

Because of You

The Year in Review

Reflection on the year that is closing is as inevitable a part of the holiday season as turkey and decorations. We tally up accomplishments, plan for the future and, hopefully, forgive ourselves and others for whatever failed to go according to plan.

This has been a big year for the Friends of VA Puget Sound Fisher House. We have a new slate of officers, an employee and a logo. We have a Speakers Bureau and a new Development Committee that is working on some exciting ideas for 2014. We helped the staff celebrate the 5th birthday of the House and were honored to receive, with them, the Fisher House Foundation’s “Patriot Award”.

We are excited about how this year has shaped up and what lies ahead but most of all we are humbled to realize that VA Puget Sound Fisher House has now served over 3,500 families. Because of you and your generosity we saw to it that those families had all the comforts of home and then some. We provided programs for the caregivers and funded a thorough steam cleaning of the House and replaced appliances, all things that fell out of the scope of the VA budget and saved taxpayer money. Finally, we were able to make a partial repayment to the Fisher House Foundation toward the construction of new houses. None of this would have been possible without you. Thank you!



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By the Numbers

- Fisher House has served over 3,500 families since opening
- Estimated cost savings to families: \$6.3 million
- Average length of stay for 2013: 13 days
- Average occupancy rate for 2013: 93.5%
- Interesting stat

Friends of VA Puget Sound Fisher House

Our mission is to ease the burden on our Veterans and their families during difficult times. The Friends, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, work to raise funds and awareness in support of our local Fisher House. We are grateful for your partnership with us!

Officers:

Pat Norikane Logerwell & Ellen Martin,
Co-Presidents

Debbie Skow, Vice President

Chris Blackman, Treasurer

Cathy Dickson, Secretary

Directors:

Zack Hudgins

Melanie Kreis

Holly Krejci

Lorraine Thomas, Development Director

A Letter from the Friends

It is a few days before Thanksgiving as I write this note. Like many families, mine took turns going around the dining table at Thanksgiving dinner, sharing what we were thankful for. As a child I can remember being thankful for a special toy or the fact that I didn't have a ton of homework to do over the break. As a teen I was thankful for my friends and that cool vacation we may have been planning. As a young adult, my thanks turned to more magnanimous things like my family and my health. And now, as a "mature" adult, my thanks have become less self-centered and more altruistic. To this end, I am so very thankful for being involved with the VA Puget Sound

services and goods to the House. A fresh loaf of bread or a place to board a beloved pet goes a long way to making a family's stay that much more comfortable. And my thanks go to every person who has made a monetary contribution to the House. Your donations allow us to purchase items for our guests and to make their stay as easy and restful as possible.

Many of you who receive this newsletter give generously every year (and sometimes more than that!) But if it has been a while since you've made a contribution to Fisher House I invite you to consider doing so during this holiday season. Small or

Board Volunteer Opportunity

We are setting plans in motion to make 2014 our best year yet and we're going to need help to do it. Specifically we are looking for people interested in serving on our Speakers Bureau, joining our Garden Committee or helping with fundraising events. If "volunteer" is on your list of New Years Resolutions for 2014 we'd love to hear from you! Email Lorraine:

Development.director@fisherhousevaps.org and put "Volunteering" in the subject line

Thank you!

Fisher House.

I never cease to be amazed at what the House offers to the families and what the families offer to the House. The sharing, the camaraderie and the can-do spirit among the families and the staff are palpable. Every time I come to the House I meet incredible families who thank us for offering them a place to stay while their loved one is in the hospital. But really, it is I who thank the families for supporting the Veteran while they were in service to our Country and for becoming the fabric that binds us all to the Fisher House.

And I thank the hundreds of volunteers who provide countless hours cooking, decorating, knitting, playing games, gardening and being with our families throughout the year...giving of themselves to make the days a little brighter for our guests. And I thank our Community for donating

large, each donation of time, service and money has a strong impact on the lives of the families staying at the House. We couldn't do what we do without your support and for that you all have my heartfelt thanks.

My fellow Board members and I want you to know how much you mean to us, how deeply we appreciate you and how grateful we are that you have shared a piece of yourself with the VA Puget Sound Fisher House. We are humbled by what you have given to us and hope that you will continue to be a part of our "family".

