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MHP Hires New Associate Director

We have a new addition to our staff at the MHP. Tim Ashe was hired in March as the new Associate Director. For those of you who knew Carolyn Anderson, she has left the MHP but Tim is ready to start where she left off. If you get a chance, call Tim or send him an e-mail to welcome him to our team!

Tim comes to the MHP with a strong background in organizing and low-income advocacy. Most recently, Tim completed his Master's Degree in Public Policy at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government. In the past, Tim worked with the American Federation of Teachers organizing UVM faculty and nurses in Brattleboro. Tim has also worked as a field representative for Congressman Bernie Sanders.

Tim is hoping to get off to a running start. He is already actively involved with the Shelburnewood residents (see article below) and in building a strong state-wide resident association for mobile home owners and renters (back page). His contact information appears to the left. Welcome, Tim!

Shelburnewood Mobile Home Park

An Update from Dimitry Kremontsov– Shelburnewood Secretary

Shelburnewood has 28 mobile homes and is home to roughly 50 people, myself included. This February, we were unpleasantly surprised when we received notices of park closure from the park's owners. The owners said they were closing the park for financial and personal reasons. We were very concerned by the prospect of losing our homes, so we formed an association in order to work together to make the best of this difficult situation. Our efforts were rewarded, as the state agreed that a letter of sale should have been issued, and on April 6th the owners sent us the letters with the option to purchase the park. The price of the property is steep: \$2.2 million, as it is located in a very desirable location. We are now working with various state agencies that will help with grants, and with non-profits who are trying to work out some creative funding to purchase the park and keep our homes. For more information, visit www.shelburnewood.com.

Special points of interest:

- The MHP has hired a new Associate Director (page 1) and Charlie Hoag is leaving (page 2)
- Want a loan or to refinance? Check out page 2 for details
- VT has a statewide resident association. Look to the back page for details about their annual meeting on May 14th

MHP Associate Director Tim Ashe Speaks

I am very excited to join the Mobile Home Project as the new Associate Director. These days, much attention is being paid to mobile home issues in the Legislature and in the newspapers. That makes this a time of tremendous opportunity to strengthen laws that protect mobile home owners, and to re-dedicate ourselves to improving the lives of mobile home residents both in and out of parks.

My top priority is to build a strong network of residents in all corners of the state. Why is this so important? Because when like-minded individuals flood the Statehouse to meet with their Representatives, those Representatives take notice. When residents speak at Committee meetings, their concerns are taken seriously. When residents organize, they win.

If you are interested in helping to organize your park or your corner of the state, let me know by calling (802) 660-3451 x107.

Resident Advocate/Organizer Leaving July

Charlie Hoag, the current Resident Advocate/Organizer, will be leaving his position at the end of July to pursue graduate German studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. For those of you who know Charlie, he has greatly enjoyed his time at CVOEO since his hiring in 2003.

He is most proud of his work with local resident associations across the state and his ongoing work with Shelburnewood residents in Shelburne. Call him or e-mail him to wish him well before his departure in July!

"Charlie has greatly enjoyed his time working with local resident associations across Vermont."

Rural Development Loans Make Cents

USDA Rural Development has one percent loans available to mobile home owners to perform general repairs to improve or modernize their property. Non-profit parks, co-op parks, and individual land owners are eligible. Some restrictions apply. For a list of eligible parks, call the Mobile Home Project.



Don't pass up free money!

Loans and Grants must be for repairs that will remove health and safety hazards including insulating or weatherizing the home, or to repair or remodel dwellings to make them more easily accessible for all people. To be eligible the applicant must own the home and occupy the site prior to filing an application. The household also must qualify based on income. Residents in eligible parks may receive a loan and/or grant up to \$7,500. Mobile homeowners on their own land are eligible for loan assistance of up to \$20,000.

For additional information about USDA loans contact the Mobile Home Project.

Do You Need Help? The MHP Is Here For You!

We offer housing counseling to all mobile home park residents and potential mobile home owners. Although we do not offer any direct monetary assistance, we can help residents in many ways. Please call us. All information is kept strictly confidential.

We can assist mobile home residents with:

- Credit/debt counseling
- Eviction/foreclosure assistance
- Back lot rent or mobile home payments
- Refinancing your home or home improvement loans

Introducing the CVOEO Fair Housing Project

The Fair Housing Project, one of three programs of the Statewide Housing Services division of the CVOEO, works to end housing discrimination in Vermont through education, outreach and enforcement of state and federal fair housing laws. Together these laws protect your right to equal opportunity in housing based on your race, color, national origin, religion, sex, family status (having minor children), disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, and receipt of public assistance. Fair housing laws also require housing providers to make reasonable accommodations and allow reasonable modifications based on the needs of people with disabilities.

If you or someone you know has experienced housing discrimination or would like more information about your rights, contact the CVOEO Fair Housing Project at (802) 863-3334 x202 or check out our website: www.cvoeo.org/vti/fair.htm



A Good Opportunity

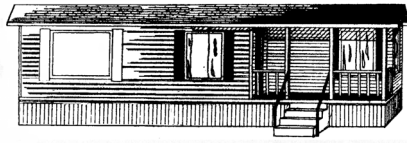
From its success in working with its members to purchase manufactured homes across Vermont, Opportunities Credit Union is widely recognized for finding affordable homeownership options for those who need it most. Their counseling-based lending helps buyers work through questions and options available to them. They lead the way in providing affordable financing for manufactured housing in Vermont for new purchases, refinancing, and home improvements.

Formerly known as Vermont Development Credit Union, Opportunities is an award-winning Community Development Financial Institution that brings affordable capital and financial resources to underserved people and communities in Vermont. Now celebrating their 15th year with over 13,000 members statewide, Opportunities provides an atmosphere of respect where members turn for loans, information, education and counseling needed to improve their financial success.

For more information or to contact Opportunities, contact the Mobile Home Project.

CVOEO Mobile Home Project

Is your address correct? Please let us know if there are any changes.



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MH Commission Will Hold Public Hearings in VT

The Governor's Special Advisory MH Commission will hold 3 public hearings throughout the state in June and July. It is very important that mobile home owners and residents come to these meetings and give testimony. Come out and tell us what is important to you, what problems you have, or what is working well in your park or community. If you do not come, the Commission will not know what you think is important or what needs to be changed! Contact the MHP with any questions. Here are the dates and times:

June 20th 6:30pm at the Colchester Meeting House (Main St., White Church)

June 22nd at 6:30pm at the Bennington New Firehouse (130 River St.)

June 30th 6:30pm at the Springfield Town Offices (96 Main St.)

Vermont Needs Your Help!

From the Vermont Mobile Home Owners Association (VMHOA):

VMHOA anticipates a busy year ahead. The Governor's Commission on Manufactured Housing continues to discuss issues surrounding mobile homes in Vermont with the goal of recommending legislative changes in the next session. We believe that the needs of Vermont's mobile home residents will only be met if residents themselves speak up.

At our May 14th board meeting, we formed a committee dedicated to building our membership in the coming months, so we'll be ready for action in the Legislature. The committee consists of Tim Ashe, Associate Director of the Mobile Home Project, VMHOA Board Member Ike Jacobs, and resident Robert Walker.

Any residents who want to be involved, or who are interested in speaking before Legislators, should contact Tim at 802-660-3451 x107.

As always, I can be reached at timberneedle@aol.com.

Dottie Hayes
VMHOA President