

# Because of You

## The Power of Small

Small pleasures matter. For families in the Fisher House, something as simple as a meal in a restaurant provides a well-deserved break from long days spent at the bedside of an ill or injured loved one. Once a month, because of you, the guests are treated to just such an outing. They pile into a van and meet at an area restaurant for lunch or dinner. Truth be told, these folks are a cheap date. For them, it’s not about the food nearly so much as it is about the conversation and support that is shared at the table. But having a couple hours away from the hospital makes them feel special. It helps them feel ‘normal’. And they are always amazed that there are people like you who make it possible. At a recent GNO (Guests Night Out) Mylean shared her story. Her sister had just been treated for pneumonia and Mylean herself had recently retired because of health issues. Then they learned that their brother needed surgery in Seattle. The sisters left the Tricities to support him but with no money for a hotel were planning to sleep in their car. Their brother heard about Fisher House and by the time the family arrived in Seattle arrangements were made for them to check in to the House. Instead of loneliness, they found a family of people who shared the same challenges. Instead of the fear and discomfort of sleeping in a car, they were in a warm, safe house full of groceries, beauty and friends. Instead of fast food burgers, they were treated to a nice meal in a comfortable restaurant. At one point during GNO Mylean sighed and said, “I never in my life thought I would receive a gift like this. Fisher House is the most incredible thing that has ever happened to me.”

Thank you for giving gifts like this every day to the families of Fisher House. Thank you for holding up these families during a difficult time.

## Shattered Sky—A Novel Approach to Supporting Fisher House Families



Local author Paul Byers has both literary talent and a giving heart. Paul’s dad served in the Navy, in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters and was in Japan for the signing of the treaty that ended WWII. His father’s experiences fueled Paul with a passion for both aviation and WWII history.

While writing his first novel, Catalyst, Paul edited out about 60 pages of ‘good writing that didn’t move the story forward’. But he knew he’d get back to those characters one day and he did, featuring them in his novel Shattered Sky.

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### By the Numbers

- 2014 end-of-year gifts were up by 12%
- Savings to families of over \$7.5 million dollars
- Families have come from 47 states & 11 countries
- Average of 4 gallons of milk consumed each week

## 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 the VA Puget Sound Fisher House. We are grateful for your partnership with us!

### Officers:

Pat Norikane Logerwell, President

Mike Winkler, Interim President

Chris Blackman, Treasurer

Cathy Dickson, Secretary

### Directors:

Patrice Brower

Melanie Kreizis

Holly Krejci

Victoria Roberts

Roxane Rousch

Sue Williams

Lorraine Thomas, Development

Director

### Paul Byers Book Signings

Meet Paul at one of these upcoming events:

May 16 Paine Field Aviation Day

June 27-28 Olympic Air Show

Sept. 5 Vintage Aircraft Weekend



## Board Talk

I love the Fisher House garden and came to be a member of the Friends of VA Puget Sound Fisher House Board of Directors because of it.

My first involvement with Fisher House was through my garden club. One of the Friends presented my garden club with the challenge of helping out in the House garden, and a handful of us took her up on it. We donned our gardening gear, grabbed shovels and trowels, gloves and digging tools, and trekked up to the Fisher House for a day in the garden. The experience was rewarding and satisfying and I was hooked on the idea of gardening in this place that was a haven for families with loved ones in the hospital. I could see what an oasis the garden is and how we could help make the garden a pleasurable place for House guests. Having a loved one in the hospital makes for a stressful time for family members. Those families who stay at the Fisher House find relief and relaxation after long hours at the hospital, and the garden is their oasis. Being able to play a small part in providing some comfort to our guests through the garden is pleasurable for me.

