



Friends and Family of Tucson Homesharers

An Occasional Newsletter October 2024

ARE YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER?

By Lucy Read, Vice President

Getting your affairs in order or resolving to finish those end of life plans might sound ominous indeed. You may even hesitate to get started and it's likely that your children don't even want to hear about that topic from you. However, it is the kind of "work" that retirees and older adults should complete sooner than later.

For legal issues such as wills and trusts, consider working with an (elder law or estate-planning) attorney, a supervised paralegal or an on-line service to draft a will or trust that contains instructions for what happens to your assets (e.g. Grandma's turquoise necklace, a car, an off-shore bank account or an insurance policy) after your death. It will be necessary to identify a person willing to serve as the Executor of your estate after you die, as well as a Durable (financial) Power of Attorney, who can help with financial decision-making during your lifetime, should you want or need that kind of advice or assistance. This process provides significant peace of mind, knowing that your wishes for designating beneficiaries, distributing assets, etc. are in writing, and will be carried out in the manner you choose. Funeral or memorial decisions are also an important part of end-of-life planning.

Planning for end-of-life healthcare allows you to express your preferences about the kind of medical care and treatments you want or don't want at the end of your life or when a life-threatening emergency arises. It also compels you to identify someone who knows what you want and can speak for you, in case you cannot advocate for yourself; this person is known as a Healthcare Proxy or Medical POA (Power of Attorney).

Most end-of-life planning is the kind of "work" that can be completed by both home providers

and home seekers while participating in the THS educational process or while awaiting the right home sharing arrangement. Tucson Home Sharing's "Home Share Agreement" recommends that extensive contact information for close family members or friends or personal representatives be exchanged between homesharers, and that both persons remain committed to open, on-going conversation about late stage planning for legal and financial matters as well as health care preferences.

Engaging in the end-of-life planning process fosters a real sense of accomplishment and mitigates potential conflict. Clear communication about personal choices, preferences, values and beliefs reduces uncertainty and assures smoother decision-making among remaining family and loved ones.

Please don't just write your plans; share them with loved ones, legal representatives, healthcare providers, family and other trusted individuals, such as your homemate. Review and update them regularly to make sure you haven't changed your mind about an important matter. Lastly, store them securely and then rest well, knowing that your affairs are now in good order.



HONORING THE PAST, THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE

By Deb Knox, Co-founder and Board Member

Sharon's passing on June 15, 2024 was the end of our home sharing relationship. As Co-founders of Tucson Home Sharing (THS), creating this organization was part of our coming together in 2016-2019. Over the years, in our Public Gatherings we often hear people ask: "How do relationships end?" Well, there are so many ways a home sharing relationship can end ... in sickness, in health, in family wanting one of you elsewhere. It's impossible to say but it's best to be somewhat prepared. That's why we are increasing our focus on ensuring end of life planning and documentation are complete. This is for your benefit and also the piece of mind of your home sharing partner.

Back to the beginning, much of what you will learn from THS's Public Gatherings and Educational Workshops, Sharon and I practiced, experienced and reflected upon as we were learning how to make this home sharing thing work. It was a very exciting and creative time. And thanks to an in-person visit for me in Vermont in the summer of 2019, when I met with Annamarie Pluhar, author of [Sharing Housing: A Guidebook for Finding and Keeping Good Housemates](#). We use her materials promoting many of the concepts, practices and tips about home sharing and we offer a free copy to workshop attendees. She has been preaching about this since 2011, and has so much to share.

Living alone in the home we once shared together is a challenge as anyone knows who has lost a loved one, especially someone with whom you shared so many special moments, feeling safe at home. Sharon was the home provider and now I am left to empty out part and parcel of her home with her son, David. I was the home seeker then — eight years ago, and now I will be the home provider if all goes according to plan.

Home sharing is often about creating a new life for yourself. Any kind of a physical move results

in a readjusting of one's energy, priorities and simply the ways of living. The moment I miss Sharon the most is when I turn out the lights in the Arizona Room to go to bed, and don't have to leave a light on for her. After that, every day is different without her, as I gradually start that creative process again. One foot in the old world and another in the new, one step at a time.

