



Friends and Family of Tucson Homesharers

An Occasional Newsletter January 2024



LONELINESS AND GETTING A DOG

by Deborah Knox
Co-founder & Board Member

I've been sharing a home with a woman for the past 7 years. When she was diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease in 2003, the neurologist she finally got an appointment with suggested she might want to get a dog if she didn't already have one. "Why is that?" she responded. And he thoughtlessly replied, "to give your life meaning." Well here she is nearly 20 years later and she has a house mate instead ...

I like to think together we have created a life with meaning and purpose that is greater than each of us would have created on our own, but carries our own unique and personal interests and flavor.

When is it too late in life to have a purpose? And what happens when we struggle without it? Certainly a dog would be no match for what we have created in the past living together without even considering the "best dog breeds for those living alone." A recent article entitled "The Dog Breeds that are a Woman's Best Friend ... Especially When One Lives Alone," certainly captured my attention.

Sharon and I have often expressed the wish that having a dog — or a cat — would bring an additional level of enjoyment and humor into our lives, but the worry about having to avoid tripping over them overcomes the desire - not

to mention the extra task and cost of feeding and cleaning up after them.

I've been a dog and a cat lover all my life. I grew up with dogs, but as a single adult most frequently shared my life and my home with a number of cats — "Mr. Cat," "Sir Lancelot Longfellow" and "Lyon Kitten" ... to name a few. To think that a cat — or a dog — for that matter could provide meaning is a travesty for the woman power that is longing to find meaningful ways to create an engaging and purposeful life. The joys and challenges of living with another — especially if you haven't had that experience in a while, provides an opportunity for personal growth, in-depth conversations into what is meaningful, and a chance to share the joys and sorrows of aging with another. I think it's the latter that captures my attention the most lately. As a famous slogan rightly suggests "Aging isn't for Sissies." So what better way to take on the challenges than to have someone with whom to share them.

Consider a dog, but better yet, consider what it would take to bring another person into your life if you are a home owner, with extra space and the increasing cost of living? Sharing your home with someone (not just anyone) can alleviate a lot of the worry and concern you may experience as well as your loved ones, if something terrible were "to happen." It's perhaps the inevitable fall, and lying alone for hours that draws you onward in this quest. If that's the worst, what would be the best? We hope you'll consider home sharing as a viable alternative.

**A 2024 Resolution:
Creating a Home Sharing
Community in Tucson
By Lucy Read**

On December 1, 2023, there was an article in the Arizona Daily Star entitled "Study: US ill-prepared to house older people." According to a recent report issued by Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies, the US population 65 and older climbed 34% between 2012 and 2022. Looking ahead, the fastest growth is expected for those 80 and above who may need both accessible and affordable housing as well as care services and supports at home. It's time to explore options and put some creative ideas into practice!

I wonder what it is that city officials/planners, housing authorities/providers and funding partners just don't get about the value and simplicity of home sharing. Since home sharing allows persons to share household expenses or trade dollars for assistance with basic household chores, it's an affordable living option. Now, let's focus on those above-mentioned "supports at home." Home sharing offers safe, healthy, and companionable living in homes or apartments which reduces costs, facilitates sustainability and offers relief from boredom, isolation and loneliness. Now that's what I call exemplary "supports at home," especially for older adults living out their "golden years."

Many people have practiced some form of home sharing for a long time and have learned to accommodate another's individual preferences and priorities. Most successful homesharers have mastered an understanding of compatibility and compromise. Each of us has a unique style of living at home—including preferences around cleanliness, kitchen routines, overnight guests, clutter, pets, smoking, drugs, etc., and the better we understand our own needs, priorities and preferences, the more likely we are to find and select a compatible homemate.