Spring is early this year in our region, and spring is evident everywhere in the Fisher House garden. A quick walk through the garden shows promise of things to come....soft grasses are poking

up through last year's dried stalks, the rosemary is laden with brilliant blue flowers, yellow primroses and pink strawberries are blooming away, and the aroma of winter Daphne and sweet box permeates the air. The garden is once again becoming a refuge for our Fisher House guests who need a break from the harshness of the hospital environment and the worry that illness brings.

I see the garden as a crucial part of the House, as important as the lovely rooms our guests stay in and the kitchen that is the heart of the House. The garden exists in large part because of volunteer labor and generous monetary donations, so if you have helped either or both ways to bring this garden into being and maintain it so beautifully, thank you so much for your help!



*Sue Williams, Board Member*

### Shattered Sky (continued from page 1)

As passionate as Paul is about good storytelling, he also has a passion for Fisher House. Since 2013, he has been donating 50% of the proceeds from the sale of the ebook version of Shattered Sky to VA Puget Sound Fisher House. What inspired this partnership? Paul explains. "We often forget that while mom or dad is away on deployment, they are not the only ones serving their country. The soldiers make sacrifices but so do their families, in so many ways. Being able to support a foundation like the Fisher House is the best of both worlds, helping the soldiers who support our country *and* supporting the families who support them". Paul has raised nearly \$2,000 so far and we are delighted to have him in the Fisher House family.

Find the ebook of Shattered Sky on Amazon!

## Making Music for Fisher House



In 2008, in North Carolina, a group of bluegrass musicians collected pledges and joined together for a 12 hour marathon jam session to raise money for Fisher House. Since then the event has spread to seven states *and* Iraq and Afghanistan. Leanna Cowan had been involved with the North Carolina Jam for years so when she and her husband relocated to the Northwest she decided to make Washington the eighth state to hold a jam. Thanks to her boundless enthusiasm we are

pleased to announce that a Marathon Jam for VA Puget Sound Fisher House will be held Saturday, April 25, from noon to midnight, at the VFW Hall in Redmond, 4330 148th Ave NE, Redmond, WA 98052. Admission is free to the public (although donations will be accepted). The event will include blues and jazz musicians from around the Sound. As an added bonus, Leanna will be holding a baking marathon simultaneously with the music. The goodies will feed the musicians, be available for sale to the audience and shared with the guests at Fisher House. All proceeds from the marathon jam (and the treats) will go to benefit the Friends of VA Puget Sound Fisher House.

The Friends are grateful to Leanna for her enthusiasm, to the Redmond VFW Post for hosting the event and, in advance, to all the talented musicians who will play their hearts out for a good cause.

If you are a blues or jazz musician (or know someone who is) and would like to participate in this event, please email [leannadextercowan@gmail.com](mailto:leannadextercowan@gmail.com) to get involved.

## With a Little Help from Our Friends

The ways to support VA Puget Sound Fisher House are as various as the people who care about Veterans and their families. Nearly every week there are groups that prepare meals for the guests or drop off inkind donations that help stretch donated dollars. When these volunteer hours and donations are given directly to the VA the Friends are not always notified. We want to thank all who volunteer at the House. To that end, we'd like to recognize the following groups:

The **VFW Ladies Auxiliary 2289** comes to the House once a quarter to cook for the families. Their events always include charming favors for each place setting and delicious food. The women of the auxiliary love spending time with the families and the families love the care and attention these ladies offer. The group also regularly collects paper products and other necessities and deliver them to the House. Once a month members from **VFW Post 2100** come all the way from Everett to drop off toiletries and other essentials for the families. The **MI Hummel Club** also demonstrate their friendship by regularly dropping off hardback books, toiletries, pantry goods and funds. These are just a few of the groups that always have the VA Puget Sound Fisher House on their hearts and in their minds. Their kindness and generosity make a big difference in the daily life of the families and we are so grateful for their ongoing support!

Visit our website "Wish List" for inkind inspiration. Call the House, 206-277-3950, to arrange a time to drop off donations. The office is open Monday through Friday, 7:30a to 4:30p, except Federal holidays.

