

*ASCFG has 300 members in the large areas impacted by Hurricanes Helene and Milton. Everyone's stories and experiences are important, but it isn't possible to cover them all in detail. Please consider the experiences of the four growers featured in this article as representative of many others. If you are interested in helping flower farmers impacted by Helene or Milton, or need help for your own farm, please visit ASCFG's Hurricane Helene Resource page at <https://ascfgmembers.org/hurricane-helene-resources/>. While we cannot post individual websites and GoFundMe pages, affected growers and members who would like to help are encouraged to connect on ASCFG's Member's Only Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ascfgmembersonly>.*

## **Hurricane Helene Brings Destruction to Everyone in Its Path—Including Flower Farmers**

When Hurricane Helene churned north from the Gulf of Mexico on September 27, it left a 500-mile path of catastrophic destruction and death in its wake. Through Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina, it damaged property and upended lives, tragically causing the deaths of more than 200 people, half of them in Western North Carolina. Perhaps nowhere was affected more than this part of North Carolina—usually a beautiful region with small towns nestled near rivers and in mountain valleys. Tourists visit for the natural beauty, restaurants, quaint shops, and artistic culture.

When Helene arrived however, by then weakened to a tropical storm, residents endured up to 31" of rain in just three days—and gusts of wind from 40 mph up to 107 mph (the latter recorded at Mt. Mitchell). It spawned six tornadoes in the state and caused flooding at a scale never seen before in recorded history, wiping out bridges, roads, homes, and even entire towns. It was a complete shock to an area where hurricane remnants usually mean a bit heavier-than-normal rainfall, but not much more.

Many ASCFG members in the wide path of the storm were impacted, some devastatingly so. ASCFG Editor Robin Siktberg reached out to a number of those members to learn how they are coping six weeks later, what they still need, and their future plans. Four flower farmers in Western North Carolina responded. Here are their stories.

### **Jenny Hite, Walker Town Farm, Black Mountain, North Carolina**

Jenny Hite farms about 3/4ths of an acre at her home in the North Fork valley—a high valley on Black Mountain where water usually drains away, and flooding isn't a concern. Her entire lot is on a slope, and she is a no-till farmer, working hard to always keep living roots in the soil and to improve her clay soil with organic matter.

She and her family were at home when the storm hit, thankful for their small generator that ran the sump pump in the basement. “Without that, we would have had severe damage to the house,” she says. “I didn’t measure the rain, because I couldn’t keep up with it, but we got somewhere between 25 and 30 inches of rain over about three days. Even the dry soil from the dry summer we’ve had couldn’t possibly absorb that much.”

### ***Soil Erosion, Crop Loss, and Fields Crushed Under Trees***

The saturated soil and high winds took down five large trees, which thankfully missed her house but crushed her high tunnel and fell on her dahlia, rose, peony, and perennials fields. Two beds where Jenny had recently removed flowering bulbs in order to expand her dahlias were completely washed away since there were no roots to stabilize the soil. “It’s just gone,” she says. “All the way down to the base layer of clay—there’s just crevasses. And it’s hard to know how to replace that soil in a timely and cost-effective manner, because I’m concerned about contamination. The place I usually get my compost is in Swannanoa, one of the most impacted areas. There is petroleum and garbage and everything all over, and I’m concerned about bringing that out to my farm.”

Three large trees fell on Jenny’s shade garden and not only removed the shade but also uprooted or crushed the helleborus crop underneath. Last year for the first time, she overwintered dahlias—her biggest crop—in the ground with good success and was planning to do the same this year. But even though the water didn’t pool in the field, the tubers rotted. “It’s the strangest thing, because after all that rain for three days, we haven’t had any more, so I thought I’d leave the dahlias for now and spend my time cleaning up,” Jenny says. “But they are completely disintegrated. I’m trying to dig up what I can.”

One of the larger problems for this mountainous area is that most residents don’t have flood insurance unless they live in a flood plain. This includes Jenny, who says her insurance is only for liability to protect her when visitors come to the farm for U-pick. The lost income from selling her flowers to florists for weddings, along with her dahlia crop, cuts deep. September and October are high season for tourists and weddings and are key revenue times for flower farmers in the area.

