A Passion for Hospice

“Death and our tradition of saying goodbye is hard and overwhelming. But what a gift the Hospice House and Hospice in-home services are to support core physical and many other needs so that people can focus on their people, love, stories, and the sweet sad magic of saying goodbye.”

Sarah Rothenbuhler, Whatcom Hospice Foundation Board Member

Whatcom Hospice Foundation Board member Sarah Rothenbuhler is the owner of Birch Equipment Rental & Sales. Her inspirational leadership has transformed her small local business into a nationally respected rental equipment company with stores in Washington and Alaska. Lucky for us, Sarah has also lent her entrepreneurial super powers to the task of raising funds and friends for Whatcom Hospice Foundation!

For the third year in a row, Sarah will not just chair, but also run the Birch Equipment Hospice Pro-Am Golf Classic to be held Thursday, August 31 at Bellingham Golf and Country Club. Over the past two years, Sarah and her co-worker Jessie Everson have revamped the eleven year-old tournament into a one-day, sold-out event. Last year saw record-breaking revenue of over $250,000 to help terminally ill patients and their families in our community.

Sarah was invited to join the Whatcom Hospice Foundation Board of Directors in 1999 during the time she was working to revive and buyout Birch Equipment. She accepted without hesitation, recalling a poignant Hospice experience from her college days twelve years earlier:

“A bunch of buddies were back in Bellingham for summer break and planning to meet up for one last evening. Our friend Kip took a motorcycle out for a spin and there was never a chance to say goodbye, his funeral was a few days later. A week later I had to get back to my sophomore year at University of Colorado. It was another gut wrenching goodbye, this time to my beautiful cousin who was home from University of Washington and leaving soon in a different way. Sue had been fighting cancer like a champion since high school and she still lit up the room. Losing a buddy unexpectedly and then saying goodbye to a cousin who was like a sister – it changes you. My cousin was brave, full of grace and able to be at home, surrounded by family and friends with the support of Hospice caregivers. Having those moments and those conversations is a bittersweet reminder to live and appreciate those around you. Who knows what’s to come?”

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Every gift to the Whatcom Hospice Foundation is deeply appreciated. Below we acknowledge the many generous people and organizations who made gifts or pledge payments of $1,000 or more between July 1 and December 31, 2016.

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$25,000+
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$10,000+
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Carmen and Dale Zender
Zervas Group Architects
Sue and George Zuck
Christine and Frank Zarline

A complete donor listing is posted at www.whatcomhospice.org at the close of each fiscal year.
### Hospice Pro-Am Golf Classic - August 31, 2017

The 11th annual Hospice Pro-Am Golf Classic will be held August 31 at Bellingham Golf and Country Club. Thanks to Birch Equipment and other generous sponsors, over $50,000 in tournament prizes will be available! Get info, sponsor or sign up at https://whatcomhospiceproam.com. Non-participants may make a 100% tax-deductible gift to help Whatcom Hospice patients and families at https://www.whatcomhospiceproam.com/all-for-hospice/.

### A Passion for Hospice

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Sarah’s passion and commitment to community is clear. Through her direction Birch Equipment gives a minimum of $100,000 back to the community each year, totaling approximately $2 million dollars in the past 17 years. Whatcom Hospice has been one of the many recipients of this generosity.

Sarah’s leadership in driving the 2016 Pro-Am to record-breaking success was all the more impressive since the tournament was held during the same time two of her close loved-ones were being served at Hospice House, while another dear friend was being served through Hospice home care. She is very thankful for their outstanding care and for the “sad, sweet magic of saying goodbye.”

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**Foundation Staff**

- Anne Rasmussen, MBA, CFRE, Chief Development Officer
- Shawn Sullivan, MD, Associate Medical Director
- Gurpreet Dhillion, Service Line Director
- Dawn Alexander, RN, BSN, Intermediate Nurse Manager
- Mollie Tan, Assistant Nurse Manager

**Whatcom Hospice Foundation**

- mailing address: 2901 Squalicum Parkway
- physical address: 3001 Squalicum Parkway, Bellingham, WA 98225
- phone: (360) 733-1231
- email: info@whatcomhospice.org

**Whatcom Hospice (Clinical Services)**

- 2800 Douglas Avenue
- Bellingham, WA 98225
- (360) 733-5877

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**Whatcom Hospice Foundation gratefully acknowledges the very generous members of its Legacy Society, who have included Whatcom Hospice in their estate plans. Our Legacy Society members play an important role in ensuring that future generations will continue to have access to exceptional hospice care in our community.**

| Estate of Leon Ashmead Alpaugh | Robert and Diane Becker | Edward C. Bouverat | Lesa Boxx | Michael Bradburn | Byron Brown and Angela Klontz-Brown | Estate of Dolores W. Burlin | Estate of Joyce Cronk | Judy Doyle | Larry Feeney | Michael Feerer | Lisbeth and Alan Fritzberg | John Gardiner | Mickey and Carole Ghio | Bill and Kris Grace | Estate of Stuart R. Graham | Jeff and Karen Haggen | Estate of Jack and Dorothy Heller | Joel Hile | Sylvia and Dennis Holmstrom | Margaret Jacobson, MD and Richard McLenaan, MD | Estate of Emma C. Johnson | Estate of Juanda Dorothy Johnson | Cheryl A. Kellert, MD | Mike and Judy Kirkland | Michael B. Langey | Estate of Kathleen Maberry | Estate of Mary A. McDonald |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
Lynden resident Bill Grace believes in paying it forward. He loves volunteering at church and for great organizations like Elks Lodge #194 and Rotary Club of Whatcom County North. Through his years of service with these groups he has always been impressed with how Whatcom Hospice has touched the lives of his friends in our community.

For Bill the hospice experience hit even closer to home when his brother-in-law Cliff, a World War II veteran, died at home with the help of hospice and his beloved wife, Sharon. “Home is where Cliff wanted to be. Hospice was such a godsend to Cliff and Sharon,” said Bill.

In 2001, when Bill’s wife Kris was forced to retire from teaching at the age of 55 due to health problems, Bill also retired early to care for her at home. Kris passed away four years ago after a twelve year illness. Bill does not regret one moment of his long stint as caregiver. “When you are soulmates, it’s just what you do,” he remarked. Because the couple had no children, after Kris’s death Bill rewrote his will to include significant gifts to the charities of his choice, including Whatcom Hospice Foundation.

Have you considered including Whatcom Hospice Foundation in your estate plans? With a simple designation in your will or trust, you can support the Whatcom Hospice Foundation. This type of gift costs you nothing during your lifetime. It is revocable if your situation changes.

We would be happy to work confidentially with you and your advisor to create a plan that suits you. Call our office at (360) 733-1231 for more information.