Wishing you a wonderful holiday season,

Ellen Martin,
Co-President



Donor Spotlight

Patty Skommesa used to volunteer at Children’s Hospital, before there were accommodations for families. She particularly remembers one mom, sleeping on the hospital floor to be near her daughter. So when Patty first read about plans to build the Fisher House she knew right away what a help it would be to Veteran families. She made a donation to the House and was “so honored to get an invitation to the dedication; I didn’t expect that”, she said. The dedication ceremony only confirmed her commitment to the House. Guest speaker Dena Bennett talked about getting lost on the way to the hotel after her husband had been admitted to the hospital and how the stress he experienced because of her difficulties actually set back his recovery. “Hearing that just made me more sure that we really needed this house”.

Ever since, Patty has been one of our faithful ‘bread and butter’ donors but her commitment reaches beyond her checkbook. “A couple years ago I saw your appeal for a knitter in the newsletter and I thought, ‘Well, I can do that’”. For two years Patty has led weekly Sit & Knit sessions. And yes, sometimes she actually teaches people to knit or crochet. But that has not turned out to be the real importance of the program. “Quite often people will bring their knitting and never touch it; what they really need is to talk. Even when guests don’t sit down to knit I talk to them as they make their lunch or whatever. I think often they just need an ear”.

“I feel at home here,” Patty says and that ease translates into her interactions with guests. She exudes a kind, calming presence and her interest in the families and caring for them is evident in every encounter. We are grateful to Patty for sharing her time, talent and treasure with the families of Fisher House.

We’d love to know your story. How did you hear about Fisher House and why have you made the commitment to support the program? Send us an email: Friends@fisherhousevaps.org



Putting Gifts to Use

The VA Puget Sound Health Care System is responsible for the basic upkeep of the House and for paying staff salaries. All programs of the House are sponsored 100% through donations and volunteers.

As with any home, there are always other needs that spring up (even more so in a House that sees an average of 50 families a month!) Because of you, the Friends of VA Puget Sound have the resources to respond quickly to emergent needs of the House rather than burdening the VA (and the taxpayers).

In fiscal year 2013 there were over 280 programs and events for guests. These included massage therapy, yoga classes, weekly Sit & Knit sessions, monthly Craft Corners and Bingo nights.

Throughout the year we held celebrations for all the major holidays and a host of “minor holiday” celebrations including Talk Like a Pirate Day, Book Lovers Day and a Bad Poetry competition.

Individuals and groups provided 101 meals for families.

Phase II of the Healing Garden was designed, built and dedicated.

The Household grocery budget runs between \$1,300 and \$1,500 a month.

Over 100 dozen doughnuts were consumed.

Donations also made it possible for us to provide for other needs of the House including:

Energy efficient light bulbs

New microwave

New clothes dryer

New box spring

New bath mats

Holiday gifts for 20 families

Vegetable garden seeds & plants

Steam cleaning of all upholstery, rugs, tile and floors

Supplies for Craft Corner classes

Lanyards for guest badges

We couldn't function without the over 600 volunteers who provided 2,204 hours to support the programs of the House. Some of these kind folks include:

Sally Carley
Virginia Carman
Chef Matt
Chris & Melinda
Alicea Coles
Emily
Lena Hunt
Kathi Lehr
Kathy J
Ian Murray
Joanne Murray
Kimberly Nolan & family
Kate Ruest
Santa Al & Sugar Plum
Patty Schmitz
Patty Skomessa
The Stacy Family
American Legion Post 123
Blacks in Government
Google VetNet
KPMG Veterans Network
Kiwanis Club
Nimitz Families
Parkside Garden Club
ROAL
Seattle Federal Executives
Soldiers Angels
Tun Tavern Grub Club
VFW Auxiliary Post 2289

Employees of:

Bonney Watson
Convergent Technologies
FAA
Neilsen
Nestle
Microsoft

Stanley Company
VA Regional Office

Students from:

Asa Mercer Middle School
Blanchet High School
Cleveland High School
Cortiva Massage School
O'Dea High School

A Note from the Manager

2013 was a year of changes at Fisher House. We said 'goodbye' (sort of) to two original staff members and welcomed two new ones. Our gardens expanded with the help of many new (and a few old) friends. We celebrated our 5th year of service. But most importantly, we served 622 families, at an estimated cost savings to those families of \$1.3 million!

