Chelsea resident Cassie Michael will share from her experiences as a Marine at the Nov. 6 Stories of Service, benefiting the Ann Arbor VA Fisher House. Page 6
I hear of one of the few cities that has a vendor named Tony, who many of you readers have probably come across. The vendors have stories and things to say, and they are passionate about and like to talk about life while being homeless. I just recorded the time so far. I have made a podcast about Groundcover vendor No. 159, which you can find on Spotify under the name Groundcover.

I came up with the idea for making a podcast because once I started being around the office and talked to the commuters that are homeless, I became extremely passionate about and like to talk about homelessness. The vendors have stories and things to say, but other than the tweepverse, they’ve had no platform to express these things. I want the podcast to be a place where I ask basic questions, but let it turn into a conversation about whatever the person I’m interviewing feels strongly about.

The first record went well. I spoke with a vendor named Tony, who many of you readers have probably come across. He works with Groundcover almost since its beginning. I went into the recording thinking he would say a lot of negative things about his experience, and how the area treats the homeless, but I was pleasantly surprised when he talked about how Ann Arbor gives a lot of opportunities and tries to help. He said that the people of Ann Arbor are courteous, and that he has made friends through selling the paper. He did say that lack of affordable housing is an issue facing the area, but that there is at least some progress with that. He made me realize that things may not be as bad as some news outlets say. It is important to keep that in mind.

There are always going to be hardships with homelessness, but there are positive things you can look at instead of dwelling on the negative. You should always try to make the best out of what you have, and believe there are not many people who do that better than formerly homeless people such as Tony. Even with a hand dealt to them that could very easily make people give up, those individuals push through adversity, because that’s how you get where you want to be. Tony said the experience of homelessness has made him a better person, because it really made him appreciate everything in his life a lot more. “You only appreciate what you really have once you lose it all,” Tony said, and I couldn’t agree more.

I had a very good time recording the podcast. It opened my eyes and helped me realize things aren’t necessarily as bad as some people make them out to be. I also get some good advice, such as to keep your head up and keep going no matter what gets thrown in your way, and to be grateful and appreciative for what you have. You may have heard these things before, but I feel these are very important to keep in mind. I will always be grateful for the words Tony spoke to me. I will keep them in my mind for whenever I need to hear them.

If you would like to see Ann Arbor change for the better, make housing cheaper.

To honor their passing…

We can’t know why the lady has so brief a time to bloom in the warmth of our sight. It’s kiss upon its face before it folds into its fragrance and bids the world good night to rest its beauty. But we can know that nothing that is loved is ever lost. We can know that a heart can really pass away because some beauty lingered on in each memory of which they’ve been a part.”

— Ellen Breneman

New podcast captures vendor stories

ELIJAH KLEIN
Groundcover Community High intern

My name is Elijah Klein. I am a new member to the Groundcover team, and I’ve really enjoyed my time so far. I have made a podcast about Groundcover in which I interview vendors and we talk about life while being homeless. I just recorded the first episode, which you can find on Spotify under the name Groundcover.

I came up with the idea for making a podcast because once I started being around the office and talked to the commuters that are homeless, I became extremely passionate about and like to talk about homelessness. The vendors have stories and things to say, but other than the tweepverse, they’ve had no platform to express these things. I want the podcast to be a place where I ask basic questions, but let it turn into a conversation about whatever the person I’m interviewing feels strongly about.

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Shou should corrections officers wear body cameras?

AARON ST. GERMAIN
Brooklyn, NY

We see police brutality in the media — people sworn to protect and serve are the ones we fear. Police is not different. Not every corrections officer is a bad one, but there is a very small number of corrections officers who use their power in a way that is not justified. Some corrections officers use their power in a way that is good for them, but not good for society.

Should corrections officers wear body cameras?

Christopher Ellis
Groundcover contributor

She bends, a flower gives, and the snow won’t seem kind in the morning fall…

As her chair moves, she pushes forward, while leaves are green.
Homelessness Awareness Week, November 16-24: Events throughout Washtenaw County

Groundcover staff

Every year over 5,000 people experience homelessness right here in Washtenaw County. Many more experience food instability.