As to the present and future, THS looks forward to more workshops, serving more home providers and home seekers. Check our Events schedule regularly, although Marilyn does a great job sending out reminders. This growing trend of home sharing has a solid base here in Tucson and we look forward to spreading the word to others. Home Sharing is a viable option for finding and securing affordable housing that offers security, opportunity for personal growth, and someone with whom you can share the joys of living together. We look forward to meeting you.



**Sharon and Deb — Botanical Garden 2017
at the beginning of their journey together**

Meet & Greet — October 5, 2024
 by Marilyn Gilbert, THS Administrative Assistant

For a few hours, in the heat of a Tucson Autumn afternoon, twenty aspiring home sharers - some with family and friends (and at least one proxy who came for an ailing neighbor), joined the Tucson Home Sharing Team in the cool refuge of the Ward 3 meeting room for the October 5th Meet and Greet.



THS President Jennifer Treece introduced Founding Board Member Deb Knox and Vice President Lucy Read, also acknowledging Solange Monette, Stephanie Pasanen and newest Board Member, Kathy Kuser, who were unable to attend.

Kathy's wonderful original greeting cards featuring her and Susan Taylor's photographs of doors, on the theme "Opening the Doors to Home Sharing," were made available to attendees for a \$10 donation. The cards were a big hit, and will be on sale at our other events soon, for \$5 each.

Jennifer then introduced Jim Schultz, president of Choice and Dignity, a local non-profit that helps people consider options for end-of-life care and the legalities of assisted dying. Jim began his thought-provoking 30-minute talk saying "while we have many euphemisms for death, there is a 100% chance that death and dying" will come for all of us.



In light of this fact, he wanted to know: "How many have Wills? Trusts? Medical Power of Attorney (either for ourselves or being MPOA for someone we know)?" A surprising number raised their hands, and a few did not. Jim then explained the differences. A Living Will is 'when you're not dead yet,' and allows people to make their wishes known about what we do or don't want to have happen to us in the event of our death, and/or if we need to be moved from a hospital or facility that refuses to honor our final wishes to one that will.



Jim gave out copies of the official forms provided by the Arizona Attorney General's Office to prepare and register Advance Directives, "**A Checklist for End-of-Life Planning**," including: Health Care Power of Attorney; Living Will; Mental Health Care Power of Attorney; and the Prehospital Medical Care Directive (or DNR). In addition, he shared copies of Gail Rubin's ("The Doyenne of Death") list, "**A Good Goodbye Planning Form**," (excerpted from *A GOOD GOODBYE: Funeral Planning for Those Who Don't Plan to Die*). It lists information needed for the Death Certificate (and Five Things You Need to Know NOW Before Someone Dies). The document also recommends information to gather such as Veteran's Information, Marital History, Codes, Passwords, Family, Friends and Others to Notify, what to put in an obituary and on the tombstone (if necessary). A **document locator** should be kept and shared with next of kin as to the where-abouts of all important documents, including Living Will, MPOA, Durable Power of Attorney; birth certificate, passport, and safe deposit box keys.

A home seeker, David, wanted to know what to do if someone has no family or friends to handle final arrangements. Jim answered, "Get a Fiduciary." Another participant, Mona, who came with friend Margaret, shared that she has a large family who have divided up the different roles - e.g. Medical Power of Attorney, Estate and Trust executors, and financial management — all of which Jim's handouts addressed.

Meet & Greet—continued

Mona “watched peoples’ faces as they followed the presentation, and, she added “While everyone understands the necessity of end-of-life planning, it was useful for people to hear the information presented referencing actual documents one needs.” She planned to share the information with her daughters, and said she had enjoyed the meeting and found it helpful, although she herself did not wish to move ahead with the home sharing process at this time.

After Jim spoke, Lucy underscored the importance of including end-of-life planning in home sharing agreements, for both home seekers and home providers. She mentioned that our template for the home sharing agreement now includes recommendations for end-of-life planning.

After a refreshment break, two groups were formed with a home provider and 5-6 home seekers in each. Lucy gave a prompt for role-playing: “How do you feel about having overnight guests whether it’s a romantic partner, or ‘Aunt Murgatroyd?’” All were asked to consider such fine points as how long guests can stay, who pays for their meals, etc.

