

Immediate Press Release

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Wish There Were More Like “Harry”.

June 5,2013 - During the month of June, Harry Garafalo’s ShopRite supermarkets in Stratford, Milford, West Haven and Hamden, oversee a charitable endeavor for The Friends of Fisher House, Connecticut. As customers walk into ShopRite, an employee may greet them, asking if they wish to give. At every checkout line, a huge glass fish bowl and an American Flag are present. Often there is a table set up with Fisher House volunteers ready to explain why Fisher House is such a remarkable organization. 100% of these donations go to programs that benefit veterans and their families.

Tom Flowers, one of Fisher House’s dauntless veterans and a long term volunteer says, “Think of us as a Ronald McDonald House for veterans.” The Fisher House Foundation builds and maintains long term residential facilities near military hospitals nationwide that offer free lodging to the families of seriously injured soldiers during the long rehabilitation process.

Veteran and attorney Kevin Creed from Bristol, Connecticut, heads up a tireless group who have been working for several years to reach their \$3 million goal. They are half way there. This is no small task. Connecticut’s Fisher House will be built next to the VA Hospital in West Haven and is slated to break ground in Spring, 2014. That is why we need more “Harrys”.

This is the third straight year, and if you ask Harry, who is the owner and president of four stores (soon to be five when the East Haven store opens), Shop Rite employees and customers will have orchestrated raising close to \$150,000 for Fisher House. In fact, all four stores compete to see which one will raise the most during the month.

ShopRite and its parent company Wakefern, headquartered in New Jersey, are community minded fundraisers. ShopRite supports United Way initiatives and practically any organization related to food banks and soup kitchens.

There is something really unusual about Harry's Shop Rites. He has fostered a corporate culture of caring that manifests itself in the pride his employees take in their work. The physical store is immaculate, with bright lighting, gorgeous displays and friendly people. Harry frequently meets with employees at morning "Breakfasts" to see who needs some assistance with their job, their schooling, or their life.

This is a classic story of a young school boy who started as a grocery bagger. Working hard within the corporate structure, Harry knows firsthand what it takes to become a success. He encourages his employees to be compassionate towards co-workers and customers. "Walk in their shoes first, before you criticize others." Harry says. Harry Garafalo's philosophy of "Paying it Forward" makes it easy to see why he and Fisher House are a perfect match.

For more information or to support Friends of Fisher House, go online to www.FisherHouseCT.org . Join in their Half Marathon or Yankee Harley Motorcycle Rally coming up this summer. You can sign up for either of these events online.