

# UNDER THE UMBRELLA

WINTER 2017 NEWS from STABILITY FIRST



[www.stability-first.com](http://www.stability-first.com)

## A HOPEFUL FUTURE

If you spend even a few minutes with Ashley you will think she's about the sweetest person you've ever met. But she will tell you that life has not always been sweet for her. Her childhood memories include sexual abuse and waiting up for her mother who had been out drinking late into the night, begging for her attention. Her mother died of cirrhosis when Ashley was only 11. At the age of 16 she and two siblings moved to Martinsville to live with an aunt and uncle, and her grandmother who also relocated to help with the kids. The adjustment was not easy for Ashley. She quit school and got involved in a series of relationships, each one with young men who entangled her deeper and deeper into drug use. She had jobs in home health care, but lost them due to her addiction issues. At one point she lived with a boyfriend in a garage with no heat for two years, addicted to heroin and selling drugs on the street. One night her (then) boyfriend came up with a scheme to rob a home with his friend. On a whim, Ashley, decided to go along. It ended up being a set-up and she was arrested for burglary, without ever entering the home. Choosing to protect her boyfriend, rather than cooperate, she was sentenced to 5 years in prison.

While at Rockville Correctional Facility, Ashley participated in the CLIFF (Clean Living is Freedom Forever) recovery program where she learned to let go of much of the pain from her childhood. She eventually became a leader and facilitator for the program. Her good behavior earned her a transfer to a less restrictive environment in Madison. Under less control, Ashley started hanging with girls who weren't the best influence and fell back into old



habits. She got into trouble and was sent back to Rockville. This was a real wake-up call for her. She remembers thinking, "If I am acting this way in prison, how will I ever make it on the outside." That's when she started getting serious about protecting herself from the negative influence of others and making decisions based on what was best for her.

Seeds of faith were also starting to take root.

Ashley (front row, 3<sup>rd</sup> from right) is pictured with KingdomWay Central, a Christian rap group she brought to perform at the Lvnay Center in October.

Ashley was released from prison on house arrest, requiring that she stay in Morgan County. Her family members had all relocated elsewhere. She had one sweatshirt to her name, and no place to go. We welcomed her into the Magdalene House this summer. At first, she admits, it was pretty overwhelming to comply with house rules and all of the requirements of probation. But she took it one day at a time, relying on her growing faith in God to help her. Soon she had her driver's license and a job at PacMoore in Mooresville, where she appreciates the faith focused environment. Her current routine includes working 6 days / week, and attending church and recovery group meetings on Sunday. She recently qualified for the Rapid Re-Housing program (see above) and will soon be moving into an apartment with her new friend, Magdalene House resident, Haley.

Ashley credits the Magdalene House staff with keeping her on track, giving her confidence and encouraging her faith. She loves the morning inspiration time at the house and is a frequent leader. This fall she reached out to Christian rap group KingdomWay Central, who had ministered to her while in prison. She invited them to perform and meet with Magdalene House ladies and others in the community who are recovering from addiction. She even used her own funds to help with some of the cost of the event and refreshments. It was a wonderful evening of music and ministry. We're all very proud of Ashley and know, that with God's help, she is going to do great things!



Meghan Taylor (back) watches as Ashley & Haley sign their lease with apartment owner Cathy Lahne (front right)

## RAPID RE-HOUSING

The Rapid Re-Housing program is a valuable partner working with homeless individuals to help them obtain suitable housing. Counselor, Meghan Taylor, explained that participants are usually referred by a shelter and must be truly homeless to qualify. An initial assessment determines what type of services are needed, for example case management, rapid re-housing, or permanent supportive housing. To qualify for re-housing assistance participants must be able to live independently, be physically and emotionally healthy, be able to pay rent and be willing to work actively on housing.

Once enrolled, the goal is to obtain housing within 45 days. Counselors advocate with landlords, especially on behalf of those who have made poor choices in the past. They help with lease negotiation and can sometimes (when funds are available) help with security and utility deposits.

We're very thankful for their partnership. To date five Magdalene House residents have benefitted from their assistance.



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**A BLESSING FOR ROGER = A BLESSING FOR ALL**

Tuesday and Thursday nights at the Lynay Community Resource Center are usually filled with some serious studying. That’s when Central Nine offers its high school equivalency prep classes. On Tuesday, December 5, however, the mood was more celebratory than studious. Why? Roger O’Conner had just passed the equivalency exam and decided to buy pizza for the entire class. It was his way of thanking teachers and classmates for their assistance and encouragement.

It’s been a long journey for Roger to reach this happy day. He grew up in Martinsville where he attended school, but wasn’t really interested in studying. He dropped out and started working for a plumber. Most of his life he has worked as a laborer. The pain associated with this kind of work eventually resulted to addiction to pain pills. When this no longer worked he started using harder drugs, like meth and heroin. For many years his life was a cycle of having and losing jobs because of his addiction. He even spent some time in jail.

Six years ago, Roger decided that his son, who was 7 at the time, was more important than drugs. He began a medically supervised treatment program at a methadone clinic. After many struggles, lots of hard work and money, over a 5 year time period, Roger was finally completely drug free. He has become the custodial parent for his son. He has also been able to gain and keep employment as a property manager. He currently manages rentals for several owners, handling anything from leasing arrangements to all aspects of maintenance. He’s been so successful that he’s considering an opportunity to begin the process of owning his own multi-unit property.

Getting his high school diploma gives Roger a great sense of satisfaction and it also has him thinking about other interests. He confided that he has an interest in social work and really enjoys working with an elderly



Roger (center) poses with Don Warren from Bender Lumber & Julie VanWinkle from the Magdalene House as he prepares to share his blessing with the shelter.

tenant who often needs help with paperwork and other challenges. We can attest to his heart for helping others too. Roger recently won a \$500 giveaway at Bender Lumber which he donated back to Stability First, purchasing needed shelving units, winterization products and more. He shared, “I have been blessed and now I want to bless others.”

