

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

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AHH STAFF

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Brian DeRouen, co-director

FLIGHT INFORMATION



Raleigh County Memorial

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

AMTRAK INFORMATION



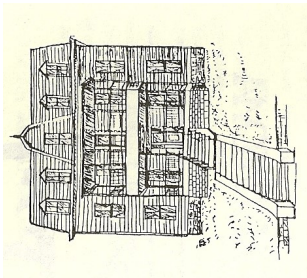
www.amtrak.com

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



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INTRODUCING CLAIRE!

By CLAIRE MILLS

Hi, I am Claire Mills, and I am the new staff member of the Alderson Hospitality House. I love reading, building puzzles, and I've newly discovered that I enjoy taking walks around Alderson. The walks give me a great opportunity to connect with nature, and it is one way I spend time with God. In addition to my work at the Hospitality House, I am excited to spend the next year studying Criminal Justice online as a freshman at Southeastern University.

I started working at the Hospitality House less than a month ago, but I already have a variety of jobs. I prepare rooms for guests and clean up after they have been staying here. I answer the phone and make reservations while trying to answer as many questions as I can.

Recently, I had the opportunity to make dinner for guests for the first time. I made shredded barbecue chicken sandwiches with salad and corn on the side. While some of the tasks that I am asked to do are new, others I

am familiar with; I try my best to do them with a cheerful heart.

Since I've been here, some of the programs I've gotten to participate in for the Alderson community include Gwen's Meals and the Alderson Food Pantry. During Gwen's meals, I help make and deliver the meals. I love talking to the people I deliver meals to and hearing about their week. At the Food Pantry this past week, I helped Brian get everything prepared and on the day of the pantry, I got people set up in the new computer system.

I applied for this job because I am drawn to the mission of the Hospitality House and want to be a part of it. I believe that Jesus calls us to serve others, and this is one way that I can do so. One of the many reasons I want to work here is because of the environment that is provided for anyone and everyone that enters the House. I am looking forward to many changes that this job may bring, and I can't wait to see how in the next year my thoughts, perspectives, and opinions expand. 🙏



HOUSE NOTES

By KATHLEEN

The Alderson Hospitality House and FPC Alderson have a long working relationship which predates the start of our time at the House over 14 years ago. While the work that we do is very different, by working together with the camp, the Hospitality House is best able to fulfill its mission of helping women who are incarcerated and their friends and families get through a hard time.

The yarn program at FPC Alderson has been going on for many years now. Women at the camp can create projects using donated yarn and some of those projects benefit the House and our local community. Around the Hospitality House guests will find blankets crocheted by women at FPC Alderson, and our boys each have stuffed animals sent to them by other women there. Women at the camp work for months to create scarves and hats which they then donate to the elementary school and town to be given out during Christmas celebrations. While family and friends are not able to send yarn directly to women at the camp, the Hospitality House has been approved to receive donations which we then pass on to

FPC Alderson for the ladies to create with. If you have yarn that you would like to donate please don't hesitate to send it our way.

Visitation events at the camp have a big influence on life at the Hospitality House. We know that everyone is disappointed by the loss of Friday visitation after the pandemic, but the administration of FPC Alderson is working on new ways for families to come together. An example of this was a sleepover at the camp for women and their children in the 7-12 age range. A first trial run of this program took place a couple weeks ago. There were around 8 kids belonging to 6 different women that participated. The kids were dropped off at 3pm and then picked back up at 8am. The camp had cots laid out in the visitation room for sleeping; they had a cookout and cake; they got to play games, and most importantly, just be together. While adults were not able to spend the night at the

camp, we had a great time hosting them for an unusual weeknight of activity at the House.

The other event that the prison has in the works is a formal GED graduation where immediate family can join in the celebration. We are not sure of the details of that event just yet, but we will be sure to have beds ready and food prepared if our services are needed.

We feel blessed to be able to provide a

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HOUSE NOTES CONTINUED

safe, comfortable and convenient place for people to stay while they are visiting their loved ones, and sometimes we need hands-on help doing so. I had spinal surgery in April, which took me out of commission for a while. Just as he did when Brian had his liver surgery, our friend and guest, Khael, stepped up, cooking dinner for guests for several weeks in a row as I recovered. At this moment, another guest and friend, Jed, is outside doing yard work. He came a few days early for his monthly visit this week and has been cleaning and resealing the second floor walkway along with many other odd jobs. We are so thankful to both of these men.

