

## 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

Gloria Martin	Amy McClure
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Jandy Hanna	Herb Montgomery

## AHH STAFF

Kathleen DeRouen, co-director  
Brian DeRouen, co-director

## FLIGHT INFORMATION

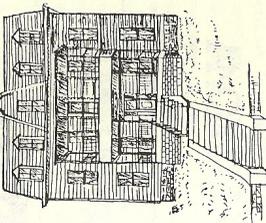


**Raleigh County Memorial**  
Beckley, WV  
www.flybeckley.com  
**Greenbrier Valley**  
Lewisburg, WV  
www.gvairport.com

## 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**



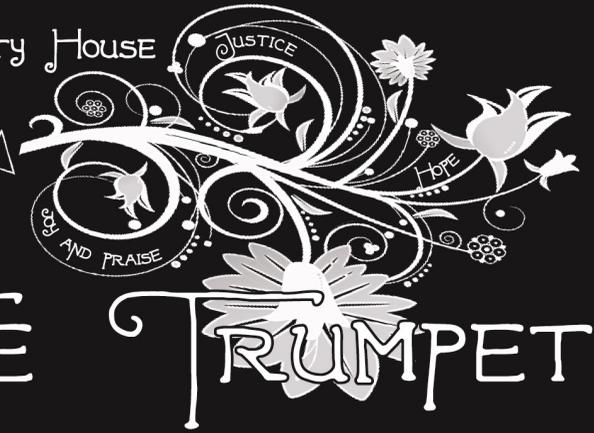
If you would like to be added or removed, please contact us!

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Permit No. 579  
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# ALDERSON HOSPITALITY HOUSE



# THE TRUMPET

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## 15 YEARS AT AHH

By BRIAN

On our son Micah's first birthday, we moved into the Alderson Hospitality House. Graduate school was a few years behind us, and we had been living at Bethlehem Farm up the road for two and a half years. Up there we lived in an intentional community while hosting groups of high school and college students on Appalachian immersion retreats. As we approached the end of our time at the Farm, we knew that we weren't quite ready to leave West Virginia and thought that a couple of years at the Hospitality House would help us figure out what the next step for our young family should be.



A couple of days ago, Micah turned sixteen, and yesterday he got his driver's license. As it turns out on that cool October morning years ago, we had found exactly where our family was meant to be, and what an adventure it has been. A few months after

we started working at the House, my parents came to visit from California and were treated to an early snow storm. It was several days before Christmas and when visitation started on Friday it was a lovely winter scene with snow gently falling. By the time visitation ended, only 4 wheel drive vehicles were able to leave the parking lot at the camp as over a foot of snow had fallen. The snow continued to fall through the night, and by the next day there was 2 feet of snow on the ground. Before spring's arrival, there were two more storms which dumped at least 2 feet of the

white stuff, so we quickly understood just how much shoveling we were in for to keep the driveway and parking areas passable for our guests. A couple weeks

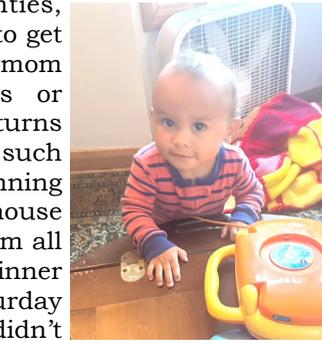
later on Christmas Eve, we had just gotten a house full of excited kids to sleep and set out presents from Santa when the fire alarms started blaring. Looking around we could not find the fire and thought it to be a false alarm

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HOUSE NOTES

By KATHLEEN

As Summer moves into Fall, we oftentimes have wonderful weekends full of kids whose grandparents, aunts, and dads are trying to get one last visit with mom before school starts or before the weather turns poor. We had one such weekend at the beginning of September. The house was full of people from all over the country. Dinner was busy that Saturday night, and the fun didn't end there. After dinner, everyone continued to gather on the main floor. Some helped with the dishes; there was music (both good and not so good) coming from the piano in the playroom; and football was on the living room tv with several people gathered around cheering on one team or the other. Once the kitchen was cleaned up, several board games were played by kids and adults alike. Everything was loud and a bit chaotic, but honestly, that's how I like to see a Saturday night at the Alderson Hospitality House. This is why the House is here; to offer a good meal and a place to unwind after a life giving and yet emotionally exhausting day of visiting at the prison. Kids don't have to worry about being quiet and on their best behavior; caregivers can sit and cheer on their favorite football team. Then by 10pm, the House is quiet again as everyone is getting ready for



bed so they can be at the prison camp again in the morning at 8am.

