



STORIES FOR PEOPLE
WHO SUPPORT SURVIVORS

bloom



WINTER 2021 *(the first issue!)*





While Daisy was a resident at the emergency shelter, she participated in regular support groups and nature-based healing activities. She also completed six weeks of farm programming that provided a weekly stipend for her time and contributions. Today, Daisy lives in a transitional apartment of her own. She secured a new job and saved enough money to purchase a reliable vehicle.

daisy's story

"For the first time I finally feel it's over. This is the first time in 21 years that, inside of me, I know it's done."

I've always thought, "Well, he's gonna get better, he's going to change," but he's not going to change. I know this now.

Since arriving at GreenHouse17 and being safe, it's my apartment that has brought me the greatest joy. It's mine. Everything in it belongs to me. On my first night, I sat on my air mattress and looked around and saw that finally this is mine.

"I just want to be and enjoy the flowers."

Now, I can have friends. That's something I've not really had in the past. I would have a few girlfriends, but it would always turn into them hating him, and then trying to help me to leave him, and me not being ready to go.

They asked me all the time, "Well, why don't you just leave?" Even now, I don't know. That's a hard question to ask someone in that sort of relationship.

They financially cripple you. Your self-worth is non-existent. There just isn't any.

The farm program here was a wonderful thing for me. Many mornings, we would sit there picking beans and just talking and getting it out. The farm is like meditation in a physical form. I loved it.

When cutting the flowers, I once broke one, and I was devastated. Christina [farm co-manager] said, "Just throw it down, and give it back to the earth." She convinced me to give it back to nature, and this was one of the best lessons I've ever learned in the garden.

I see myself as self-sufficient, on my own, and strong when looking into the future. I don't want anything grand like a mansion or Porsche. I just want to be and enjoy the flowers.

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

ALPHA CHI OMEGA

"The fight against domestic violence starts with your friends and family."



Ending domestic violence is the national philanthropic focus of Alpha Chi Omega, and members of the University of Kentucky chapter embrace the mission with passion and creativity.

"Alpha Chi Omega is all about fostering an environment that builds real strong women through their college experience who become contributing members of our society," explains Tatum Mowery, Chapter President.

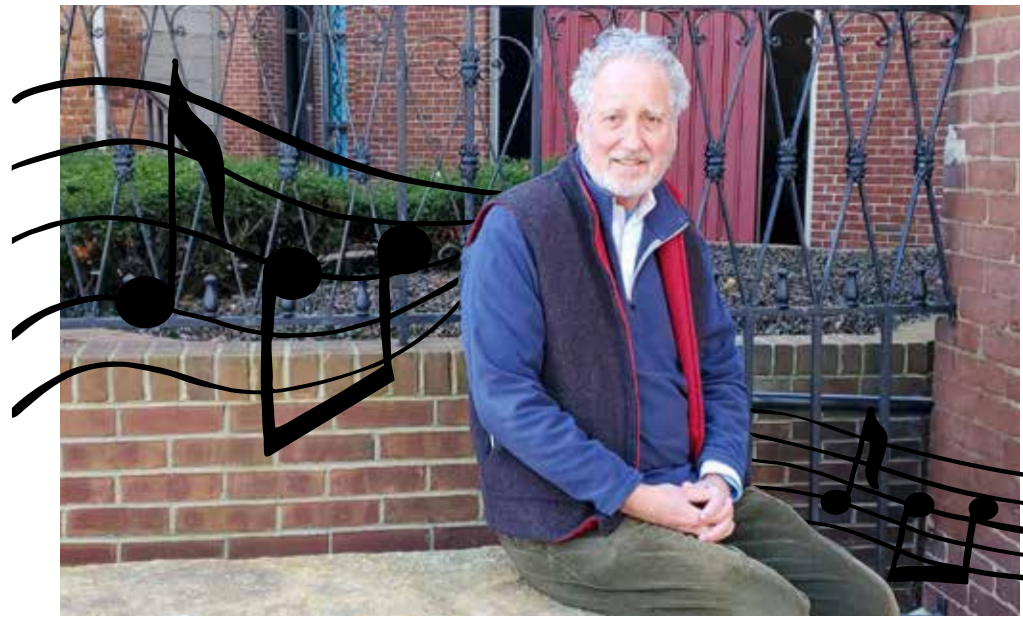
Every semester, members volunteer at the shelter and organize campus-based awareness events like Volley Against Domestic Violence and Donut Let Love Hurt to promote healthy relationships.

For the past five years, the sisters have partnered with Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity to host Paint Wars, a popular and fun-filled event that has contributed more than \$50,000 to support services for survivors.

Allyson Carson, the Chapter's Vice President of Philanthropy, believes contributions by young adults to make positive change often are underrated. "We have the voice to speak out against injustice and the support to do so," she says. "It starts with us."



Paint Wars participants compete in a series of mini-events to earn incentives for the main event held in a big field on the edge of campus. Teams must keep their banner clean, while the other teams invade with a rainbow of powdered paint. It's a colorful messy day full of friendship and support for survivors.



FAITHFUL HELPERS

"If we want to be helpful, then we need to be in partnership."