And while noting volunteers, I can't leave out Mr. Bob and his crew from New Jersey. Mr. Bob has been coming to the area since our boys were babies. His crew comes twice a year, stays at the House, and does home repair in the local community. They



always take some time to help us, as well. This year they fixed our on-demand hot water heater (which I was about to replace because no one around here was able to fix it) and one of our dryers that was taking forever to dry. We always enjoy having them around, and are grateful for the support that they give the Hospitality House.

Many church groups near and far lend their support to the House. Most recently, the women from the Union Presbyterian Circle Group, pooled their efforts and their resources to bring the AHH a donation of gift certificates, groceries, and paper supplies to aid our cause.

It is generous hearts like these that help keep the Hospitality House going and allow Brian and I to flourish in the work we love. 🙏

FIRST STEP CONTINUED

isolation to continue the progress begun by the First Step Act. In order for that to happen, we as the voters need to take responsibility. We cannot be swayed by promises to make America safe by being "tough on crime." We must elect those that will reject fearmonger-

ing and instead look at the data and come up with solutions. We desperately need reform which will benefit everyone from the taxpayers to federal inmates, including the many guests of the Alderson Hospitality House who understand firsthand the costs of mass incarceration. 🙏

POETRY
CORNER*Alderson House*

*Sincere and honest helping hand
Regardless of the trial
Always there with you to stand
or bring about a smile

*Place of humble volunteers
With not an ounce of greed
There to help you wipe your tears
whenever you're in need

*Blessed to have them on your team
or just a loyal friend
Alderson is like a dream
A million hands to lend.

By: Christian Victorian

LA County Jail 4/21/24

Thank you to Christian for these kind words about the Alderson Hospitality House.

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! 📧

FIRST STEP ACT REVISITED By BRIAN

As we find ourselves in the midst of a presidential election cycle, crime is, of course, a favorite subject of many politicians. Being "tough on crime" is a sure way to bring voters to your side and bi-partisanship seems like an idea from a time gone by. Considering the political climate that we are in, it is interesting to see that sentencing reform is one of the few areas where significant legislation has been able to garner bipartisan support.

The First Step Act, signed into law by President Trump in 2018 was championed in the Senate by Dick Durbin (D-IL), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Chuck Grassley (R-IA), and Mike Lee (R-UT). In the House, Representative Doug Collins, a Republican from Georgia, and Democrats Hakeem Jeffries of New York and John Lewis of Georgia championed the legislation. Truly bipartisan bills are few and far between in recent American politics as is meaningful progress on an issue as important as sentencing reform, so it is worthwhile to ask: Did the First Step Act work?

Requiring the Bureau of Prisons to place individuals closer to their families, making menstrual products free for those in federal prison, and banning the shackling of pregnant woman were among the reforms which sought to make federal prisons more humane. The First Step Act expanded opportunities for compassionate release, allowing many elderly and seriously ill federal prison-

ers to go home. It gave judges greater discretion in sentencing so that they could consider the circumstances of individual defendants, and it lowered mandatory minimum sentences which are politically expedient but do nothing to make Americans safer. The legislation increased funding for substance abuse treatment during incarceration and for programs to help prepare inmates for reentry into society.

According to the Department of Justice, between 2019 and early 2023 approximately 30,000 people were released from prison before their original release date as a result of reforms in the

First Step Act. Amongst those released thanks to the First Step Act, recidivism is 37% lower than it is with others leaving prison.

Last year a congressional briefing looking at the five years since the passage of the First Step Act was held. At that briefing, members of Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime and Incarceration, a group made up of police chiefs, sheriffs, corrections officials, current and former chief prosecutors came together with prisoner advocacy groups such as Families Against Mandatory Minimums to celebrate the progress made possible do to the legislation.

While there has been good news to celebrate, the name of the legislation itself makes it clear that it was only a start. It may be naïve, but it is our sincere hope that those elected in 2024 will write and pass leg-

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RECIPES FROM THE KITCHEN

Roasted Potatoes

Last Newsletter Vitale wrote up a Potato recipe for you, but he is at camp this month. You'll have to settle for one of my recipes, that just so happens to be one of Vitale's favorites to eat.

