The Campaign to Build A New Guest House
Help Sacred Heart build a home away from home for families in crisis
Many parents who have spent time in PeaceHealth Sacred Heart’s Neonatal Intensive Care Unit can relate to Albany chiropractor Josh Ort’s story: Something goes wrong during what should be one of the happiest experiences in life, and terror takes hold.

His wife, Danyelle, had a scheduled C-section at 37 weeks (at a Corvallis hospital) due to umbilical cord complications. But when tiny Raegan Grace was born, she let out a cry, then stopped breathing. Hospital staff revived her with CPR and a transport team whisked her away to RiverBend. Josh kissed his tearful wife goodbye, then followed. He spent several nights at Sacred Heart’s current Guest House.

Every year, thousands of families, like the Ort family, arrive at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center from outside Eugene/Springfield to receive long-term and/or specialty care unavailable in their home communities. Leaving their homes and jobs behind, they face not only a medical crisis but also the logistical and financial demands of finding a place to stay near their loved ones.

“A growing need

Fiscal year 2016 figures

- 450 babies were admitted to the Sacred Heart Neonatal Intensive care unit (born at Sacred Heart or other local facilities) with an average length stay of just under 20 days, and some cases up to three months.

- There were 2,820 cardiovascular, 2,474 neuroscience, and 877 oncology discharges (from Sacred Heart) with an average length stay of roughly 5 days each.
Sacred Heart’s current Guest House

Sacred Heart’s current Guest House, located at 1057 Patterson St., provides a tranquil retreat for families in times of crisis. On average, it hosts about 313 families per year. Yet the need for these accommodations grows every year, and often the hospital must find alternative housing for families so they can be near their loved one.

During the Olympic Trials or the Oregon football season, it becomes nearly impossible to find affordable or available lodging near the RiverBend campus. When Sacred Heart can’t make alternate arrangements for family lodging, unfortunately these individuals are turned away.

Another difficulty is the current Guest House location; it’s nearly 20 minutes away by car and over 30 minutes away by public transit. While this may not seem like a large distance, it’s an eternity to family members who receive a call in the middle of the night and learn their loved one may not survive much longer.

Serving families all over Oregon

As a regional medical center, Sacred Heart Medical Center provides care to patients throughout Oregon. In 2016, the Guest House served families throughout the state, including those living in:

- Coos Bay
- Albany
- Roseburg
- Sutherlin
- North Bend

When you travel far from home to receive medical care, the costs for food and lodging can quickly become expensive. Without the use of the Guest House, families can pay upwards of $1,000 in out-of-pocket food and lodging expenses, not to mention additional expenses like lost wages for family members.

At - A - Glance Details

- 313 families served by the current Guest House
- 9 days average length of stay
- 1,200 families provided alternate lodging at a local extended stay hotel
- $56,914 cost of alternate family lodging

Fiscal year 2016 figures
Mallory McDonald was only 16 years old when she had her first reconstructive knee surgery. After she was discharged, she and her mom, Debbie, got in their car and drove five hours home to Brookings, Oregon. They didn’t know about the Guest House, or that they could have spent a couple affordable nights there so Mallory could recoup before making such a long drive. The second time she had reconstructive knee surgery, her mom connected with a case worker, and they were able to spend a couple nights at the Guest House. “Her knee healed much better that time – those two nights meant everything! And now she’s playing college basketball,” said a very proud Debbie.

The Blair Family
Linda Blair was diagnosed with an aggressive breast cancer at 19 weeks pregnant. Soon after she began chemotherapy. At 27 weeks and round three of her chemo treatment, Linda’s water broke. She and husband Rob, were transported by ambulance to Sacred Heart’s NICU just hours before Ava was born. Baby Ava arrived in the world at only 970 grams (2 pounds, 2 ounces). Since the Blair family lived in Corvallis and Ava would spend over 10 weeks in the NICU, the couple was given a room at the Guest House. “Being near Ava during such a difficult time was incredible. I’m certain it contributed to her consistent and steady improvement while she was in the NICU,” said Rob.
Jim Wilbur

Jim Wilbur suffered a very rare stroke in his spinal cord, rendering him completely paralyzed except for the use of 2 fingers on his left hand. He was rushed from his hometown Winston, Oregon to Sacred Heart’s Intensive Care Unit. After four and a half weeks in the ICU, Jim was now ready for inpatient rehabilitation, but Oregon Rehabilitation Center required that his wife, Mari, could participate 100% in his rehabilitation. Jim and Mari lived almost two hours away and would need to temporarily find a long-term and affordable place for Mari to live. “We couldn’t afford a hotel, but I was able to stay at the Guest House. It was an amazing home away from home, and it allowed Jim to receive the best care possible,” said Mari.