Each November, National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week serves as a nationwide spotlight, highlighting the issues of homelessness and hunger in our county. This year, the week takes place Nov. 16-24. The Washtenaw Housing Alliance and other local agencies and organizations have a variety of events planned to honor the week and provide awareness, education, and advocacy opportunities for our community.

Just prior to the weekly observance, on Nov. 13, Washtenaw State of Homelessness Event at Washtenaw Community College’s Morris Lawrence Building from 5:30-7:30 p.m. will provide background information about Washtenaw County’s homeless system of care. People who have been homeless will share some of their stories. Attendees will also hear about the different programs and part-nerships that are addressing homelessness. Contact Samantha Adams of the Shelter Association of Washtenaw County at 734-662-2829 ext. 226 for more information about joining fellow community members to make up our county’s homeless response system. This event is free and open to the public, and refreshments will be served.

A march to demand affordable housing for all in Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti will take place on Nov. 17 at 1 p.m. It will start at Liberty Square Plaza and wind through downtown Ann Arbor, ending back at Liberty Plaza where people will be invited to speak about and listen to people sharing their stories about housing insecurity.

On the evening of Nov. 21, the Shelter Association is bringing back “Put a Roof On It: Comedy for a Cause.” And comedian Kita Sobelshock will entertain at the Ann Arbor Comedy Showcase with all proceeds of the $20 admission charge going to the SAWC. There will also be a 50/50 raffle. The show begins at 7:30 p.m. with doors opening at 7:15 p.m.

The SAWC is sponsoring a Food Rally from 5-9 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 22, starting at the Delonis Center. Participants will learn about the city of Ann Arbor as they follow clues and vie to finish first. A sale of Shelter Association client art, an open mic and cash bar will follow the rally. Register by the SAWC by November 4. The $25 per person entry fee will benefit the SAWC.

The SAWC is also challenging community members to discover ways they can help the homeless community (Sunday, Nov. 17) and take the SNAP Challenge by limiting weekly spending on food to $28 or fasting for the next day, Nov. 18, at 7 p.m. at the Michigan Theater. The film, “Owned: A Tale of Two Americas,” will show on Thursday, Nov. 21 from 2-5 p.m., Packard Health, U-M Medical, Ozone House, the WHA and the SAWC students in this event.

On Thursday, Nov. 21 from 2:50 p.m., Packard Health, U-M Medical, Ozone House, the WHA and the SAWC are teaming up at the Delonis Center (312 W. Huron Street in Ann Arbor) to provide a day of free health care for those living with homelessness. This free community event is designed to encourage healthy lifestyles, prevent and manage diseases and connect people with the available community resources they need.

I decided to review my column from the September 2019 edition of Groundcover, in which I interviewed the resident council of three low-income public housing complexes. The first group was a public housing complex called Green Baxter Court. The residents expressed the pain and oppression of being trapped in their current living place with no hope for improvement. They were people of color, again mostly black.

The next focus group was at the Hikone community, which likewise was comprised largely of people of color — again, mostly black. The third focus group meeting was with folks at the Bryant community. Again, residents expressed the pain of an oppressive housing system, which offered them no hope. Once again, the place and identity of the residents closely resembled the others.

The stories of the residents of these three low-income public housing projects are not in the “brochure” many Ann Arbor residents are smoking. Only the great things the city is doing are in the brochure. (The brochure is a metaphor for the city’s self-image as a great place to live.) This status is most educated, its U-M’s “Leaders and Best” slogan, all those Top 10 lists.

I remember the time that the city’s low-income housing communities and minority populations are often hidden away, out of sight from the mainstream — not included in the “brochure.” People of color are tucked away.

Recently, at a presentation on neo-colonization and academia at U-M’s School of Social Work, Dr. Clelia Rodriguez addressed how colonization was present at the university. Rodriguez claimed the university believed it was doing well by addressing oppression, but she criticized this saying it is the privileged who speak, not the minorities. She reminded me of the importance of place in social life. Residents of public housing in Ann Arbor are the victims of colonization. Of being trapped in a place that satisfies the beliefs and preferences of the privileged but does not offer change for all residents.

