

PARKS PLACE PRESS

PARKS PLACE COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTER / BELLOWS FALLS, VERMONT

VOLUME 16 ISSUE 1 / Spring 2011

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Our mission is to connect people with programs, resources and information.

44 School Street
Bellows Falls, VT 05101
802.463.9927

www.parksplacevt.org

My Experience as a Volunteer Receptionist

By Meaghan Holmes

Helping the community has always been something I was never really into. It was just never something I thought about. Then I moved to Vermont and that all changed. There was so much to do around here, so many people in need, and I just felt like I had to do something.

After working with the Department of Labor they set me up with a volunteer job. The best part was I got to choose where I wanted to volunteer. So I chose, well, where else? Parks Place! I had come here so many times for meetings with case workers that it just felt right. At the time I thought I knew this building like the back of my hand. Turns out...I wasn't even close. I never knew most of the things that happen here and I'm glad that I finally do.

When I began as a receptionist at Parks Place I was a little frightened. I had no idea what to do or who went where or anything. It was a little intimidating. There was so much more than just answering phones and transferring calls to the right people. Being able to talk to people and try to figure out what they need is a start. Sometimes they don't even know what they are looking for, and it really helps if you can try to understand them without getting frustrated.

Upping my people skills was just the start. Eventually I learned how to read the appointment book, answer phones without talking too fast, hit the right buttons to send



Parks Place volunteer receptionist Meaghan Holmes.

calls to the people needed, and even filing.

I have to say, I really regret not starting this sooner. Being here just this short time has taught me something special. I never actually noticed how much help I was bringing to others in the community and even to some of the other volunteers here at Parks Place. I have not met a person that wasn't kind. That was probably what really got me into this. Every person in this building is so approachable, kind and gives some kind of warmth. That's really what makes Parks Place what it is. I send my sincerest gratitude to every person in this building. I would like to thank you for making this time I had here at Parks Place the best in a life time.

A fundraiser for PARKS PLACE

GROWING GREAT FLOWERS by Henry Homeyer

Gardening Talk at Alyson's Orchard – Sunday, May 1 – see page 3

PARKS PLACE

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By
**BARBARA
TERNES,**
Director

Change at Parks Place

For almost three years we've been extremely fortunate that Robyn Weisel has led Parks Place's development efforts. She proved her worth over and over, raising the funds needed to sustain Parks Place. In an extraordinarily successful campaign led by Robyn, we raised enough additional funding to renovate our Carriage House. That expanded the amount of office space and modernized our technology (Parks Place boasts wireless internet now). We renovated the old garage, connecting it to our main building with a boardwalk. Yes Monopoly fans, Parks Place now has a Boardwalk, too!

Throughout this period more individuals came through the doors. More people found the programs and resources they need to move their lives in new directions. Education, training, alternatives to incarceration, substance abuse prevention and treatment, mental health counseling, financial assistance, employment and parenting classes—all this takes place in the new, improved Parks Place.

Robyn has left Parks Place to pursue other goals, and we will miss her. Margaret Grisczenkow has replaced her as the new Development Director. Look for Margaret's column in the next newsletter.

WANTED: New Members for TD Bank's Affinity Program

How it works:

- TD Bank will contribute a percentage of the annual balance in members' checking, savings, money market, CDs and/or retirement accounts.
- Visit any location to sign up your existing TD account or open a new one.
- Let a TD representative know that you want your account linked to Parks Place's Affinity Program #A1606. That's it. TD Bank will automatically keep track of percentages that are earned for Parks Place!
- Any TD Bank member is eligible; corporate, business, individual and even out-of-state. Please let friends and relatives know about this easy program that helps raise funds for Parks Place!
- Your confidentiality and anonymity will be not compromised.

Parks Place has joined TD Bank's Affinity Membership Program, which provides us the opportunity to earn annual cash contributions.

- It's **easy** to participate.
- There is **no cost** to contributors.
- And it **benefits** Parks Place.

