



THE COVER PAGE

REPAIRING HOMES AND
BUILDING COMMUNITY

NEWS ABOUT COVER HOME REPAIR & THE RECOVER STORE

158 South Main Street, White River Junction, Vermont • T: 802.296.7241 • F: 802.296.7380 • www.coverhomerepair.org

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COVER is about building a joyful experience of living in community here in the Upper Valley. As I look around COVER in the last six months I see some pretty stellar examples of Upper Valley folks **LOVING** living in the Upper Valley:

- **The ReCover Store Auction** is fun in every way. It's a standing room only gathering of folks who laugh and egg each other on to bid for some of the best donated items of the year. The room is warm with good food and good company, made even warmer by Frank's excellent auctioneering, along with the buzzing store staff.
- **The ReCover Store Raffle**, held throughout the auction, delivers excellent prizes generously donated by local businesses. Mary Ellen outdoes herself each year by reaching out and inviting these businesses to support the ReCover Store and COVER community.
- This year we expanded our five-year partnership with **Hanover High School**. In addition to two groups coming for their March Intensive Week, we also had an "Alternative Spring Break" group from Youth in Action. In each case, the high school students enjoyed each other's company and the company of the homeowner. **AND** all three groups finished their projects — three accessibility ramps.
- One of the high school groups built a **65 foot ramp** for a Canaan homeowner who has not been able to physically leave his home for two years. He now enjoys a safe, accessible egress and a deck to enjoy the outdoors and be part of his neighborhood.



- **COVER Weatherization** volunteers completed **65** new projects and revisited **25** of last year's homeowners. This year's homeowners saved an average of **94.5** gallons of fuel this winter. Added together, these homeowners saved a total of nearly **\$25,000**.
- Just recently, volunteers from **Leadership Upper Valley** built an accessibility ramp in White River Junction and a new roof in Braintree. Leadership Upper Valley is a leadership training program run by **Vital Communities**.

We believe that volunteers and homeowners and store customers and donors **ALL** benefit when we get to experience directly the affection and support of the people around us — at the ReCover Store or on a COVER jobsite.

Thank you for all you do to make our community more joyful and more connected! I'd like to know about your most meaningful experience of living in good community. Drop me a line!

Rob Schultz
Executive Director



"There are no words to even say how grateful we all are to have had the chance to work and also have a roof done on our house by your wonderful program. We really enjoyed having all the volunteers and leader work on our family's home. Thanks again for all you have done for our family." — Homeowner

Our Volunteer Coordinator, **Sarah Blum** has bid farewell after being an integral part of the COVER family for the past 8 years. If you are a volunteer, chances are you have spoken with Sarah. In fact, she was (and is) the voice and the face of COVER for many people.

To watch Sarah in action on the phone or face to face with volunteers was to witness a “people” person. Her warmth and her sense of humor drew many folks to COVER as she juggled and rearranged schedules to fit the work that needed to be done. As one of her colleagues reminded her at her farewell lunch, “You were here with Simon [Dennis] and your presence is a daily reminder of the original vision and mission of COVER.”

We wish Sarah all good things as she embarks on her next Upper Valley adventure.

Mary Sutton-Smith has stepped right in as our Interim Volunteer Coordinator, sharing

Sarah’s last week with her and learning the essential ropes to carry us forward smoothly. We are grateful and glad to have Mary with us.

We have a very large, very loyal pool of volunteers and we can always use more! If you would like to join us, with or without skills, please call Mary at 802.296.7241 x104. We enjoy engaging with individuals as well as business groups and students. You will see photos of some of our volunteers throughout this newsletter. As we’ve said before, there would be no COVER without volunteers.

Speaking of volunteers, we’d like to thank **MISysInc. of Woodstock, VT** for choosing COVER as their organization to sponsor in 2014. In addition to financial contributions, employees have so far volunteered at our Annual Benefit Concert and on a home repair project in Hartland. We are so grateful for all of their support. 



MISysInc. volunteers Ray, Nat and Charlie with Americorps volunteer Finn Burns and homeowner’s son.

HEEEEEEEERE’S DAVE!