Fisher House never ceases to amaze me. From the earliest days, this has been a place where individuals from disparate backgrounds and experiences come together to form a community. Differences of race, creed, color, religion, politics – you name it – doesn't matter here. In this 'family' the things that supposedly divide us are set aside; guests are focused on one thing: the patient. The staff and volunteers are focused on one thing: helping the caregivers take care of themselves. And somehow, week after week, despite the turnover in guests, despite the changes or challenges that are faced, that community forms again and again, making Fisher House a place of respite and support.

As you celebrate this holiday season I hope you know how very thankful we are for each one of you and the support you have given to this program. The remarkable things that happen here every day are grounded in your generosity. And because of you, lives are changed.

Happy holidays!

Cecile



Making an Impact: Team Fisher House

Ron Thomas is a Veteran of the US Navy and heard about Fisher House through the Mens Room show on KISW. Ron is in sales at Seattle Boat and was inspired to offer boating excursions for families. The idea was wholeheartedly embraced by both the staff at Seattle Boat and Fisher House and trips are being planned for summer of 2014.

“But then I had to ask myself if I was doing enough,” Ron says. He called his brother, stationed in Washington DC with the Air Force, who flew out to brain storm. “Over a couple of Mens Room Reds we decided to do some fundraising on our own”. We directed Ron to Team Fisher House, a wonderful program of the Fisher House Foundation that allows individuals and groups to recruit their friends and colleagues to support the House. The program is free to users and makes donating on line easy. 100% of the money raised is sent to the House designated by the fund raiser. Ron decided to kick off his fund raiser on Veterans Day, set a small goal of \$1,500 and emailed everyone he knew, “I passed my goal on the first day!” Ron said, Because he had decided to run the fund raiser through December 1 he was able to raise a total of \$2,200.00!



Thank you, Ron, for being a part of our team! Learn more:www.teamfisherhouse.org

In the Words of a Guest: A Haven for the Weary

“Recently my husband spent two weeks in the VA hospital in Seattle, and since we live some long way from there, I was given lodging in Fisher House so that I could be nearby, and with him each day.

I was pleased when I was informed I could stay there, but nothing prepared me for what I found on my arrival. First, Fisher House is a beautiful building, furnished in warm and comfortable style, and immediately when I entered, it felt more like a home than just 'a place to stay'.

Second, I was amazed to find the fantastic kitchen with several refrigerators, freezers, and many cupboards stocked full of food for us to choose whatever we wanted from them. Further, local people donated their time and services to cook dinners and provide entertainment (such as bingo) several evenings, all gratuitous. An air of peace and kindness pervaded for the tired recipients each time we came back there at the end of the long day.

Equally welcome were the computers available to all, as were the clothes-washing facilities, the televisions, books and other reading materials, the dining room, pleasant sitting rooms, and areas to relax both inside and outside on the decks, along with an absolutely first-class herb and vegetable garden.

I felt so fortunate to be a recipient of this generosity, and would like to register my sincere thanks to the Fisher family, as well as to the staff and volunteers, who helped ease a very difficult time in my life. It is greatly appreciated”.

S. Anderson, Canada

“An air of peace and kindness pervaded...at the end of the long day”.



St. Nicholas comes to Fisher House for breakfast every year, then spends the day visiting the Veterans across the street at the hospital.



It's so nice to have little ones in the House at the holidays!



Donor Acknowledgements—Fiscal Year 2013

Gifts received from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013

Bread & Butter

Individuals who make regular gifts throughout the year.

Barbara & Chris Bandoli
Goddard & Willanne Beck, Jr
Kenneth Chapman
Jack & Murrel Dawson
Donald Egan
Adele Emerson
Peter Harader
Karen Hori
Dorie Jennings
Hans & Mary Larsen
Doris Marcellis
Debra Milek
Theodore & Loye Misselwitz
ElizaBeth Morris
Sean Nakamura
Tracy & Barbara Neighbors
John & Shelley Pollock
Larry Powalisz
Patrick & Allene Quinn
Sandra & David Rensvold
Kristian L. Sampson
Robert Sheridan
Dan & Dianne Simson
Patricia Skommesa
RE & Viola Stone
Michael Vogel
Irene Willard
Stanley & Nancy Zeitz

Individual Donors

The average individual donation in FY 2013 was \$130.85. With all these friends that adds up to a lot of support.

