help with taking care of her 1800's plank house in Plainfield, and some companionship would also be nice. So, she turned to HomeShare Vermont to find a compatible housemate.

While Brenda knew she could use help around the house, she didn't want to share her home with just anybody. She wanted to find the right fit. Kristin, a free-spirited artist in her early 50's who moved to Vermont from California following a divorce, felt the same way during her search for housing.

When they were introduced by HomeShare staff last year, they were so worried about making the wrong choice that they initially said no about each other. After meeting, Brenda thought she wanted someone around more. Kristin was afraid that her work and commute time would limit her availability, and she also needed time for herself to paint. But within a day, Brenda and Kristin both experienced "ah-ha" moments and realized they really liked each other. Now they couldn't imagine not living together. "I like Kristin because she's just a delightful spirit. For me, a lot of it is just being able to feel her energy in the house," Brenda said.

The two started a garden together this year, and Kristin helped clear out the basement and has brought several bounties to local thrift shops as Brenda is trying to downsize for her future move into senior housing. "My fear was that someone

would be judgmental and wonder why this is such a mess or why I was keeping that. Every time we've done work like that, Kristin's just been so supportive. She's always saying the right things. It's really been wonderful," Brenda said.

Kristin had similar fears about living with someone she didn't know, which is probably why the two get along so well. "I think we just heart connect. When I think of Brenda, she has a kind, non-judgmental spirit herself. It just comes down to the fact that I accept her vulnerabilities and she accepts mine," Kristin said.

Kristin's priority initially was simply to find more affordable housing since her job was rewarding, but not the highest paying. Since she's gotten to know Brenda, the value of homesharing goes well beyond the affordability aspect. "It's really peaceful. I always feel at home here. I come home and I just breathe a sigh of relief."

And while this homeshare match will come to an end when Brenda moves into senior housing, they plan on keeping this friendship going. That will also make Brenda's dog, Tara, and cat, Buddha, very happy.



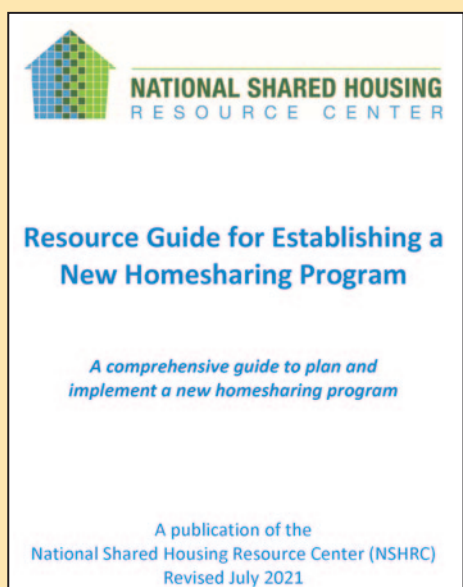
Kristin, Brenda and Tara the dog

Photo by Aaron Retherford

Sharing Our Expertise

This year, HomeShare Vermont and the National Shared Housing Resource Center published the 2nd Edition of *A Resource Guide for Establishing a New Homesharing Program*. HomeShare Vermont receives dozens of calls each month from people around the country wanting information about starting a program. This resource guide is an attempt to share our knowledge and to help to expand homesharing services throughout the country.

The resource guide is available for \$100 and can be ordered online at www.nationalsharedhousing.org



FY21 Accomplishments

What We Do:

Homesharing is a simple idea where two or more people share a home to their mutual benefit. The home can be an apartment, condominium, mobile home, or traditional single-family house. A person offers a private bedroom and shared common area in exchange for rent, help around the house, or a combination of the two. Every homesharing arrangement is unique; it depends on the needs, time, interests, and abilities of the people involved. It differs from a typical roommate situation because, at its core, it is about two people helping each other.

How We Do It: Our Screening & Matching Process

Processed **435** applications
Made over **1,200** reference checks
Performed over **2,000** background checks
Interviewed **265** new customers
Facilitated **108** in-home introductions
Resulting in **191** matched participants!

Who We Served:

Those Who...	Shared Their Home	Found Housing
# of Individuals	96	95
Age Range	27-98	21-79
Average Age	72	51
% Low Income (HUD)	71%	89%

Volunteers Play a Unique Role

This year, HomeShare Vermont benefitted from the assistance of nine amazing staff volunteers! Working closely with Amy Jelen, Homesharing Coordinator, our staff volunteers assist with everything from interviewing new applicants to creating matches. While our caseload was a little smaller this year due to the pandemic, staff volunteers played a crucial role ensuring

that our process ran smoothly and efficiently. With COVID-19, the volunteers had to adapt to new safety protocols and using more technology in their work. Volunteers have been a cornerstone of our service delivery since we opened our doors in 1982 and we hope to expand our staff volunteer base into central Vermont in the upcoming year. Thank you, staff volunteers!



