



A Great Social Investment

Sometimes, you leave home looking for happiness and the path of your life winds its way back to your beginnings.

Jane grew up on a farm in Cabot and left home at the age of 18. After spending decades away from her birthplace, she was able to acquire a piece of property at her ancestral home when she needed it.

But Jane knew she shouldn't live alone. "I have short-term memory problems," she explained. "It's very helpful to have somebody who gives me reminders when I forget things, keeps me informed about their schedule and is aware of my schedule and plans." Jane has also experienced housing insecurity and is glad to be able to share her home with another person in need of housing.



Tracy, Mandy and Jane

Photo by Ben DeFlorio

arrived in the spring. "I was looking for a place in the Marshfield, Plainfield, Cabot area to be close to the parks I work in," Tracy shared. "I particularly liked the idea that HomeShare paired people in a way that was more than just transactional. There is a sense of social investment. They took my needs into account – as well as the needs of the person who is offering the space – to make the best possible match."

Tracy helps Jane with a number of chores around the

home and property. "I shovel the snow and clean it off the roof. I haul the trash. When Jane needs help moving rocks on the property, I'll do that. And I clear out the Japanese knotweed, which is a losing battle, but I try. Somebody's got to fight the good fight."

"Having Tracy here every day helps me to stay on track," Jane added. "Just knowing she will be home later reminds me to eat and clean up afterwards."

The housemates take walks together, happily accompanied by Jane's dog, Mandy. Mandy adored Tracy as soon as she met her and loves having another human around.

Jane and Tracy are pleased with the match that HomeShare Vermont created. Jane said, "We think a lot alike and sometimes even make the same remark at the same time!" That happens frequently, especially when they're watching vintage TV shows that they believe have not aged particularly well.

"They did a really good job in matching us," Tracy said. "Better than anybody could have realized. And the case manager has been really communicative anytime I've had questions."

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Through HomeShare Vermont, Jane was matched with Tracy, who saw an ad on Front Porch Forum. The listing motivated Tracy to learn more about homesharing. "I read through everything on the website to learn exactly what the program was," Tracy said. "It made sense and I thought it might be good for me."

Tracy moved from Nebraska last year to take a job with Vermont State Parks in the Northeast Kingdom. She was provided with temporary accommodations, but knew she'd have to find somewhere else to live when the park staff



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THANK YOU, Amy Tarrant

HomeShare Vermont might not exist if not for Amy Tarrant’s generosity. Since 1995, HomeShare Vermont has received incredible support from Amy and the Amy E. Tarrant Foundation. Her gifts to HomeShare Vermont have totaled over \$1.3 million during that time, and she has given to us nearly every year since 1995! This includes a transformational gift that we received this year. Amy’s generosity is one of the reasons for our growth over the last three decades.

Amy has helped us with funding for operations and programming and she was our lead donor for our capital campaign in 2006. She has also made matching gifts to encourage others to donate to HomeShare.

In appreciation of her generous support, we have created the Amy Tarrant Program Fund. This fund will help to support HomeShare’s current service delivery efforts and, over time, will help us to expand our homesharing services to other parts of the state as outlined in our 2022 Strategic Plan.

Thank you, Amy, and best wishes for much joy in your retirement!

Welcome Ellen and Abi

HomeShare Vermont is pleased to welcome Ellen Flight and Abi Sessions as Staff Volunteers in Addison County.

For 24 years, Ellen was director of Songadeewin of Keewaydin, a residential

girls summer camp that specializes in wilderness canoe tripping. In total, she spent 43 years working at Keewaydin and served as president of the Vermont Camp Association for two decades. Ellen has also taught 7th and 8th graders English, social studies and general studies in Washington DC and Massachusetts.

Upon retiring in 2022, Ellen wanted to use the skills she developed over the years. “The more I learned about the great work of HomeShare Vermont and what was needed from volunteers, I saw how my skills in interviewing both families and staff for camp were a great

match,” Ellen said.