John & Gloria Adams
Patricia Anderson
Tony Arredondo
Susie Ault
Barbara Aya
John & Edith Bailey
Ronald & Kathleen Bailey
Janell Baker
Stephanie Balicki
Vernon & Terry Barlow
John & Joanne Barney
Anthony Baron
Joanne Bates
Barbara Beach
Helen Bentley
Jennie & Virgil Benton
Kathy Bergman
Debra Blodgett
Michael & Bobbi Boushey
Judy Boyd
Christine & Bradley Brannon
Robin Brashear
Cheryl Bray
Rebecca Brenneman
Mort Brinchmann
Melissa Briscoe
Vernon & Janet Brown
Gilbert & Joan Brown
Janet Burkey
Debbie Burton
Christine Bussing
Jerry Cahill
Dennis Callaghan
Mario & Irene Capristo

Donor Acknowledgements—Fiscal Year 2013

Gifts received from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013

Individual Donors

28% of the individual donations received were from past and current guests of Fisher House.

Charles & Virginia Carlson
Debbie Chenoweth
Lois Clark
Beth Classen
Jennifer Coker
Bridget & Dick Cooley
Robert Crandall
James & Nancy Cranford
Mark & Wendy Crews
Ann Curro
Christopher Curry
Melissa Danielson
Cathi H. Davis
Dennis Denton
Ellen Dougherty
Ronald & Rose Dunagan
Patricia Earp
Daryl Edie
Len Elsberry
Ginni Engen
Gerald & Deanna Erickson
Mary Fairchild
Tom Fellin
Thomas Fermstad
Antonetta Fioretti
William & Alice Fitch
David & Molly Fitch
Brenda & John Forcade
Gene & Jean Frank
John Fults
Lillian Georgi
Rose Gibbs
Carolyn Gillen
Michelle Goldberg

Individual Donors

No gift is too small. Every donation directly impacts the lives of Fisher House guests.

Fay & Craig Gordon
Wynn Grandgeorge
H. Thomas Greer
Daniel Griffin
Delvin Groen
Adam Groff
Michael Gumke
Dorothy Hall
Rita Hamlin
Rorie Hanrahan
Jane Harder
Joyce Harding
Dorothy & John Harris
Bill Heist
Loralee Hendricks
LeRoy & Ann Henning
Christene Herr
Robert & Kathy Herrick
Jon & Charlotte Hill
Kris & Al Hodge
Verna Hodgson
Frauna Hoglelund
Kathy Hopkins
Bonnie Jackman
Rue & Pamela Jenkins
Leslie & Arlene Jensen
Hollis Ann Johnson
Merlin & Jeanette Johnson
Irene Johnson
Glenda Johnson
Mary Jolley
Sharon Jones
Bruce & Jo Ann Jones
Ron Kaplan

Donor Acknowledgements—Fiscal Year 2013

Gifts received from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013

Individual Donors

“It’s not how much we give but how much love we put into giving.”

Mother Teresa

Grace Karst
Gerald Kaylarian
Joyce Keller
Karen Kelly
Barbara Kennedy
Donald & Margaret Kennedy
Katherine King
Pamela Kitchener
Daniel Kivlahan
Joy Knipple
Paul Knopf
Laurie Krick
Frank & Jean Kulakowski
Paula LaGrandeur
John Lane
Dorothy Laufer
Maureen Lico
Victor Lindquist
Nancy Lovell
Richard Lunt
Jeff Lunzer
Gerry & Barbara Lyons
Ann Mabry
Jane MacRae
Karen & Carl Maehl
Mary Jo Malquist
Debbie Manus
Thomas Mathews
Judy McDole
Carlton & Mavis McDonald
Carolyn McDowell
Susan McEver
Dale McGinley
Ann Cummins McIntyre

Individual Donors

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted”.