For more information:

contact Margaret Grisczenkow – margaret@parksplacevt.org / 802.463.9927 x109

Garden Talk by Henry Homeyer

A fundraiser for PARKS PLACE

GROWING GREAT FLOWERS in Vermont & New Hampshire [Including Some Lesser Known Greats!]



Join us for an inspiring talk by noted garden writer and speaker, Henry Homeyer. He will discuss some of his favorite flowers, show slides of them, and explain what each needs to succeed. You'll also learn how to deal with pests and diseases without using chemicals!

SAVE THE DATE!

Sunday, May 1 / 3-5 pm*

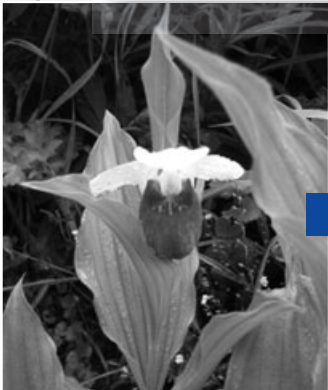
at Alyson's Orchard, Walpole NH

- Refreshments & Cash Bar
- Silent Auction: *Preview at 2:30 pm
> Art, Gardening Books & Supplies
- Admission by Donation



HENRY HOMEYER writes a weekly gardening column for newspapers around New England and is the author of 4 gardening books. These include: *The Vermont Gardener's Companion*, *An Insider's Guide to Gardening in the Green Mountain State* and his newest book, *Organic Gardening (Not Just) in the Northeast*, *A Hands-On Month-by-Month Guide* coming out in spring, 2011. Henry is a regular commentator for Vermont Public Radio and is a UNH master Gardener. He teaches "Sustainable Gardening" at Granite State College.

PARKS PLACE thanks our event sponsors:



Parks Place Welcomes New Board Members

ERIC ANDERSON

Born deep in the suburbs of New Jersey in the very swell town of Glen Ridge. I was first exposed to the wonders of northern New England through summer camp. With an NROTC scholar-



Eric Anderson with his son Rob and grandson Charlie.

ship I went to Dartmouth, graduating in 1960.

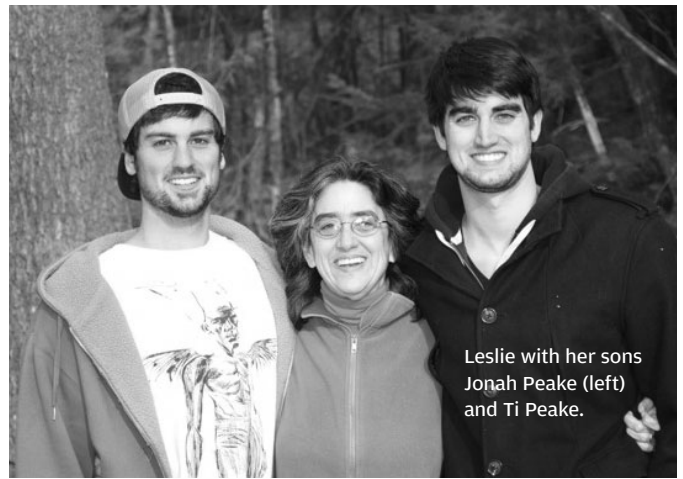
I spent three years on active duty and three years in the reserves with the Marine Corps. Since I had become a California resident while in the service, I attended one of the University's great and inexpensive law schools, graduating in 1966.

I was re-introduced to Vermont helping some friends who had bought the tiny ski area in Windham called Glebe Mountain Farm. The more time I spent in Vermont, the more I wanted to live here.

In 1969 I took a job with the law firm Fitts & Olson in Brattleboro and worked there into the nineties before working on my own in Manchester and then moving to Connecticut where I practiced in Greenwich. I closed my practice in Connecticut last year in order to return to Windham County. I am "of counsel" with Tom Costello in Brattleboro.

I live in Westminster and have two grown children, two grandchildren and one sweetheart.

