



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

Spring 2016 • Volume 15, No. 2



Big News at COVER

Late last fall, Rob Schultz let COVER's Board know that he was ready to step down after nearly 10 years as Executive Director, effective April 30, 2016. We accepted his decision and immediately launched a search process that has resulted in the hiring of Bill Neukomm as COVER's new Executive Director. Bill started April 25th! Rob and Bill are working together to assure a smooth transition of COVER's operations and development efforts.

I would first like to thank Rob for his service to COVER. Rob began at COVER in September of 2006, just after COVER had become its own independent 501c3 corporation. He followed COVER's wonderful founders, Simon Dennis and Nancy Bloomfield. Over the years, Rob has helped COVER become an important resource for homeowners and volunteers. COVER has grown financially and programmatically. Rob's wisdom about organizational process and ability to represent COVER to donors and to the broader community have been key assets. Rob also played a key role in leading COVER in its response to Tropical Storm Irene. We are grateful for his efforts and look forward to seeing him as a volunteer on COVER worksites!

After an extensive search, COVER's Board is delighted that Bill Neukomm has agreed to lead COVER into its next phase. Bill has extensive business experience and community organizing experience. Most recently, he has been working with Habitat for Humanity in Cambridge, Massachusetts. After a grueling interview process, COVER's Board voted unanimously to bring Bill on. Bill is deeply committed to housing issues and to community organizing. He understands what makes COVER a special organization. He listens well and is eager to meet the many different faces of COVER's extended community.

Throughout this transition, COVER's Board has been committed to assuring that COVER is strong in its program, its mission, and organizationally. We are grateful for the efforts of the Search Committee and staff as their input has been invaluable.

COVER's future is bright.

— Helen Hong
Chair of the Board of Trustees,
COVER Home Repair



It has been a great ten years!

As I wrap up my last days here at COVER, I simply find myself incredibly grateful to have been able to live and work in this vibrant community.

At the core of COVER's work is the radical idea that the essential action needed to address deteriorating housing stems from the loving kindness of neighbors. Homeowners, volunteers, donors and staff all see ourselves as part of one whole community. We each bring what we can and participate fully. At the end of the day, we know each other and ourselves better - the fabric of our community is stronger.

While COVER's programs have grown in size and scope, I'm most delighted about how the essence of COVER has NOT changed.



The heart of the work is still meeting new people and learning about how we are connected to one another. Of course, we complete a tremendous amount of work in the process - making homes dry, warm and safe.

COVER's Board and staff, joined by my successor Bill Neukomm, are in a great position to continue this work. COVER is in great, strong, heart-centered hands. The ReCOVER Store is vibrant and profitable. The Home Repair program is stronger with the full integration of weatherization and fall-risk prevention. COVER's development efforts are diverse and our revenue is healthy.

Thank YOU so much for your generous spirit, your hard work and your courage to step out of the comfortable to meet your neighbors. This is a terrific community to live in.

I look forward to putting my tools on and going to work with you.

Best wishes, Rob



Yes, I love volunteering with friends and it's always nice to come back and work with the incredible COVER staff. The weatherization workday was also very similar to what I'm learning in college as an environmental engineer, and it was a great opportunity to put some of that knowledge to practice.

—Volunteer

Welcome Bill!

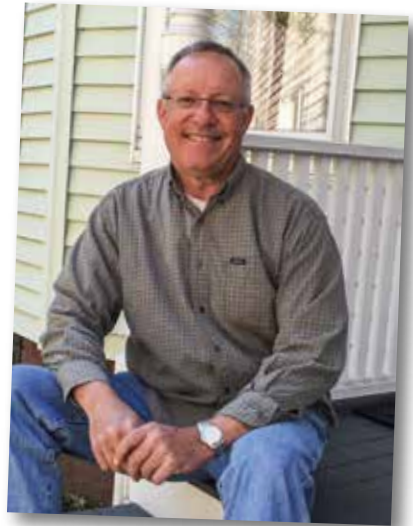
As the new Executive Director at COVER Home Repair, I am finding many exciting reasons to work here as well as some important challenges ahead.