Aesop

Gordon & Pamela McLaren
Jeanne McMahon
Misty Merrill
Brenda Merriman
Patricia Michalski
Alberta Middlesworth
Jay Miles
Capt. Thad & Barbara Mills USN (Ret)
Carole Mortensen
Linda Moyer
Myrna Mysse
Cloydia & Rick Newton
Jeanice Novak Zillyette
Tom O'Donnell
Susan & Charles O'Neal
Lynn & Dennis Ogle
Stanley & Sharon Palmer
Marla Peele
John D. Pennington
Frances Perren
Ingrid Peterson
Marilyn Phegley
Patricia Pinkham
David & Joan Pulaski
Kevin Ratliff
Les & Eileen Reardanz
Samuel & Batia Regev
Thomas & Nancy Reid
Robert & Jeana Reimer
Judith & Douglas Richey
James Richey
Vivian Roach
Pat & Rod Rodriguez
Marsha Rolfs

Donor Acknowledgements—Fiscal Year 2013

Gifts received from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013

Individual Donors

“How wonderful that no one need wait a single moment to improve the world”.

Anne Frank

Dolly Salazar
James & Jane Sanders
Jason Sappenfield
Phyllis Sappenfield
Marilyn Scanlon
Jocelyn & Richard Schiller
Zachary Schoffstall
Sherry Schroeder
Sherri & Dave Schruder
Judy Seward
Barbara Shaffer
Lynne Sharp
Connie & John Shea
Steven Silver
Beatrice Simpkins
Clementeen Singleton
James & Andrea Siscel
Peter & Diamantina Skinner
Nancy Skinner
Pam Smith
Gayla Smith
Rachel Smith
Dale & Dorthy Snearly
Louise Sodawasser
Donna Spatz
Trudy Spilman
Pat & Pam Spino
Douglas Hershey & Stephanie Pratt
Gail Stumph
Alma Guest & Elbert Tinney
Dean Tirador
Lorraine Toly

Individual Donors

“The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched. They must be felt with the heart”.

Helen Keller

Joseph Toniolo
Jo-Anne Toomey
Joffre & Marjorie Tremblay
Frederick Triggs
Lisa Trout
Anthony & Lois Tysseling
Wilhelmina Van Krieken
Lanna Vedvick
Joseph & Arlene Vollmer
Cherie Waack
Denny Wagenman
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Wainger
Sandra Walden
Mark Waldron
Elizabeth & Charles Wallin
Harold & Belva Wanamaker
Jeffrey Ward
Barbara Webb
Jane Weigle
Jane Wells
Tarah Wendel
Tony & Pat Willford
Ron Williams
John & Joy Williams
Roger & Susan Williams
Thomas Wynne
Dorothy Yoney
Garrett Youra
Judith Zerr
Sharon Zerr-Peltner
Judy & Jeff Ziedman
Michelle Zimmerman
Richard & Helen Zwaller

Donor Acknowledgements—Fiscal Year 2013

Gifts received from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013

Companies, Organizations & Trusts

Community support - an expression of caring for the families we serve.

Active Network – Heroes Mud Run & Obstacle Course
Aetna Foundation
Alaska Airlines Employee Giving
American Ex-POW, Fourth Corner Chapter
American Legion Aux, Post 214
American Legion Auxiliary, Dept. of WA
American Legion, Post 235
American Legion, Post 239, Bellevue
American Legion, Post 41, Codd-French Post
American Legion, Post 92, Fred H. Hancock
Angelo Foundation
AT&T United Way
Ballard Emblem Club, #216
Ballard Rotary Education Endowment Fund
California Pizza Kitchen
Carl Hossman Family Foundation
Cascade Chapter of the NSDAR
Cates Family Trust
CFC Greater Olympic Peninsula/North Puget Sound
CFC, King County
CFC, Tacoma
CFD, State of Washington
Champagne Fund of the Whatcom Community Foundation
Chenoweth Family Foundation
Coar Family LLC
COBRA
Costco Wholesale
Crane Fund for Widows & Orphans
DAR, Peter Puget Chapter
DAV, Chapter 2, Seattle Louis Saxon
DAV, Chapter 47, Whidbey Is.
Deacon Charitable Foundation
DiPietro Family Foundation

Companies, Organizations & Trusts

Our corporate partners (in bold) represent 29% of our organizational donations!