### ***The Power of Community***

Jenny says her neighbors have been tremendously helpful. The local farmers’ market opened up quickly, which allowed her to sell her dried flowers for three consecutive weeks. “Our community has rallied around supporting local artisans and farms, so that really helped,” she says. “I had neighbors and friends come to help cut up all the trees. But the massive amount of debris and the huge roots and stumps are keeping me from being able

to plant. Hopefully, I'm getting someone to donate their time and machines to take care of this, because it would be a huge expenditure."

Two neighbors with tractors regraded the road for the entire neighborhood. Others shared generators or stoves. For her part, Jenny let neighbors drive through her yard because the bridge and road were destroyed.

In a bad stroke of luck among the turmoil, Jenny's farm manager broke her foot a week after the storm and is out of commission. "Without our full team, things move a lot slower, and that has been a big blow," she says.

She says strangers who follow her online have venmoed her small amounts of money that add up and she is grateful. A flower friend in Ohio she only spoke to on the phone donated all of her resale profits to Jenny. Another small flower farm sold bouquets for a week and gave her \$130. Three flower farmers in the Piedmont area of North Carolina picked chrysanthemums and drove them up to her so she could sell them at the farmers' market. Other farmers have offered extra dahlia tubers. "It's just amazing to see people love each other and take care of each other," Jenny says. "It's overwhelming in a good way."

She was also able to get a \$3,000 grant from WNC Communities to help replace some of her lost income and has applied for some other business grants.

Jenny's biggest priorities are getting the tree debris removed from her fields, replacing the lost soil and planting more areas with cover crops to beef up organic content and prevent more erosion. She increased her order of ranunculus, adding an additional row of them in her high tunnel because they sell so well. The manufacturer, Farmers Friend, gave her a 50% discount on a replacement tunnel, another gesture for which she is grateful.

Jenny has her good and bad days. "I can say this now without bursting into tears, that it will be okay. It's just flowers. This, too shall pass."

### **Abigail Moffitt, Bloom WNC, Black Mountain, North Carolina**

Just down the road from Jenny Hite at Walker Town Farm, Abigail Moffitt of Bloom WNC struggles with the opposite of erosion: tons of heavy sand, silt, gravel, and sewage spread at least eight inches thick over her fields. Her small farm is in a valley next to a tiny creek with Allen Mountain just behind it. She says her fields formed a bowl that caught all the runoff from above, plus what came down the creek, which also flooded. In a contest nobody wants to win, she is right up there on the podium.

“It’s a tiny creek that sometimes goes dry in the summer, and we aren’t even in the 100-year floodplain,” Abigail says. “When the remains of Hurricane Fred came through in 2021, we had a tiny bit of flooding, but it was gone in a couple of hours. But this time, all the water from above us just came roaring down bringing tons and tons of gravel from all the driveways up the mountain. The septic systems of three houses upstream from us blew out, so we have sewage, too.”

Abigail says the storm followed two heavy days of rain, and she estimates 30-plus inches of rain falling on her land in just four days. Ironically, as of the time of this writing, the area was still considered to be in a drought since nothing has fallen since. Because she doesn’t live in a flood plain, they didn’t evacuate, but at 4:30 a.m. on the morning of September 27,



The field with Abigail’s spring field crops, including larkspur, nigella, Chinese forget-me-nots, etc. She also had three beds prepped here for poppies, snaps and more that she plants in late winter. “We have had to scrape up at least six inches of this and pile it up,” she says. “We are testing this soil to make sure there are no heavy metals or petroleum in it. NC state did soil and water samples for us for free. It was so kind of them.”

swift water rescue teams told them to leave because they were worried about the dam holding back the reservoir above. “We took my mom who lives next door and left,” Abigail says. “We were thankful that some emergency measures were taken a few years ago; spillways were added to relieve pressure on the North Fork Dam if the reservoir filled up. And that’s exactly what they did, so it could have been so much worse.

However, the fast-moving torrent of water from the spillways eroded 25 feet down to the 30-inch water main that runs along the road to Abigail’s farm and supplies the Asheville area with water. Eventually the pipe broke, and it took 21 days to fix, leaving the community completely without water. The water still isn’t drinkable or able to be used for watering plants since there are high amounts of chlorine and particulates. “For water to be safe, the particulate level needs to be a 1,” Abigail says. “Ours is at 27.” Officials say the earliest possible time for potable water is around Christmas.