## Board Blurbs

### Changing the Guard

President Pat Norikane Logerwell is taking a hiatus from her duties. Vice President Mike Winkler has assumed the role of interim President.

At the February meeting we voted to make Victoria Roberts a Director. Victoria is a business owner and marketing professional with a passionate heart for Veterans. In fact, Victoria was recently acknowledged for having performed over **3,000** hours of volunteer service at VA Puget Sound Healthcare System! We are excited to put her talents to work for the Friends.

### Tour Fisher House

If you would like to visit Fisher House to see how your donations are put to work please call 206-501-8860 to schedule a tour. Please come see firsthand what you make possible!

From a Guest

*"I will spend the rest of my life finding ways to pay it forward. I am in awe that a place like this exists. This is a very special place, unlike anything I have ever experienced. I have stayed in many 5 star hotels, but the love that grows in the Fisher House is over the moon".*

-Lauren G.

### Zachary's Corner



Fun Bear Fact: Zachary feels very lucky to live at Fisher House.

## Manager's Musings

I got my flu shot.

I washed my hands. Bunches.

I took vitamin C.

But, it got me.

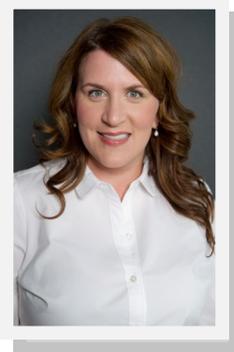
I was down and out with the "ick" that has been making its rounds throughout Washington. Headache, body aches, feverish, generous use of Kleenex, copious amounts of tea and nearly anything else folks suggested to get better quicker. Four days: the longest I've been away from work (aside from vacation) in at least 3 years. Sure, I felt awful. But the most irritating portion? I couldn't control the ick and I didn't plan for the ick. I laid in bed sniffing, sneezing (which was quite irksome to my 20 pound dog nurse) and feeling helpless and guilty for missing work: guests I didn't get to see off upon checkout, emails unanswered, meetings cancelled, paperwork left undone.

However, on the zillionth tissue, it dawned on me. The guests at Fisher House? They didn't plan for their loved one to be sick. They may have planned for a short stay, and now they're on their fourth, eighth or twentieth week at the House. Some of them arrived with only the clothes on their back. They don't

have their favorite blanket, pillow, tea stash or dog nurse. I was at least in the comfort of my own home with all my favorite things. Maybe I can just hunker down, drink some more tea and catch up on Dr. Phil. Yes, I can do that.

Thanks to our staff, The Friends, our donors, volunteers and support from the VA Hospital we are able to make our guests as comfortable as possible during their (often unplanned) stay. The extra blanket, home cooked meals (yay for SOUP!), donuts, massages and camaraderie make it easier to focus on what they can impact...providing support and presence for their loved one.

And while I am no longer up to date on the latest Dr. Phil episode, I have caught up on my email.



*Stephanie Toepp  
Fisher House Manager*

House Scrapbook:



Valentine's Day treats! 



Mike is ready for the Superbowl. (Note the temporary Seahawk tattoo on his forehead). Thanks to the Nolan family for putting on a wonderful party!



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*...“the love that grows in the Fisher House is over the moon”...*

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Guests Franca & Pastor share a birthday...and cake!



The strawberries are in bloom!

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Contact Lorraine Thomas:  
[development.director@fisherhousevaps.org](mailto:development.director@fisherhousevaps.org)

Combined Fund Drive# 1480897  
Combined Federal Campaign# 45650  
King County Employee Giving# 9504



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 \_\_\_\_\_

I was a guest of VA Puget Sound Fisher House.

I would like to make a recurring gift using a Visa or Mastercard. Please call me at \_\_\_\_\_.

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:

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

You may also give online. Visit [www.fisherhousevaps.org](http://www.fisherhousevaps.org) and click on the “Donate” button.