Lively discussions ensued, and people were encouraged to continue in a free-wheeling fashion until time was called and all the home seekers who wanted to connect with a home provider had had a chance to meet. When asked what she had learned about different facets of home sharing of importance to others, one person said that “the size of the property, distance from town, and a preference for no pets” were some of the considerations expressed in her group.

Lucy concluded the meeting by inviting everyone to our upcoming Sharing, Support and Networking group at Ward 3 on October 17th. A few prospective home sharers remained outside on the patio as the late afternoon sun began its descent. By all accounts, it was another THS afternoon to remember, with thanks to Jennifer, Deb, Lucy and all those whose enthusiastic participation in our quarterly Meet and Greet events is greatly appreciated!

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

THS Board
President—Jennifer Treece
Vice President—Lucy Read
Sec/Treasurer—Deborah Knox
Member at Large—Solange Monette
Member at Large—Stephanie Pasanen
Member at Large—Kathy Kuser

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.

THANK YOU !!
Big thanks to all those donors, funders and individual contributors for supporting Tucson Home Sharing. We welcome others to join with us in creating this community resource to fulfil our Vision: a sustainable community of homesharers in Pima County.

HISTORIC NUMBERS OF OLDER AMERICANS ARE NOW LIVING BY THEMSELVES

By Deb Knox, Co-founder

A recent article in the Washington Post by Judith Graham cited that more than 16 million Americans live alone ... while growing old ... the largest number ever. Is it any surprise then, for many of us in the know, that home sharing is making a comeback big time?

Longer life spans, geographic moves of family members, and our own issues with aging have left more of us alone. If this happens to be your case, then how did you end up living alone? Was it intentional ... or the passing of a loved one? Some of the common concerns of solo agers are: Who can I call on for help now, and in the future? Who can make decisions on my behalf if I'm not able to? How long will I be able to drive and what do I do when I no longer am able?

Creating a Culture of Sharing

I just finished an 8-year home sharing arrangement with Sharon Kha who passed away this summer. Tucson Home Sharing had it's early beginnings in 2016 and that really heightened our relationship. Not only were we able to take care of ourselves by sharing financial and emotional resources, but I am a much better person because of that experience. Taking an interest in another person is just one of the many benefits of home sharing. Being cared about is too. We deeply cared about each other.

We don't often talk about the emotional benefits of home sharing, because we're not all quite comfortable yet sharing intimacies about worries, fears, medical issues, needing help and not being sure how to ask for it. Well, even in those eight years together as companions (and my being somewhat of a caregiver), we both learned to

trust one another and ourselves by simply sharing living space.

The most reliable, up-to-date data about older adults who live alone comes from the U.S. Census Bureau. According to its 2023 Current Population Survey, about 28% of people 65 and older live by themselves, including slightly fewer than six million men and slightly more than 10 million women.

Of women ages 65 to 74, 27% live alone, compared with 21% of men. After age 75, an astonishing 43% of women live alone, compared with 24% for men.

Do you think you'll be comfortable living alone the older you get? And wouldn't it be nice to have someone to help with household chores? What would it take to get you thinking about a broader base of support? Which of your whole person health issues do you think would be most affected: physical well being? mental/emotional well being? spiritual well being? Which area would you like to be improved, while growing older?

Being proactive about how and where we will live depends a lot on our self-esteem, self-awareness and that requires doing some self-assessment. Tucson Home Sharing has developed and adapted some excellent resources for you to discover what you **must have** and **can't live** with in a home sharing relationship.

Once you have a solid idea of what you're looking for — what's so much better than living alone — you're ready to start reconnecting with your personal network. That's part of the business of aging, reaching out to others for socialization, help with any number of daily tasks, and a place to call home with someone where you feel safe and secure.

Our Public Gatherings and Workshops are a good place to meet like-minded persons.

TUCSON HOME SHARING HOME POSTINGS AND HOME SHARE MATCHES

By Deb Knox & Lucy Read

There is a well-kept secret, and that is ... that Tucson Home Sharing, Inc. (THS) hosts an informative website where you can learn all about the benefits of home sharing, and how to find a compatible homemate. To that end, we also have on our website, a special video developed by the Pew Charitable Trust, stories about successful home sharing here in Tucson, local resources for you to contact and a list of Announcements or Home Postings from both home seekers and home providers. And as you can see by the lists below ... everyone has their favorite part of the Old Pueblo.

