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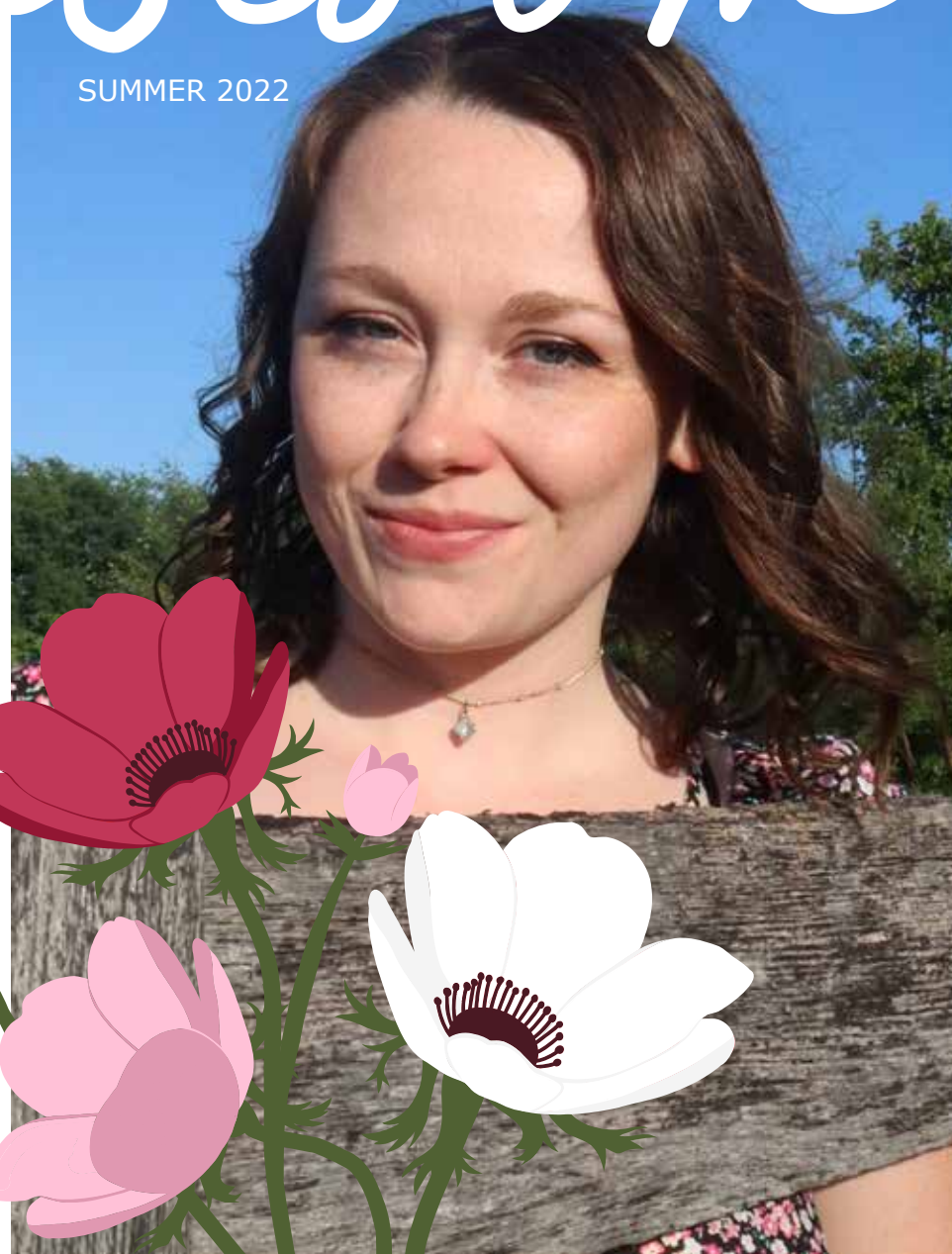
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STORIES FOR PEOPLE
WHO SUPPORT SURVIVORS

SUMMER 2022



LUNAFEST™ Lexington returns on **Thursday, October 27**
at The Kentucky Theater. An evening of films by and
about women benefiting services for local survivors of
intimate partner abuse.



