

ESTABLISHING CONNECTIONS

Nathalie non-profit embarks on expansion with fundraiser for Recovery Hall

- JOSHUA FITZWATER
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NATHALIE — In her broken-in cowboy boots, scissor sculpted T-shirt and with the undeniable scent in the air of hair spray giving her long locks extra shape, Kim Adams jumps in her golf cart in the morning to survey Breezy Hill Farm, home of Recovering Hands. Today, the horse rescues, Ziva and Sully, need to be groomed and run, plants in the greenhouse need to be pruned, clay in the art studio needs to be restocked and some kind of fast-growing algae that is taking over the pond needs to be attended to, stat.

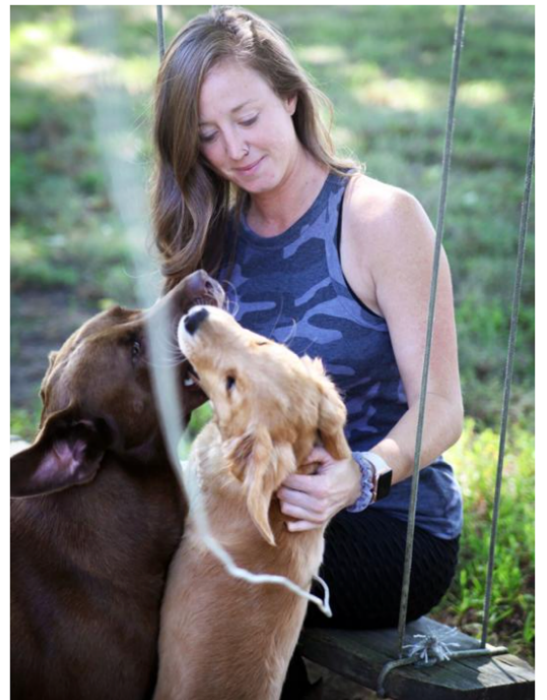
It is a typical morning for Adams, busy, but she has the right squad to help her keep everything running.

All of these features require upkeep, after all, they are important to the center. They serve to help heal women struggling with addiction. A challenge Adams knows all too well, which is why she created Recovering Hands.

Callie Elliott, Adam's right hand, begins her day on the farm with a quick diversion to pet a resident's puppy tethered to a shaded tree swing before attending to the horses and equine program. Elliott's official title is Adams' executive assistant. As Adams explained, however, she means much more than just that to the nonprofit Recovering Hands.

"Callie is really good with the women," Adams said. "She runs many of the programs here. She is younger, like many of them are. They stay connected to her. That's important."

A former resident, Elliott credits Adams and Recovering Hands with helping her recover from a really difficult time in her life when she battled with addiction and legal issues. Elliott's transformation into a leader — a difference maker in people's lives — is but one of the many indicators of the important work happening at Recovering Hands.



Callie Elliott, executive assistant to Kim Adams, pets two of the dogs on the farm Sept. 15.

Joshua Fitzwater/Gazette-Virginian

“The opposite of addiction is connection, not sobriety,” Adams explained about addiction. “People think it’s sobriety, but you need connection first.”

In terms of connection, Adams could not have set up this place of healing without the person she is the most connected to, her husband and the program’s co-founder, Bill. He, who like Elliott was designated a title, in his case, director of maintenance, definitely earns his moniker. Among the many things he has built for the program are the wooden pews that sit inside the chapel built and donated by Main Street United Methodist Church. It serves as a place of contemplation for some of the residents who are religiously inclined.

The Adams’, since 2015, have run a rehabilitation program focused on breaking the tendency of isolation in people during times of addiction and instead helping them to build new connections in life and their community. As Kim explained, “Our program is heavy on life skills. We are teaching people here how to not feel comfortable. You need that skill in life. You are going to have to make calls you don’t want to make, do things you don’t want to do. We practice the things here you need to do in life. It’s an action program.” After 20 years of sobriety for Kim — and 22 years of sobriety for Bill — the Adams’ moved to the area in 2010 from Connecticut and recounted how they, “saw there wasn’t much here” in terms of support for those who have battled with addiction. Early on, Kim said, “I recognized there was a need for that here.” The catalyst for creating Recovering Hands however didn’t come until she had a traumatic experience at a local meeting. Kim reported that she was so disturbed by the events of the meeting that she, “had a black out” after the meeting and it wasn’t until later when talking to a therapist that it was concluded that she developed post-traumatic stress disorder over the incident.



A head statue rests inside the Recovering Hands greenhouse.

Joshua Fitzwater/Gazette-Virginian



A Recovering Hands saw sign hangs outside a building.

Joshua Fitzwater/Gazette-Virginian

With that, a background herself from college in therapy, and urged on by her therapist, she set out to, “create the type of environment she and others needed,” in the area.

Since 2015, Recovering Hands has been busy helping women who, like Kim, have struggled with addiction so that they can heal and evolve to a better place in life.

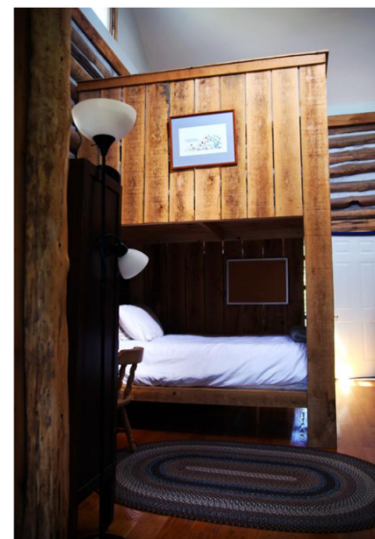
Though often more than four residents reside on the farm, Kim and Bill now have their sites on expanding the program with a new building that will house four more beds and therefore four more women in need of recovery. Up to now, the Adams, anytime the need exceeded the room, have taken residents into their home or found other accommodations. For the building of Recovery Hall, as they have named it, the Adams are seeking to raise \$150,000. They plan to do so through multiple avenues. For starters, they are

holding their first Fall Fundraiser and Silent Auction on Saturday at the Saint John's Methodist Church in Greensboro, North Carolina. As Kim explained, "local support is crucial to making this happen." Circling back to connection and community, the Adams' have also enlisted Marisa Boyd, a member of their board of directors at Recovering Hands and a woman herself who survived issues with addiction.

Boyd, today an accomplished artist and businesswoman, was aware and admired the work of the Adams' from the early days of the inception of the program. To date, as Kim explained, "Marisa has been knocking on doors and pursuing national sponsors," raising just over \$15,000.

While \$135,000 still to be raised might seem daunting to many, it's clear that when called upon, Kim and her crew know how to dig deep and overcome adversity.

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A bed is prepared in a cabin for the residents.

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Kim Adams and Callie Elliot interact with the horse rescues, Ziva and Sully.

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