HOME SEEKERS

- Home Seeker: Midtown or Nearby Preference
- Home Seeker: Looking to Co-Buy Home in Central Tucson
- Home Seeker: Anywhere in the greater Tucson area

HOME PROVIDERS

- Home Provider: Eastside Location
- Home Provider : Vail Area
- Home Provider: West Side of Downtown

Over the years we have learned that location, location, location is important to individuals. Once you have defined your own area of preference, start looking at these postings as they are thoughtfully created, listing important priorities such as a description of the physical space available or wanted, personal preferences about sharing time together and “oh my gosh, she needs a gardener!” People are putting a lot of time into creating their Announcements, listing “must haves” and “can’t live withs,” and indeed they should. Home Sharing can help you create a new life, feel less stressed financially and excited about opportunities for more personal growth as you navigate a new relationship and a growing sense of safety and security.

If you’d like to have a conversation or email exchange with “CODE: RL2024-2” or any other

person found on the Home Postings tab of the THS website, then all you need to do is call Marilyn at the THS office (520-965-4017) and request receipt of the contact information associated with that code number. On occasion, Marilyn may refer your request to a THS Board member, but it’s still a simple process. As a reminder, if you have not already written your Announcement with your location preference, please do so, as this is the only way to communicate what you have to offer or what you are looking for to our wider cohort of home sharers. Our organizational vision remains stable...an established and supported home share community in Tucson.

HOME SHARE MATCHES

There have been several new home share partnerships made between THS home seekers and home providers over the Spring and Summer months. One match was made quite quickly but most take time, patience, a good bit of personal reflection, and a bold leap of faith. Although THS does not provide an actual “matching service,” we provide opportunities to introduce you to like-minded persons through our educational programs and workshops, a sharing, support and networking group, and social events as well.

Here is the story behind one recent home share match, mirroring a runner’s perspective on Keeping the Faith. *7 Tips for Life’s Journey* was written by Rabbi Yehuda Ceitlin and printed in the Arizona Daily Star on 9-29-24. Similar “Tips” were shared by a THS home seeker, “EF.” EF has spent a lifetime living in a variety of housing communities around the US. With her mind on the goal of home sharing and knowing she needed to start off slowly, EF began participating in THS programs and events virtually (via Zoom) from Yuma, AZ, and then via long distance transport to Tucson for a few monthly in-person meetings.

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(Tip #1: Design the Warm Up Plan, Establish goals, create resolve for the finish line and enjoy the (THS) process of education, self-assessment and personal reflection). In search of more in-person participation in the THS Home Share Program, this home seeker eventually moved to Tucson, after learning of a short-term rental opportunity here from the THS Intern.

(Tip #2: Keep moving. (in this case, literally-speaking). Then, EF began attending numerous educational programs and workshops as well as networking and social events. It wasn't long before she found a more compatible rental arrangement, so she moved again.

(Tips #3 and 4: Know that distractions are inevitable and that sometimes we feel lost.) (e.g. health concerns, transportation challenges and moving expenses). During this period, EF wrote and revised her Announcement for posting on the THS website. While attending a THS Meet 'n Greet social event earlier this summer, she met and clicked with a home provider, who called her soon thereafter.

(Tip #5: Customize your own path and watch for opportunities for growth and discovery). Both women enjoyed the "Getting to Know You" stage through interviews and a Move-In date was set for August 2024, nearly one year after EF began her home sharing experience with THS. Thankfully, EF is now thriving on her life's journey.

(Tip #6: Celebrate! Be ready to pivot, when necessary, as there will always be a few obstacles along the way. A Home Share Agreement can remind you of what you and your home share partner deem most important; if revisions to your Agreement are necessary, don't be afraid to make them.

(Tip #7: Lifes' journeys are available to everyone). Join us and become better prepared to learn and grow each step of the way toward the destination of a successful home sharing adventure.

The Best Part of Home is Who You Share It With

Two or more adults share housing for their mutual benefit. It's about people helping people to age at home ... safe and happy!

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.