Groundcover will continue to be a voice of the silenced.

Next month’s column will address the liberation of public housing residents and possibilities of how they might change their destiny. (Hint: We do the disenfranchised discover their rights?)

Unpacking the ‘brochure’

JERRY CHARRONEAU
Groundcover volunteer

I was driving on Ann Arbor’s west side going from a local church on Miller Avenue to run an errand when I got caught in slow traffic on North Maple. While I was engaged in my usual critique of urban life, I noticed of many of the housing units were multi-family and were called cooperatives. I also noticed while I was waiting for a school bus in an urban that most of the students were minorities, mostly black.

Meanwhile I pondered the larger issue of land use in Ann Arbor and the experience of oppression and pain of place. I decided to review my column from the September 2019 edition of Groundcover, in which I interviewed the resident council of three low-income public housing complexes. The first group was a public housing complex called Green Baxter Court. The residents expressed the pain and oppression of being trapped in their current living place with no hope for improvement. They were people of color, again mostly black.

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Nov. 18th
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Nov. 19th
SNAP Challenge
Day of Caring

Nov. 20th
Dine-In Move-Out
Health & Wellness Fair

For more information, contact Samantha Adams at 734-662-2829 (ext 226) or visit annarborsome.org

Affordable Housing

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Residential Cleaning
Commercial & Commercial Cleaning

We’re Moved to the INTERNET!
Check us out at auntagathas.com

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Stories of Service powers healing, funds family support for ailing veterans

SUSAN BECKETT Publisher

Military veterans treated at the Vet erans Administration hospital in Ann Arbor come from the entire Great Lakes region and often stay for long periods of time. Like a Ronald McDon ald House for our military and veteran families, a Fisher House allows families to stay together when veterans require in-patient care at a VA hospita l. There are Fisher Houses across the country, but the one under construc tion on the Ann Arbor VA grounds will be the first in Michigan. Another will be built in Detroit at the John D. Dingell VA Medical Center once a remaining $13 million is raised. All donations made through the end of the year will be matched up to $1 million.

To that end, Stories of Service, a pro gram to honor veterans, will be a tick eted fundraiser at the Michigan Theater on November 6, though sponsors have provided free tickets for veterans, first responders and students. In as many years as veterans will recount stories of their service in the armed forces to a spellbound audience at the Michigan Theater — a powerful shared experience — with music provided by the Concordia College choir.

Retired Brigadier Gen. Doug Slocomb will emcee this year’s event. Slocomb followed his father’s footsteps as a pilot in the Air Force. A decorated and inspiring leader, Slocomb’s military career culminated in Michigan as Commander of the 127th Wing and Selfridge Air National Guard Base in Macomb County. As a career pilot, Slocomb logged over 4,100 flying hours in the F-4 Phantom, F-16 Falcon, the A-10 Warthog and the KC-135 Strato tanker. These missions took him all over the world and prepared him for the greater mission of pioneering safety initiatives to protect our men and women in uniform.

Stories of service will span 70 years, from Art Fischman’s experiences serving in the Navy in the South Pacific during World War II to Cassie Michael’s service with the Marines in Iraq from 2006 to 2010.

“I became a monster”

Fischman is a returning storyteller but this year is Michael’s debut. She shared parts of her story with fellow students as an undergrad as part of the Warrior Scholar program and now as she is completing her masters in social work at the University of Michigan. It was as a panelist on Women in the Military that she first met the people who would bring a Fisher House to Michigan. At the time, she was consumed as a student and mother to two young children.

She now feels that sharing her experiences could be valuable to her, and she wants to shed some light on a woman’s experience in the military and dispel some commonly held misperceptions — take, for example, her road to the Marines. She enlisted after a single semester at S-M Flint, not because she was struggling — in fact, she had a 4.4 average and no financial concerns — but because she was bored.

