

Who is AHH?

The Alderson Hospitality House supports the women of the Federal Prison Camp Alderson and their families and friends. We believe in the importance of visitors during incarceration. Our volunteers and staff, through donations, demonstrate this belief by providing temporary lodging, meals, transportation assistance, information and support.

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Catherine Goggins, volunteer

FLIGHT INFORMATION



Raleigh County Memorial
Beckley, WV
www.flybeckley.com
Greenbrier Valley
Lewisburg, WV
www.gvairport.com

AMTRAK INFORMATION

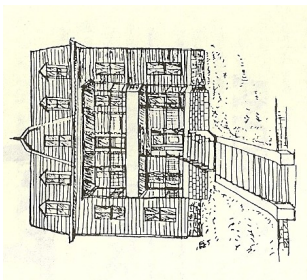


www.amtrak.com
Amtrak stops in Alderson, WV
ONLY Sundays, Wednesdays, and Fridays
From Chicago, eastbound: Train #50
From New York, westbound: Train #51

Non-Profit Org.
Permit No. 579
Alderson, WV
24910

If you would like to be added or removed, please contact us!

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ALDERSON HOSPITALITY HOUSE



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TRANSITIONS

By BRIAN DeROUEN

While the winter seems to last forever in Alderson, when spring arrives it does so with a brilliant explosion of color. The brown empty trees and gray skies transition to blasts of green and radiant blue as the bone chilling winds become gentle warm breezes. Bringing in wood and keeping the woodstove burning are replaced by lawn mowing and weeding as life continues its cycle. Transition is a constant presence in this House, and those transitions can be joyful and heart breaking. The beauty and renewal of spring is but a hint of the joy in families reunited and the hardship of a long winter, too long is plain to see in the eyes of families who have many years to go. We welcome all of the emotion of transition, both good and bad, here at the Hospitality House, but springtime, both literal and metaphorical, is amazing.



It seems as though it were only a few month ago that Anna was moving in to begin her year as our third staff member. We so enjoyed her beautiful music and the gatherings of guests it pulled together on the front porch and the play room. As she moves on

to life in graduate school at Boston College, we send her off like we do all of our Hospitality House family, with love and thanks for what she has shared with us.

As Anna has gone away, our new staff member Julia is about to graduate from De Paul University in Chicago and will be joining us towards the end of June to transition from big city life to the slightly different setting of Alderson. She will bring a great deal to our staff, and we are eagerly looking forward to her arrival. In the meantime our dear friend and amazing volunteer Catherine has already returned for another

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How Does Your Garden Grow?

By CATHERINE

Everyone one of you who has stayed with us has been helpful in filling the compost bowl over the trashcan. Just this weekend someone asked what it was. "Next year's soil," I responded. And it really is! The pile that those scraps end up in might not look like anything special, but with a little patience the compost pile is a place of decomposition and transformation. In go apple cores, egg shells, and leftovers, and out comes rich soil.

My name is Catherine Goggins, and this summer I'll be helping to care for the gardens enhanced by that soil, working at the Hospitality House as well as the Alderson Community Food Hub. I arrived at the Hospitality House for the summer in early May after I finished my junior year at Virginia Tech. My family lives in Newport News, Virginia, and as the second of five children, I love the energy that this house has on the weekends! So far this summer I've learned a lot from Kathleen about cooking, and had the chance to enjoy reading on the porch swing, milkshakes from the Big Wheel, and swimming in the Greenbrier River. It was such a pleasure to meet many of you late last summer, and I'm really excited to get to know you better and to share food from our gardens. We're hoping to have lots of fresh



veggies all summer, as well as great tomato sauces, pickles, and dried herbs throughout the year.

Our guests have all probably seen our smallest garden just off the playroom with lots of herbs, peas, and some hoped for carrots. There is a larger community garden we're tending that sits along the route that leads to the Camp (at the bottom of the hill just before True Value). There we have rows of sweet potatoes, sugar snap peas, more carrots, tomatoes, peppers, zucchinis, and even some sunflowers and zinnias. The third garden plot is full of foods for the Alderson



Community Food Hub and is located just across the Greenbrier River at St. Mary's Catholic Church. I'm especially excited about all the watermelons growing there and am constantly amazed by the way they begin, just a seed and some soil. 🌱

House Notes By KATHLEEN

It's a beautiful spring evening. My boys are all up at Bethlehem Farm enjoying a community night. They are probably collecting the eggs from the chickens, wrestling with the college students, and eating a lot of dessert. This morning, Catherine, our summer, garden volunteer, Vitale, and I started planting our plot in the community garden. And now I'm relaxing on the couch typing this update for you.

