

SUMMER NEWSLETTER 2017

OFFICE 253.853.2033 CELL 253.219.6684 FAX 253.853.6373

WEB familyfirstafh.com EMAIL rebecca@familyfirstafh.com

ADDRESS 4700 Pt. Fosdick Dr. #312 Gig Harbor, WA 98335



A NOTE FROM JULIE



When starting our business 20+ years ago, Chris and I always held the belief that family, above all else, was the most important part of life. It's a belief we've never lost sight of in our line of work, and something that is constantly reaffirmed through the interactions we share with our residents and their families. Like many, Chris and I value the bond we share with those we love more than anything. We've always felt extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to help so many during times of great need, and always approach every situation as if those we care for are a part of our own family. Regardless, losing a loved one is one of the most difficult things we face in life. With that, I would like to share my story in hopes that it will help others...

My father, John Engel, sadly passed from dementia on March 11, 2017. He was 75 years old and had no prior family history of the disease. He was a smart, active and healthy man that always did the best he could to take care of himself. Despite a demanding schedule as a vice president of an insurance company, he always made time for his family and devoted countless hours to hobbies he loved like hiking, skiing, writing and so much more.

Dementia can be a long difficult journey. It's something we see so often with our residents and their families, yet something that's hard to imagine ever happening to those in your immediate family. Throughout this long and difficult process, you continually have hope, but slowly come to realize that eventually, you must say goodbye. I, like so many I've come to know, recently came to this realization during my father's final months.

Though my family and I are still healing, we felt so fortunate to have been able to care for our grandparents, my uncle, many other close friends and family members, and now my father, in their final days. Losing a parent is a heartbreaking experience. The rock you grew up knowing your entire life is suddenly gone, leaving a void you've never known before. My Dad was not only my rock but was also Mom's other half. They truly were their best selves when they were together. Seeing the man your Mother loved her entire life slip away is another difficult moment you cannot prepare for.

We were not ready when my Dad's physician Dr. Kramp said: "It's time" several months ago, though we found comfort knowing that we would be able to care for my Dad. At the end of our conversation, Dr. Kramp said he "knows of a really good place." We all smiled, thanked him, and agreed that it was time. Hearing those words from our long time trusted doctor hit home. Shortly after, we placed Dad on our waiting list, and even in his dementia state, he jokingly said to us, "What! I have supported this organization for nearly two decades and I am on the waiting list?" We all laughed. Dad always had a great sense of humor.

Moving day was one of the hardest days but Dad made it easy on us and so did our amazing team at Family First! Within a couple days I could see Mom looking more rested and less stressed. She was sad to go home without him but visited every day and knew when she left he would be loved and well cared for. She said to me "Honey what do families do that don't have Family First?" It was helpful knowing my Mom found comfort during this difficult time in both of our lives. Much of this comfort came from our wonderful staff who immediately bonded with Dad. Many of them knew him from working for us for several years. I loved the way they made him smile and interacted with him in his fragile state.

As Dad's care increased, our team of caregivers, Franciscan Hospice and Dr. Kramp worked together to ensure he was getting every possible need met. Chris and I knew this is what our team does for our residents every day, but to be a family member on the other side gave us a deeper insight into how our team brings peace to our residents and their loved ones up until the very end.

Everyone's experience is different for those needing continuing care, however, bringing the quality of life to those who can no longer take care of themselves has been and continues to be the greatest honor that Chris, myself and our entire staff get to experience within our work at Family First.

Thank you for reading our story and trusting us with the care of your loved ones.

Sincerely,

JULIE

2017 PIERCE COUNTY CAREGIVER OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to Family First caregiver Tara Basye on winning the 2017 Pierce County Caregiver of the Year! We were all brought to tears by the kind words of appreciation that were read. Family First is blessed with many amazing caregivers who share their gifts with us. We are proud to announce that four of our caregivers were nominated by our residents' family members. Congratulations to Michele, Michael, Jeanette and Tara for your nominations.



TARA'S NOMINATION FOR CAREGIVER OF THE YEAR

My father was at Crescent Valley home for over a year where Tara was house manager. Everytime I visited Tara was consistently cheerful and attentive to all the residents. She would sit at the table with them and read inspirational quotes or poetry. She loved getting them to laugh. During this March, my father was on hospice care, bed ridden and in his final days. Tara was in his room every few minutes re-assuring him, holding his hand, or rubbing his brow if he seemed distressed. She would leave her phone on his pillow playing soothing music for him.