Living and working in small communities gives each of us wonderful opportunities to contribute to the well-being of others, to really make a difference. Parks Place seems to be a valuable resource that I believe I can contribute to in order to help our neighbors deal with many of the issues all of us face from time to time.



Leslie with her sons Jonah Peake (left) and Ti Peake.

LESLIE GOLDMAN

Education has always been an important part of Leslie's life. She earned a BA in Biology, BSN in Nursing, a Master's in Nursing and then at 55, a Masters of Public Health. She has spent her professional life educating patients about health matters and her personal life learning about the world with her children, husband and friends. Her interest in educational environments and policy led to service on the Bellows Falls Union High School board for 15 years. She was on the Windham Northeast Supervisory Union Board

when establishing Parks Place was proposed and recognizing the importance to the community, supported it wholeheartedly.

As a member of the Rockingham Selectboard for 3 years, she had an opportunity to learn about the governance of a small town and was surprised to learn about the amount of work it takes to maintain the infrastructure and quality of life in a rural Vermont town.

"Parks Place is an organization that offers many opportunities for learning and growth to the individuals and families it serves. It is an honor to be a member of the board."

Helping Hand Counseling Center

A Group of Professionals to Help You by "Talking and Listening"

Five experienced therapists share an office at Parks Place where they meet with children, teens and adults. They do not judge you or your life experiences. They have experience treating Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), addictions, marital problems and divorce, learning disorders, oppositional youth and ADHD, to name but a few. They use a variety of approaches and work to match the approach to the client's needs. You may find yourself struggling to cope with changes, losses or overwhelming situations. Deciding to see a therapist shows strength and determination towards making your life better.

Phil Brubaker, LCMHC
802.257.4561

Sue Dennison, LCMHC
802.376.9977

Mike Earley, LCMHC
802.579.1857

Mark Kilgallon, LICSW
413.522.9158

Patty Stickney, LCMHC
802.299.8157

For information or an appointment, please contact the therapists at the phone numbers listed above.

Meet Allyson Wendt

New Outreach Specialist at Lead Safe Homes

Lead Safe Homes recently hired outreach specialist Allyson Wendt. Allyson will provide educational opportunities aimed at contractors, landlords, parents and others for whom lead is a concern.

"I've long been interested in creating and encouraging safe, sustainable housing," said Wendt. "Making people aware of lead hazards and helping them understand how to work around lead safely is a big part of that effort." In addition, Wendt will focus on educating parents of the risks of childhood lead poisoning. "Young children are particularly at risk for lead poisoning, the effects of which can be irreversible. By informing parents of the risks and

arming them with the knowledge they need to protect their families, we hope to decrease childhood lead poisoning in southeastern Vermont."

Allyson Wendt joins Lead Safe Homes after working as a managing editor for Environmental Building News, a green building publication produced in Brattleboro. She hopes that her knowledge of green building will complement Lead Safe Homes' mission to reduce lead poisoning in and create healthy home environments for young children.

Lead Safe Homes has been successfully addressing the problem of lead poisoning in southern Vermont since 2005. In 2010, the program



Allyson Wendt, new Outreach Specialist at Lead Safe Homes.

trained 400 individuals in lead safe work practices.