The lack of clean water means the cancellation of an order for 40,000 tulips, an important source of winter income for the farm. Her vendors, Ampersand Bulb and Little Farmhouse Flowers generously gave her a full refund. Many of Abigail’s plugs—campanula, poppies, nigella, larkspur and more—went downstream, too. She normally used a gravity-fed irrigation system on the creek that

included a massive tank which is now gone. Her 50-foot cold frame is also gone. Also gone is the income from all of her October weddings.

One of the most sobering aspects of the first few weeks was having search-and-rescue teams at her farm and behind it where the Swannanoa River flooded into retention ponds. “Park rangers, the army, the border patrol, so many people were helping to search. There are crushed cars behind our property, thankfully with nobody in them. That was kind of a hard reality to see that.”

### ***Slowing Down and Stepping Back to Prioritize***

The damage was so overwhelming it was hard to know where to start first, so Abigail enlisted the help of her business mentor of four years from an organization called Mountain Biz Works. “Mountain BizWorks supports small businesses—especially woman-owned or minority-owned,” Abigail says. “They provide funding and give classes. It was helpful to have my mentor provide a rational look at what my priorities should be and where to focus my efforts.”



Abigail’s beloved Farmer’s Friend high tunnel. The wind didn’t damage it “because it is sooo strong and could have handled heavier winds, but the water was two-feet deep and rushing. The strength of the water bent the steel frame, and the rebar stakes they were attached to.” She grows campanula, orlaya, bells of Ireland in here in this tunnel in the fall for spring crops, as well as established eucalyptus.

First, the high tunnel. Abigail took advantage of the storm damage offer of a 50% discount from Farmers Friend to replace her high tunnel so she can possibly replace her plugs and have flowers by April. Soil restoration is the next big priority. Experts from North Carolina State University provided free water and soil tests for area farms, and what Abigail does next hinges on the results.

“As much as I wanted to get moving on cleanup, I had to slow down and wait to see what we are dealing with,” she says. “It determines how we clean it, where to put it and how to work with it. I want my staff and volunteers to be safe. The lady from NC State was so awesome. She says if the contamination is bacterial, natural microbes in the soil and ultraviolet rays from the sun will take care of it within 60 days. But if there are heavy metals, petroleum etc., it’s a

different story that involves excavators coming in to haul it away. If it's clean, once we get the gravel sorted out, I can use it to start my new compost pile. Perhaps I can get some plugs in December and January if the test results are favorable."

Peonies are an important crop at Bloom WNC, and Abigail has about 500 plants, which were buried. "We're trying to mark the ones we find with little sticks, but there are about 150 that are pretty deep. It's a little like treasure hunting," she says. Abigail says the ones she has found still have healthy eyes and look good, so she is hopeful that she can lift them up and replant. If the deeply buried crowns sprout in the spring, she can do the same for them. A particularly painful loss was the 30 *Helleborus* 'Ice N' Roses' plants she had recently purchased from Ball seed that brought in important February income.

### **Communities, Grants and Time**



One of Abigail's peony fields. She is slowly digging and finding them—"a treasure hunt."

Like the others in this story, Abigail has experienced support from her community and from strangers, either by volunteering directly on the farm, contributing to her GoFundMe account or with grant money. Like many farmers, she is used to being self sufficient and doesn't accept help very often, but so many people have volunteered, she is starting to do volunteer days every two weeks—primarily cleanup tasks. "I've learned to be specific in what I need in my emails, such as 'Next Tuesday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. we're going to pick up sticks and I'll make chili for everyone,'" Abigail says. "My clients and the community are so sweet, and they love to help. I'm so grateful for that."

Money from her GoFundMe is helping to pay her part-time employees and for the new tunnel. The Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Program (ASAP) provided an immediate \$500 grant. Abigail has applied for grants from USDA National Resources Conservation

Service (USDA NRCS) and other organizations, but the process takes months. She understands the wait because there are thousands of applications to verify, but farmers have already lost their winter and spring crops and need to rebuild as fast as possible. Experts from the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) program came out to her farm to assess the damage. While they are not a disaster relief organization, they will do a

75% cost share on riparian restorations to prevent further erosion, so Abigail may pursue that in time.