5-6 White Potatoes

Salt and Pepper to taste

2-3 Tablespoons Vegetable Oil

*****There is a lot of room for creativity in this recipe. For example, you can use any potato; I just like the white ones best. This is also a good time to play around with spices and herbs to make different flavor combinations. Have fun experimenting.*****

1. Peel or don't peel the potatoes. The choice is up to you. I only peel if I notice a lot of bad spots in the potatoes. Cut potatoes into half inch pieces.
2. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
3. Put potatoes into a large pot and cover with water. Add a generous amount of salt to the water; then bring to a boil. Once the water boils, lower to a simmer and cook approximately 10 minutes.
4. Strain potatoes and transfer to a glass casserole pan. Coat with vegetable oil. (Using vegetable oil is much better than olive oil as it cooks at a much higher temperature.) Then sprinkle on salt and pepper and stir.
5. Place in oven for 40—50 minutes. Stir after 20 minutes, then again at 40. If you want them to be crunchier, leave them in longer. Don't stir more as it will cause the potatoes to fall apart and not brown as well.

Raise money for AHH while you shop online. Go to smile.amazon.com, and search for Alderson Hospitality House as your charity. You get all the Amazon options, and they send us a portion of what you spend with no added cost to you.



Raise money for AHH without spending a dime. Every time you search the internet using goodsearch, you can raise money for the Hospitality House. Go to goodsearch.com to find out more.

Raise money for AHH while buying your groceries. Go to krogercommunityrewards.com and register your Kroger Plus card to automatically give a percentage of every sale to AHH. Our number is 85722. Use it when you sign up today!



Like Us on Facebook! You can follow us and keep up with what is going on at AHH throughout the year.

THE ANNUAL FUND

It has been a dry start to summer in WV. While the grass is turning brown, the wild flowers are adding their beautiful colors to the Hospitality House property.

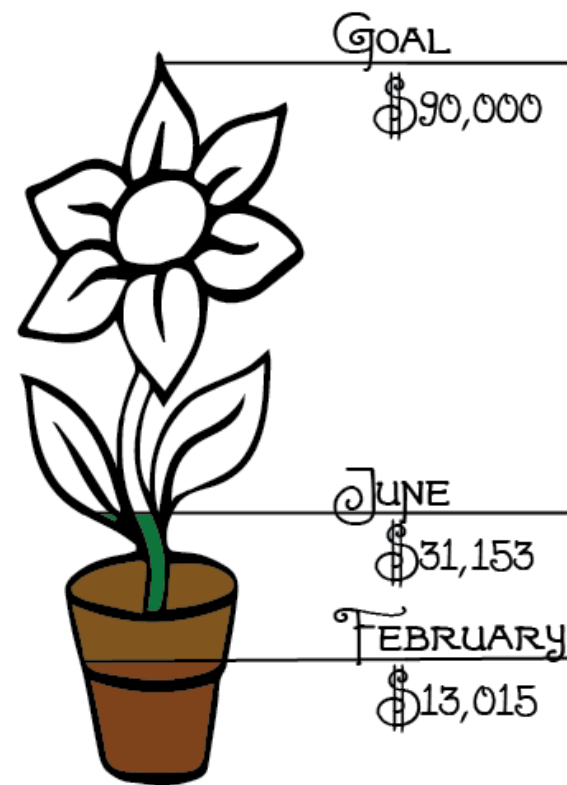
Our wonderful guests are doing the same. Just this past week we had families from Miami, Wyoming, New York and Texas all with their own stories of struggles and perseverance. Each of these families rely on the House not only for a bed and good food, but for the community of others sharing their experience of incarceration.

Similarly, we rely on you, our friends

and supporters, to keep our doors open to all who arrive. Your donations are critical and each of you is a valued partner in the work of the Alderson Hospitality House.

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

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



WISH LIST

Coffee (Not decaf)
Postage Stamps
Dish Soap
Dryer Sheets
Toilet Paper
Paper Towels
Hand Soap Refills
Pasta
Pasta Sauce (Not Meat Flavored)
Lemonade/Iced Tea Mix
Kroger Gift Cards

Willing to spend a bit more?

Small Working Lamps
New Twin Beds
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(esp Weed Eater)
Small Recliners
Propane Grill
Fire Wood