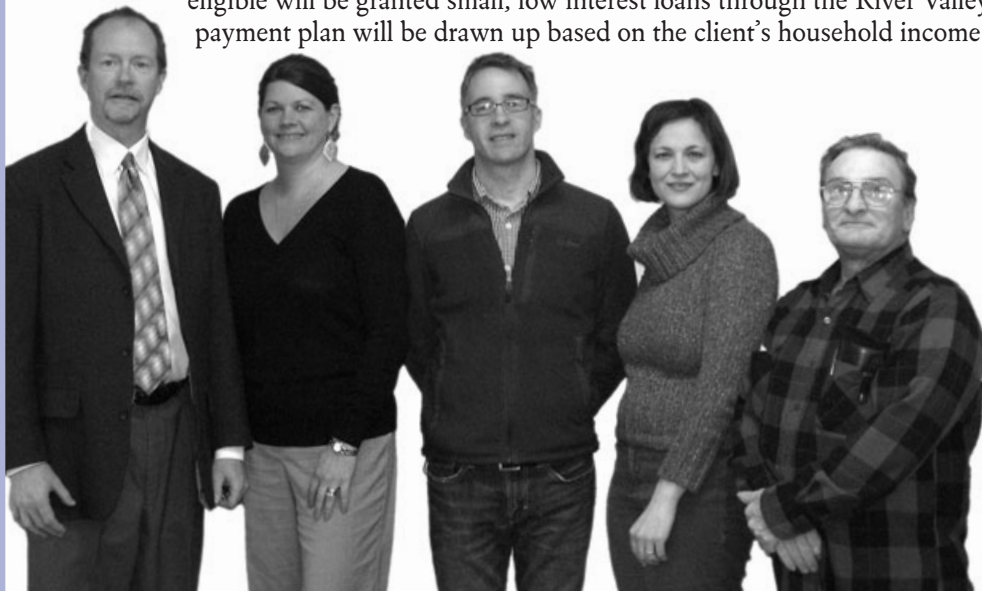
You can contact Allyson at her office in Parks Place 802-462-9927, extension 207.

"SAVE OUR HOMES" EMERGENCY HOUSING LOANS

Brattleboro Area Affordable Housing (BAAH) and River Valley Credit Union join forces to bring emergency housing loans to Windham County – starting in April.

BAAH and RVCU will launch a joint program of emergency housing loans that can be used towards a rental security deposit, back rent, or late mortgage payments. The "Save Our Homes" program is designed to help individuals or families who do not have access to normal credit channels. River Valley Credit Union will help clients secure needed funding, create a positive credit history and participate in a formal banking system, so that they can obtain or maintain decent and affordable housing. Building on the successful program launched by BAAH several years ago, this new partnership will allow BAAH to serve an expanded number of clients in Windham County.

Potential clients will be screened by the BAAH Volunteer Loan Administrator, Dave Weaver, and those eligible will be granted small, low interest loans through the River Valley Credit Union. A flexible payment plan will be drawn up based on the client's household income and expenses.



For further information, contact Dave Weaver at 802-380-2631.

He'll be happy to answer questions or schedule a loan application appointment.

Pictured, left to right: Jeffrey Morse, President of RVCU; Kimberly Gouger, Vice-President of RVCU; Knowles Wentworth, President of BAAH; Cassandra Holloway, Chair of Save Our Homes; and Dave Weaver, BAAH Loan Administrator for Save Our Homes.

Education

- **Vermont Adult Diploma Program (VADP)**
Provides a way for Vermonters over 21 to earn a high school diploma within a year.
Alternate Thursday, 9 am – 12:00 pm
Jay Callahan: 802.257.9449
- **Vermont Adult Learning (VAL)**
Provides tutoring in reading and math, preparation for GED and Adult Diploma Program.
Thursday, 9 am – 3 pm
Barbara Cain: 802.463.9927 x.107
- **Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC)**
Free career, educational and financial aid counseling. Available monthly. Call to make an appointment with Michele Delhaye: 800.642.3177

Employment

- **Economic Services/Reach Up**
Assists with training, education and employment counseling for parents receiving TANF.
• Terri Morey: 802.885.8873
• Helen Miller: 802.885.1419
- **Vocational Rehabilitation + VABIR**
Prepares persons with disabilities for employment.
Please call for an appointment.
• Judy Gallagher: 802.885.6457
• Aisha Pandelaki: 802.885.8896
• William Pendlebury: 666.760.6228
• Joe Sorrentino: 802.885.1409
• Derek Young: 802.885.1409

Family Services

- **SEVCA-Family Services**
Help with fuel assistance and emergency needs.
Tuesday, 1 – 4 pm
Susan Howes: 802.722.4575 x.124