The number of visitors to FPC Alderson has dropped dramatically since the pandemic hit in 2020; and like many other things in our world, it is slow to return to what it was for many decades. Weekends like the one I described above used to be the norm; and while we're not quite back to that yet, each season the number of busy weekends seem to increase. The prison staff is also offering some new events for families to get to spend



time with their loved ones. Early in the summer, they hosted an overnight for a select number of moms and their kids. Then, in September, they opened the GED graduation to families of the women who graduated. Finally, later this month, the prison is hosting a kids' day for children of the women who are incarcerated. We almost have every room filled on that weekend.

On 11% of federal inmates get visited during their incarceration; yet, a person is significantly less likely to return to prison if they get just one visit from a loved one during their sentence. I'm happy to be working in a place that makes it a little easier for people to see and spend time with the women they love.

15 YEARS CONTINUED

end for multiple years...and yet, we are still here with our doors open just as they have been since 1976.

When we moved in on Micah's first birthday, we committed to running the House for two years. I remember one particular conversation we had a few years later on New Year's Eve 2012. Vitale was not yet a year old, and Micah was a rambunctious four. We were speculating about what our future might hold and where we would move next. I joked about what a trip it would be to raise high school boys in Alderson, a place so very different from our home towns in California and Ohio. It seemed like a preposterous proposition at the time, and yet, here we are. The House is still full of surprises, tears, frozen pipes in the winter, goodbyes, reunions and lots of laughter. Just as was the case back

then, we don't always know if we will have the money to pay the power bills all winter, but now we have learned that this House is a place where we can expect miracles. Sometimes they come in the form of unexpected checks in the mailbox, and other times the immediate release of a woman who thought she had years left on her prison sentence. We can expect to see families thrive despite the burden of incarceration, and unlike fifteen years ago, we now fully expect to still be here fifteen years from now.



A CALL FOR HELP

Our faithful wood stove that has kept us warm for many years has grown old. Installed long before we arrived at the House, the stove has done a lot of hard work throughout its life, keeping thousands of guests and our little family warm and comfortable inside the Alderson Hospitality House. This winter will be its last winter with us. Unfortunately, the stove stork does not just deliver a new wood burning stove in the middle of the night. And while we can always hope that Santa comes through for us, a large soapstone stove would be mighty heavy in a flying sleigh. (Though just in case, I'll put the tree on a table this year, so there is plenty of room.)

All kidding aside, we are glad to have advance notice that our stove is approaching its last winter because that allows us the opportunity to fundraise. Many of you give generously already, and we greatly appreciate that. This newsletter has been the place where, in addition to our normal fundraising for general operations, we have made special requests for new vans, fire alarm systems and even a new caretaker home; and our community of supporters has come through every time. So with hope and gratitude, we ask that you help us to keep the Alderson Hospitality House warm for decades to come by contributing to the purchase of a new wood burning stove.



POETRY  
CORNER



*By: Lance Wickner*

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! 📧

15 YEARS CONTINUED

until someone went outside. There, they saw that the chimney looked like a volcano as we had a flue fire, which is less than ideal in a large home built in 1880. The fire department came and did a fabulous job putting out the fire and let us know that having the flues cleaned once a year was an imperative...another AHH lesson learned.

Fifteen years after that wild first winter at the Hospitality House, Alderson has become our home. I am now a member of that same volunteer fire department; and despite their snowy first foray into West Virginia, my parents are in the process of moving from our beloved Northern California to join us in our wild and wonderful West Virginia.

While we love our quaint river town with its walkable streets and beautiful fall colors, the weather is not always friendly. In 2012 not too long after Micah's little brother Vitale was born, a derecho slammed into town with 90 mile an hour winds. A massive tree landed on our minivan and a section of the Hospitality House roof was torn off. Almost four years to the day after that storm, the caretaker home in which we lived was destroyed by a flood that peaked with 3 feet of water in our living room.

Despite these challenges, the joy of run-

ning this house has never failed to sustain us. Guests walk in for the first time uncertain and afraid but leave as family after spirited dinners, celebrated birthdays and, of course, the happiness of their loved one being released. Our two boys have grown up with the children that stay at the house, many of whom spend every holiday with our family so that theirs can be together with moms, sisters, daughters and grandmas over at FPC Alderson.

