

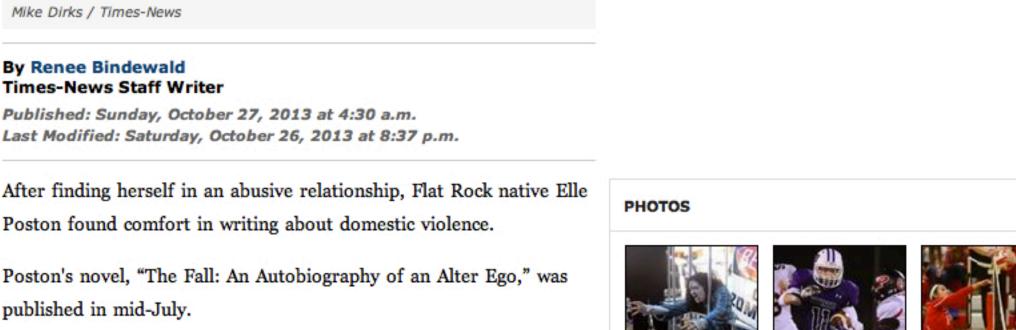
West

Henderson

Symphonic

Elementary -

Pumpkin Patch



community. October is a shared awareness month for both breast cancer and domestic violence.

Now living in Los Angeles, Poston returned to Henderson County

this weekend to raise awareness for domestic violence in the

"I tried to write a book about how somebody who has plenty of

to those deep, dark places and answers those questions of why

somebody would stay in that."

Mainstay Executive Director Tanya Blackford, right, talks with author Elle Poston on Friday. Poston held a book signing and discussion of domestic violence at the Dandelion

eatery on Saturday.

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> month, and my family has been affected by that as well and I applaud the coverage," Poston said. "But I was always really upset that the domestic violence platform gets overshadowed."

> "Everyone knows that October is national breast cancer awareness

recently formed with Mainstay. "Any proceeds from any of the books I sell will go directly to Mainstay," Poston said.

Poston held a book signing and open discussion of domestic violence

at the Dandelion eatery on Saturday, through a partnership she has

"We know families leave seven times before they leave for good and

Mainstay is a local nonprofit serving victims of domestic violence.

because of domestic violence," Mainstay Executive Director Tanya Blackford said. "If all we did was crisis services, then those would be the type of numbers that we would see here." Blackford said Mainstay's goal is to help make victims' lives entirely different. Consequently, the nonprofit offers more than counseling

that 80 to 90 percent of homeless women and children are homeless

and crisis services. It has a partnership with the Housing Assistance Corp. of Hendersonville to offer affordable, safe housing for clients during times of transition. And Mainstay recently began a job training program through the new eatery, Dandelion. "An abused woman usually comes stripped of everything, including self-esteem," Mainstay case manager Teresa Thomas said. "So to get

Other case managers said many abused women have been isolated and often have not worked in several years.

them out there in the workplace is a big deal."

Denney said. "They have to learn work ethic."

said, a restaurant was the perfect balance.

Starting a job training program with a restaurant, Blackford said, was very intentional.

"We began looking at where the jobs in the community were and

"Most of them have never had a resume," case manager Mindy

what programs Blue Ridge (Community College) had to offer, and we started adding those components together," Blackford said. Since the skill levels of Mainstay's clients vary so much, Blackford

"We had to create a program that equally offered that kind of span, and there's always restaurant jobs," Blackford said. "We're a tourist

community. If nothing else, we have restaurants, we have country

clubs, we have all kinds of food service programs." At the Dandelion, Mainstay program graduates work side by side with those still in the shelter. "When I first went to Mainstay, I was very scared and felt alone, and

then time went by and I got the internship here and then you start

to feel more confident," said a former client now working as a

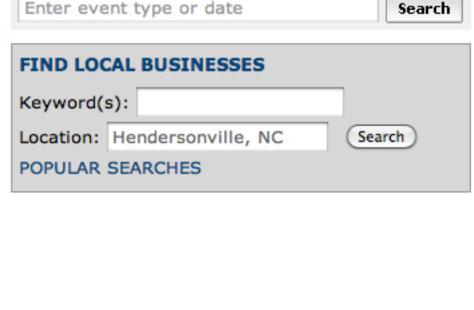
mentor at Dandelion. "You start to feel more relaxed." The former client, who asked not to be identified by name, said Mainstay reached out to her and encouraged her to enter the organization's internship program and remain active with Mainstay.

"I wasn't sure what I wanted to do, but I had to do something and they really helped me and encouraged me to get a job here and start out here," she said. "Even though I don't stay at Mainstay anymore, I am still doing my counseling, and it really does help and give you

somebody to talk to." At the event on Saturday, Poston left a few signed copies of her book at Mainstay, which she said is something she usually does not do. Mainstay will now be carrying her book on their shelves at

"I am overjoyed by how supportive the whole community has been," Poston said. "I think what Mainstay is doing has the ability to effect great change in the community."

Dandelion.



EVENTS CALENDAR MORE EVENTS № SUBMIT EVENT

WED

31

THU

27

SUN

28

MON

29

TUE

COMMENTS

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