Abi is a retired early childhood and elementary school teacher, school librarian, and principal. She also served for nine years on the board of John Graham Housing and Services (for-

merly John Graham Emergency Shelter), which made her more aware of the struggle many individuals and families face in finding affordable housing.

Joining HomeShare Vermont is one way she feels she can “make a difference, one home at a time, for people in need of housing in Addison County. Making my first successful match was very satisfying. One person was able to remain in his home, and another person found a comfortable place to live.”

Abi and Ellen join our longtime Addison County volunteer Connie Kenna.



Ellen

Abi

Photos by Karen Pike

Welcome Wendy & Sarah



Wendy

Photo by Karen Pike

Please welcome HomeShare Vermont's two talented new case managers — Wendy Rowe and Sarah Hudak. Wendy will work in Grand Isle, Franklin, Chittenden and Addison Counties. And thanks to increased funding from the State of Vermont, Sarah's is a new position serving the Central Vermont counties of Lamoille, Washington and Orange.

Wendy has devoted her career to working in health and human services. Most recently, she has been a housing advocate in the Housing Advocacy Program at CVOEO. Prior to that, Wendy served in the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program at Vermont Legal Aid, where she advocated for residents in nursing homes and residential care communities.

"My experiences have ignited an interest in the complexities and challenges of aging in place and finding and sustaining affordable housing in Vermont," Wendy explained. When not at work, Wendy loves gardening, traveling and hiking with her dogs and spending time with her husband, Charlie, and with family and friends.



Sarah

Photo by Karen Pike

Sarah was an 8th grade language arts teacher in Denver for six years, worked for Teacher America and in oncology at a children's hospital.

She and her wife, Misha, live in Montpelier and are the parents of three children, including a pair of identical twins. They decided to move back to New England to be closer to family, having fallen in love with Vermont when they spent time here last summer.

"When I saw the job opening for a HomeShare Vermont case manager in Central Vermont, it spoke to me because we saw firsthand how difficult it is to find housing in Vermont," Sarah said. "Homesharing is a creative solution to our housing problem."

Sarah is originally from Connecticut and is a big UConn Huskies basketball fan. She played lacrosse at Tufts University and has a Masters in Education from the University of Colorado Denver.

On the Shoulders of Giants



Photo by Karen Pike

It has been a whirlwind Summer for us at HomeShare Vermont and we're ready for an active Fall. We've welcomed Wendy and Sarah to our amazing team of case managers; added more volunteers in Addison County; moved our Montpelier office and I was able to start my brief apprenticeship with Kirby as she handed over the reins and planned her

next chapter.

So far, I have been reminded just how much care and dedication the HomeShare team brings to the work they do on behalf of our guests and hosts. This group really does celebrate the pure joy of a match well made. I am humbled to support the staff wherever I'm needed and to guide us towards an expanded service area, so we can help more people experience the advantages of homesharing. There are so many!

I also want to extend my deepest thanks to Kirby Dunn, without whom this incredible organization, indeed this way of living, would surely not have reached the level of engagement and support it enjoys in our community. I speak for the thousands of people whose lives HomeShare has impacted when I say we are in your debt. Thank you, Kirby. We can't wait to see what you tackle next! — *Connor Timmons*

MOVING in Montpelier

This summer has seen damage and destruction in a number of Vermont towns due to the flooding from severe weather events. In Montpelier, many downtown businesses are still trying to re-open in the aftermath of the flooding. Alas, HomeShare Vermont's satellite office in Montpelier was also impacted by the heavy rainfall.

For that reason, we have moved our office to another location in Montpelier. The new office is at **28 Barre Street**, the former law office of Attorney Stephen J. Murphy. The entrance to the HomeShare office is around the right of the building on Downing Street.

The Montpelier office will be staffed by our two Central Vermont case managers — Anne Farley and Sarah Hudak. They can be reached at (802) 324-3842 or (802) 324-2899 and they would be happy to answer your questions about sharing your home.

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



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