Green  House17
Nurturing lives
harmd by intimate partner abuse.



For questions and more information about this publication,
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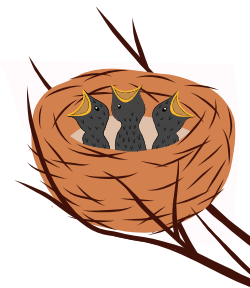




michelle's story



He would give me a lot of attention, something I wasn't used to.



We met in 2009, but we didn't really start dating until the beginning of the following year. It was a bunch of love bombing at first. Then his drinking started coming out and verbal, mental, and emotional abuse started showing up.

I would try to make friends but couldn't go anywhere alone. Any appointments, he had to be with me. I wasn't allowed to go around my family, which I was having trouble with anyway.

They're also abusive in their own ways. I didn't really recognize all the stuff that he was doing because it was normalized in childhood. It felt like home.

"I feel all the love for the first time ever in my whole life."

There were a few times I tried to leave. He would buy me all kinds of jewelry and flowers—doing the whole "I've changed"—until I told him I didn't want to have sex with him.

He started accusing me of poisoning him. Turned out he was doing that to me. I would get really sleepy and wake up with him raping me. When I finally said no more to the sexual abuse, it was way worse than before.

He had linked my phone to his, so he could see all my messages. He was trying very hard to buy a gun. I feel like he was planning on killing me. He threatened to kill one of our cats right in front of the kids.

My sister found out about this place. I got a DVO (protective order) for three years, no contact. He hasn't shown up for any court appearances.

I feel all the love for the first time ever in my whole life. I'm soaking it in.

I'm starting a work-from-home job and we're moving into transitional housing soon. I'm 32 and like, yes, this is what I deserve.

This is only part of Michelle's story, in her own words, shared with her permission.

You don't deserve to be abused. Even if it's not physical, if you feel like it's wrong, even if you're told it's not—leave. You don't have to stay.



a healing canopy

BRANCHING OUT

"I have really sweet kid memories of laying down under a tree and looking up at the sky," says Ryan Koch, residential program manager.

"I like anything that helps a young person have a good, normal kind of day."

Many trees on the shelter property were planted about ten years ago with the support of a Plant the Planet grant from Kentucky Utilities.

Ryan is committed to planting more for residents to enjoy and reduce our carbon footprint.

He recently installed a big disc swing on a strong black cherry tree in the front lawn. "Moms and kids can all get on it at once and have a carefree moment."

Michelle's kids love playing under the trees. "They have a little mudhole out there," she shares. "The other two really love to swing out front. They don't like to come in sometimes."

Volunteers help with the upkeep of the trees and cleared a path into the woods on the edge of the property for nature walks.



moments of magic

HORSING AROUND

Lyndsay Deaver knows the healing love that only a horse can give. In 2008, while a student of Midway University's equine therapy program, she completed her practicum internship at the emergency shelter.

Lyndsay suggested that boarding her horse, JB, on the property, could be meaningful for survivors.

"People really identify with the horses. That's their magic," explains Lyndsay. "Horses are the perfect type of mirror. They reflect back to you what you're experiencing."

JB still lives on the property today. Saucy and Solo, both horses of Lyndsay's family members, have joined her.

If a resident or staff person stops along the fence line, it doesn't take long until one of the horses ambles over to say hello. They often wait near the gate to welcome kids back from school.

"It's really rewarding to see how many women and kids have enjoyed just spending time with the horses," Lyndsay adds.



empowered by plants

RESEARCH FROM THE FARM

The University of Kentucky Center for Research on Violence Against Women recently completed a multi-year study of the farm's effectiveness.

"Our mission is research," shares Diane Follingstad, Ph.D. "If you have been a victim of violence as a woman, we would like to know the best ways to help you get better, to help you heal."

Research considered physical, psychological, and functional benefits for survivors who participated in six weeks of programming on the farm. These outcomes were compared to those who lived at the shelter but chose not to participate in farm activities.

"I was really fascinated by the impact that this was having on women who have experienced horrible things in their lives—and their children—and the fact that they were somehow recovering more quickly," explains Claire Renzetti, Ph.D.

