

Fall is Awesome!

From The Staff

Place Refrigerator Magnet HERE

at Shires Housing

### IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Shires Housing Office: 802-442-8139

Maintenance Requests: 802-442-8139 ext. 4

EMERGENCY MAINTENANCE - Call the office, if closed call pager below:

EMERGENCY MAINTENANCE PAGER: 802-742-6530

(stoves and refrigerators not included)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Watch your mailbox:

By end of October - new leases and Resident Handbook!

## We Want Your Thoughts & Feedback!

Our mission is simple. We provide top-quality apartments at prices that fit the budgets of regular working folks. Anything we can do as a community to improve the quiet enjoyment of your home, to keep costs low, and to improve our environment to be safe and welcoming for everyone is what we want to hear from you.

### Stop by, call, write, or e-mail us!

Our Shires Housing office is located at 302A South Street.  
Mail: Shires Housing, P.O. Box 1247 • Bennington, VT 05201  
Phone: 802-442-8139 • Fax 802-442-5125  
www.shireshousing.org • info@benningtonhousing.org



# You Deserve A Great Place To Live!



# Newsletter

Vol. 1, No. 4  
Fall 2014



Get Ready for Winter!

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## Shires Housing Community Spirit

### Recent Grant Application Brings Out The Best In The Shires Community

One thing you should know about your neighbors who live in Shires Housing is that they are proud members of the Bennington community. They are the hard-working people that do essential work and provide valuable services that make our town what it is.

This is especially important to note during the recent controversy over the new Shires Housing development to be created on Silver Street.

At issue was whether or not the town should accept a grant on behalf of Shires Housing to help build a 5.5 million dollar development for additional housing that fits the budgets of working people in Bennington.

At times the discussion on this issue became very heated. Some very distressing things were said about "the type of people" that live in Shires Housing.

We want to be very clear, that the "type of people" in Shires Housing are THE SAME type of people found throughout Bennington. We are all members of the same community, with the same hopes and fears, with the same goals of improving our lives as everyone else.

And yet when the negative statements were at their worst, Shires Housing residents were at their best. When accusations of criminality, drug use, and worse were being thrown around the room, members of the Shires Community sat calmly and respectfully. They quietly but firmly showed

their support, meeting after meeting. Elderly and disabled residents came despite physical hardship. Workers with families found the time to come out. Supporters and members of the business community risked losing customers to speak in favor of Shires Housing and to remind the community of over two decades of good work this organization has done for residents of this community.

Much also was said about the use of our tax dollars. To be very, very clear: not one dollar of local tax money will be used to fund this project. The ONLY tax dollars used are taxes that have been specifically allocated for this purpose from the State and Federal government.

The fact that Shires Housing is being successful bringing these tax dollars BACK into your community instead of them going elsewhere should be something we applaud, not complain about.

We also heard the very odd issue that the housing proposal costs TOO much. That private landlords could build housing for much less. Well, it may be true that others can build units for less, but the old adage "you get what you pay for" still rings true. The fact is that Shires Housing builds top quality housing that you can be proud to live in, or next to.

So we sincerely thank YOU, the Shires Housing community, for being the heart and soul of our community, and for your proud belief that we all deserve a great place to live, at a price you can afford.

**One complaint was that Shires Housing spent TOO MUCH money building housing that was TOO NICE.**

**We respectfully disagree.**

## Don't Be Surprised By New VT Laws

Here is a heads up... two recently enacted Vermont State Laws can catch you by surprise! So take note of these new laws so you will not have an unpleasant surprise if you are pulled over:

### Cell Phones In Cars

As of October 1, handheld cell phone use is no longer allowed while driving. Police are now authorized to pull over drivers who are seen using a cell phone.

### Smoking In Cars with Children

It is now illegal to smoke in a car with a child present who is under the age of eight years old.



## COMING SOON: Shires Housing Improvements!

As part of our ongoing commitment to provide top quality housing, we are always reviewing the state of our existing housing and making improvements to keep everything in tip-top shape. In the next year we plan on doing major improvements to the following:

**Carrigan Lane**  
**119-121 Pleasant Street**  
**233 School Street.**

We plan on starting this work in 2015, so we will keep you posted as we move forward!

## New Resident Handbook

### Watch your mail for new lease & handbook!

We have totally revamped and improved the resident handbook! This booklet is your go-to source for all the information you need to have maximum enjoyment of your housing.