The COVER Board and staff are very enthusiastic about the mission of fostering hope and building community, and they exhibit a dedication not always found in community-based organizations. Everyone has thrown out the welcome mat in a way that is heartfelt and greatly appreciated.

On any COVER project, volunteers can find unexpected connections with homeowners and each other. Repairing homes becomes the flip side of creating greater confidence in your community and connection with your neighbors.

It has been amazing to witness the community's support of the ReCOVER Store. By donating and purchasing at the ReCOVER Store, you help recycle items and fund urgently needed home repairs and weatherization of drafty homes.

Rob Schultz has left an impressive ten year legacy of serving the housing needs of residents of the Upper Valley and he will be a tough act to follow. The challenge to the organization will be to chart a path toward serving even more residents in need of essential repairs, fall risk prevention, and energy conservation services and to sustain this community asset for the next ten years.



—Bill Neukomm,
New Executive Director of COVER



Bill participated in his first home repair project in April helping to build a roof, far right.

For over sixteen years I have been watching my bathroom floor deteriorate. It seems every time I got ahead financially there would be a crisis: frozen pipes, car repairs, illness and hospitalization. I never would have been able to manage these repairs on my own. It is reassuring that there are people in the world who are willing and able to help people this way.

—Homeowner

ReCOVER Store

The ReCOVER Store is thriving and busy after a fall and winter of many changes. Diane Reinhardt, who has been with COVER since 2005, shifted her work from the Home Repair Program to lead the ReCOVER Store. She has assembled a wonderful team of Mitch Ross, Paul Johnson, and Kathy Partridge. We are excited to have a new team on the ground and running.

Store hours are the same as ever: Tuesday - Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm. Come on down and see what we have in the Store!



(From Left, Paul, Mitch and Kathy)

Weatherization

Many thanks to Kendra Colburn! Kendra stepped in on short notice last fall and did a great job filling in to lead this year's Weatherization Program. People who worked with Kendra quickly understood her deep commitment to saving energy and working with volunteers. Working with many volunteers and homeowners, Kendra led the way to completing 69 projects - 55 new projects and 14 "rehangs". We will miss her and wish her well!



Diane Reinhardt



Jay Mead

Home Repair

After many years of service as a Volunteer Work Leader and then joining the staff as Home Repair Director, Diane Reinhardt resigned due to an injury. Diane has been appreciated by volunteers and homeowners alike for her excellent carpentry skills and her evident joy in teaching. She has often described her work at COVER as "the best job in the world." We're thrilled she will be staying on to lead the ReCOVER Store!

After an extensive search process, we're delighted that Jay Mead will be joining COVER as the second Home Repair Work Leader -- working on both home repair and weatherization projects. Jay comes with wonderful carpentry skills and has recently been teaching at The Sharon Academy. He'll be phasing in to COVER work over the course of May and early June. Welcome Jay!



Stop by for a visit!

The ReCOVER store has been very busy the last couple of months. We have seen a complete turnover of staff and a thorough cleaning out of stale merchandise. Come in and see for yourself and tell us what you think. Time will tell which changes are good and will stay and which changes will change again.

One of our new initiatives is volunteer-staffed store projects modeled after COVER's home repair and weatherization programs. COVER's website now includes these opportunities. Some examples of projects are painting the front of the COVER building and constructing a community picnic table. Volunteers have already built the ReCOVER store a lumber rack to give us a place to put plywood, sheetrock and dimensional lumber. Thank you Ray and Rich! We have many new projects for this spring and summer. Sign up for COVER's monthly email update at volunteer@coverhomerepair.org

The ReCOVER store is now set up to test washing machines as well as stoves and electric dryers. This will definitely lower the risk involved when buying used appliances.



Many thanks to Ted Emerson and Dan Cofell!

We are excited to be now doing donation pick-ups 2-3 days per week, so you will see COVER's box truck out and about more often. Please keep us in mind if, in your spring cleaning, you find yourself with good usable items that could find a new home instead of being dumped at the landfill. We are always looking for tools, furniture, appliances, pots and pans, doors, windows, cabinets, building supplies, paint and much more.

So give us a call or come on in to set up a donation pick-up, to shop, or to sign up to volunteer in the store. Help us support COVER's work in the community — your community!