Meet **Dave Sherman**... if you can find him. Dave came to COVER as a volunteer in 2013. He had recently retired and wanted something to do. After working several weekends, he announced that he wanted more to do and wanted to work during the week. Dave negotiated with our Home Repair Director and now he’s busily (and quietly) doing small, one man projects for folks throughout the Upper Valley under the auspices of COVER. (Here’s a photo of him with a custom designed/built hand railing.) Dave has met a number of our UV neighbors and has even been known to stay in touch and return to visit with some of his “clients.” Dave was the obvious choice for our annual “Golden Hammer Community Builder Award”, presented at our recent Annual Benefit Concert featuring **Keb’ Mo’**. We like Dave a lot. 



Spring Auction and Raffle a Great Success!

The 7th Annual ReCover Store Benefit Auction, held on April 5th, proved a wonderful event for COVER, and for those in attendance. During the two hour auction, over 80 items sold that were donated to the ReCover Store and set aside especially for the event. Happy bidders took home antique furniture, artwork, glassware, and many unusual, one-of-a-kind items.



Bidding was competitive, yet some great buys were had by auction attendees. Everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. If you missed this year's event, make plans now to attend our next auction in the Spring of 2015.

The ReCover Store is bustling with customers and frequent new donations. Please stop in and check out the wide variety of items. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday 10-5 and Monday 10-2.

In addition, there were drawings held throughout the auction for over two dozen fantastic raffle prizes including Red Sox tickets, a Lake Sunapee cruise, restaurant gift certificates, car detailing and oil changes, and even an iPad Mini. We are very grateful to all of the businesses and organizations that provided these prizes. Please visit our website for a list of all who contributed.

As usual, the ReCover Store staff and volunteers did a great job of organizing and carrying out the auction and raffle. Special thanks go to **Mary Ellen, Elise, Andrew, Irene, Rosemary and Luise** for their efforts in making this event a big success.



Mary Ellen and Elise spruce up the store with a mosaic from our large tile supply.



Here are a few more comments overheard from customers:

"I'm glad I came in here. I can't believe they have two rolls (of matching wallpaper). It's great."

"Oh my god, look at this!! I was just thinking the other day how much I miss my old one."

"Wow! Do you remember these??"



Season Over As Spring Arrives

The 2013-2014 Weatherization Season was very successful, having jumped off to a great start and continued strong throughout the winter. (And what a winter it was!) We exceeded our goal of **80** weatherization projects. COVER staff, volunteers, and home owners were able to weatherize **65** new homes and return to **25** homes that needed help reinstalling the plastic window kits. That means we air sealed **842** windows, **95** doors (including insulating a rim joist), enclosed porches with plastic, installed dryer vents, and filled many air holes with expanding foam. On the side, we attached grab bars in tubs. That's not to mention the many hours of good conversation and many cookies eaten!

COVER completed ten blower door tests this season. A blower door test measures the draftiness of a home. By taking a "before and after" test we were able to measure how much difference our weatherization made. The average decrease in draftiness per home was 750 CFM (Cubic Feet per Minute). Don't get nervous — the math is easy. For each 100 CFM decrease there is a 13 gallon a year savings. That means the average savings per home was about **97.5** gallons. If fuel oil costs \$3.80 a gallon that is an annual savings of **\$370** per home. For the 65 new homes we weatherized there was

total savings of **6045** gallons or **\$22,971**. For those who are concerned about climate change, the reduction in CO₂ is **61.8** metric tons.

COVER has observed that when money is tight and families need to make hard choices about where to spend their money, they often can't afford to have their furnace cleaned. This may go on for a number of years, leading to increased risk of carbon monoxide poisoning and decreased furnace efficiency. COVER is very grateful to have received a \$5,000 grant from The High Meadows Fund to start a furnace cleaning program. Patriot Fuels of Enfield, NH worked with us to clean and repair 13 furnaces to top working order.

I am now busy in Home Repair through the fall, but my mind is still wondering what we can do better next winter to save even more energy.

Diane Reinhardt
Weatherization Director



From COVER's Board

We thought it would be interesting to share how our board members are professionally engaged. Here are their individual answers:

Homeownership Coordinator and Project Manager at Twin Pines Housing Trust; General Contractor with an emphasis on thermal solar systems; Manager of an HIV/AIDS program and teacher at Dartmouth; Mechanical/Electrical Engineer designing and building analog circuits; Gemstone Artist and Writer; Psychologist; Hobby Farmer and retired Lt. Colonel in the Army National Guard; Engineer at local solar installer and member of Norwich Fire Department; Director of Corporate Social Responsibility at Hypertherm

How did you end up in the Upper Valley?

