

BY Katherine P. Cox  
PHOTOS BY CPerry Photography

# Family Affairs

LOCAL BUSINESSES ARE PROUD OF THEIR FAMILY TIES

What is it about the Upper Valley that draws people back? Children who leave the area for college often return, sometimes to join the family business. It's evident that it's a win-win situation when children follow in their parents' footsteps. >>>



Baker Orthodontics



The Carriage Shed



Peraza Dermatology Group

Amy, Robert, and Jenny enjoy keeping work all in the family.



# The Carriage Shed

Although they say that working together has its ups and downs, it's clear from the banter among the Therriens that the up times predominate at The Carriage Shed in White River Junction. Robert Therrien and his daughters, Jenny Sinclair and Amy Hook-Therrien, have been working together since Robert bought the business in 2004.

Robert was in the concrete construction business and was getting burned out. He knew the previous owners of The Carriage Shed, which sells sheds made by the Amish in Pennsylvania, and told them he was interested in doing something else. They wanted to sell and offered him their business, and he bought it, although he kept his hand in the construction business as well for a couple of years.

At the time, The Carriage Shed sold only small sheds, and Jenny, now 37, came on board right away as manager. She had just returned from the Caribbean where she was teaching and doing archaeology work. "I came back here and haven't left," she says.

Amy, now 27, was still in high school and helped out on weekends and during the summer. "I liked to hang out," she says. "We always did things together." She went on to get a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at the University of Maine in Orono, focusing on painting and sculpture. After graduating in 2011, she joined the family business, as "it was hard to get a job in the art field," she says. She joined her dad and sister as assistant manager, and along with sharing their duties, she handles the website and writes a blog. She continues to pursue her art on the side.

Under the Therriens' ownership, The Carriage Shed has grown tremendously over the years to include large structures such as horse barns and garages, and even smaller houses. "I saw a lot of potential in doing bigger buildings," Robert says. "I could see we could create a nice niche doing quality buildings."

He developed a couple of building plans for structures that were easily transported and assembled, and he convinced their builder in Amish country, Jake

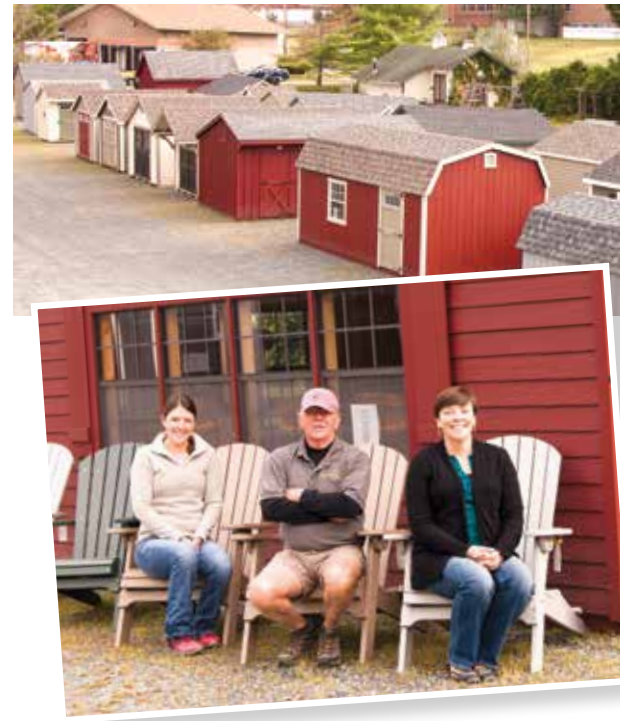
Jenny and Amy are almost 10 years apart and adults now, but Robert, 68, says, "They're always your little girls. Ever since they were born, they were my life. Everything I do is to make sure they have the best life they possibly could."





**Breakfast. Lunch.  
Dinner. Dessert.  
Live Music.  
22 Beers on Tap.**

**3 Lebanon Street  
Hanover, NH  
[www.skinnypancake.com](http://www.skinnypancake.com)**



Beiler, to build one. They built their first horse barn in 2007 and sold 12 that year. “In three years we doubled our business,” Robert says.

From there they began designing more traditional New England-style structures, and now they sell their products across the United States. Barns and garages are their biggest sellers, but they are growing the sales of log-style homes that can be customized. They also sell playground equipment, which Amy and Jenny oversee, and they keep that in the family too. As Jenny jokes, “My son does the playground inspections.” Greyson is six years old.

The division of labor among the Therriens is pretty fluid, with each person able to step in and do whatever is needed. “We all do quotes,” Amy says, with Robert generally doing the estimates on the larger buildings. They all work with customers, and Jenny sets up deliveries; Robert does the deliveries.

Working together has its ups and downs, says Jenny, but “most of the time it’s really great,” says her father. The three are extraordinarily close. They go on vacations together, and even after working together all day, “Dad still calls us every night,” Amy says. Robert likes the arrangement. “I



**MT. ASCUTNEY HOSPITAL  
AND HEALTH CENTER**  
A Dartmouth-Hitchcock Affiliate

**Peter G. Lapre, OD**

*Nothing is more rewarding  
than helping the world come into  
focus for patients.*

When your vision is properly corrected, objects are clearer, colors are brighter, and you can drive with greater confidence. See the world in a brand new light with care from our expert Ophthalmology team:

**Christopher Connor, MD & Peter G. Lapre, OD**

Together, we provide comprehensive eye care for adults, from basic eye exams to testing and treatment for cataracts, glaucoma, macular degeneration and diabetes.

**Call today to schedule an appointment in Hanover at (603) 643-1919  
or in Windsor (802) 674-7345**

289 County Road, Windsor, VT 05089 | (802) 674-6711 | [MtAscutneyHospital.org](http://MtAscutneyHospital.org)



don't have to worry about anything.” He trusts his daughters and knows the business is in good hands with them.

Jenny and Amy are almost 10 years apart and adults now, but Robert, 68, says, “They’re always your little girls. Ever since they were born, they were my life. Everything I do is to make sure they have the best life they possibly could.”

“He does anything for us. He set up a wonderful place for us to work,” Amy says. “I didn’t have to think about joining the business. We’re like best friends. We know what’s going on in each other’s lives. We can pick up on cues. If you’re having a bad day, here we all care and want to help. It works out really well because we can talk about anything.”

“We all have our own strengths,” Jenny says, “and it’s a good fit. I can’t imagine doing anything else. My son wants to work at The Carriage Shed when he grows up.”

Simply put, Robert says, the success of a family business “reflects on all of us. It took all of us to make what happened happen. It’s the only way I want to live life.” ←

The Carriage Shed  
1195 VA Cutoff Road  
White River Junction, VT  
(800) 441-6057  
www.carriagedshed.com



*Wishing you a happy and healthy holiday season!*



**Nathan Wechsler**  
Accountants & Business Advisors

Concord  
(603) 224-5357

Lebanon  
(603) 448-2650

Keene  
(603) 357-7665

[www.nathanwechsler.com](http://www.nathanwechsler.com)



**CHEW & CO. DESIGN**

Interior Design • Home Furnishings • Accessories • Unique Gifts

One South Street • Hanover, NH  
[www.chewcodesign.com](http://www.chewcodesign.com)