

Because of You

Picking Up the Check

Imagine you are at dinner with friends. The restaurant is lovely, the food impeccable, the service has set a new standard for excellence. You had a wonderful evening as you talked over old times, laughed at jokes, and solved the problems of the world. And sure, the restaurant is a little pricier than you usually frequent and everyone ordered dessert. But what’s a couple hundred dollars next to the friendship you share with these folks? The evening comes to an end and your waiter drops the bill. But before anyone can reach for a credit card a stranger approaches your table. “Here,” she says. “let me get that.” Your party watches in stunned silence as she picks up the check and walks away from your table.

That is how every family at Fisher House feels when they stay here. The Fisher House Foundation estimates a family is saved \$200 a day by staying at a House. (We’ve done the math—for Seattle it would be more like \$375/day.) But because of you, those costs aren’t borne by the families. You pick up the check for them, every single one of them, day in and day out.

Since the last newsletter the 5,000th family walked through the doors of VA Puget Sound Fisher House. And like the first family and all the other families since, they were met with warmth, compassion, and told to make themselves at home. Guests use words like “overwhelmed,” “stunned,” and “blessed” when asked to describe how they felt when they first entered the House. The beauty of the House and gardens, the material needs met, and all the special services, events, and programs offered all come from the generous hearts of donors. You make a difficult time so much easier to bear.

Thank you for picking up the check. Thank you for supporting VA Puget Sound Fisher House!



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By the Numbers

- Over 5,100 families served since opening.
- Estimated savings to families: over \$9 million
- Number of volunteer hours logged since opening: over 10,000
- Estimated number of dove bombing crows in the garden: 5

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:

Chris Blackman, President

Mike Winkler, Vice President

Roxane Rusch, Secretary

Directors:

Cathy Dickson

Gail Eck

Melanie Kreizis

Holly Krejci

Pat Norikane Logerwell

Victoria Roberts

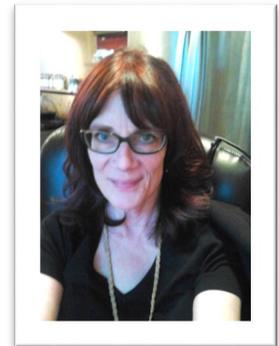
Lorraine Thomas, Development Director

Friends Talk

A few months ago a donor called. I recognized his name (he's a long-time supporter) and we chatted like old friends. Only after the call ended did I realize I'd never actually met this man. But after seeing his name on lists and sending thank you notes for years I *felt* like I knew him. Interacting with donors is one of the best parts of the job. It is always fun to put a face or a voice to a name. Many of you donate regularly and have throughout the years. In fact, individuals make up the largest segment of the Friends donor pool. This program is faithfully supported by regular people who care deeply about the families served at Fisher House and step up time and again to make sure guests have all they need to feel safe and comfortable during their stay. Guests are often reduced to tears when they learn

about the hundreds of community members committed to their comfort and care.

Please know that if you have never visited Fisher House and would like to do so it would be a joy to meet and show you around this wonderful place that, because of *you*, is a beautiful home away from home for Veteran families. Contact info is on the back page of the newsletter. Call or drop us a line!



Lorraine Thomas

Development Director

Keep in touch. Stay informed.
Follow our digital footprint!



And we're always on the web
@ www.fisherhousevaps.org



Congratulations to our good friends at Elysian Brewing on their twentieth anniversary. A rocking party was held at Seattle Center to celebrate, with 100% of the proceeds from tickets and drink sales being donated to charity. The Fisher Houses in Seattle and at JBLM will be beneficiaries as well as Team Red White and Blue, Bloodworks NW, Bailey-Boushay House, and Obliteride.

Since 2009 Elysian has, with their Men's Room beers, provided generous support to the families of Fisher House. Elysian is valued and delightful part of the Fisher House family. Congratulations to owner Joe Bisacca and all the amazing folks who work with him. They bring hope, encouragement, and fine beer to so many.

Attention Golfers!

In the last issue of the newsletter we told you about two golf tournaments being held to benefit Puget Sound Fisher House. The first, on July 12, 2016 (9am shotgun start) at the Mill Creek Country Club, is sponsored by the Women's Golf Division. The second is the Proliance Surgeons Golf Invitational, September 16, 2016 (12:30pm shotgun start), which will be held in Dupont, Washington.



Information and registration for both events is now available on the new and improved Calendar page of the website: www.fisherhousevaps.org/calendar.