A friend; Just got lucky; Moved here with my (now ex-) husband for his job; Came with spouse who was appointed Dean of Engineering at Dartmouth; Beats me...; I was born here.; My spouse took a job at the VA Hospital; I moved from Brooklyn, NY to Hanover for college ten years ago. I liked the area so much that I ended up staying here; I followed a dashing handsome, wonderful, young man who was starting his training at DHMC. We've been married and here for over 11 years since.

How did you first hear about COVER?

Through a friend in Waitsfield; In conversation with a volunteer; We were working on green tags with Bob Walker; Simon Dennis came to my church and spoke to us. I was hooked.; The ReCover Store- it was invaluable when I had a fire in my studio.; From a client; Through Rosemary Affeldt at church when I moved here two years ago; At a Dartmouth Undergrad Career Fair ten years ago; I did a Build Project Day when I first started at Hypertherm.

Have you ever considered how you ended up where you are, working with your current community of peers? Here's where each of our current COVER community of staff members was raised.

- Elise Angellilo Southington, CT
- Jane Blanchard Carlisle, MA
- Finn Burns..... Salt Lake City, UT
- Ham Gillett S. Woodstock, VT
- Gail Guernsey Sutton, NH
- Irene Hanslin Meriden, CT
- John Heath New Brunswick, NJ
- Hugh MacArthur Oakland, CA
- Frank Orlowski..... Romeo, MI
- Diane Reinhardt..... Bemidji, MN
- Rob Schultz Denver, CO
- Mary Sutton-Smith Yonkers, NY
- Andrew Tofel Huntington, NY
- Mary Ellen Treadway .. Williamstown, MA



Transitions

John is back!

We welcomed **John Heath** back to COVER officially on January 1st. You may remember that John worked with us for a year following Tropical Storm Irene as we added recovery projects to our regular home repair schedule. John is now a Home Repair Co-Director with **Diane Reinhardt**.



Hugh has passed the Home Repair directorship on to John and Diane, allowing him to focus solely on projects in the field.

Diane is still here!

Diane Reinhardt has just finished 3 intensive months as Weatherization Director and has switched hats (literally – from winter wool to summer baseball cap) to do Home Repair through the fall.

Hugh is back!

Hugh MacArthur has returned to COVER as well, after a well -deserved winter hiatus.

Andy Petersen spent the fall and winter with us as Finance Manager and then retired from COVER to manage life on the home front, including his wife's thriving quilting business. **Jane Blanchard** has

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This Was The Winter That Was

For those who've forgotten this past winter, here are some photos to remind you — Hanover HS March Intensive and our parking lot.



WHAT STINKS?!

Several skunks beat a path to our basement this winter and did what skunks do best. One particular day, wherever we all went after work, people had to hold their noses. After much investigation it was determined that “Pepé le Pew” had followed a path into the basement during a rain storm, gotten trapped when the path flooded and froze, and then perished in a crawl space under the ReCover Store. Our intrepid Americorps volunteer, Finn Burns, donned a hazmat suit, crawled into the crawl space, deposited the corpse in a trash bag and handed it

to our intrepid Home Repair Director John Heath for a rapid dumpster disposal. The hand off was “captured” in this photo. Everyone but the remaining skunk population is happy that all possible entrances to our basement have been permanently sealed, we hope. 



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jumped in as bookkeeper with zip, vigor and a happy presence.

The exterior wall of our Executive Director’s office has been intensely insulated by John Heath. The nasty carpet in the above office and adjoining conference/staff room was ripped up and the floors insulated and covered with light, bright low maintenance wood laminate. We are grateful for the upgrades and our volunteers, some of whom are shown in this photo with Diane Reinhardt. 