Introducing:  
**THE MAGGIE BAG!**  
 Coming in 2018.  
 A unique way to teach job skills, entrepreneurship and much more.  
**PLUS beautiful and well-crafted handbags to share with all of our friends!**



**SCRIP ~ FOR THE HOLIDAYS & EVERYDAY**

Stability First is now a registered non-profit with the Scrip program. What is Scrip? It is an easy way for charitable organizations to earn income as their supporters make normal everyday purchases. Participants simply purchase gift cards, through the Scrip program, at their normal face value. Retailers donate a percentage of that payment back to the designated charity. Supporters use the gift cards to make their routine purchases, rather than cash. Or purchase them to give as Christmas gifts!

Over 750 retailers participate – department stores, restaurants, home improvement stores, sporting goods shops, and more. From Amazon to Walmart, we have scrip for just about anywhere you shop.

There are two ways our friends and supporters can get involved and help Stability First:

- 1) Participate as an individual or family by registering at [shopwithscrip.com](http://shopwithscrip.com). You will need assistance from our site coordinator, Angie Shockney (see contact info below) to complete the registration process.
- 2) Contact us about being a Scrip representative for your church, sorority, or service club. Enlisting groups to participate really extends our reach and quickly translates into valuable support for our ministries.

To learn more about Scrip or serving as a Scrip site rep., contact Angie Shockney at [StabilityScrip@gmail.com](mailto:StabilityScrip@gmail.com) or (765)860-2209. Angie is also willing to meet with churches and other organizations to learn more about the Scrip program.



**PLEASE CONSIDER SUPPORTING STABILITY FIRST! SEE PAGE 3 FOR DETAILS OTHER WAYS TO ASSIST INCLUDE.....**

- VOLUNTEER:**
- Transportation assistance
  - Handyman skills
  - Sewing skills
  - Share a hobby or skill
  - Website design or maintenance

- DONATE NEEDED ITEMS:**
- Cleaning supplies
  - Paper goods
  - Toiletries
  - Feminine hygiene items
  - Women’s pajamas (in all sizes)
  - Groceries
  - Copy paper
  - Kroger or Walmart gift cards

**HELP US SAVE POSTAGE ~ PROVIDE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS.** We’re hoping to move to an electronic version of this newsletter soon. We promise not to share your email or inundate you with additional unwanted information. Please send your email address to [info@stability-first.com](mailto:info@stability-first.com) to be added to our contact list.

## A SERVANT'S HEART

Pat Moneymaker has been working with women in difficult circumstances for many years. She was a volunteer with the Overcomers (substance abuse recovery) Ministry at Eastview Christian Church for 10 years. While there she frequently encountered women who had no place to live. She worked hard to find shelter for them, often out of the county. She also took many into her own home. So when plans for the Magdalene House women's shelter began to unfold, Pat was involved from day one. She served on the Advisory Board, providing valuable input into both facility plans and the intended programs and services. When the shelter opened she agreed to serve as one of the House Managers.

Months before the Magdalene House opened, Pat arrived with a ceramic pitcher and basin, announcing her plan to follow Jesus' example by washing the feet of each woman who moved into the shelter. And that's exactly what she has done over the last 15 months. Pat's foot washing includes a warm soak, plus washing and drying, and a little massage with soothing lotion. While she washes their feet she tells each woman that they are deserving of love and respect, and that God is their loving Father and protector. She relates that this symbolic gesture of humility often has a great impact on the women who arrive tired and guarded. Many have never heard this gospel story. They frequently react with tears, but also with joy and peace.

Pat retired from a career in medical administration 3 years ago and had planned to move to Florida. But her enthusiasm for the Magdalene House caused her to put those plans on hold. This fall she announced that she felt it was time to follow through with those plans. She will be moving to Clermont, FL in mid-December. Pat feels strongly that God has plans for her to share the things she's learned at the shelter in new ministry opportunities in the south. Everyone at the Magdalene House is very grateful for "Mama" Pat's service. Ashley (page 1) shared that upon her release from prison, Pat was the first person to meet with her. "I was a mess. But she told me I was going to be ok and to stay strong. She made me feel so loved and welcomed." She will be greatly missed by all. We pray God's richest blessing on Pat in this new venture!

Current and former residents describe "Mama" Pat's foot washing:

*"I felt renewed, revived, and born again."*  
 "Ma Pat was telling the story of Jesus washing others feet and I felt God's love overcome me. I felt humbled and I felt the power of his sacrifice."  
*"It was wonderful and a very spiritual experience."*  
 "I felt relief. I felt pure, and very thankful for the Magdalene House."

**John 13: 12 - 17**

*After washing their feet he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I am doing? You call me 'Master' and 'Lord' and you do well to say it, for it is true. And, since I the Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow: do as I have done to you. How true it is that a servant is not greater than his master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends him. You know these things - now do them! That is the path of blessing."*



*Pat Moneymaker washes the feet of a new Magdalene House resident, soon after her arrival.*

**WON'T YOU PLEASE CONSIDER PARTNERING WITH US TO BRING HOPE TO THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST? YOUR MONTHLY PLEDGE HELPS US PROVIDE HOPE AS WE ALSO BUILD STABILITY ORGANIZATIONALLY**

I / we would like to pledge the following monthly:     \$15     \$25     \$50     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_    To give monthly via our secure EFT bank draft system contact waynebyoung@comcast.net

Please charge my credit card in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_     Visa     MC     Discover

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_    Exp Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_    CVV \_\_\_\_\_

Signature (required for all credit card transactions): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

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