As we walk around the House, we fondly remember the guests that helped us get the kid's room tv hooked up, the back deck stained, the play structure

in the park installed and the window on the front door fixed. Time and again we have seen that our guests and supporters will come through for the House no matter what the current challenge may be. Four years ago our whole world faced a new challenge with the arrival of the pandemic. This crisis was particularly

daunting for the House and our guests as visitation was suspended at FPC Alderson for several years. Along with our board of directors, we try to have a plan in place for any emergency, but prior to 2020, none of us could have fathomed that our dinner tables and guest rooms would be empty every week-



*(Continued on page 7)*

RECIPES FROM THE KITCHEN

Air Fryer Tatter Tots

Vitale started making these Tatter Tots from scratch, and they are delicious. I've never actually made them, but they seem pretty easy to do and are definitely worth the mess. Vitale followed the instructions from a YouTube short, but this recipe I got from delish.com is basically the same. Vitale also says it's ok to play around with the spices...try adding paprika, as well.

- 3 lb. russet potatoes, peeled
- 1 1/2 tsp. salt, plus more for finishing
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1/4 tsp. onion powder
- Freshly ground black pepper

1. In a large pot of boiling water, add potatoes and boil until potatoes are met with only a little resistance when poked with a knife, about 7 minutes. Drain and let cool.
2. When potatoes are cool enough to handle, use medium holes on a box grater to shred potatoes. In a large bowl, combine shredded potatoes, salt, garlic powder, onion powder, and pepper. Use your hands to form about 2 tablespoons worth of mixture into a tater tot shape, gently squeezing mixture as necessary.
3. Working in batches, place tater tots in basket of air fryer. Cook on 375° for 20 minutes, stopping to shake basket halfway through, until golden.
4. Remove from basket and sprinkle with salt.



You can now donate through PayPal or Venmo! Search for us under the give tab or follow these QR codes.



Raise money for AHH while buying your groceries. Go to [krogercommunityrewards.com](http://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.

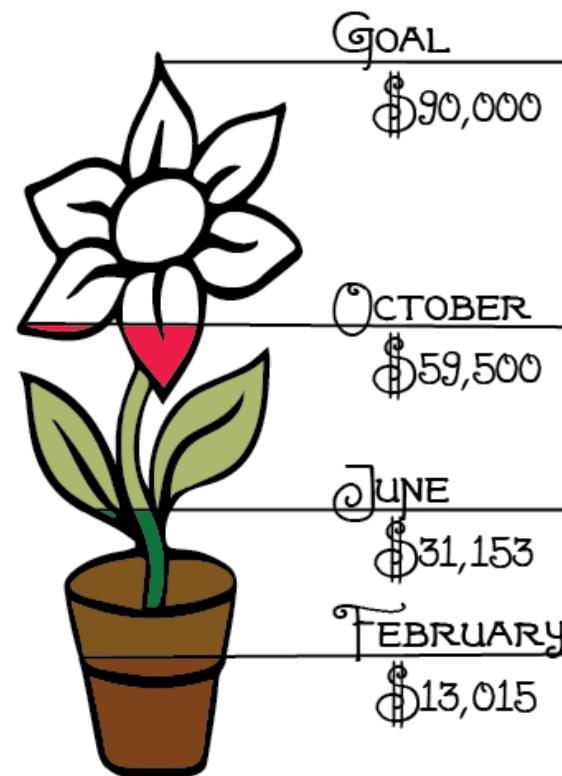
THE ANNUAL FUND

Storms have dominated the news in these past weeks. First, the horrible floods, and then, the massive task of rebuilding. We are grateful that unlike in 2012, 2016 and 2020, this year the winds and waters did not rise to the level of destroyed homes and lives in our local community.

That is not to say that the weather does not throw financial surprises our way. In the past several months, two massive trees have fallen, doing damage in our park and our back walkway. Another one will soon follow, and the cost

to have it taken down safely will be substantial. At AHH, we want our meals to be yummy, our beds comfy and our guests safe. We welcome and thank you for allowing us to accomplish our mission with your financial support.

Please make all checks payable to **Alderson Hospitality House** or donate online at [www.aldersonhospitalityhouse.org](http://www.aldersonhospitalityhouse.org)  
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



WISH LIST

- New Wood Burning Stove
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