Education

After a brief hiatus our Education Program is back for a trial run. Elise Angellilo, a dedicated ReCover Store employee, has stepped forward with a plan to once again offer a small number of classes

The Education Program will focus on teaching people how to perform basic home repairs and improvements on their own. Our “intimidation-free” classes will be designed to build people’s confidence in a variety of skills from basic electrical and plumbing, to car maintenance and woodworking. Classes will be located either at the COVER Home Repair building or at homes within the area. Suggestions for future classes are encouraged and welcomed.

Elise offered this reflection: “When our youngest child went off to college, I went too. I earned a B.S. in Environmental Sciences in order to increase my choices of employment. My hope was to be involved in starting a recycling program where there was not already one in place. In the meantime, I discovered the ReCover Store. After having been a customer for several years, I began working there. I hope that my efforts will help to ensure that the store and the Home Repair Program continue to thrive.”

Keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for more information, or feel free to call our office on Mondays and speak with Elise. 802.296.7241 x115 

Home Repair

We started up again in March after a two month mid-winter break to focus on the COVER/ReCover Store building on South Main Street. At the time of this printing we were booked through July and into August.

We’ve described a typical home repair site before — the gathering circle at the start of the day where everyone is introduced and the order of the day is set out by the Home Repair Director, the training and support given to volunteers and home owners throughout the day, the sharing of a meal at lunchtime by everyone involved, and the gathering of everyone at the end of the day.

“Everyone” gets used a lot. “Everyone” means community. When you ask us, “What do you mean exactly by ‘building community’” this is what we mean. We gather a group of people at someone’s home on a Saturday or Sunday morning. These individuals have never seen each other before. For the most part, they don’t shop at the same stores, they don’t eat at the same restaurants, they don’t go to the same movies or softball games or swimming areas or parties. They don’t work in the same places or do any of the same things. They don’t travel the same

paths. They might as well live in Alaska and Florida.

For this one day, in this one place at this one time “everyone” is together. Someone who was born in California and loves tofu sandwiches is holding a board to be sawed by someone who was born on the White River and can’t stand tofu. Up on the roof, some guy is holding a sheet of roofing while some gal is hammering it in place. If he hears one more Johnny Cash song he’s going to scream. She feels the same way about Beethoven and she *loves* Johnny Cash. They might even talk about it.

This is a community being built. It might be a community that’s physically together for only eight hours but at the end of the eight hours EVERYONE will have learned and considered something new and shared something of themselves with someone they didn’t even know existed when they woke up that morning.

If this sounds like fun, call us. If this sounds terrifying, call us. When you sign up, whether you plan to or not, you will have changed your “community” by the end of the day. 

The Cover Page is published semi-annually and mailed to friends and supporters of COVER in the Upper Valley including individual contributors, businesses, foundations, civic groups including churches and other religious organizations.

Editor: Ham Gillett
Design: Tiger Bridge Graphics

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COVER's mission is to foster hope and build community in the Upper Valley.

We do this by bringing together volunteers and homeowners to complete urgently needed home repair projects and to facilitate the reuse of household goods and building materials. We envision a community where the need for home repair is an opportunity for people to come together.

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WHITE RIVER YARNS HOLDS "DESTASH" FOR COVER!

- Collection dates for yarn:
April 15- May 15
- Donated Yarn Sale: May 31st
from 8am to 2pm

Visit <http://whiteriveryarns.com> or
<http://www.coverhomerepair.org> or
our Facebook page
for more information.

Volunteer!
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x104

Donate!
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x114

Assistance!
802.296.7241
x105

COVER
158 S. Main Street
White River Junction, VT 05001

The ReCover Store is open Mondays 10-2;
Tuesday – Saturday, 10-5. Check out our
website! www.coverhomerepair.org



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COVER Home Repair & The ReCover Store

"What COVER means to me is shelter. I think it means get out of the rain get under something that covers you. I also think it means team work, helpful, hardworking, getting stronger. (That's what I think of the staff anyway.)" — Sally, aged 13

FRONT DOORS

We ended the season with the installation of six doors on four different homes. My appreciation of what a front door means to people grew from my conversations with homeowners. They are the gateway through which we welcome people into our homes, the lock that helps us feel secure as well as the tool used to keep the weather out. One home owner said, "It has been hard to have people over because I have been so embarrassed by how my front door looked." Another spoke of how she had felt vulnerable at night because she couldn't lock the front door. — Diane Reinhardt 

