

## Amanda and Jeff

### Where Love Lives



*In and around Woodstock, Vermont, affordable housing isn't just hard to find—it's slipping further out of reach for the very people who keep this place running. Carpenters, teachers, servers, and care workers are too often priced out of the communities they serve. Local Deeds was created to change that, offering down payment support and housing stability for local workers in a market increasingly dominated by out-of-state buyers.*

### **The Value of Local Workers**

Amanda and Jeff represent the hardworking locals who keep our community running. They have spent decades serving their community, behind the bar, behind a chair, and always putting clients first. Like so many in the Upper Valley, they hoped to raise a family while staying close to their roots. But without stable housing, their ideal future seemed out of reach until they connected with *Local Deeds*.

### **A Locally Brewed Love Story**

Amanda and Jeff met eight years ago while working at a restaurant in Quechee. Jeff is a skilled bartender with more than 20 years of experience, and Amanda has since returned to hairdressing, buying a salon in Bridgewater from a friend.

Both grew up in the area—Amanda right in Woodstock and Jeff in Hanover, NH. When they moved in together, they initially rented a two-bedroom in Hartland. With the two older kids Lenni and Camden sharing a room, it was tight. They yearned for a house with more space for the kids and for Jeff to pursue his passion for ceramic and sculpture.

### **Everything Just out of Reach**

Jeff developed a Zillow habit, checking it daily for new listings or dropped prices for two years. He searched and searched for homes in their price range. They simply didn't exist. He even searched for other rental properties.

"The rental market and the housing market are pretty tight around here. So we were kind of in a little bit of a housing crisis," Jeff recalls.

Camden, now 16, had started at Woodstock Union High. Lenni, now 14, was at Hartland middle school—heart set on following her brother to Woodstock High. Both kids loved their school and the community of friends they had made. Leaving the area was not an option.

Luckily, being a local worker means daily interaction with the community. It was one of Amanda's clients at her salon, *Local Deeds* worker Trena, who told Amanda about the program and assured her they would be the perfect fit—the exact type of family Local Deeds aims to help.

After one house fell through, they found a nice three bedroom right on Route 12 in Barnard, so close to Silver Lake that Amanda's mom calls it "the family lake house". Despite the house being above their price range, Jeff kept an eye on it. Then, while on a family trip, the price dropped and the trip was cut short. Upon walking into the main room for the first time, with its vaulted ceilings and rays of natural sunlight, Amanda immediately knew this was the one. Their offer was accepted two days later.

### **Turning a House into their Dream Life**

The couple woke up in their new house for the first time on January 1, 2025. It felt like home immediately: "We were here for one night. It just felt comfortable. I loved it," beams Amanda. *Local Deeds* got them there. "The whole program opened the door for a price point of houses that we wouldn't otherwise have been able to afford," Jeff remarks.

Owning a home has completely transformed their lives. They got a puppy—an adorable Lab named Ellie who is full of energy and loves racing around the yard. Amanda hopes to open a salon near their new home, offering an apartment for rent at an affordable rate to another local worker. To her, being able to pay it forward is the most meaningful part of the plan. Jeff has already created a studio on the lower level dedicated to sculpture and ceramics. For the first time, he has a space of his own, and a newly bought kiln is ready for projects he hopes to showcase in Amanda's salon.

The kids are thriving too—Lenni takes her new paddleboard to Silver Lake often while Camden tears around the property on his 4 wheeler ATV.

Perhaps most exciting of all is the wedding they planned in their new backyard in September. Beneath the sprawling canopy of brightly colored trees, well secluded from the road, Amanda and Jeff said "I do" just nine months after finding their forever home.

Grateful to have found more space for the family's passions to grow, Amanda reflects on how smoothly the process went and how thankful they are to have found their home with the help of *Local Deeds*. "We look at each other every day like we just love our house."

### **Help More Families Find Their Home**

*Amanda and Jeff's story is one of many housing success stories made possible in 2024 by Local Deeds supporting local workers and their children through this housing assistance initiative.*

*When you support Local Deeds, you make more stories like theirs possible.*

- [Donate Here](#) to support nonprofit housing programs in the Woodstock area, VT
- **Volunteer** to expand local housing options for families
- **Share** to spread the word about the urgent need for affordable housing in the Woodstock area.

*Together, we're not just creating homes—we're building a stronger, more inclusive Vermont where families can stay, work, and thrive.*

**Local Deeds** is an innovative program to protect housing for families and individuals who live and work, or will work, here year-round serving the local community.

Local Deeds is a Project of **Woodstock Community Trust**