“I never had to work for anything,” Michael said. “I wanted to do something that would shock people and prove to myself I could do something tough. I googled ‘toughest branch of service’ and the Marines came up. I was 18 and enlisted. My mom cried. My dad was pissed. I was bored.”

Before deployment to Iraq, Michael endured harassment, sexual assault and coer cion and was soon asking herself, “What have I done and how can I get out of this?”

She was very angry and her sense of self-worth had been severely diminished. She was then vulnerable to the systematic negative indoctrination she says she received regarding the Iraqi people. She was emasculated when she was summarily separated from the combat engineer unit and assigned to the Lions program in which she searched Iraqi women returning home from the local stores.

“I was in combat but, as a woman, not allowed to return fire. I’m grateful now because I would have killed any Iraqi man, woman or child without compassion. I felt like I was dead, empty, unforgiving, hollow. I became a monster. I was used to the women and children.”

However, one day an Iraqi woman ran into the Lions bunker, frantic because her son had been kidnapped by a terrorist group. She was begging

Falled

RON PAGERESI Groundcover contributor

Alone he stands, plastic cup in his hands. Icy lips get a bite to eat he hardly

Looking like he’s about half dead. His voice so quiet, I could hardly hear. In. His eyes a world of far-away fear. People rush past him pell-mell Often they tell him, go to Hell But Hell is what he’s known for so long Once his ears heard a sweeter song, Family and friends were in the past, He fell from grace, they did not last. He’s had to learn life on the street, The only bed, a cardboard sheet. He’s got to lie in this house, the street he now must cry in. His health is bad, he won’t last long But no one cares, he’ll get no song. A pauper’s grave, is where he’ll lay. Will anyone even have a prayer to say?
Ypsi’s Corner Health Center: affordable physical & mental health services for teens, young adults

The Corner Health Center is about community intervention to solve the problems of inequity, to provide high-quality, affordable health care, and to ameliorate the challenges faced by young people. Corner Health offers health care and mental health services for teens and young adults. Services are judgement-free and confidential to any 12 to 25-year-old and their children regardless of ability to pay. Corner Health’s current location is 47 N. Huron Street, Ypsilanti.

In a February 1981 Detroit Free Press article, Nancy Margolis, deputy director of the Washtenaw County Community Services agency at that time, said Corner Health would “offer a wide range of health services aimed at low-income teenagers who may not have access to health services.”

Corner Health was founded upon the belief that young people should be able to control their reproductive health with access to safe, confidential birth control and mental health services. What started as a “room and pop shop” led by Dr. David Share has grown into an educational center as an “innovative health clinic for teens”.

In 1982, Dr. David Share, who is co-facilitator of the clinic’s troupe, has visited schools in southeastern Michigan to promote healthy living and personal responsibility. Today Corner Health also does proactive programming in addition to educational workshops and peer theater dialogues, the following services are provided: physical exams and tests, immunizations, nutrition counseling, insurance enrollment, health and fitness education, community resources referrals, confidential STI and pregnancy testing.

Corner Health calls for a medical staff headed by Dr. Donald Horner, U-M instructor of pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology. Staff members from Washtenaw County Health Department were expected to provide services and the St. Joseph Mercy and U-M Health Systems would help.

More than 1,000 teenagers were targeted to receive medical and social services during 1981. Teenagers from poor families who could afford to pay something for a doctor’s visit would be charged nominal fees, those unable to pay would receive free services.

Before her death in 2016, Joan Cheeler, a founder and original executive director, shared her thoughts: “The Corner was founded upon the belief that all youth have a right to high-quality, affordable health care, and that young women in particular should be able to control their reproductive health with access to safe, confidential birth control and mental health services. What started as a ‘room and pop shop’ led by Dr. David Share has grown into an important community and statewide resource.”

Corner Health staff at their Ypsilanti office where they provide health services to teens and young adults, regardless of their ability to pay. Left to right: Versell Smith, Jr – Executive director; Paula Brown – Chief Development & Engagement Officer; Jaz Brennan – Community Health Educator; Breah Wasson – Clinic Manager.