I am very glad that the weather is turning warm again. We had a very cold winter, filled



with frozen pipes, sub-zero temperatures, and high heating bills. The warm weather is a relief for us, as well as, for our guests. It is hard to travel during the winter months, especially with the threat of snow and ice. These past few weeks, the house has been filled with families visiting their loved ones at the camp.

This spring has brought a lot of volunteers to the house. The Faith Lutheran Mission Team from Troy, MI brought a group of high school students to Alderson. A portion of them spent all week on the roof of our shed. They expanded it for firewood storage

and put new shingles over the entire roof. On their last day in Alderson, a huge group came over to clear the field behind the shed. Their help was wonderful.

We also had two college groups stay at the house. The students from Virginia Tech painted two bedrooms, did some spring-cleaning, and helped out with other small repairs around the house. A group of students from Hamilton College also spent a day working around the house and learning about our mission.

We want to thank all of our volunteers. You help make us look good! Evey and Jim

Ferrotte have cooked many meals for our guests. The Churches of Hinton have also helped to cook meals. Other volunteers include Jandy Hanna, Anna Osbone, Kevin Johnson. Chrissy, our former staff member, and her partner in crime, Marybeth, came to run the house for a weekend so that the boys and I could go cheer Brian on in his annual marathon. If you are interested in volunteering with us, please let us know. We have also started our service program with

the prison again. There are four women from the prison who will come out every week to help us with landscaping.

We also get a lot of help from the guests who stay with us. It is a rare occasion that I am in the kitchen doing dishes by myself. I don't want to name people because I know I'll forget someone, but I absolutely enjoy the company and help that many of our guests provide when cooking such big meals. And know that I miss those of you who spent every visit cutting, chopping, and doing hundreds of dishes. You hold a special place in my heart. 🌱

Remember The Day

Mason Varney

*Dreams became reality
the day you gave me the news
We were gonna be a family
Our walk to the store To buy that simple test
A couple of minutes
felt like hours at best
My pacing in the kitchen
nervous I guess
The sound of your sweet voice
the loving look on your face
tears filled my eyes our long loving embrace
Name all picked out
for a girl or a boy
My heart beating fast
overflowing with joy
9 short months later
waiting for you to give birth
To our perfect little man
Yeah I'll always remember the day
When I first held love in my hands*

Calling all poets, song writers, and artists!

We would love to feature you in
our next newsletter!
Share your artwork, thoughts,
words, and feelings.

POETRY
CORNER

Shame

Mason Varney

*The shame I feel
shame that's so real
The shame of being
a failure
shame that's so real
The shame of leaving
a son on his own
shame that's so real
Shame of losing
your love
shame that's so real
The shame of seeing
a son grow up by himself
shame that's so real
Son that's the shame
that I feel
yeah that shame is so real
Son, I love you forever
No shame in that son
Dad truly loves you
And Dad always will.*

TRANSITIONS CONTINUED

summer of working in the garden and sharing her beautiful presence with everyone she meets.

With the seasons and arrival of new (and returning) staff members, it is easy to see the blessings which life's journey brings to us. With so many of our guests, though, the positive can be much harder to see. Incarceration separates mothers from their children and wives from their husbands. It leaves Christmas dinners and 4th of July picnics with an empty seat at the table. While the emptiness that our guests experience is not permanent, it is profound and difficult.

Yet, as it is with most hardships, the potential for growth and the ability for love and community to overcome despair is ever present in this house. Life does not stop with the incarceration of a love one, it changes, and we have the great pleasure of watching so many families thrive and grow despite the myriad obstacles they face - husbands who learn to communicate and share with their wives more authentically and teenagers who come to appreciate sitting all day at a table across from their parent. This is not to romanticize the experience of a family experiencing incarceration but rather to offer an

example of how resilient many of the families we work with are and how they are able to live, love, and grow together even in the midst of this season in their lives they so want to have behind them. Thankfully, that

time will come for all of them.