HomeShare Vermont volunteers: Joan, Julie, Connie, Marty, Cathy, & Radetta.
Not pictured: Rene, Judy and Barbara.

Photo by Karen Pike

FY21 Financial Report

July 1, 2020–June 30, 2021



This year was anything but normal and we are grateful to our funders and donors for our continued support. COVID had repercussions for us financially. For part of the year, we stopped creating new homesharing matches altogether, and when we did start to create new matches, many people were reluctant to live in a shared housing environment. An open staff position was not

filled, and this savings enabled us to end the year in the plus column. Also of note, this year HomeShare Vermont received two substantial bequests and an unexpected major gift that we were able to add to the Polly Rowe Fund, thus continuing to build an important income stream for HomeShare in the future. Thank you.

Brian Stark, Treasurer

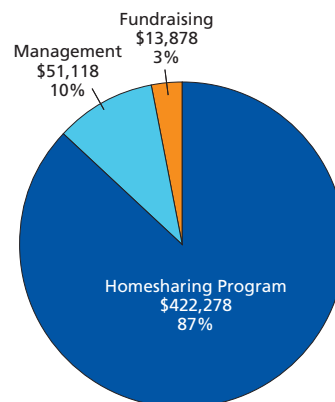
Income

State & Local Government	\$ 288,850
Contributions & events	193,154
United Way	20,094
Donated services	9,721
Match fees & Interest	9,279

Total revenue \$521,098

Complete Audited Financial Statements for FY21 are available upon request.

Expenses



Total expenses \$487,274

Net Assets increase \$33,824



Staff: Amy, Aaron, Kirby, Joyce and Kathy

Photo by Karen Pike

FY21 Cumulative Benefits of Homesharing

By sharing their homes, Homeshare Hosts received over \$220,000 in rental income to help them make ends meet. Homeshare Guests provided almost 25,000 hours of assistance to their Homeshare Host, helping with everything from yard-work to dog walking to sharing meals.

The average rent of a homesharing match in our program was only \$323/month with 27% of matches paying no rent at all. Using the difference between market rents and homeshare actual rents, it is estimated that Homeshare Guests saved over \$500,000 in rental expenses this year.

Individual Donors

Thank you to our donors at all levels of giving who have faithfully supported us this year (July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021).
* Signifies donations to the Polly Rowe Fund.

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If we have omitted anyone or included anyone who would prefer to be anonymous, it is unintentional, and we would appreciate your notifying the HomeShare Vermont office. Anyone who contributed after June 30, 2021 will be acknowledged in next year's annual report.

We wish to acknowledge Futura Design for the design of this Annual Report and HomeShare Vermont's other printed pieces.

Our programs and services are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, place of birth, ancestry, or national origin.



United Way of
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Contributions have been given in memory of:

John S. Barbour

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Stanley Burns, MD

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Thomas DiSilvio

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

FY21 HomeShare Vermont's Outcomes

We Are Better Off Together Than Alone!

Since 2001, HomeShare Vermont has conducted outcomes surveys with matched participants and the findings have consistently shown benefits to those sharing their homes (Homeshare Hosts) as well as to those who found housing (Homeshare Guests).

Our survey uses results-based accountability (RBA) methodology to assess whether matched participants benefited from our program and, if so, in what ways. This year we again surveyed participants in matches as of April 1, 2021 and we had an 88% response rate.

How Much?

Unduplicated # of Persons in Match	191
# of Housing Units Created	105 homes available to share
# of Service Hours Exchanged	25,000 hours of assistance to seniors & others

How Well?

HomeShare Average Match Length	692 days
Participant Satisfaction	93% very satisfied
	100% would recommend us to family or friends

Is Anyone Better Off?

Affordability of Housing	Average Rent: \$323
Ability of Seniors & Others to Stay Safely at Home	46% of those sharing their home reported they would not be able to live safely and comfortably at home without a homesharer
Improved Quality of Life: Those having someone live with them report they...	Feel Less Lonely: 83%
	Feel Happier: 83%
	Feel Safer in their Home: 81%
	Sleep Better: 51%
	Feel Healthier: 51%