Health

- **Health Care & Rehabilitation Services (HCRS)**
Offers individual counseling for adults, teens and children. By appointment.
Call 1.888.888.5144
- **Helping Hand Counseling Center**
By appointment:
• Phil Brubaker: 802.257.4561
• Sue Dennison: 802.376.9977
• Mike Earley: 802.579.1857
• Mark Killgallon: 413.522.9158
• Patty Stickney: 802.299.8157
- **Lead Safe Homes**
Lead poisoning prevention, information and consultation.
• Michelle Pong: 802.463.9927 x.208
• Allyson Wendt: 802.463.9927 x.207

Housing

- **Springfield Supported Housing**
Helps people obtain housing.
Rich Moore and Kathleen Sargent
By appointment: 802.885.3034

Offenders' Options

- **Reparative Probation Board**
Provides a sentencing option for offenders to make reparations to victims and the community.
1st Tues. each month, 6:30 – 8:30 pm
802.463.1234
- **Windham County Court Diversion Board**
A local volunteer board that meets with first-time offenders.
2nd Wed. each month, 6:30 – 8:30 pm
Patrick Fleming: 802.257.0361
- **Department of Corrections**
• Mike Malick: Mon, 802.885.8985
• Eddie van Dijk: Wed, 802.885.8999
• Garry Sharon: Fri, 802.885.8997

Parents & Children

- **Parenting Classes**
Taught at Parks Place by the Springfield Area Parent Child Center and the Nurturing Program.
802.886.5242; 802.254.6686

Resources

- **Patch Team**
A group of service providers and community members that meet monthly to discuss community needs and resources.
3rd Wednesday, 9:30 – 11:30am
All are welcome.

Substance Abuse

- **Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)**
Group support for those in recovery from alcoholism.
Sun, 10 – 11 am
- **Phoenix House/CRASH**
Screening for driver's license reinstatement.
Thursday, 4 – 7pm
Christopher Wesolowski
For an appointment for CRASH interview: 802.257.1147 x.103

Youth

- **Youth Services Case Management**
• Bianca Barry: 802.463.9927 x.201
• Ruston Mitchell: 802.463.9927 x.202
- **Youth Services Teen Program**
• Meng Lu: 802.463.9927 x.205
- **Greater Fall Prevention Coalition**
• Kari Fletcher: 802.463.9927 x.209
• Debra Witkus: 802.463.9927 x.212
• Chad Simmons: 802.463.9927 x.210
- **Big Brother / Big Sister**
• Janice Berube: 802.463.9927 x.203

Please note: Parks Place does its best to ensure the information we provide here is accurate, but sometimes program changes are made after the newsletter is printed. Feel free to call the contact numbers to confirm program availability and schedule information.

Important News About 3SquaresVT!

3SquaresVT (formerly Food Stamps) is a Vermont program designed to help you stay healthy by allowing you to spend more money on healthy, nutritious food.

3SquaresVT can help you make ends meet – especially in this challenging economy! It can help you stretch your food budget, freeing up money for other living expenses.

If you are eligible for 3SquaresVT, your children are eligible for free school lunches. If you are elderly or disabled, special rules make it easier to qualify.

If you are an eligible senior, your benefit can be directly deposited as cash right into your bank account.

- **New rules make it easier to qualify.** You can get 3SquaresVT even if you have a savings account or own your own home. Don't assume that you earn too much to qualify. You may be eligible for 3SquaresVT even if you were turned down for Food Stamps in the past.

- **And there are other benefits.** People who qualify for 3SquaresVT can also get Lifeline (a monthly credit of at least \$13 per month to help households maintain phone service) and Link Up (a credit up to \$30 to pay half the cost of installing a phone line).

- **You may be automatically eligible.** People who receive Vermont Earned Income Tax Credit or SSI are categorically eligible for 3SquaresVT. That means that even if you receive a \$0 benefit, you are still 'eligible' and therefore are eligible for Lifeline, Link Up, free school meals, etc.