The planning proposal for Corner Health Clinic a lift-off and county commissioners approved it in February 1980. A $40,000 state grant, plus money from Washtenaw Interfaith Council of Congregations and the Jewish Foundation of Ann Arbor provided the initial operating budget.

Within five years of its inception, Corner Health had about 20,000 visitors and was serving more than 12,000 patients per year. The clinic continues to be a major topic of policy discussion in Ann Arbor.

Clinic founders started to seek funding about two years before it opened, and a current chief development and engagement officer of Corner Health. Other organizations in Washtenaw County and Michigan helped give Corner Health a lift-off and county commissioners approved it in February 1980. A $40,000 state grant, plus money from Washtenaw Interfaith Council of Congregations and the Jewish Foundation of Ann Arbor provided the initial operating budget.

While Groundcover News vendors are contracted self-employed, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper. Every vendor reads and signs this code of conduct before receiving a badge and papers. If you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the code, please contact us at contact@groundcovernews.com or 734-263-2098 and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should benefit our community. All vendors must agree to the following:

1. I agree not to sell additonal goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
2. I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner.
3. I agree to treat all customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
4. I agree to not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
5. I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the paper.
6. I understand to refrain from selling Groundcover News.

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Mental illness among the homeless: consequence, not just cause

Boober, book update

Mental illness among the homeless: consequence, not just cause

SANDRA S
Vendor No. 253

In last month’s article, I talked about how trauma can have symptoms of depression. I mentioned that it is common among the community. Symptoms of depression are quite prevalent among those living in a place without a roof over their heads. Depression is also common among the homeless community. Symptoms of depression are quite prevalent among those living in a place without a roof over their heads. Depression is also common among the homeless community.

Signs of depression include:
- Feeling sad, empty, or hopeless
- Trouble falling asleep or sleeping too much
- Feeling restless or fatigued
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- Loss of interest or enjoyment in activities

The difference between major depression and bipolar disorder is that, with bipolar, typical symptoms are exaggerated: episodes of manic-depression are more intense, and the person can have periods of both extreme highs and lows. This difference can be confusing, and it is important to distinguish between the two conditions.

When you picture a homeless person feeling angry or depressed, you might think of them as a victim of society. Sometimes, people think that they are being kind by offering food or clothing, but these actions do not address the root causes of their suffering. Many homeless individuals have experienced traumatic events in their lives, such as abuse, neglect, or natural disasters. These experiences can lead to feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, and isolation.

Many homeless individuals also suffer from mental illness, including depression. This can make it difficult for them to access the resources they need to improve their lives. When considering how to help the homeless, it is important to recognize the complexity of their situation and to work together to develop solutions that address their needs.

In conclusion, it is important to recognize that mental illness among the homeless is a consequence, not just a cause. By working together to address the root causes of homelessness and mental illness, we can help create a more just and compassionate society for all.

Kevin Spanger
Vendor No. 35

My book, "Bisexual out of Depression and going Up the Royal Road," is now available for order. I published my "100 reasons" and explained their struggle. I am trying to give you a picture of what I have lived through — the struggle. I am trying to give you a picture of what I have lived through — the struggle.

The struggle. I am trying to give you a picture of what I have lived through — the struggle. I am trying to give you a picture of what I have lived through — the struggle. I am trying to give you a picture of what I have lived through — the struggle.

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Get your copy today!

Kevin Spanger
Vendor No. 35

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Pear, pomegranate & spinach salad

ELIZABETH BAUMAN
Groundcover contributor

Salad
2/3 cup chopped walnuts or pecans, toasted
3/4 cup pomegranate arils
3 oz. feta cheese, crumbled
1/2 cup dried cranberries
2 Bartlett pears (firm, but ripe), cored and sliced
9 oz. baby spinach

Dressing
1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 Tbsp. honey
1 tsp. Dijon mustard
Salt and pepper to taste

Place all salad ingredients in a large bowl. Whisk dressing ingredients in a small bowl, drizzle on salad and lightly toss. Serve immediately.