— Diane Reinhardt,
ReCOVER Store Manager

PS – If you want to donate goods to the ReCOVER Store, please call Diane directly at 802-296-7241 ext 106 or email pictures to recoverstore@coverhomerepair.org



Store hours are
10-5 Tuesday
through Saturday.
Come in and see
if we can help
with a project you
are working on!

Fall Risk Program

Editor's Note: in May of 2015, COVER received funding from the Entrepreneur's Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation to enhance our construction program, working with seniors to help make their homes more safe from the risks of falling. We've had some great early successes!



The mission of COVER's Fall Risk Program calls for a holistic approach that eliminates fall risk and allows homeowners to safely remain in their homes. Our projects are completed utilizing COVER's model of volunteer and homeowner involvement. Some of the work is completed by paid trades-people. We have historically addressed many of these issues in homes, but the Fall Risk Program will concentrate our efforts to meet an increased need.

The process starts with the COVER application for services, and continues as the Home Repair team assesses the home for possible safety hazards. Together with the homeowner, Care or Service Provider and/or family, a plan is created.

The following are examples of projects that have been completed:

- o Bathroom access modifications including adding grab bars, enlarging doorways, and making showers, toilets and sinks accessible.
- o Exterior stairs that meet code, and in some cases have a roof.
- o Handrails on interior and exterior stairways.
- o Moving washers and dryers upstairs from cellars.
- o Repairing transitions in floors and flooring.

Thanks to some of our skilled volunteers, we have also been able to address lighting in those key areas.

The COVER Home Repair Program continues to make necessary repairs that allow homeowners to stay safe, warm and dry in their homes. While we have taken on additional fall risk repairs, we still continue to do general home repair that maintains the basic function of the home.

— John Heath, Home Repair Director



This has been such a blessing for both of us. We are both using the ramp now because of knee, leg and hip problems. The COVER crew did such a beautiful job on the ramp. We love it and want to extend many thanks to John, Briana and all of the Hanover students and Eric Richardson for their hard work. It was a great pleasure having them in and around our home.

— Homeowner

Reflections

When the time came to open up the windows and welcome in the spring air, I was grateful for a fantastic season of weatherizations and indoor repairs. These projects are often a little more intimate than building a ramp or a roof, and it was a privilege to experience the hospitality of homeowners and the kindness of volunteers. It can be uncomfortable to open your home to people you have never met, but I have encountered generosity in so many forms: hot coffee, tidbits of valuable wisdom, homemade corn chowder, lively conversations, or a chocolate chip cookie for the road.



As the schedule fills up with roofs, ramps, and other projects, and I enter the second half of my AmeriCorps term at COVER, I am looking forward to working with and learning from a great community of homeowners and volunteers. I am amazed by both the structures and the connections that can be made when people get together for a day. And, if I'm lucky, maybe I'll learn another thing or two in this half of the year!

—Briana Baker
AmeriCorps



I really needed this kind of ramp and will need it when I'm in a wheelchair so I can still stay mobile. I think they did a great job, all of the workers were really good to me and my family. I am very lucky to have had this done for me. I would like to thank them all again and I put the word out on how good they are so that maybe someone else might get the chance to use their services. Thank you.

—Homeowner

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.



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 by facilitating the reuse of household goods and building materials at the ReCOVER Store. We envision a community where the need for home repair is an opportunity for people to come together.

158 S. Main Street
White River Junction
Vermont, 05001
(802) 296-7241
www.coverhomerepair.org

Check out our website!
www.coverhomerepair.org

VOLUNTEER! 802-296-7241 x104
DONATE! 802-296-7241 x102
ASSISTANCE! 802-296-7241 x105
RECOVER STORE! 802-296-7241 x106
OPEN TUESDAY-SATURDAY, 10-5

Non Profit
U.S. Postage
Paid
WRI, VT
Permit No. 38

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



"Like" us on facebook:
COVER Home Repair & The ReCOVER Store



I have used the COVER volunteer experiences to prepare for executing projects on my own home. Its been excellent to gain confidence using different tools and to understand techniques used in home repair. It has also been a great reminder of how fortunate I am to be able bodied and resourced to do these projects myself or with the assistance of friends/family.

—Volunteer