

Kristi

Woodstock and Back Again



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.

A Single Mom Returns Home

Kristi represents the heart of the Upper Valley—someone who grew up here, left to build a life elsewhere, then came back with a desire to raise her children in the same community that shaped her. But like so many others, she quickly realized that returning home did not mean being able to afford to stay. At *Local Deeds*, we aim to change this, helping the people who serve this place afford to stay in it.

Hope for a Native

Kristi, a West Woodstock native, returned to her beloved hometown in 2017 with her two children, Arlo and Billie. Her goal? To find a home for her family that would provide the warmth and support of a tight-knit community, a hallmark of life in Vermont's Upper Valley. She began working part-time at Mount Ascutney Hospital while her two kids were enrolled at Woodstock Elementary.

Despite her deep roots in the area, the prospect of buying a home felt out of reach. Housing prices were skyrocketing, and Kristi's pursuit of a master's degree in social work further stretched her finances.

Luckily, around 2018, Kristi discovered a three bedroom duplex property listed for rent and the family, taken by the charm of the place, quickly moved in. Their neighbors in the adjoining unit became fast friends, and throughout the pandemic, the children found solace and joy playing together in the shared outdoor space. As the years passed, Kristi and her children became increasingly attached to their home, nestled amid a peaceful corner of the village. The duplex's location couldn't be better—just minutes from the school, the Norman Williams Library, and the Green. Gradually, the place became more than just a rental, and more like a home.

Avoiding Relocation

When Kristi's landlord notified her that they wanted to sell the duplex, Kristi knew leaving the home was not an option. "Without financial help, we would've just been looking for a two bedroom, you know?" she recalls, scared of the thought of having to downsize and potentially move far from the community they had created in Woodstock.

When asked what they love most about living in Woodstock, both Arlo, 13, and Billie, 8, gave the same answer without hesitation: "The people!" Kristi had to find a way to stay in that duplex to secure her and her children's futures.

Luckily, Kristi's landlord pointed her towards *Local Deeds* and hope began to bloom.

Making a House a Home

With the help of *Local Deeds*, Kristi was able to turn her long-time rental into a permanent home. The day the papers were signed was more than just a personal victory; it was a neighborhood celebration. Kristi's dad, visiting at the time, built a new mailbox, which Billie and Arlo proudly painted. They marked the milestone with a gathering at White Cottage, joined by their neighbors who had become like family over the years.

Now, with her master's degree in social work completed and a new position at the White River Junction VA Medical Center, Kristi looks toward the future with a renewed sense of excitement. "I've been building a list since 2018!" she says, beaming as she discusses plans to enhance their home.



Meanwhile, Billie has her sights set on something even more exciting: kittens. As renters, they had to follow strict no-pet rules, but now, as proud homeowners, the Clarks are eagerly planning to welcome some furry new family members.

Now, the children can continue to enjoy summertime soccer on Vail Field, neighborhood barbecues, and vibrant, hand-painted bedrooms.

For the Clarks, this house is more than just a place to live. It's a testament to perseverance, community, and the fulfillment of a dream—one that will be filled with new memories and, very soon, the pitter-patter of tiny paws.

Help More Families Find Their Home

Kristi'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 building 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**