- **Apply today!** Call Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) at (800) 464-9951 and ask for a 3SquaresVT application or set up an appointment for help filling out an application.

SEVCA is a non-profit organization that addresses the full range of needs of low-income residents of Windham and Windsor counties. SEVCA's Family Services Program offers financial assistance, case management, service linkage and advocacy to low-income households facing lack of food, heat, eviction, foreclosure, illness, vehicle breakdown and other emergencies.

If you have questions or want to apply, call SEVCA:
1.800.464.9951
 Information also available online:
vermontfoodhelp.com

WISHLIST

TD Bank Affinity members
(see page 2 for more info)

Digital Camera

Photographer

Scanner

Gardeners

Indoor Plant Caretaker

Can Opener

Cookies

Paper Cups - hot & cold

Paper Plates

Coffee

Sugar

Tissues

Person to take "stuff"
to Recycling Center

In Appreciation

Lisa Burke - ice cream

Sue Cota - subscription
to Reader's Digest

TD Bank - Christmas tree

Chroma Technologies - toys

Karuna Kress - delicious snacks,
notebooks & office supplies

Erika Patch - kitchen supplies

Edgar Greason - cookies

Chris Danforth - gloves

Roberta Sperling - wreath

Beta Chapter of Delta Kappa
Gamma Society Intl. - books

Elaine Bowen - tablecloths

Bonnie Olson - tissues

Matthew Peake - TV & DVD player

Helena Morell - linens, school
supplies, kitchen utensils

Marlene O'Connor - Juice

KG Signs - room signs

MJS Lawncare - mulch

Millie Barry - chocolates

Lori Miller - pitchers, bowls,
& glasses

Helen Miller - electric pencil
sharpener

Springfield Orthodontics -
toothbrushes and toothpaste

Grafton School, Emily Lewis's class
- Mother's Day gift baskets

Gordon Toussaint - plaques
for name board

Joy Mitchell - gallon of paint

Doreen Aldrich - plastic ware

Michael & Celeste Marquise
- table & chairs

Anne Collins - plastic ware, pens,
pencils, paper plates, cookies

Ray Brewster - paper products

Terry Mills - coffee

Linda James - coffee & pens

Allison Deen - office supplies

Vermont Country Store - snacks

Arnold & Elayne Clift - desk chair

Darrow Clark - TV

Women's Christian Temperance
Union - collapsible display stand

Rose Avenia - pickling cukes
& yellow squash

Allen Brothers - mulch

Jim & Nancy McAuliffe - bookcase

I support Parks Place!



You can donate online at www.parksplacevt.org
or mail your gift with this donor form to:

Parks Place, 44 School St., Bellows Falls VT 05101

NAME

MAILING ADDRESS

TOWN / STATE / ZIP

PHONE

Thank you for your generous support.

**GARDENING
VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED**

Join the Parks Place Gardeners for the 12th season of cultivating and expanding the perennial gardens around Parks Place. No experience is necessary. All levels of expertise welcome. It's fun. It's exercise ...
It's a great learning experience.

For information, contact Barbara Ternes:
• 802.463.9927 ext.104
• barbt@parksplacevt.org

**NOTE for MASTER GARDENER CANDIDATES:
Earn your hours this season at the Parks Place Garden!**

COMING TO BELLOWS FALLS AREA
**“Save Our Homes”
EMERGENCY
HOUSING LOANS**

In April, the River Valley Credit Union and Brattleboro Area Affordable Housing (BAAH) will launch a joint program of emergency housing loans that can be used towards a rental security deposit, back rent, or late mortgage payments. Called “Save Our Homes,” the program is designed to help individuals or families in Windham County who do not have access to normal credit channels.

See page 5 for more information.



Parks Place is a United Way of Windham County agency.



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
A Volunteer's Experience – Garden Talk by Henry Homyer – Welcome to New Board Members



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