Tucson Home Sharing espouses a DIY (Do It Yourself) educational process for home

sharing that includes self-assessment tools, personal support and assistance, information on compatibility, best-practice interviewing techniques, safety and security measures, access to community resources AND a recommended HomeMate Agreement. This is not a program for persons experiencing an acute crisis such as financial despair, homelessness or unresolved health issues, because the consideration to home share should not be a rushed, overnight decision. It is indeed a decision made with personal reflection, resolve, intent and commitment to a viable option for safe, healthy, affordable and companionable living.

Seventeen other states boast funded programs of home sharing, and nearly 60 community home sharing programs are operational across the US. Tucson Home Sharing is the only organization promoting this affordable and companionable living arrangement in southern Arizona! Visit <https://www.tucsonhomesharing.org> to learn about our programs and help us create a vibrant Home Sharing Community in Tucson.

**Home Sharing
by Anne Stelmach**

Come to Tucson Home Sharing
Enjoy a place of caring
And this organization
Seeks to have a clear vision
That has a oneness that states
Share together as homemates
How this removes loneliness!
So others you do not miss

Come along to shared housing
Feelings of trust arousing
Reduced costs financially
Do it any way you see
Whether it be an exchange
Or rent or else anything
Together responsibility
Make it the best possibly!

A Summary of ASU Intern Anne Stelmach's Accomplishments

by Deb Knox

Anne spent 16 hours a week over the course of three months — a total of 240 hours — interviewing community leaders, conducting research on the AZ Landlord Tenant bill, housing and homelessness, managing the phone, and coaching clients, while being a great advocate for home sharing. Board Member Melissa Friesenborg served as Field Advisor.

Outreach

Anne interviewed staff and volunteers from Ward 1 and Ward 3 offices. One Ward fully engaged and the other wanting to learn more. Responses from both organizations were positive and supportive. Anne also dropped off a total of 500 rack cards to ICS and two churches, Pantano Christian Church and Saint Peter and Paul Church. Drop offs were welcomed and contact information exchanged. Need to follow-up!

Education

Anne reviewed the Summary of Evaluations from both our 1.0 and 2.0 Next Steps workshops. Most respondents felt they had received all the information they needed to proceed. It's just a matter of motivation, follow-through and other services THS can offer. Starting in January — THS's Sharing Support and Networking Group will provide the on-going support individuals need. It will be facilitated by Simon Strange after each third Thursday in-person Public Gathering.

Current Issues

Anne researched and wrote articles on the Arizona Landlord Tenant law, ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units), Tiny Homes and homelessness in Tucson which are posted on our Resource page. Anne also compiled helpful information on Housing & Homelessness in Tucson updated in November 2023. The

results are stunning. Go to the THS website Resource page for more information.

Volunteer Training Program

THS now possesses an outline for creating a training manual for volunteers who would like to learn more and help out with our program.

Thank you, Anne, for your accomplishments and contributions to Tucson Home Sharing. We wish you the Best in your on-going career.



Melissa and Anne at 12/21 Meet & Greet

Sharing, Support & Networking Group

A new THS offering for those who have attended a Public Gathering or Next Steps Workshop:

Need help staying focused on your home sharing goals? There's a lot to consider and we think more heads are better than one. So our hope is that this networking group will provide answers to questions you have that others might not have considered. Or someone may have a great tip and it leads you to the person you've been wanting to meet.

Come prepared to be brief, curious, and respectful.

Time, Place and Registration

2:15 - 3:15 pm following the Third Thursday of the month "live" Public Gathering at various locations; can change monthly so check our website

Registration: www.tucsonhomesharing.org and register on the events page.

THS's First Meet & Greet

by Marilyn Gilbert, THS Administrative Assistant

By all accounts, the December 21st Holiday Meet-and-Greet was a success: owing to great food and games; lively presenters; and a surprise poetry performance by Co-Founder Sharon Kha. In sum, a thoroughly memorable, well-received afternoon at Ward 3!



After an introduction by THS President, Jennifer Treece, Lucy Read — with her Christmas tree 'microphone' held high — led thirty plus participants in an icebreaker activity. Small groups were asked to consider “how to explain home sharing to an alien from outer space” and “what was the hardest thing about making the decision to home share.” The responses were often hilarious and thought-provoking. Everyone gained new insight into the home sharing process and common predicaments. Many new connections between potential home sharers were forged during these conversations — which continued long into the afternoon.