I was never worried leaving him because I knew that her presence was comforting to him and that she genuinely cared about him. I was sure that she would stay with him, should he pass away on her shift. Even off shift, she would call or stop in to check on him. Many times, she has tears saying how much she would miss him. Her strength and ability to do her job effeciently and still care deeply for the emotional well-being of her residents is impressive. This is especially so, as she is also the mother of five children. One has special needs and the youngest is still a toddler. She's a lesson and inspiration to those of us who feel there is a limit to the compassion we can find in ourselves and others.

Thank you!

JACKIE HUNTER

WORDS OF APPRECIATION

Dear Chris & Julie,

The care, attention and encouragement that Family First provided us with will not soon be forgotten. I would recommend your style of assisted living to anyone who wants their loved one cared for by a group of dedicated and loving professionals.

The first life lessons my father taught me and continued to emphasize through his life was "Family First", everything else comes second. How incredibly appropriate that Mom passed away under the care of "Family First".

Mom, having suffered from a series of strokes, had gotten to a point that required more educated and skilled help than we could offer her at home.

When entering the house for the first time, my husband and I were nervous, tearful, and feeling guilty for not bringing her home with us. Within moments of our arrival, I was feeling relieved as I was seeing Mike feed Mom and then saw and heard her laughter at something Mike had said. By the time we left, I knew Mom was in capable, friendly hands and I knew I had made a new friend with Christina the House Manager.

Family First staff are dedicated, competent, knowledgeable, reassuring, kind, thoughtful, caring, accommodating and joyful. You don't enter as a patient, you and your family are immediately adopted into the Family First family.

I will be forever grateful to Family First for helping us through Mom's final days. My husband and I have assisted with placement of his step-father, assisting his mother, assisting my mother with placing my father in a memory loss facility and not one of the facilities we viewed came close to what Family First offers.

You are and will remain my heroes!

SUE GALPIN

TEAM RECOGNITIONS



CONGRATULATIONS TO CINDY HARPER FOR HER PROMOTION TO QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGER!

Cindy has been a with Family First since 2009, serving as manager at our Rosedale and Goodman locations for the past 8 years. She continues to be an integral part of our mission and we look forward to her continued work in her new role. Thank you for all that you do, Cindy!

CONGRATULATIONS MICHELE SHORT AND SHAYLA DAVENPORT ON THEIR PROMOTIONS TO HOUSE MANAGERS!

Michele and Shayla have both been with Family First for over a year and have proven to be outstanding in their leadership, professionalism and compassion. When asked why they chose this profession and what they liked most about working at Family First, these were their responses:



"I chose this type of work from personal experience of watching first hand, Doctors, Nurses, and CNA's providing amazing and compassionate care for my father. This is what inspired me to seek education that would put me into the field of helping others. I chose Family First over other facilities because Family First provides a more one-on-one experience that affords the caregiver the opportunity to become close with clients and their family."

- MICHELE



"I have been caring for the elderly for over 12 years. I've worked in many different settings from private to very large scale. I enjoy working at Family First because of the quality of care, and compassion that the owners foster and share. It is this example of love that sets the tone of our company, where we are a family and it truly does come first."

- SHAYLA

BIRTHDAY MILESTONES



**MARILYN
GISELA
GORDY**

JUNE 13
JUNE 18
JUNE 21
JUNE 28
JULY 22



**IRIS
ROSALIE
BETTY**

AUG 3
AUG 16
AUG 20



**HAROLD
MARIAN
MARY LOU
LORRAINE**

SEPT 10
SEPT 11
SEPT 13
SEPT 28

COMMUNITY EVENTS

CHAMBER AND HCPC AFTER HOURS



Family First was honored to host the Gig Harbor Chamber and HCPC After Hours. Thank you to everyone who joined us! We enjoyed a great evening with many wonderful businesses in our community.

ALZHEIMER'S FUNDRAISER



Special thanks to those who donated to our Alzheimer's fundraiser and to Claire Furlong with Cabi for donating a portion of her profits to the Alzheimer's Association!