When Pastor Mark Davis moved from Boise, Idaho to begin his role at First Presbyterian Church of Lexington 10 years ago, he asked the search committee to connect him with a few of our community's leaders.

Former Fayette District Court Judge Lewis Paisley suggested Darlene Thomas. In the years since those meetings, Pastor Mark has led the congregation in meaningful survivor support.

One example, Music for Mission, is an annual philanthropic concert series organized by the church to support our services and other nonprofit organizations.

The recent concert, held online for social distancing, featured local musicians performing John Lennon's most popular songs.

The day after the pandemic was declared a national emergency, Pastor Mark reached out to ask what would help most. Church members also organize a holiday gift drive for children living at the shelter and donate Thanksgiving food baskets for families living in transitional housing.

"The way we worship calls us to justice and to nurture," explains Pastor Mark. "If we want to be helpful, then we need to be in partnership."

hope blooms



"If you are quiet, the flowers will tell you what you need to hear."

Opportunities for nature-based healing are introduced to survivors soon after arrival to shelter. For some, this could be walks on the farm or eating more vegetables. Other survivors choose to participate in a six-week training program.

Farm advocates meet with interested survivors to develop an individualized program plan that responds to their physical limitations, healing goals, and personal interests.

"I knew it was going to be interesting the first day on the farm, writes a participant. "It was hot and humid and there were bugs, but that's nature. That's also what really helped me center myself."

BENEFITS OF NATURE

Survivors participate in 10 hours of weekly training and activities on the farm in exchange for a stipend. One hour each week is reserved for reflection on the experience.

"If you are quiet, the flowers will tell you what you need to hear," says Daisy. "The flowers told me I was beautiful, and that I was good at things."

The flowers told me that I could be gentle, and it was just okay to be."

Early spring activities focus on planning and seeding the flowers. As temperatures warm, survivors tend to watering, weeding, and harvesting the beautiful blooms.

While survivor safety improves and planning for transition away from shelter begins, advocates provide work references during their search for employment.

MISSION SUPPORT

"The flowers were absolutely beautiful," writes a supporter of the farm. "My heart went out to all those who touched them."

Shares of the harvest are offered to the public through a community-supported agriculture (CSA) model. Individuals, families, and companies sign up to become members and receive weekly flowers.

"I absolutely loved the flower CSA," says previous member Julie Thomas. "I looked forward to my pickup every week and plan to join again this year."



Early registration for the Summer Flower CSA opens Friday, February 26.

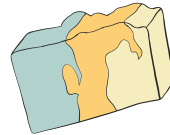
When you become a member you're investing in local farming and courageous survivors, each on their own journey of healing. Look to our social media and website to sign up for your share of the harvest.



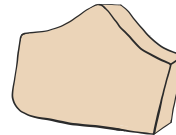
Jewell was a resident at the shelter and participated in product programming after transitioning to an apartment of her own. She received a weekly stipend while working to develop, make, package, and label products. Look for Handmade by Survivors at several retail partners in the region, or visit our shop at GreenHouse17.org.

jewell's story

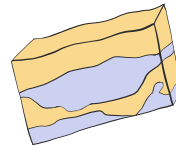
"We all are similar in some kind of form, but we all have our differences to be celebrated."



If you purchased Handmade by Survivors products during the recent holidays, Jewell likely helped make them.

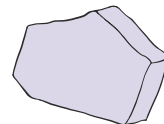


"It was a lifeline. This program gave me some kind of purpose, or drive, or reason to get up. There were a lot of days that I contemplated not coming and realized this is where I needed to be," she says.



"The soaps made a lot of difference. They're all different and all beautiful. It doesn't seem like any two are the same—a lot like survivors. Women and men of domestic violence, we all are similar in some kind of form, but we all have our differences to be celebrated."

Much of Jewell's program participation coincided with protests following the murder of Breonna Taylor, and she remembers important conversations that happened while making the products.



"For the first time with Bekah [farm advocate], I was able to talk to someone of another race and actually carry on the conversations that we need to," she says. "I could celebrate me without having to protect her."



Making products encouraged Jewell to be creative and experiment in a supportive space. "As I move into my next chapter from this program, I'm taking with me is a sense of self that I didn't have before."

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

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) Employees from Catalent Pharma Solutions stopped by to make a gift.

Gullwing and his friends from 4Paws for Ability visit the shelter to share their love and happiness.

Andrea Lewis at the Heart of Kentucky United Way 5K Fun Walk and Run in Danville.

Sending thanks to every person, organization, and company that participated in October's Purple Thursday! City Center glowed purple and Crank & Boom offered free purple sprinkles.

Thank you to Nothing Bundt Cakes, Josie's, Selma's Catering, and others for giving food and meals during the pandemic.

An anonymous donor bought weekly bread from Sunrise Bakery for the shelter. What a great way to support local business and survivors!

Diane Fleet with a few of our nonprofit partners at the Anita Franklin Annual Peace Walk.

Kelli DeSimone painted lovely #kindnessrocks to encourage survivors during the pandemic.

Employees from Altar'd State present a donation collected during Mission Monday.

In January we said goodbye to Morris, one of our oldest and beloved shelter cats. Rest easy.



Do you have a great idea to support survivors?

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



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Green House17

Nurturing lives

harmed by intimate partner abuse.



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