Most of the information is not new, so don't worry about there being any major changes or new rules. Rather, our focus was to make the existing information more accessible, and easy for you to use and find the information you are looking for.

One improvement is our focus on the importance of your quiet enjoyment of your housing. That is the primary goal of everything we do at Shires Housing and we look forward to your thoughts and comments on



ways that we can continue to improve the quality of your housing.

## Your Top Quality Housing

### Because you deserve a great place to live!

As you know, Shires Housing is committed to providing top quality housing. So you can have maximum enjoyment of your housing, we are ready to fix any problems or issues that come up.

All regular maintenance that is considered "wear and tear" is done for free, so don't hesitate to call us. Other needed repairs (hey, accidents happen!) are done at below market rates by our dedicated maintenance staff. If you have a general maintenance request, please call Shires Housing at **(802) 442-8139 ext. 4** and follow the directions. This will lead you to the designated maintenance voicemail, and your work request will be added to the next time the crew is in your area.

### Report Water!

If you ever notice water leaks in your apartment, or in any common areas, please contact us immediately! Water leaks can cause a lot of damage and wasting water is a major environmental problem.

**Report any maintenance problems and we will fix it!**

### When is Maintenance An Emergency?

Good question. Fire, no heat, hot water is cold, fire alarm, sewer backup, sink or tub fully clogged, water leak that a bucket cannot contain, toilet is plugged after using a plunger, or being locked out of your apartment are all emergencies. If you have any of these issues Call the Shires office **(802) 442-8139, Ext 7** and follow the directions which will activate the on-call paging system and get you an immediate response.

One thing that is NOT an emergency is Comcast needing to get in the basement. Make sure to contact the office during regular business hours to schedule a Comcast installation that requires basement access.

### Don't Worry About Inspections

Our goal is to make sure your housing is in tip-top shape, not to judge your decorating choices. Any problems or issues we find we will fix so you can have maximum enjoyment of your housing!



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## Knapps is ALIVE and WELL!

During a recent presentation to the Bennington Select Board, Shires Housing director John Broderick misspoke when talking about recent business closings (see article on cover of the newsletter!)

John was discussing concerns in the community over bad news such as the closing of some of our beloved businesses such as Greenbergs, TE Connectivity, and... wait for it... Knapps Pet store! John MEANT to say O'Malley's Pet Store not Knapps!

For locals this is a more understandable mistake, since Knapp's was originally a pet store (located next to the present day Walmart) which did close many years ago.

However, the Knapps we know and love today is very much alive and well! Currently located on Main Street, Knapps has evolved beyond its roots as a pet store to a fun and eclectic combination of hobby store, gift store, and music store; featuring everything from a fine selection of guitars to retro vinyl records covering an extraordinary array of quality music.

So let us officially say OOPS and SORRY! to Knapps... and our best wishes to their continued success as a valued business in the heart of our downtown. THANK YOU KNAPPS!

## New Maintenance Technician

We are happy to introduce to you our new maintenance technician, Shawn Thibodeau. Shawn joined our team this past September and brings with him eighteen years of construction experience.

In addition, Shawn is certified in renovation, repair, and painting. He also holds a EMP certification for Essential Maintenance Practices.



**Welcome Shawn!**

Having Shawn assisting Bernie is a huge help and will ensure that all your maintenance needs are handled quickly and done professionally. Keeping your housing in great shape is our mission, and we are pleased to have found such an experienced professional to fill this position. Please join us in welcoming Shawn!

## Fall Reminders

Fall is here, and winter is fast approaching! For the protection of your property and the environment, here are a few friendly reminders to take note of before the snow flies (and no later than November 1!).

### Avoid the Snowplow!

#### Put Away Outside Toys and Furniture

All outside toys, furniture etc. need to be stored by November 1st. This is very important to make sure that your property is not destroyed by the weather or hidden by snow and crushed by the snowplow!

### Save the Environment!

#### Remove Air Conditioners

Air conditioners must be removed by November 1st.

#### Close Windows

All windows must remain closed after November 1st when your heat is on.

#### Don't Leave Water Running

While leaving water running may be amusing to your pets, it is a terrible waste of water and not allowed in Shires Housing.

#### Why All The Rules?

Frankly, we don't love rules, but when it comes to your safety and peaceful enjoyment of your housing, we will do everything in our power to make your housing a great place to live!