She is philosophical and trying to be patient. “I’m trying to find a part-time job to tide me over, but I’m also dealing with the farm recovery, so it’s a lot right now. It’s just going to take a while. The tourism industry needs to come back so you have jobs and customers, but that will take time. But lots of Asheville is ok—there’s restaurants and hotels and it’s pretty much cleaned up and ready. So please come! Just don’t drink the water before Christmas.”

### **Loretta Ball, Never Ending Flower Farm, Barnardsville, North Carolina**

Loretta Ball and her family spent the storm going from window to window watching the wind and rain until the power went out. The next morning, they realized their bridge was gone and they were stuck at home, which she says turned out to be a blessing because so many trees continued to fall everywhere due to the slopes and saturated soils. Her farm, Never Ending Flower Farm, is tucked back into a holler and experienced mostly wind and tree damage, but the lost income from cancelled weddings, u-picks and other events was significant.



With the bridge to her farm destroyed, Loretta and her family lost access to the outside world for several days until neighbors created a temporary fix.

“The next day was our last Supper Club dinner of the season, and I had to refund \$7,000,” Loretta says. “Thankfully I hadn’t spent the money.” Loretta may owe another \$1,000 to the chef for the food which he had already ordered and paid for. She’s hoping his insurance claim will cover the cost.

Eight weddings were scheduled for that weekend and the following week, which were all cancelled. Loretta’s dahlias were beaten down a bit, but came back beautifully, but with the bridge washed out, nobody could get to the farm to pick them, and likely were preoccupied anyway. That was another \$5,000 loss. “Ironically, the dahlias were gorgeous,” she says. “They were staked and though they got a little blown to the side, they really came back out.”

#### ***Paying it Forward—and Back***

Loretta and her family were stuck for about three days until some neighbors with the right equipment

were able to repair the bridge enough for access. Once the bridge was repaired, Loretta and her children got into volunteer mode. With the weddings and events cancelled, she offered her small event space as a collection and sorting area for donations. “We started our own little group to coordinate all the donations we were getting from all over and are putting them in all the churches.” She was compiling cleaning kits during the interview and said donations were coming from everywhere, especially New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. Many southern states were grappling with their own storm damage.



Once her event space was cleaned up and access to the farm restored, Loretta began using her barn to collect and sort donations for the community.

With diesel fuel and gas in short supply, Loretta made the decision not to burn it up repairing her fields once they dried out. There was too much immediate need for it elsewhere, she says. She knows many farmers have it much worse than she does, so she is careful about using resources that could be better used by others.

Loretta, like many, does not have flood insurance because she isn't in a flood plain. While insurance doesn't usually pay for lost income, she has heard that even those with homeowner's insurance for structural damage have been denied payments because the storm was "an act of God." "They are left with nothing," Loretta says. "These are people's homes. They weren't in a flood plain. It's so hard to see families we know that are left with nothing, but they still have mortgage payment and property taxes. It's terrible."

### ***Finding and Accepting Help***

Loretta continuously acknowledges her blessings compared to others. Her biggest concerns are the payments due on her tractor and the new 40' x 30' metal building that serves as her studio and shop. She's thankful for the three-month deferral from her loan officer, which allows her some time to catch up. She also needs to purchase plugs and seeds for next season. Her accountant told her about a grant from Mountain BizWorks that

funds up to \$25,000 for lost income for small businesses—a rarity among grants, which usually target structural damage or other repairs. Loretta applied and is waiting for approval. Her estimated losses are around \$24,000—income that would have taken her through the winter months. “Mountain BizWorks is right here in Asheville, and it’s so amazing they’re doing this. We’re such a big tourism location, and so many hotels and restaurants lost their income,” she says.

Loretta feels the Extension service is doing a good job and is working hard to get aid for farmers. There is hesitation among some of her neighboring growers about accepting help from the government. An Extension agent told her some feel if they accept help from the government they are giving up control, so they are getting some pushback. But there are some funds there to help.

This wasn’t the first-time Never Ending Flower Farm experienced a natural disaster this season. In true farming form, a hailstorm struck this spring. “All my seedlings got beaten to death,” Loretta says. “Local high schools gave us extra flats of plants, and other flower farmers offered extra plants, which was wonderful. But I had plans for that money, and those weren’t realized.”

One thing she did last year was improve the ditches around her field. Her farm gets runoff from the mountain nearby, so in early spring it was a big project to create better and bigger ditches and berms. “I’m so thankful we did that,” Loretta says. “Otherwise, we would have had gullies going right through the field.”

