United Friends Group Homes

United Friends empowers people with developmental disabilities to enjoy quality lives and experience the best of home, health, family and community.

From Rick Massey, Executive Director

As a new year kicks in, I want to thank all of the donors throughout 2016. Whether you were a first-time giver or a long-time supporter, we appreciate it. The poet John Donne wrote “No man is an island” in the prose work *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, (1624). These words continue to ring true today. Regardless of their sparkling personalities and the wonderful care they give to the residents, the staff at United Friends Group Homes can't do it on their own.

Over the last calendar year, your donations have helped to:

1) Install new flooring in Lincoln Park Group Home’s living room and dining room
2) Renovate and strengthen Lincoln Park’s deck
3) Supplement well-deserved (and city mandated) staff raises
4) Fund many other smaller items

A main goal at both Beverly Park and Crown Hill this year is to make entrances completely ADA approved. Both houses were grandfathered out of current ADA entrance requirements. However, as the residents age, it is getting difficult for them to safely negotiate existing doorways. The idea of a resident tripping over a door threshold is unthinkable and it's in our power to prevent. The fire exit from the upper level at Crown Hill is also badly in need of repair. Also, the February snowstorm created yard clean up problems at Beverly Park (see pg 4)

Please help the residents of United Friends Group Homes to lead the quality lives they deserve. Your donation, no matter the amount, is truly appreciated. Here’s to a great 2017!

You may provide a monetary gift, **with a check** sent to: UFGH, PO Box 17017, Seattle, WA 98127, or you may contribute using your **credit card** via PayPal. You can easily access PayPal by clicking on the Donate icon on our website: [www.ufgh.org](http://www.ufgh.org). You can even set it up for an ongoing monthly contribution.
Thank You Clipped Wings

Due to lack of parking at the prior site, the 2016 December holiday party had to relocate to Lincoln Park Group Home. But would that space be big enough for residents from all three group homes, their staff, friends, family, & the wonderful volunteers from Clipped Wings? For years, Clipped Wings have welcomed and served at this event. In the smaller group home environment, would they still be willing to help us out?

Yes! On party day, the Clipped Wings arrived early in festive Christmas fashions with packages of cookies in hand. They aided in the setup and with refreshments. Their individual warmth and grace was on display as they interacted with all the party-goers. The cookies were an amazing array of yummy goodness; gingerbread men, frosted short bread, and so much more. Clipped Wings even made sure to bring sugar free cookies for our residents who couldn’t have the extra sugar.

We at UFGH are humbled by these wonderful women and are honored that they choose to help us out year after year. Thanks to all of you for everything you’ve done and continue to do to make the residents’ holiday season a truly memorable one.

Lincoln Park Holiday Party

On December 10th 2016, Lincoln Park had the honor of hosting the United Friends Group Homes (UFGH) annual holiday party. Lincoln Park’s mission was to hold the most festive and fun party imaginable and to make sure everyone enjoyed themselves. What did that involve?

The week before the party, Lincoln Park’s staff worked hard to create a holiday atmosphere. Each shift cleaned and then the fun part, decorated. They made a fabulous “Welcome to the Party” bulletin board and hung miles of holiday garlands throughout the house. With glitter and ribbons everywhere, Lincoln Park sparkled with holiday cheer.

At the party, everyone enjoyed cookies and festive holiday beverages provided by Clipped Wings. Executive Director, Rick Massey thanked the staff, residents, guardians, and volunteers for their unique contributions to UFGH. Then, the party transitioned to everyone’s favorite part, karaoke! Residents took turns at the microphone singing lively Christmas carols as everyone else sang or cheered. At the end, each resident received a snow globe from Santa.

Everyone who attended would enthusiastically agree that the first UFGH holiday party held in a group home was a huge success. Great food, decorations, ambiance, songs, laughter, joy & celebration—what more could you ask for? Thanks to the hardworking staff at Lincoln Park group home who made the party possible. And, thanks again to Clipped Wings.
Beverly Park Cruises into 2017…

The residents of Beverly Park literally cruised into the holiday festivities, starting with a Christmas ferry boat ride around Puget Sound! WA State Ferry employees sponsor this event annually. Other organizations provide entertainment, food, and gifts.

