

Who is AHH?

The mission of the Alderson Hospitality House is to provide support for those incarcerated at the Alderson Federal Prison Camp, their families and friends by providing temporary lodging, meals, transportation, emotional support and education.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Paul Loos	Tod Hanger
Gloria Martin	Nancy Burris
William Strange	Judy Lucas
Sam Kasley	Evey Frerrotte
Bobbi Loos	

AHH STAFF

Kathleen DeRouen, co-director
Brian DeRouen, co-director
Daniel, volunteer

FLIGHT INFORMATION



Raleigh County Memorial

Beckley, WV
www.flybeckley.com
Greenbrier Valley
Lewisburg, WV
www.gvairport.com

AMTRAK INFORMATION



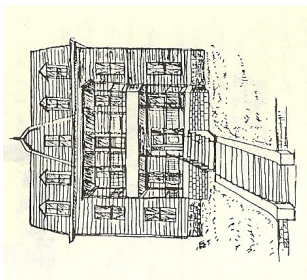
www.amtrak.com

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!

ALDERSON HOSPITALITY HOUSE
203 High Street
PO Box 579
Alderson, WV 24910
304.445.2980



www.aldersonhospitalityhouse.org
aldersonhospitalityhouse@gmail.com

ALDERSON HOSPITALITY HOUSE



VOLUME 41, ISSUE 1

FEBRUARY 2018

HOUSE NOTES By KATHLEEN

Every year about the time that February comes around, I look back at the past couple of months and marvel all that has gone on around here. The holidays are a busy time for us at the Hospitality House starting all the way back in October with Halloween. For the few of you that maybe don't know, each year the staff, in conjunction with many community volunteers, turns the entire 4 floors of the Hospitality House into a House of Horrors.

We start planning for this event in August, determining a theme and starting publicity, but it is the last weeks of October that things really get moving. Because we don't want to stop offering the services of the House to our regular guests, the House stays open during the weekends, and we host the Haunted House for three days in the middle of the week. We try to keep the house looking pretty normal through the weekend, but once Sunday hits, the transformation begins. Sets and props that have been waiting in the

garage or in the back breezeway make their way into the house. The playroom is turned into a staging area with lighting in one corner, costumes in another, masks laid out on a table, and a large spread of food waiting for all the volunteers.

The Hospitality House becomes unrecognizable. Portable walls are put up to give the illusion of a cramped space, stuffed dead bodies and fabric are draped all throughout the house, beds are shoved into a corner, and this year a psychedelic rainbow tunnel was constructed on the upper staircase. All this happens in two days, and the real miracle comes the last night of the haunting, when all this is taken back down and the Hospitality House is once again the lovely bed and breakfast that we

all know and love.

During our three nights of haunting, we

(Continued on page 3)



PRISON MINDFULNESS INSTITUTE

By BRIAN

"Be still and know that I am God..." This line of scripture, the beginning of Psalm 46:10 is one that is tossed around a bit in the Christian tradition in which I was raised. These days it can often be found on Facebook memes featuring sunrises or the comments below someone's post about how they are stressed and having a tough day. Despite its popularity as a quick piece of encouragement or as text over a bucolic landscape scene, in all my years of youth group, Bible study and graduate school (studying theology) it was never given more than a passing mention. That is with one exception...an obscure elective theology course during my undergrad days entitled Contemplative Prayer.

Contemplation and mindfulness have a rich history and practice in the Christian tradition, but it is one that most followers of the faith are completely unaware of. I was very much in this category until I stumbled across the writing and teachings of a Vietnamese Buddhist monk named Thich Nhat Hanh. In 1967, Martin Luther King nominated Thich Nhat Hanh for the Nobel Peace Prize for his work, which he continues today at the age of 91. In his writings, Thich Nhat Hanh seeks to offer people of all religious backgrounds access to Buddhist teaching and practices that will aid them in their life journey. He does not seek to convert Christians to Buddhism or convince atheists to seek a spiritual life, but rather he endeavors to meet people where they are and open up a worldview, an understanding that they might not have been made aware of.

During my very short stay at the Taft Correctional Institution I found great sustenance in sitting in mindfulness with the Buddhist inmates, and it is from these men that I first heard about the Prison Dharma Network, now known as the Prison Mindful-

ness Institute. This organization was founded in 1989 by Fleet Maull, a Buddhist inmate, while he was serving a 14-year sentence for drug trafficking. Today the mission of the Prison Mindfulness Institute is to, "provide prisoners, prison staff and prison volunteers with the most effective, evidence-based tools for rehabilitation, self-transformation, and personal & professional development...". By bringing mindfulness behind the bars of prisons, they seek to "transform individual lives as well as transform the corrections system as a whole in order to mitigate its extremely destructive impact on families, communities and the overall social capital of our society."

There are myriad programs, both faith-based and secular which seek to help inmates during their incarceration and prepare them for life after they are released. However, something that stands out about the Prison Mindfulness Institute is that their objective is not only to help inmates. They state, "we also believe in the power of mindfulness training to positively enhance performance, quality of life, and health and wellbeing among corrections professionals while at the same time creating healthier, more human environments for prisoners and staff alike...". In order to make progress towards such an ambitious goal, the Prison Mindfulness Institute has several programs including the Path of Freedom curriculum, Books Behind Bars, the Engaged Mindfulness Institute, networking and community building.