She also says it’s difficult to plan for a disaster on this scale. “We thought we had diversified. We had our u-pick flowers, our supper club dinners and our wedding floral design. And of course, all of those were affected by this storm.”

### ***Keeping Next Spring’s Plants Alive***

Asked about her next plans, Loretta says she hopes to continue making the payments she needs to on her studio and tractor. She was planning to cut back on weddings in order to spend more time at home and on the farm but will likely pivot and open the schedule back up this year. Loretta saved any kind of heirloom seeds she could, such as celosias and zinnias and had a lot of seeds from Floret this year. Her biggest purchase is sunflowers, “so they may not be as grand and glorious next year.” She was able to keep her plugs from Farmer Bailey alive with water hauled by wheelbarrow. “I had 12 trays and those are my spring flowers. Those are happily planted now.” But ironically, it’s now been six weeks without rain, so Loretta is still watering them. She’s glad to have the food donations that are coming in, and her family has their own beef in the freezer.

“I’ve had people reach out to offer extra plugs and seeds, and it makes me feel good just knowing I have a fallback. It’s so nice,” Loretta says.

Future plans are now on the back burner. “I was going to do low tunnels in the fall so I could have earlier flowers in the spring and expand our peonies. It knocked us back, but I know how fortunate I am compared to others in this area. The sun will come up tomorrow and it will be a new day. Seeing our community coming together—there’s good happening among the destruction. We will just keep on keeping on.”

### **Emily Patrick, Carolina Flowers, Asheville, North Carolina**

Emily has the largest operation of the four flower farmers in this article. With 14 employees and several locations including her farm, an operations/studio, and a very newly opened small retail space (soft opening the day the storm hit), she is managing a huge amount of logistics as well as the financial and emotional well-being of her staff.

Her farm has no infrastructure—it’s just land, Emily says. She pumps water from the nearby creek. She’s careful about not planting in the floodplain near the creek. “We have a 30-foot buffer, and I know better than to mess around with that,” she says. “It’s tempting to plant there, but we don’t, and we’ve been saved by that.”

Emily has dealt with flood events before, saying it either affects her farm or her studio, a building about eight minutes’ drive from her farm in the historic town of Marshall. Marshall also sits next to a river, like many of the towns in Western North Carolina.



Carolina Flowers’ studio and tiny retail space (third building from left) was engulfed by floodwaters up to nine feet high.

When Hurricane Helene was classified as a hurricane on Tuesday, September 24, Emily started planning to remove her water pumps from the creek and batten down the hatches on her high tunnels.

“I was more concerned about the surface-level flooding on the farm that comes from the creek,” she says. “[Marshall is affected by] the French Broad River, which has to do with waterways that are about an

hour from us and the water works its way down. But I called the town manager for an update. I wanted to make sure our staff at the studio could get in and out and wouldn't be trapped. He told me he would give me an update Friday morning to let me know if roads would be affected. On Thursday morning he was texting me to tell me we had a serious problem—to get out today.”



Emily and her team just before evacuation.

Emily says everything that requires utilities happened at the Marshall location: starting seed, unboxing and growing winter bulbs, designing flowers—a thousand square feet of everything a farm and flower shop would normally have in one space. Dried flowers took up the second floor. Ten weddings were scheduled, three big ones and seven smaller events.

“My first thought was, where are we going to evacuate?” Emily says. “I first thought of our cooperative Extension building, but they were hosting the county fair. Even though I

figured there wouldn't be a county fair given the weather, I felt I should find somewhere else.”

The building's main power source was in the basement. Not ideal, but Emily leased the building and couldn't control it. Knowing the power would likely go out, she rented an Air BnB outside of town and the staff helped to move what they could there. Emily spent the night at the Air BnB, telling herself, “We've got this.” When she woke up in the morning, she realized, “We definitely DO NOT GOT THIS. The trees were pulverized—it looked like giants were busy there. Everything was crumbled and shredded. It was as if someone said, ‘We're not going to break this power pole in one place, we're going to break it in four places.’”

### ***“It Was Unthinkable.”***

It was hard to realize the scale of the devastation without cell phones and access to the news, Emily says. “I kept thinking, ‘It's really bad, but it can't be this bad everywhere. Maybe some of our weddings are still moving forward.’ It's just unthinkable to imagine this life-altering damage going for miles.”