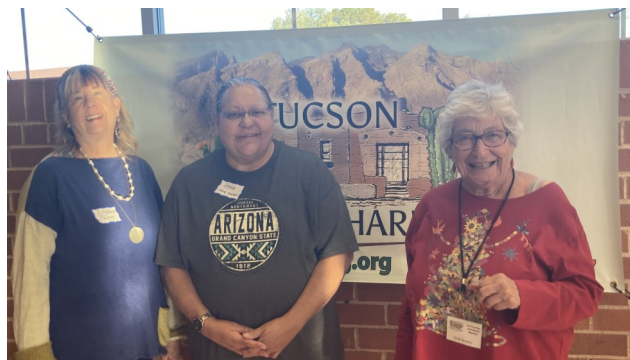
Board members provided a wonderful holiday feast, including sweets, charcuterie and crudité platters, and two delectable trays of Baklava and Spanakopita catered by Santorini Greek Restaurant, courtesy of THS' newest Board Member, Stephanie Pasanen. Lucy's lemon bars were “perfection,” as one participant blissfully noted!



While people filled their plates, two presenters gave informal remarks on topics central to home sharing: Carolyn Chilcote shared helpful tips on decluttering in preparation for home sharing (“don't feel like you have to do it all at once” was an example). THS has a resource available to help with this task. Tom Starrs spoke about home sharing from the point of view of a realtor. A third presenter from the Center for Community Facilitation and Mediation was unable to attend, but many participants received a handout describing their work. THS is looking forward to having presentations from this group in the future.



But perhaps the biggest surprise of the day was when Co-Founder Sharon Kha treated everyone to her “HomeSharing Rap” — sending ripples of lighthearted laughter, applause and warm appreciation throughout the room. If anyone has a video, we will add it to our website in January: it should be seen by many! Sharon has expanded the original rap, which is also included in this newsletter.



All in all, the smiles and positive comments of those in attendance reflected that a good time was had by all: “Lovely food;” “Nice to be among so many friendly people;” “I made new connections;” were some of the comments overheard by the organizers. Thanks to all who attended, and special shout-outs to Stephanie, Melissa, Simon and Liz, Sharon, Deb, Lucy, and Jennifer, to our presenters Carolyn and Tom and Tucson's Ward 3 — for making it all possible!

BUY LOCAL. SUPPORT LOCAL.

By Lucy Read

For the past few months, mailboxes have been full of requests for year-end contributions to sustain non-profit organizations. Many come from unfamiliar or faraway organizations, so I consider them either "silent" or "ill-fated" – silent because their effectiveness is diluted by a lack of notorious telemarketers or ill-fated because 99% find their way into the little round recycling receptacle under the desk before being read. (I stopped counting after #55 went into the trash!)

Nonetheless, fundraising (or asking for money) is absolutely necessary for every non-profit which has plans for the future, and Tucson Home Sharing (THS) is no exception. As a small, grassroots organization, THS' financial needs are small and simple; funding has come from AARP, private foundations, local government (Tucson City Council Wards 3 and 6), other non-profits, churches and individuals over the past three years. However, our dreams and vision for 2024 are BIG and financial support is necessary to continue current programming and outreach, especially designed to create a Home Sharing community in Tucson.

Please join us in supporting Tucson Home Sharing's dreams and vision for 2024, as we move into the New Year – offering Tucsonans a safe, affordable and companionable living option where they may age in place. Donations may be mailed to Tucson Home Sharing at 2332 E. Seneca Street, Tucson, Arizona 85719. (IRS tax-exempt designation #85-3999082). Also, please let us know of your willingness to volunteer your time.

Tucson Home Sharing is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your contributions are tax-deductible and most appreciated!