“As a NICU physician my community extends outside of Lane County to Roseburg, Coos Bay, Albany, Corvallis, Newport, Lebanon and North Bend. When we bring kids to RiverBend we want them to feel loved and comforted. Offering a safe haven for our families so they can be close to their kids is the difference between good care and great care.”

Douglas Leonard, MD
Sacred Heart Medical Center Neonatologist
Caring for everyone

We want to make sure all of our patients can have family close by for support and help with the healing process. PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center is partnering with the Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) to build a new one-story house with two wings of bedrooms and 20 rooms on the RiverBend Campus.

The new **Heartfelt Guest House** will be funded 100% through philanthropy. PeaceHealth will provide the land, the Sacred Heart Medical Center Foundation will raise the construction costs (approximately $6 million) and RMHC will furnish the entire interior.

One wing of the new Guest House will be dedicated solely to families of pediatric patients and babies in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. RMHC will assume all responsibility and costs associated with operating this wing. The other wing will be dedicated to the general patient population who require a higher level of care not available near their home.

The new Guest House will also provide an array of amenities and support programs for families who must put their lives on hold while their loved one heals. The house will offer its own laundry facilities and shared relaxation spaces. A kitchen, dining area, healing garden and children’s playground will be available for all guests.

A home away from home for all

With the new Heartfelt Guest House, Sacred Heart anticipates being able to provide accommodations to an estimated 1,500 patients and families a year.

“Having family around can be reassuring during a frightening time. It helps to have people who know you nearby, those you feel safest with. And for the family, knowing that the staff of the guest house is doing everything they can to ease the crisis – these things allow the family and patient to focus on healing.”

Debbie McDonald,
Sacred Heart Patient Family Guest House Manager
Thank you, Sacred Heart Medical Center Guild, for your lead gift to the Heartfelt Guest House Campaign!

Since 1950, the Sacred Heart Medical Center Guild and the Sacred Heart Medical Center Foundation have partnered philanthropically to support the hospital and its programs and services.

The Guild is a volunteer based organization, made up of dedicated and loyal community members. Their top priority is managing Sacred Heart Medical Center’s gift shops – Heartfelt Gifts – at both RiverBend and University District. Each year the Guild Board donates a portion of the shops’ proceeds to support Sacred Heart.

True to their generous spirit of giving and helping the community, the Guild pledged one million to the current Guest House Campaign. The Foundation Board was honored to accept this generous gift, and voted to give the Guild the naming rights for the new Guest House.

After an overwhelming response, the Guild voted to keep the name in the family, and decided upon the Heartfelt Guest House. It’s a meaningful name, one that speaks volumes about the care patients and families will receive when they stay and are cared for at the new Guest House!

Naming opportunities

If you are interested in a naming opportunity, we have a variety of options available, including:

- Building wing #1
- Building wing #2
- Courtyard
- Lobby
- Community rooms
- Guest rooms
- Various open spaces
- Donor wall
- Large paver
- Medium paver
- Small paver

“All gifts of $1,000+ are included in that year’s Sacred Heart Honor Roll.

For prices and more details, call or email the Sacred Heart Medical Center Foundation. Our contact info is listed on the back.

“Providing a place to stay for our patients and their families or caregivers is one more way Sacred Heart can support them in their journey.”

Beth Webb, Sacred Heart Medical Center Guild President
You Can Help

The new Heartfelt Guest House will be funded entirely by private philanthropy. With your help, we can create a home away from home; a place of hope and healing for patients and families in medical crisis.

For more information, contact:

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