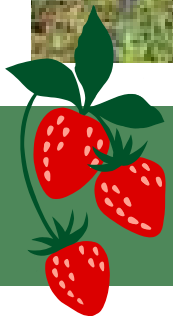
"Plant therapy has been used with lots of vulnerable populations and has shown many positive results," says Rachel Barczak, farm research project manager. Although not widely implemented at intimate partner abuse shelters, outcomes from the research could change that.

Consideration of the data has begun, and publication of the results is expected soon.

"We talk anecdotally about what happens on the farm, but I think to have research behind it gives us some leverage to expand the program," says Diane Fleet, GreenHouse17 associate director.

Rachel is a Ph.D. student in the University of Kentucky Department of Sociology. Research was made possible with grant funding from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Violence Against Women Research and Evaluation Initiative.



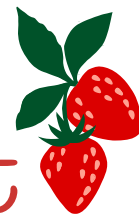


"Our strawberries taste a whole lot better than the ones that came from the store," said a survivor living in shelter. "They're sweeter and juicier."



FIELD-TO-TABLE

summer's harvest

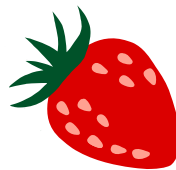


There's nothing better than a home-cooked meal made with food grown with your own hands.



Many meals prepared in the shelter this time of year feature fresh produce from the farm. Lunch is often a big summer salad. Tacos and salsa made with vegetables from the farm are popular, too.

"I'm all about the farm-to-table connection," shares Hattie Nunley, farm and family advocate. "I think even being able to just supplement onions in a meal is special."



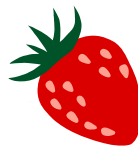
"The farm was amazing. Getting my hands in the dirt was one of the best experiences of my life," says Michelle.

Carrots, kale, cabbage, bok choy, broccoli, cauliflower, onions, potatoes, tomatoes, and peppers were seeded in January and planted in April. Several hoop houses on the farm will extend the harvest season through late autumn.



"I was able to be involved in planting the peppers and tomatoes and a discussion of the future planting of okra and squash," shares a survivor.

Too many in central Kentucky experience food insecurity. Healing the physical and emotional wounds of violence becomes more difficult without access to nutritious food.



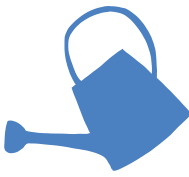
Hattie is working to expand the farm's production to provide survivors with fresh produce even after leaving the shelter. She collaborates closely with the shelter's dining and nutrition advocate for menu planning.


They also co-facilitate a monthly support group about healthy relationships with food.

"My favorite thing so far has been harvesting strawberries," says another survivor. "They were so sweet and delicious."

COMMUNITY CARE

nurturing lives



Although the work to end intimate partner abuse always will be difficult,  safer tomorrows are possible in a community that cares about survivors.

(top left to right) The International 'We Serve' Foundation and Rotary Club of Lexington After Hours replaced the swing seats just in time for warmer weather.

Madelyn Steinberg, Miss Wilderness Trace, hosted a donation drive at Sayre School for her Social Impact Initiative and collected 243 pairs of underwear for survivors.

Thank you to Wildcat Moving for moving a survivor into their new home. Wildcat has been helping survivors relocate for many years.

Thank you to the Boy Scouts and Alpha Chi Omega for hosting an Easter egg hunt for kids living at the shelter.

Benita Bloom and Katrina Victim hosted the Night of a Thousand Wigs at Crossings Lexington to benefit services for survivors.

April was Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month and staff visited local coffee shops to support Wake Up Lex, an annual day of awareness.

Keller Williams of Greater Lexington hosted a very special Mother's Day tea party at shelter.

The kids got to visit Wildwood Music Therapy. They sang, danced with scarves, and played lollipop drums.

Thanks to the Kentucky Foundation for Women Art Meets Activism grant, survivors were able to participate in therapeutic art at Kentucky Mudworks.

Thank you to everyone who made a gift during KY Gives Day. Your gifts remind survivors that there is a community that cares for them and their safety.



Do you have a great idea to support survivors?

Let's chat! Reach out to Reena at 859.519.1911 or rmartin@greenhouse17.org.