Tucson Home Sharing Rap

by Sharon Kha, El Dopa Diva
Co-founder and Board Member

Performed live at

December 21, 2023 Meet & Greet

If you're living alone and it's all out of whack
Try Tucson Home Sharing and you'll never look back.

Tucson Home Sharing brings people together
And they find their lives are a whole lot better.

It takes two adults who want to share
Their lives and their coffee and someone to care,

The benefits are mutual; you have a new friend
You save lots of money; and that doesn't end.

To share your life is to share your chores
Like taking the garbage out, both mine and yours.

To get started on this new adventure
Make a list of "must haves " or things you
can't live without,
And another of "can't live withs" without any doubt.

Cats would be a good example ...
If one of you loves cats and the other does not
Then living together is going to be fraught.

Then write an announcement; it's not a hard task
We'll coach you on answers to questions they'll ask.

They'll want to know who you are and what you do
And you'll want the same, so give them a clue.

So get up your courage,
choose a life that's more caring,

Don't be afraid, Become more daring.

Check it out! Tucson Home Sharing!



[This article appeared in a recent newsletter of Choice & Dignity, a local non-profit focused on End-of-Life Advocacy.]

Creating a Culture of Sharing

By Jennifer Treece

Home sharing is a concept as old as time ... people sharing a space, supporting each other to the mutual benefit of all. Although our culture has grown fond of the idea of "independence" a number of factors have turned interest back to "home sharing." Are you an 'empty nester' with an available room? A student or single, older adult seeking lower-cost housing, tired of living alone and struggling to make ends meet ... or a widow/widower who does not want to give up their home? With the cost of housing on the rise, many are thinking back to the Golden Girls ... could a situation of sharing a home and companionship be for me?

Tucson Home Sharing (THS) was co-founded a few years ago by Sharon Kha and Deb Knox - their story can be seen in the video featured at the bottom of the first page of our website tucsonhomesharing.org.

THS's mission is to provide education, outreach and advocacy toward creating and sustaining home sharing partnerships in the Tucson area. Our target population is older adults with a focus on women and solo women homeowners, and especially helping older adults explore affordable lifestyle options that support successful aging in the 'right' place. It's about people helping people to age at home ... safe and happy.

We offer Public Gatherings (PG) (two a month; one Zoom, one in person) as an initial introduction to Home Sharing, answering questions and setting people on the path to further investigation. As a service to other groups and fellow non-profits in Tucson, we also offer to conduct a Public Gathering to your organization exclusively.

Following attendance at a PG, an inquirer is then offered two Next Steps workshops to further investigate options and ways of proceeding, including a thorough Self-Assessment Questionnaire.

THS has become a part of the Arizona End of Life Care Partnership, recognizing that decisions about housing are all too often left

out of family or legal estate planning conversations. We are strong advocates of making sure that advance directives and other documents are in order as well as "having the conversations," recognizing that starting earlier rather than later means that plans can be altered along the way if necessary.

Remember: The best part of home is who you share it with!

THS Board

President—Jennifer Treece

Vice President—Lucy Read

Sec/Treasurer—Deborah Knox

Member at Large—Sharon Kha

Member at Large—Melissa Friesenborg

Member at Large—Solange Monette

Member at Large—Stephanie Pasanen

STORIES ABOUT HOME SHARING

Home sharing speaks to a deep need we all have for safety, companionship, sharing time and responsibilities, in a mutually beneficial supportive environment.

THS would love to hear your stories about successful home sharing experiences (and yes, even those that didn't quite work out). Adapting our thinking to a new idea (and home sharing is really not new at all, it's as old as time itself) is enhanced by learning about others' experiences.

Our Website tucsonhomesharing.org has a section devoted entirely to stories of friends and family. We would love to add yours.

I just wanted to say thank you again, for all the great, very valuable information! The meetings were well presented, the handouts are excellent, and the people were interesting. I'm grateful for all you do. — Sally A

Connecting Potential Homesharers - January 2024

If you are interested in pursuing any of the opportunities below,
please call Tucson Home Sharing at 520-965-4017
to request contact information for a particular Code listing.