FAMILY FIRST AT THE GIG HARBOR MARITIME PARADE



Family First was proud to be a part of the Gig Harbor Maritime Parade again this year, where we had the opportunity to share our mission with local businesses and the Gig Harbor community.

Thank you both for treating my mom like royalty, Saturday and every day. So blessed. So awesome."

- BILL BREWSTER

HAPPY 4TH OF JULY FROM FAMILY FIRST!



UPCOMING EVENTS YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS!

JULY

FAMILY FIRST SUMMER BARBECUES

We look forward to celebrating summer with our residents and their families. Please contact our office (253-853-2033) if you have any questions about Family First's summer barbecues, and stay tuned for a full schedule of our planned outings.

WHEN: July

WHERE: Family First's various locations

AGING SMART EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP: HEALTH

Occupational Therapy, Geriatric Care Management, Alzheimer's Disease and Audiology

WHEN: Thursday, July 27th from 10:00-11:30am

WHERE: Canterwood Golf and Country Club
2606 54th Ave NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332

<http://www.agingsmarteducationalworkshops.org/>

AUGUST

AGING SMART EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP: INSURANCE

Medicare, Medicaid, VA Benefits, Long Term Care and Health Insurance Benefits **SEMINAR #1**

WHEN: Tuesday, Aug 8th from 6:30-8:00pm

WHERE: Gig Harbor Library
4424 Point Fosdick Dr NW, Gig Harbor, WA

AGING SMART EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP: INSURANCE

Medicare, Medicaid, VA Benefits, Long Term Care and Health Insurance Benefits **SEMINAR #2**

WHEN: Thursday, Aug 24th from 10:00-11:30am

WHERE: Canterwood Golf and Country Club
2606 54th Ave NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332

SEPTEMBER

2017 WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S

Please join Family First in taking a step to a world without Alzheimer's. Visit www.familyfirststafh.com and click on the purple arrow to join our Family First Fighting Angels Team!

WHEN: Sunday, Sept 10th from 11:00am to 1:30pm

WHERE: University of Puget Sound Tacoma, WA
1500 N Warner St, Tacoma, WA 98416

SPECIAL EVENT: A NIGHT WITH NATIONALLY RENOWNED SPEAKER & AUTHOR LAURA WAYMAN, AKA "THE DEMENTIA WHISPERER"

Please join Family First for a rare opportunity to meet with Laura Wayman, author of "A Loving Approach to Dementia Care." Space is limited so please RSVP via julie@familyfirststafh.com or by calling our office at (253) 853-2033.

WHEN: Thursday, Sept 14th at 6:00 pm

WHERE: *Soon to be announced*

AGING SMART EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP: FINANCE

Charitable Giving, Final Needs Expense Planning, Secure Retirement Income, Social Security and Home Equity Conversion Mortgage. **SEMINAR #1**

WHEN: Tuesday, September 19th from 6:30-8:00pm

WHERE: Gig Harbor Library
4424 Point Fosdick Dr NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98335

AGING SMART EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP: FINANCE

Charitable Giving, Final Needs Expense Planning, Secure Retirement Income, Social Security and Home Equity Conversion Mortgage. **SEMINAR #2**

WHEN: Thursday September 28th from 10:00-11:30am

WHERE: Canterwood Golf and Country Club
2606 54th Ave NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332



FAMILY FIRST
ADULT FAMILY HOMES

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ADDRESS 4700 Pt. Fosdick Dr. #312 Gig Harbor, WA 98335

FAMILY FIRST ADULT FAMILY HOMES

ROSEDALE HOME

8219 Dogwood Lane NW Gig Harbor, WA 98332
(253) 858-8873

59TH STREET HOME

4001 59th St. Ct. NW Gig Harbor, WA 98335
(253) 857-5172

CRESCENT VALLEY HOME

2904 138th St. NW Gig Harbor, WA 98332
(253) 858-3897

ARTONDALE HOME

5305 81st. Ave. NW Gig Harbor, WA 98335
(253) 509-0263

OLALLA HOME

4553 Burley-Olalla Road Olalla, WA 98359
(253) 857-4537

GOODMAN HOME

3512 38th Ave NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98335
(253) 313-5638

For additional information or for a tour of our homes, please call Rebecca Brooks at (253) 219-6684.