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WEST ROXBURY

Sculpture made by wounded Iraq veteran to be unveiled at new garden at Fisher House Boston

Posted by Matt Rocheleau November 9, 2012 11:40 PM

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A photo of the healing garden and sculpture.

By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

A “healing garden” and its centerpiece – a 12-foot-tall steel and copper sculpture designed by a veteran who was wounded in the Iraq War – will be unveiled this Veterans Day weekend at Fisher House Boston, a facility in West Roxbury where veterans and their families can stay for free while being cared for at a Veterans Affairs medical center.

Retired veteran Staff Sergeant William R. Kleinedler, who was badly burned by an improvised explosive device in Iraq, designed the garden’s focal point: a sculpture called Integro, which means “to begin anew,” officials said.

The artwork and the garden around it are intended to provide a relaxing, uplifting area for veterans and their families to heal, according to Fisher House Boston. Sixteen students from [Worcester Technical High School](#) art helped build the artwork and the steel it is made from was donated by Peterson Steel of Worcester.

“This piece, Integro, gave me the opportunity to reach out as an artist to inspire others who have experienced trauma, to help them motivate and move forward in their lives,” Kleinedler said in a statement. “It also challenged me to better myself both in my art and in life as I progress with my own therapy,”

A ceremony to unveil the new outdoor space will be held at 11 a.m. Saturday at Fisher House Boston at 1400 VFW Parkway, officials said.

“To accept that Dad or Mom no longer looks the same, that your brother or sister has trouble sleeping at night,” Kleinedler continued. “That we now have wheelchair ramps at our house instead of stairs. Change, beginning anew and in time, with help, with patience, things can get better. Change can bring you down roads you never thought possible. Challenges can give you the confidence to look at life more respectfully.”

The sculpture and garden will be dedicated to all military men and women.

“The new healing garden and sculpture Integro builds upon the existing garden which has aided our guests in their health and well being.” Fisher House board

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president Michelle Keating said in a statement. “Now, the healing garden will be even more therapeutic with the addition of the sculpture and additional landscaping.”

The Fisher House Board of Directors, The Garden Continuum and Kleinedler collaborated on the project.

“The Fisher House Healing Garden is an oasis of safety and hope. The healing power of plant life and gardens has been well documented. We have created a reflective space where people may be embraced by the earth and the energies of plants in order to find quiet support and peaceful rest,” said Monique Allen, Owner of The Garden Continuum.

For more information, visit www.fisherhouseboston.org.

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