Friends from Lincoln Park and Crown Hill joined up with the Beverly Park group. Together, they admired the beautiful view of the Seattle waterfront. As the ferry left the dock, huge smiles and hearty laughter erupted on board—not just from United Friends, but throughout the entire ferry. Holiday music, singalongs, and the Seafair Pirates put everybody in a great mood. The US Coast Guard also assisted us with resident needs.

And then, the man of the hour (or season) showed up: Santa! Yes, the jolly old soul was walking about talking to all and asking that one important question “What would you like for Christmas?” Merriment, laughter, and giggles filled the air. But, what about food? What’s a cruise or celebration without food? The food was amazing and plentiful!

As the boat approached the dock and everyone stood in line to depart, excitement still filled the air. The US Coast Guard and their family members passed out stuffed animals to each resident as they left the ferry. Fond memories of their December 2016 cruise lingered on the Access bus ride home and into the holidays. Perhaps residents were already thinking about next year’s cruise!

Crown Hill Twists into the New Year…

The holidays were a blast for Crown Hill residents. They joined the other houses for the Holiday Ferry Cruise (see Beverly Park’s article) and the annual UFGH Holiday Party (see Lincoln Park’s article). Residents also enjoyed outings to see the spectacular holiday lights in nearby neighborhoods. New Year’s Eve featured fireworks from the Space Needle on TV.

Crown Hill residents have been staying busy outside of the house. Every Sunday, Judy goes out and supports St. Andrews Church. Carla, Deb and Paul have been taking care of their health at a Fitness and Dance Class every Thursday. Paul and Mark have been attending a class called TNT (Try New Things); each session has a different activity (artwork, games, baking, etc.). Just as the name implies, they get to try something new every time. Most of the residents also attended the annual Sweetheart Dance; an evening of meeting up with old friends, finding new friends, listening to good music and dancing the evening away. Sweet!

As we enter 2017, big changes have occurred at Crown Hill. After over twenty years working at Northwest Center, Paul Gilly has retired! He keeps active in his retirement taking an assortment of classes and enjoying social activities with the Seattle Parks and Recreation Specialized Program. When asked what he thought about retirement, Paul simply said, “I like it!”
A Tribute to Robert Lillethun:

On February 13, 2017, we lost a dear friend and long term member of the Crown Hill family. Robert “Bob/Bobby” Lillethun was fearless and feisty but with a tender side, especially toward his housemates. He loved his job at the Lighthouse for the Blind where he worked for over twenty years. He reluctantly retired after illness and injury made it no longer possible for him to work. Ever resilient, he was determined to overcome adversity, to get back on his feet, and back to his life. When in rehab, he would always remind staff when it was time to do his exercises. He made a comeback every time…except this one. Bob loved his cookies, his John Wayne movies and, of course, his Lone Ranger. Though they lived far away, Bob cared deeply about his family, too. As often as possible, he would make the long journey south to visit his sisters and their families. His next trip was on his mind, even as his health was failing. Sadly, he didn’t make that last trip though he was able to visit in 2015 and 2016. For over ten years, Bob has been a good friend and an inspiration in my own recoveries from illness and injury. I will deeply miss him as I know we all will. Hi Ho Silver Away!!! by Kevin Murphy, (long time Crown Hill staff)

Storm damage challenges...

Already this year, we have some unexpected costs that we’re looking to donors for help. The February snowstorm caused some major damage to the landscaping at Beverly Park. Branches from the tallest tree crashed into the yard. Other bushes were completely destroyed. Thankfully, the house remained intact, but the storm left a mess. Our landscaping crew is happy to do the work, but the extra $1500 for storm clean-up has to come from somewhere.

Here's a photo of the broken tree at Beverly Park. The large limb is over a foot wide at the base.

Your shopping can help UFGH!

- You can contribute to UFGH while shopping online! Do you order from Amazon.com? Please consider becoming a member of the AmazonSmile rewards program (designating UFGH as your preferred charity). It’s so easy! Instead of going to www.amazon.com, go to www.smile.amazon.com and designate United Friends Group Homes as your supported charity. You get the same great deals; UFGH gets a percentage of your overall order.

- When shopping locally at Fred Meyer, you can designate a portion of your shopping total to directly assist UFGH through Fred Meyer’s Community Rewards Program. Just go to www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards and designate UFGH as your preferred charity. Our ID# is 86108.