Elysian Brewing Company

Employee's Community Fund of the Boeing Company
Entercom
Evergreen Winnies
Ferndale Holiday Spirit Project
Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund
First Baptist Church Senior Adult Ministries
Fisher House Foundation
Fleck Family Foundation
Fletcher Bay Foundation
Greater Cincinnati Foundation
High Road Promotions
King Co. Employee Giving
Ladies Auxiliary VFW 224
Lakeside Industries - Matching Gift Program
Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd
M I Hummel Club Sea/Tac Chapter
Microsoft Matching Gifts Program
Mid Mountain Contractors, Inc.
Mission Creek Coffee
NBC News Giving Program
Order of the Eastern Star, Oasis Chapter #191
Pacific Four Sales
PeaceTags
Pete & Wilma Olsen Foundation
Prorider
Rainier Beach Womans Club
Renton Firefighters Benevolent Association
Reserve Officer Assn League (ROAL)
Russell Matching Gifts Program
Schwab Charitable Fund
SEAMOAA
Single Sams of Washington

Donor & Volunteer Acknowledgements—Fiscal Year 2013

Gifts received from October 1, 2012 through September 30, 2013

Companies, Organizations & Trusts

The average organizational gift was \$1,143.26

Snohomish County Republican Womens Club
Sons of the American Legion, Squadron #76
Stokes Lawrence Charitable Foundation
The 50th General Hospital Assoc.
The Attic Alehouse Benefit for Lt. Jason Pak
The Boeing Company
The Seattle Foundation
The Standard Employee Giving Campaign
Three Rivers Sams
Truist
United Way Mile High Denver
United Way, King County
USS Capricornus Association
Vanguard Charitable Endowment Program
Veterans Day 5K Fun Run
VFW Ladies Auxiliary, Dept. of Washington
VFW Post #8870 Edmonds
VFW Post 4314
VFW, Post 1949
VFW, Post 3063, Ballard-Eagleson
Washington Women's Foundation
Wellspring Group, P.S., CPAS
Whatcom Good Sams



If you made a donation in FY 2013 (October 2012-September 2013) and do not see your name or we have listed you incorrectly please contact us so that we can confirm our records!

Inkind Donations

Donations of goods, services & expertise stretch our donated dollars.

Abbotsford Concrete
Leann Andrews
Art Tile
Atlantic Veterinary
Auburn Garden Club
Big Tree Supply
Cal Portland
Cascade DAR
Cedar Grove
Broderick Fitch & Troop XV, Chief Seattle Council of the Boy Scouts of America
Columbia City Fitness
Foresters
Lorene Edwards Forkner
Fuller Electric
Iron Mountain
ISEC
Landscape Forms
Marenakos Rock Center
Steve Matthes
Molbak's
Perry Excavation
Bill Polis & Tina Barbaro-Polis
Larry Powalisz
The Pond Store
Q Bakery
Rain Bird
Rock Mountain Products
Stephanie Roman
Jan Satterthwait
SIKU Construction
Luanne Smith
Stoneway Concrete
TAP Plastics
TFK Foundation, Open Space, Sacred Places
Thom Tingley
Tony's Bakery
Trendset Concrete Products
Vista Professional Outdoor Lighting

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98118

Friends of VA Puget Sound Fisher House

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Seattle, Washington 98118

(206) 501-8860

Website: www.fisherhousevaps.org

Email: friends@fisherhousevaps.org

Contact Lorraine Thomas:
development.director@fisherhousevaps.org

CFD# 1480897
CFC# 45650



VA Puget Sound Fisher House—because a family’s love is good medicine

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email: _____

Enclosed is my donation for \$ _____

Please make checks payable to : Friends of VA Puget Sound Fisher House

This gift is in honor of : _____

This gift is in memory of: _____

This gift is anonymous. Please do not list my name in any published texts.

My employer will match my donation. Company _____

If you would like us to notify someone that you have made an honorary or memorial gift, please provide the name(s) and address(es) so we can send them a note:

Please mail donations to Friends of VA Puget Sound Fisher House PO Box 18253, Seattle, Washington, 98118

You may also donate online through PayPal at <http://fisherhousevaps.org/donate.asp>. Thank you!