



FAMILY FIRST NEWSLETTER

6th Edition - December 2019



A note from Chris and Julie:

This year we celebrated our 20th year in business!

As we reflect on the past and look forward to the future, we are once again reminded of what a wonderful community we live in. It's been our life's mission to provide quality care to you, our community, and we'd like to thank you for placing trust in us to care for your loved ones.

When we started Family First in 1999, both of our grandmother's needed care. Grandma Irene was at a skilled nursing home and had experienced more than one stroke. She was at the point when she was unable to walk or care for herself, so we made the decision to move her to Family First. After settling in, she constantly talked about how she was glad to be back in a home setting with tasty homecooked meals and wonderful caregivers.

Grandma Tucker was 95 and residing in an assisted living facility. She was showing early signs of dementia and would forget to eat, bathe, and would often become anxious about small tasks such as leaving her room. Moving her to a small setting with skilled caregivers was the perfect next step.

Thankfully, like Grandma Irene, we were able to move her into our 59th Street home, where she spent the last seven years of her life.

Yet our grandmothers were not the only ones in our community who needed this type of care. We knew so many that were working hard to balance caring for their parents and caring for themselves. As many have experienced, when your loved one needs 24-hour care, it can be

extremely overwhelming. Little did we know that when we started this journey that we would be fortunate enough to take care of second generations of our clients as well as additional family members, including one of our uncles and one of our fathers.

Helping families in similar situations has become our life's calling, and it's one that we feel incredibly fortunate to pursue. With all that being said, we owe a huge debt of gratitude to our community, and most of all, to our great team of caregivers who continue to provide exceptional care to so many in need. We thank you for your support and trust and look forward to serving you in the years to come.

- Chris and Julie

Gig Harbor Living Local Awards

Family First was honored to win three awards at the Gig Harbor Living Local's Finest awards event this year. Thank you to everyone who voted. Finest employer, Finest Retirement Services for the third year in a row and our own Chris Thomson was honored with Finest Person of the Year. Read the article in [*this month's Living Local magazine*](#).



When was the last time you had your Medicare plan reviewed?

Family First always strives to provide our families and residents with information that will positively benefit them. Since Annual Enrollment for Medicare plans is now upon us, we wanted to pass on a contact who can assist you with what is coming up in 2020. Medicare plans can be complicated, and unknown to many people, these plans not only change every year, but the drug plans and their formularies also change. Drugs that are covered this year may not be covered next year. Additionally, doctors who accept one plan or another can change from year to year. It is essential for anyone who is on Medicare to have their plan reviewed annually to ensure they are maximizing the benefits available to them. There are over 40 Medicare plans in our area - do you know if you have the best plan for you or your family members' needs?

We want to introduce you to Bill Drenik, a Medicare Insurance Specialist and owner of Washington Senior Resources:

As a Trusted Advisor for several health clinics, I am available to serve as a year-round resource and to review your plan to determine the best option for you or your family member. This review is no cost, no-obligation - but could end up saving you hundreds of dollars. I am paid by the plan itself when you sign up. If I determine your current plan is the best one for you - I will let you know.

The Annual Enrollment Period is here. This is the time of the year you can make changes to the Medicare plan for you or your family member. If you wish to be educated on Medicare-related issues and better understand your Medicare plan benefits, email to request the Your Medicare Newsletter. Make sure you are maximizing the benefits on your plan and understand processes that may help you reduce your costs. As a former teacher, my motto is: education is the key to making good healthcare decisions.

Congratulations to Theresa, Caregiver of the year!



Theresa has been the manager of our Goodman Home since June of 2018 and has worked with Family First since 2015. She was nominated by both families and coworkers to be **Caregiver of the Year** for the Health Care Providers Council of Pierce County this year. HCPC received over 138 nominees for this prestigious award, and Family First was thrilled when she was chosen as the winner.

Theresa has been a caregiver for many years and says she enjoys the smaller environment of an adult family home. She appreciates being able to manage her own home and to get to know her residents on a personal level. Her families and residents obviously agree as they hold her in the highest regard. Theresa always has a ready smile for everyone and prides herself on outstanding care whatever the situation. Family First is fortunate to have Theresa on our team, and have always considered her to be exceptional.

“Theresa’s sensitive, skilled approach to my husband and others is always present. She has developed a bond and trusting relationship with my husband who is very anxious and aware of his cognitive decline, allowing him to be as independent as possible and approaching him with the utmost respect and affection for who he was and his current level of function. Theresa has worked extremely hard to provide the best possible care with a quiet, calm and reassuring approach.”

-From (resident) Don’s wife, Audrey

Veteran's Day

Thank you for your service.

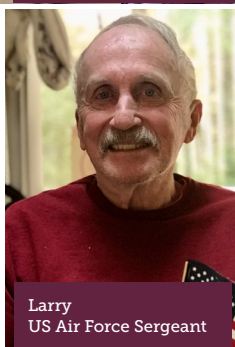
To all the women and men who have served our country so that we may live free, we thank you!



Marie (then and now)
US Air Force Sergeant



Dennis
US Army (Vietnam)



Larry
US Air Force Sergeant



Ted
US Air Force (22 years)



Thanksgiving is a time to celebrate all we have to be grateful for.

We live in a beautiful place surrounded by friends, family and a wonderful community. All of us at Family First send our blessings to you and yours this Thanksgiving.



Together, we can cure Alzheimer's disease.

Every year the Family First Fighting Angels Team raises money and walks to help in the fight to end Alzheimer's. This year we raised over \$3,000.00! Thank you to all who donated and supported this important cause.

A special thank you to Claire Furling of Cabi and Karen Herman of Opulenza for hosting 'shop for a cause' parties and donating their profits.

Together we will #ENDALZ (click to donate)

“Chris and Julie provided exactly the home my dad needed for his last two years. He wasn't their typical resident; he didn't have dementia or Alzheimer's. His needs were a different challenge and every step of the way, Chris and Julie made sure we were heard, my dad was cared for and he felt loved.”

-Carina Pierce

Upcoming Events

The Harborettes are back

11.22 - 11.23.2019

The wonderful Harborettes will be performing at the Family First homes this month. On Friday, November 22nd they will be at Goodman (10 am), 59th (11 am) and Artondale (12 pm). On Saturday, November 23rd they will perform at Rosedale (10 am), Olalla (11 am) and Crescent Valley (12 pm).*



Santa is coming!

12.18.2019

Santa will be visiting all the Family First locations on Wednesday, December 18th.

He will begin at 10 am and visit the homes in the following order: Goodman, 59th, Artondale, Rosedale, Olalla and Crescent Valley.*



*Friends and family of our residents please contact our activities director Kathinka to RSVP kathinka@familyfirstafh.com

Aging Smart Workshops

2020 - First Tuesday of each month

"I am honored to be a board member of the nonprofit organization Aging Smart. Their mission is to educate the community and assist in navigating with the many aspects of future planning. They have wonderful speakers that offer their precious time to give us valuable information."

- Julie Thomson

Aging Smart workshops are free and open to the public. They will be held on the first Tuesday of each month at the Gig Harbor Round Table event room (5500 Olympic Drive) from 5-6:30pm. Please call Julie to RSVP 253-732-3292 or email julie@familyfirstafh.com

JAN 7

Community living & Dementia care options

FEB 4

Legal estate planning

MAR 3

Financial planning and veterans benefits

APR 7

Transitions and downsizing

MAY 5

Social Security

SEPT 8

Medicare

OCT 6

Long term care insurance

NOV 3

Stay-at-home care