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### Home Seekers

#### Westside Preference

Fairly active, somewhat nerdy, senior female. Worked with scientists and engineers, but now I'm retired. Need private bedroom and bath, parking for one car, space for office desk and computer, Wi-Fi, and AC. Prefer NW or West Tucson. A property with horses or access to nature would be ideal. Early riser, coffee and Wordle. Neatnik. Not a very good cook but good at clean-up. Can do grocery shopping, outdoor watering, and some animal care, but not mucking out stalls. Like animals, especially horses. Dogs and cats usually like me. No smoking or drugs. Enjoy privacy and quiet time, as well as some shared time. Interested in healthy aging, tai chi, organic gardening, energy healing, and genealogy. Spend too much time on computer, so go to gym and practice tai chi.  
(Code SA991024)

#### Midtown Preference or other location

I am a 30 year old single female with a 10 month old baby seeking a quiet and safe home. I recently received my Master's degree from the U of A and am in the process of interviewing for jobs now. My interests include crocheting, reading and research in the fields of science and engineering. My child goes to daycare during the week. I am a quiet and friendly housemate who can offer light house-keeping, running errands and some household assistance. We prefer a home with no smoking or drinking. I am originally from Taiwan and can make you authentic Chinese food. I have a desk and office chair, but need a bed and small storage area, along with nearby access to public transportation. My preference is for a midtown location, but other areas will be considered.  
(Code EC961024)

### Home Providers

#### Near West Side of Downtown

Hand-built adobe home on very private, five acre gentleman's ranch near west side of downtown area. Home is Indian museum, in great shape and used for occasional Native American festivals. Offering fully-furnished bedroom, bathroom, fully-equipped kitchen (shared) and shared laundry room. Nominal requests for assistance with inside and outside chores, especially when travelling. Located on top of small mountain in Tucson mountains — has great sunset and morning sunrise views. Overlooking city, yet close to library, food stores, buses, and downtown. Property has much natural wildlife — birds, bunnies, quail, some javelina, two hawks and plenty of nature's pets. Looking for male

or female (child OK) housemate. No pets, smoking or drinking parties; must understand and practice RESPECT. My wife of 44 years only lasted till her time came. Shared household expenses and shared utilities for what your dream could imagine.  
(Code: FS122723)

#### Midtown

Active senior woman in midtown house offers her detached and fully equipped guest house in exchange for meals and social sharing, being present overnight and occasional help with garden and household tasks, as lifting heavy objects or reaching high shelves.  
(Code: MG9710244)

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## Home Providers

### Sahuarita

Welcome to a beautiful, gated Sahuarita resort community that is particularly attractive to those who value a peaceful, harmonious home. The community is 20 minutes south of South Tucson and has a heated pool, gym, dog park and hiking trails, all offered at no additional fee.

If you seek affordability, camaraderie, and a clean, quiet, organized home, let's talk about what a shared home environment looks and feels like. Individuals or couples are welcome. Must be employed, or if retired, receiving a monthly verifiable income. Your friendly, well-trained pet is welcome, but no aggressive breeds; cats must be indoors-only. If you pet-sit, there is further cost savings.

The 950 square foot home has fast WiFi, two bedrooms, one bathroom, no carpet, luxury vinyl flooring throughout kitchen, dining room, & living room. There is an attached garage, which can be used for storage. The focus is on health and well-being. No drugs, alcohol and smoking (indoors or outdoors). If you are vegan/vegetarian, this home is a very good fit. The space is available now. References and background check required. Shared monthly expenses + 1/2 utilities + deposit; month to month basis.  
(SP121323)



Remember our fellow dweller, the Desert Tortoise, who shares his burrow with many different creatures. We encourage you to investigate all the possibilities of sharing your burrow with someone ... or finding a companion who wants to share their burrow with you.

*The Best Part of Home is  
Who You Share It With*

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