



Happy Hinesburg Homeshare

When you enter the home of Brian and his mother, Gail, in Hinesburg, you're immediately struck by the sunny welcome you receive from your hosts and the open, airy kitchen. This is the place where so much interaction happens between the hosts and their homeshare guest, Addison.

Brian looked into homesharing when Gail started experiencing some memory issues. "When I was going to be away, I would ask friends or my daughters to come over and visit," Brian explained. "But I wanted something that was more consistent and someone who really understood Mom."

Brian tried finding someone on his own before turning to HomeShare Vermont. "I don't know how somebody would do this without HomeShare. Going your own path is really tough. HomeShare made it really easy."

Still, Brian and Gail turned down several possible matches until they met Addison. An outdoor education instructor in nearby Monkton, Addison shares Gail's background in teaching, something they both have a passion for. Gail and Brian felt an almost immediate connection with him.

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Addison loved the convenient location between work and friends, the opportunity to save money and to be part of a community. "I definitely like living in a social environment," he explained. "I was paying too much for a little apartment. It's nice being in a bigger house with a yard and porch and garage."

Addison was reluctant when he applied. "I was excited but apprehensive going into it," Addison said. "I didn't really know what I was getting into. But it's been so nice and super easy. It feels great to share the kitchen space and I can come and go at my own pace."



Photo by Karen Pike

Addison, Brian and Gail

Gail and Addison enjoy playing gin rummy, cooking, having dinner together and having cocktail hour. And talking about education.

Brian said, "I'll come into the kitchen and they're talking away, making dinner and I almost don't want to interrupt their evening." Those discussions can often last a couple of hours. Addison and Brian have also bonded over building and DIY projects and trail recommendations.

One concern Brian had about homesharing was if their guest would invite friends over and how that might be too noisy and disruptive for his mom. "Instead, he's had friends over and they're chatting with Mom about stuff and it's just a better social opportunity."

Gail says that discussing education with Addison keeps her motivated and she loves hearing what he's doing at school. Addison enjoys having Gail's wealth of experience in education as he works on getting his teacher's license.

Brian says that being picky in choosing the right "match" has been rewarding. "I was less concerned that we do this quickly than doing it right. Now, it feels like getting another family member."



HomeShare Happenings
June 2023

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Welcome Connor



Photo by Karen Pike

After an exhaustive search process, the HomeShare Vermont board of directors is pleased to announce the hiring of Connor Timmons who will be the organization’s new Executive Director. Connor is replacing Kirby Dunn, who is retiring after leading HomeShare Vermont for 23 years.

Connor’s passion is building intergenerational connections to further community wellbeing. Previously, Connor worked with young adults within the YMCA of Montreal and with children and families at the Common Ground Center in Vermont. He brings two decades of expertise in organizational leadership and collaborative management to the Executive Director role at HomeShare.

“I look forward to expanding on HomeShare Vermont’s innovative and holistic approach to mutual aid,” Connor said. He noted that HomeShare is making the fabric of Vermont’s communities stronger, one match at a time, and he’s thrilled to be part of it.

Connor will join the HomeShare team in September. He lives with his wife, Neily, and their two young children in Charlotte. Connor recently rekindled his love of hockey and tries to make it onto the ice at least once a week.

Welcome David



Photo by Karen Pike

We are fortunate to welcome David Ryan to our team of Staff Volunteers! David first learned about HomeShare Vermont when working at Champlain Valley Agency of Aging (now Age Well).

Explaining why he volunteers at HomeShare Vermont, David says, “Simply put, it is another way for me to support the efforts of an organization that provides one answer to the issue of affordable housing. Financially I have been a supporter of HomeShare for a number of years, but felt that I wanted to give my time. Thus far it has been a wonderful experience for me and given me real insight into struggles many people face regarding housing and the issues of aging in place.”

You might also have encountered David at Shelburne Museum, where he has been volunteering as a guide for the past 18 years.

Thank You Kathy



Photo by Karen Pike

For four years, Kathy Johnson has been a wonderful Case Manager with HomeShare Vermont, initially serving Franklin and Chittenden counties. When we added Central Vermont, Kathy pivoted to serve Lamoille, Washington and Orange counties. With her deep kindness, practical perspective and can-do attitude, she made many successful homesharing matches! Kathy will be retiring this summer to spend more time with family and friends.

“HomeShare Vermont has allowed me to serve the community in a direct and personal way,” Kathy said. “Hearing the amazing life stories, visiting homes, meeting extended family members—including pets—has been enjoyable and rewarding. I’ve also worked with amazing colleagues and volunteers who care deeply, work tirelessly, and laugh easily.”

Kathy will be greatly missed, and we wish her all the best.

2023 Staycation/Vacation Raffle *A Huge Success*

On April 20th we held an online live drawing for the 10 amazing prizes in the HomeShare Vermont Staycation/Vacation Raffle. The drawing was held at The Media Factory studio in Burlington. The Media Factory staff produced a professional, high-quality 30-minute video, which can be found on our website or our YouTube page.

We sold 711 tickets and raised over \$22,000 for our Homesharing Program, well above our \$15,000 goal.

To the right you'll find a list of the great prizes and the winners. Please consider supporting these generous businesses for your own Vermont staycation/vacation.

Many thanks to everyone who bought tickets, donated prizes or sponsored the raffle.



Prizes & Winners:

- ★ One-night stay at The Pitcher Inn and a \$200 gift certificate from the Warren Store.
Won by Suzanne Lourie
- ★ Two-night stay at the Middlebury Inn.
Won by Kerry Sangster
- ★ One-night stay at Lake Morey Resort.
Won by Lauren-Glenn Davitian
- ★ Three-night stay at Lake Champlain Cottages.
Won by Terry Buehner
- ★ A Night on the Town package with two tickets to see Samantha Bee at The Flynn and a \$100 gift certificate to A Single Pebble.
Won by Todd Sternbach
- ★ One-night stay at Hotel Vermont.
Won by Janice Black
- ★ A \$500 gift certificate for Amtrak.
Won by Jane Ropulewis-Shaw
- ★ Two-night stay at the Snow Farm Inn.
Won by Angelica McLennan
- ★ UVM Men's and Women's Basketball Tickets and a game-worn jersey.
Won by Samantha Elliott
- ★ Shopping Spree with gift certificates from The Warren Store, Gardener's Supply, Phoenix Books and Homeport.
Won by Erhard Mahnke



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



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Thank You Vermont Legislators!

As part of the discussions at the Statehouse focused on the need for affordable housing, Senator Kesha Ram Hinsdale, the chair of the Senate Housing Committee, invited HomeShare Vermont to testify on how to increase homesharing opportunities. We explained that our Central Vermont service area has much more potential, and we want to strengthen our service delivery in Central Vermont. This will include hiring new staff, recruiting new volunteers and increasing outreach efforts.

We will be looking to see what additional parts of the state we can serve based on the criteria outlined in the HomeShare Vermont strategic plan that we adopted last fall. In the plan, we established an aspi-

ration goal to expand our service area to cover the entire State of Vermont and offer the same personalized and comprehensive homesharing service to all Vermonters regardless of where they live.

In the FY24 budget, the Vermont Legislature appropriated \$200,000 to expand homesharing. We want to thank all the legislators who supported this effort and would like to acknowledge the work of Senators Kesha Ram Hinsdale and Jane Kitchel and Representatives Tom Stevens and Diane Lanpher for their efforts in increasing funding for HomeShare Vermont. A special shout out to long-time HomeShare supporter and statehouse regular Jessica Oski, who helped us follow what was happening with the legislation.