It is with a twinge of selfish sadness that we share in the fun of families picking up a loved one because that reunion will leave an empty space or spaces around our Hospitality House table. Our guests so often thank us for the work we do while failing to recog-



nize the amazing gifts and energy they bring into our lives. From help cooking and washing dishes, to friends who return from visitation and immediately seek out Micah and Vitale to play, or those who pick up the weed wacker or wrench. We often find ourselves wondering, how are we going to survive without Dave, Roz, Jason, Trudy, Sandra, Rosemary or Keith? The list of names of guests that we miss could fill this newsletter many times over. These dear friends have moved on to a new and

brighter season and while their absence is felt in our house, the memories we now hold in common will last far longer than even the most beautiful blooms and blossoms of spring in the Greenbrier Valley. 🌸

RECIPES FROM THE KITCHEN

Green Beans with Caramelized Onions

Those of you who have been coming to the House since they changed visitation on Fridays know that Friday night has become *Pasta Night* at AHH. When we realized we had to add a dinner, we decided to go with something simple and inexpensive, but still delicious. When I, Kathleen, am cooking on Friday, I love to make green beans (or maybe I make them often just because Catherine grew and preserved so many last year). I do not make them the old fashioned way, however. I like to spice them up, and here is my recipe.

Now, this is a recipe my husband would hate to follow because I don't have exact measurements, so maybe this is a recipe for those more adventurous cooks. I'll do my best to guess how much of each ingredient should be added, but feel free to make your own adjustments to suit your own taste buds.

1-2 Tablespoons of Butter	A Splash of Soy Sauce
1-2 Red Onions, sliced	A Splash of Rice Vinegar
1-2 tablespoons of Sesame Oil	A handful of Sesame Seeds
1 bag frozen Green Beans (or the equivalent amount of fresh green beans)	Salt and Pepper

1. Melt butter on low heat in a large skillet
2. Put onions in and put a lid on.
3. Caramelize the onions by letting them cook covered, on low heat. Stir every 5-10 minutes until the onions start to turn a little brown (about 30 minutes).
4. Turn the heat up to medium-high, then put in the sesame oil and green beans.
5. Once the beans have sautéed about two minutes, add the soy sauce and rice vinegar.
6. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally until the green beans are bright green.
7. Add the sesame seeds, and season with salt and pepper to taste. 🍴

THE ALDERSON PARENTING EDUCATION (LIFT)

By KATHLEEN

I just went to the prison's Community Relations Board Meeting, and there I learned a little more about their LIFT (Linking Inmate Families Together) program. This is the program that opens up the Children's Center in the visiting room on Saturdays and Sundays. The current warden has asked the organizers of this group to bump up the programming, which I thought was a great thing and wanted to share that with you.

So far, they have celebrated Earth Day by making recycled turkeys out of aluminum cans and Mother's Day by planting sunflow-

ers both in little cups for the kids to take home and outside the visiting room. They hope to do a bigger activity once a month to give mothers and children some ideas for fun activities they can do together. Along with the weekly activities in the Children's Center, LIFT also provides Parenting Classes, organizes Family Day (the toughest weekend of the year to get reservations with us), and plans the Children's Christmas Party. This program seems like a great way to "lift" up mothers and their children. 🍴

TOP US OFF - THE ANNUAL FUND

We are halfway through the year, but our cup is not even close to half full, yet. I like to think of myself as an optimist, but in the case of fundraising, I'm forced to be more of a realist when our cup looks like it does.

Summer is almost here, and this is the busiest time of year here at the house. Despite the warm weather, the coffee pot at the Hospitality House is filled and emptied several times a day.

Please help us to fill our cup, so that we

can continue to offer the hospitality to those friends and families that need it the most. Please help Top Us Off!! 🍴

Please make all checks payable to **Alderson Hospitality House** or donate online at www.aldersonhospitalityhouse.org

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

WISH LIST

Everyday Items

Coffee :)
Postage Stamps
Ink Pens
Dish Soap
Paper Towels
Toilet Paper
Laundry Detergent (for HE)
Light Bulbs
Fresh Produce
Pasta
Pasta Sauce
Lemonade/Iced Tea Mix
Kroger/IGA/Kmart Gift Cards

Willing to spend a bit more?

Landscaping shrubs
Standard size pillows
Quality wash cloths

For the big spenders out there:

Weed Wacker
Riding Lawn Mower
Power Washer
Economy Car

GOAL
\$90,000



JUNE
\$28,527

FEBRUARY
\$5972