Volunteer Extraordinaire: Laura Yocum



It takes a village to offer a gold standard program to Fisher House guests. Laura Yocum is a wonderful representative of our world class volunteers. She began volunteering at the House in January 2015 and has offered over 120 hours of her time. Her effervescent personality and welcoming, positive attitude has made a significant impact on guests of the House.

In the afternoons the kitchen can be a little empty as guests are with their loved ones at the hospital. Every Wednesday Laura singlehandedly fills that void as she creates a namesake dish in celebration of a special food holiday (like the veggie owl for National Fresh Veggies Day pictured below). With her contagious smile she enthusiastically engages the guests who pass by. It often happens that guests come through the kitchen with no intention of staying but end up sitting down to enjoy Laura's company. They leave with a smile that wasn't there before. Laura shows impressive initiative as well and regularly takes it upon herself to accomplish other tasks around the House without being asked.

People volunteer for a variety of reasons; when they are motivated by love and compassion it is reflected in the quality of their work. It is clear that Laura enjoys what she does and that her commitment to military families is strong. Laura is a pleasure to work with, a gift to the guests, and an important part of the Fisher House family.



Board Blurbs

New Officers!

Elections were held to select a new slate of board officers. We are pleased to announce the election of Chris Blackman (President), Mike Winkler (Vice President), and Roxane Rusch (Secretary). Tremendous thanks to outgoing President Pat Logerwell and outgoing Secretary Cathy Dickson for their service as officers.



Tour Fisher House

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

Manager's Musings

From a Guest

"I was completely surprised and amazed at the beautiful house, gardens, and organization of the Puget Sound Fisher House. I feel like a VIP and an important part of my brother's recovery. It was the safest and most luxurious place I have stayed in my entire life. Words and pictures can't begin to describe the experience I had at the Fisher House. Gratitude."

-Jeff N.

-Boise, ID

Zachary's Corner



Fun Bear Fact: Zachary Bear is a champion Frisbee thrower.

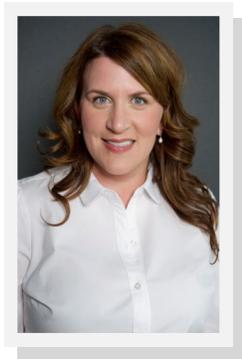
I'm from Alaska; Fairbanks to be specific. And Alaska is a *ginormous* state. Huge. Twice the size of Texas. (We often say, "Texas...aren't you cute?"). The terrain is entirely different from one end to the other: frozen and treeless with polar bears up north and lush rain forest-y jungles with temperate temperatures down south. Still, any time you run in to a fellow Alaskan, you aren't a stranger. Despite your latitude and longitude, you can relate with stories about lack of sunlight or too much sunlight, and you have the same sense of independence Alaskans *have* to have to successfully survive. You are part of the same experience.

I didn't think I'd ever find something similar to that kind of bond. Then I took over as Fisher House Manager. We have guests from all parts of the country, all parts of the world. Guests from different cultures. Guests with different political affiliations. Guests on opposite ends of the age spectrum. Still, there's that commonality. They are all guests. And they are all guests because someone, who means *the world* to them, is in the hospital. Love and concern for another is something

that bridges all gaps. (Oh. And food. Food definitely bridges gaps).

I've said many times that it takes a village to keep the Fisher House running smoothly. And all our guests, despite who they are and where in the world they come from, create that village. Everyone has a role. Everyone has a story. In the end, they are far more similar than they are different.

And really, aren't we all?



*Stephanie Toepp
Fisher House Manager*

5,000 Families and Counting



Everything in Fisher House is designed to make guests feel like royalty. But when one is a milestone guest an actual crown is involved.

Congratulations to Sandra from Bainbridge Island for representing the 5,000th family to cross the threshold of Puget Sound Fisher House.

Zachary Fisher once said, "They are my guests; they will be kept at my standard." He may not have envisioned tiaras and cake but we think he'd approve.

House Scrapbook:



Lisa H., from Bremerton, has been at Fisher House since March. This is her third stay. She got interested in photography in college but didn't do much with it. A few years ago her husband Hallie bought her a camera "but since I've been in Fisher House this time my interest has really taken off." One of the ways Lisa relieves stress is to turn her artful eye on the gardens around the House. This issue's scrapbook is dedicated to Lisa's beautiful photos. (You can see more on Instagram. Her handle is [butterflies50](#)). Lisa says, "Fisher House is a godsend and a gift. The photos are a way to give back."



...“I feel like a VIP & important part of my brother’s recovery”...



The mountain as viewed from the House patio.

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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 _____.

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



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:

You may also give online. Visit www.fisherhousevaps.org and click on the "Donate" button.