The building in Marshall was flooded with nine feet of water and Emily lost any equipment that required electricity, including coolers. “It was complete destruction,” she says. She



Emily Patrick in cleanup mode.

didn't have flood insurance, but it's so expensive she's not sure if she would have benefited. "How much would I have paid to insure the contents of the building over time? And when I bought the policy four years ago, my business was much smaller. Our staff has doubled in size and our business has grown so much." While she might not have benefited either way, Emily recommends that other growers evaluate their insurance policy at least every other year to make sure it covers what you need.

Despite everything, Carolina Flowers filled its first full-service wedding commitment on Wednesday after the Friday storm. "It was a little intense and I had to find other markets an hour and a half away to get flowers," Emily says. "But our farm was ok, and we had flowers from the farm, too."

### ***Miraculously, the Farm Survived***

The farm was indeed miraculously ok. All five high tunnels survived, a fact that Emily attributes to luck rather than exemplary construction. "Obviously, we maintain them, but I don't flatter myself they are in exceptionally great shape," she says.

The local Madison County Extension Service was invaluable. When Emily first began her business, she was able to use the cooler there since she didn't have her own. "It's good to know the resources in your community, because if I hadn't known that was there, I wouldn't have known I could use it," she says. "I called and said, 'Can we come back?'" Madison County Extension has a larger-than-normal facility, and Emily says the people are wonderful. "I can't say enough about working with Extension," she says. "They were there to help provide some background equipment or space and definitely support and a shoulder to cry on."

Immediately after the storm, and without water, Emily searched for a place for operations. A staff member offered her home while on vacation and she temporarily employed the tiny 784-square foot retail space she was about to open on the day of the storm. Neither were suitable for long.

### ***A True Flower Bar***

Currently, Emily is renting a bar downtown for doing event flowers and daily flowers. A prime attribute is the walk-in cooler. She is also renting a tiny space to access well water and electricity for the farm. “Moving things from the farm to the production space used to take just eight minutes and now it takes 30 minutes, so it’s obviously more complicated,” Emily says. “People are being really patient and understand these are extenuating circumstances. But it is hard to manage your energy for this long with no return to normalcy in sight. It’s intense for everyone who works for me.”

She’s hoping the bar will be available until the end of February so she can get through Valentine’s Day. The staff turned the tiny retail space into a tulip-forcing lab because they can keep temperatures low. Emily’s house has turned into Shipping and Receiving because that is the only address that’s predictable. During the interview, she accepted a freight delivery of glass vases. Her living room is full of plugs.

### ***Moving Forward with Hope***

On the bright side, Emily was already planning to move to a new location that would allow her farm and operations to be on the same site. She’s still going to move forward with that and says the new lease is in her inbox. She was hoping to have time to plan, but now she is figuring everything out on the fly. The goal is to scale up from farming five acres to 30, and Emily says if her and her staff keep up their mental and physical health she feels the farm will be better than ever a year and a half from now.

It’s been rewarding for her to see how the staff have been supportive—of the business and of each other. Two people on staff are due to be co-owners next year, and there is a clear outline of responsibilities. Her studio manager handled that location, and the farm manager handled the other, freeing Emily up for major decision making on things that couldn’t be planned.

And the farm manager was able to contribute a valuable resource: well water. “Our farm manager brings jugs of water for another employee who doesn’t have potable water. She takes the empty jugs back, fills them and brings them back the next day. Fellow staff members have offered showers and clean water. “From my point of view, this is similar to COVID-19, except that the rest of the country isn’t going through it with us,” Emily says.

Carolina Flowers received an early grant from Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP) and a \$10,000 grant the day before the interview, which Emily says were “amazing.” She has a GoFundMe account that was set up soon after the disaster.

Asked if she had non-monetary needs, she said all her books were lost. “Harvest books, my copy of *The Flower Farmer* that I bought nine years ago to start the business. I haven’t replaced any of those yet.”

“It took me a while to feel confident we will bounce back from this,” she says. “I think we’ve all benefited from having some structure [at work] because it feels like we’re just sort of living in a blob. We’re just in this mass of time that doesn’t make sense and has no order or routine. I think everyone just wanted to keep doing what we’re doing, because that’s a way of coping, right?”