The Path of Freedom program "includes training in: mindfulness meditation, emotional intelligence, communication, conflict resolution, and various resourcing and resiliency building skills." The program is designed to help both inmates and prison professionals improve impulse control and develop greater self-awareness as well as greater social awareness. The program is

(Continued on page 7)

MINDFULNESS CONTINUED

offered to participants of any faith and those who do not identify with any particular faith tradition.

Through the Books Behind Bars project, The Prison Mindfulness Institute has distributed almost 60,000 books inside of prisons. These books on mindfulness, meditation and Buddhism are all donated by individuals who support the work of the Prison Mindfulness Institute. In addition to supporting individual inmates, the program seeks to aid prison chaplains and librarians. The books provided to prison libraries and chaplains include not only Buddhist works but also books covering many of the world's faith and wisdom traditions so as to be accessible to any possible reader.

My personal Christian faith came to life when I began to focus on the verses in Matthew 25 in which Jesus separates the sheep from the goats. Christ recognized those who truly loved and followed his teachings as those who fed the hungry and clothed the naked. While I grew up serving at soup kitchens and taking my used clothes to thrift stores, I didn't really notice at the time, that Christ also instructed his followers to visit the prisoner. Here at the Hospitality House, we see the benefits of visiting the prisoner and how it is not only the incarcerated person who benefits from each visit. Visiting with inmates and volunteering in prisons is both a rewarding and challenging opportunity for people of all faiths, and the Engaged Mindfulness Institute was created to help prepare individuals inter-



ested in taking on that challenge. Begun in 2015, it focuses on training professionals and volunteers who work with individuals in at-risk situations and communities that have been marginalized and underserved. In our opinion, it would be difficult to find a more apt description for those living and working inside of the prison industrial complex.

The Prison Mindfulness Institute has ongoing programs in the Massachusetts and Rhode Island bureau of prison facilities and a program serving male and female inmates at the Boulder, CO county jail that has been running for over 15 years. In addition to those, the Prison Mindfulness Institute has volunteer and inmate led programs in prisons from coast to coast.

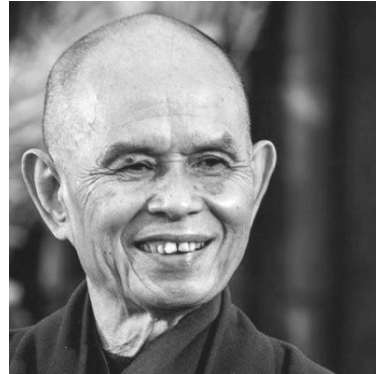
Many recipients of our newsletter are currently incarcerated, some once were or have a loved one that was or is incarcerated. Whichever of these categories a person may find his or herself a part of and whichever faith tradition you may identify with, we encourage you to learn about and support the Prison Mindfulness Institute. Perhaps you will even consider the role that the practice of mindfulness may play in your own life. The Mayo Clinic describes Mindfulness as "the act of being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling at every moment –without interpretation or judgment"; and Thich Nhat Hanh explains, "mindfulness shows us what is happening in our bodies, our emotions, our minds and in the world. Through mindfulness, we avoid harming ourselves and others." I personally do not believe that the world is significantly better or worse than it has been or will be again in the future. There are beauties and sorrows all around in equal abundance. Though having said that, life, both inside and outside of a prison's walls, can be a challenge, and my mindfulness practice has been a wonderful tool as I make my way down the path that lies before me. 🙏

POETRY
CORNER

INTERRELATIONSHIP

You are me, and I am you.
Isn't it obvious that we "inter-are"?
You cultivate the flower in yourself,
so that I will be beautiful.
I transform the garbage in myself,
so that you will not have to suffer.

I support you;
you support me.
I am in this world to offer you peace;
you are in this world to bring me joy.



THÍCH NHẬT HẠNH

Please share your artwork, thoughts and words of anguish, hope and joy. We'll consider any submissions for future publications, so please send us your stuff! 🌱

HOUSE NOTES CONTINUED

fill the house with 20-40 volunteers of varying ages and backgrounds. This year my mom, sister, husband, and sons all participated in the haunting, as well as a number of middle and high school students, board members, roller derby teammates, and many friends from the area. It has proven to be a wonderful event for the community.

The community that forms around the Hospitality House can really be felt during



the months leading into winter. It always seems like once the last box of Halloween supplies are finally put up into storage, it's time to start thinking about what to prepare for

Thanksgiving dinner, and while we might be in charge of the meal, we're never alone in preparing it. Our friend and Hospitality House supporter Donald Blake lovingly raises the turkeys we serve. They are still gobbling and doing whatever it is that turkeys do until a day or two before Thanksgiving so that they are never frozen and are as delicious as can be. Community friends bring desserts, guests come home from visitation and chop vegetables, stir pots, or make mashed potatoes, and after dinner, there is always a crew waiting to do the dishes. While

the focus of Thanksgiving might appear to be the food, I think the community formed around the prep, clean up, and the discussions and laughter around the table during the meal are far more important.

The moment Thanksgiving is over, I start getting questions about where the Christmas decorations are. I'll be honest; I don't get too excited about decorating a three-story house. I love the decorations once they are up, but getting them there is a challenge. This year, my parents came in to help put up those decorations, and with them came an entire carload of decorations given to them by their friends for the AHH. We had plenty to work with this year. I am very grateful they came to help sort through and put up so many decorations, and the house looked great

receiving many compliments from guests and community friends alike.



Christmas Eve was another good celebration at the AHH. Lots of people were together watching football in the living room; gingerbread houses were once again being decorated in the playroom thanks to our beloved friends and House supporters Lisa and Alan Zucari; and many hands were at work in the kitchen cooking another holiday feast. The house was filled to overflowing with life and community.

Once the holidays are over, the decorations are taken down, and the bad weather sets in, things slow down here at AHH. There's still plenty to do from dealing with frozen pipes to keeping the fire stoked and sidewalk salted, but the pace slows down a little. There's more time to sit and drink tea in my favorite spot in the house, the carpet in front of the wood stove (at least once we replaced its front window that cracked earlier this year). Gotta love the winter time at the Hospitality House. 🌱

RECIPES FROM THE KITCHEN

Turkey/Chicken Noodle Soup

Who doesn't love a good homemade chicken noodle soup? A can will work in a pinch, but if there is time for soup made fresh from the chicken itself, it tastes much better. And really, it's not that hard with this recipe – you just need time. You can also use turkey in place of the chicken for a great after the holiday soup. In fact, that is what I do after every Thanksgiving and Christmas with what is left over of the holiday bird. Hospitality House guests are fondly familiar with the Turkey Noodle Soup that follows our big holiday meals.

- 1 chicken/turkey carcass
- 1 Onion
- 3-4 cloves garlic
- 4 carrots
- 5 stalks of celery
- Any other veggie you may have leftover can go in, too (corn, peas, green beans, etc)
- Herbs to your liking (I use Thyme, Sage, and Rosemary. About 1 tsp each)
- Salt and Pepper
- 1 can of cream of chicken soup (Instead of this, you can also use the leftover gravy from your holiday meal)
- ½ bag of egg (or your favorite) noodles

So the great thing about soup is that there is no exact science. You can add a little of this or a little of that, and it still tastes good. So don't be afraid to experiment a little.

The first step can be done the night before in a Crockpot or put in a big pot and cooked right on the stove.

Make the broth

1. Put everything left over from the carcass in a pot. This includes skin, bones, everything.
2. Cut the vegetables into bite size pieces. Everything that you normally put in the trash, throw in the pot with the carcass. Put aside the good bits to be thrown into the soup later. This is a good place to put the extra leaves from your celery that most people toss.
3. Cover everything in the pot with water and bring to a boil. Simmer for a couple of hours.
4. The longer this cooks, the better, so don't be afraid to put it in a Crockpot on low and cook it overnight and into the next day until you are ready to make the soup.
5. When you are ready to make the soup, it is time to strain the broth out. I have a stockpot with a strainer that inserts into it, and that is the easiest way to save the broth. But putting a pot under a standard strainer, will work, too. Strain the broth, but don't throw anything away, yet. Once the bones cool, you can pick out any of the good meat to use in the soup. Cut the bits into bite size pieces.

Make the soup.

1. Put the broth you just made into a large stockpot.
2. Throw in the bits of meat, vegetables, herbs, creamed soup or gravy, and salt and pepper. If you have meat leftover from your meal, feel free to cut that up and put it in the soup as well. Simmer for at least 30 minutes and up to 2 hours. (You can put this in a Crockpot, also, and cook it for 4-6 hours on low.)
3. If cooking on the stovetop, put the noodles in 15 minutes before you sit down to eat. If you are cooking in a Crockpot, put the noodles in 1 hour before eating. If you are like me and often make the soup to freeze for using later, wait to add the noodles until after you have thawed the soup, as they will get mushy with too much cooking.

Enjoy 🍲

THE ANNUAL FUND

Soup is a winter time favorite around here. It's warm, delicious, and fills our tummies. As I said on the previous page, you can add a little of whatever is lying around, and as we learn in the tale of *Stone Soup*, if everyone gives what they have, then the entire town can be fed.

Fundraising here at AHH is similar to the *Stone Soup* story, if everyone gives, we'll have enough to continue serving our guests.

So please, look into your pockets, and see what you can give to fill our annual fund soup pot. It's very low to start off the year, and there are a lot of cold days left. 🍲

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 (Not decaf)
Postage Stamps
Ink Pens
Dish Soap
Dryer Sheets
Toilet Paper
Hand Soap Refills
AA or AAA Batteries
Light Bulbs
Fresh Produce
Pasta
Pasta Sauce
Lemonade/Iced Tea Mix
Kroger/Kmart Gift Cards

Willing to spend a bit more?

New matching sheets and comforters
Dehydrator
Small working lamps

For the big spenders out there:

Pressure Washer
Economy Car and/or Minivan

FEBRUARY
\$5905

