

# THE JACKSON LEGACY IN ACTION

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## Farewell, Helen Jackson: You will be Missed

Our Chairman Emeritus, Helen H. Jackson, passed away on February 24, at the age of 84. As I write these words, I am deeply struck at the loss to the Jackson Foundation, which she helped to create, and to the extended Jackson Foundation family of Scoop's Troops, Board members, staff, and assorted hundreds of others, whom she nurtured and led for so many years in her role as Chairman of the Board.

This is both a personal loss to Helen's immediate family—her daughter Anna Marie Jackson Laurence and son Peter Jackson sit on our Board—and to those of us fortunate enough to have known Helen over the years. There is a wonderful tribute in the Everett Herald, the local newspaper of Scoop and Helen's home town, full of pictures and details of Helen's full and meaningful life. The article can be found online at [heraldnet.com](http://heraldnet.com).

We have our own memories: Helen with her ready laugh, particularly about anyone too full of themselves, always there to help the staff and Board carry out the Foundation's work. In the early days, Helen rolled up her sleeves and came often to her office with its wall of photos, small elegant desk, faded pink satin couch, and pile of letters. She always made a point to sign each and every one of the letters to donors herself—a monumental task when our donor list had 3,000 names! I think this gave us a sense of Helen's devotion to duty and her connection to the Jackson network. She also had a special fondness for chocolate, which we shared and laughed about. She was interested in our lives, our families, and our stories (although she was horrified when our adventures involved anything physically challenging or the consumption of exotic food).

Helen worked with then Executive Director Robin Pasquarella and then Board President Bill Van Ness to build the Jackson Foundation into a substantive and enduring legacy to Scoop. She had a hand in setting the priorities of the Foundation – first among them, supporting the School of International Studies at the University of Washington that would bear her husband's name. Helen always championed the students and



faculty at the University and sought to make the Jackson School a premier educational institution.

The Foundation of course made an early commitment to environment, energy, and natural resources management given that those concerns constituted a towering part of Scoop's legislative legacy. Helen leaned on Gren Garside, Bill Van Ness, Chuck Luce, Sterling Munro and others to establish the Foundation as a leader in the environmental arena. Because of Jackson's role in the preservation and creation of national parks in the Pacific Northwest, she often was called upon to speak on behalf of the family and the Foundation.

Yet Helen herself ensured that we focused on human rights, a central part of Jackson's achievements but also one of her own passions.

In 1978 at the height of the Cold War, Helen co-founded and co-chaired the bipartisan watchdog group Congressional Wives



LEFT: Helen at home; CENTER: Dedication for the Henry M. Jackson Memorial Visitor Center, Mount Rainier National Park in 1987; RIGHT: At a demonstration in support of Soviet Jewry in 1984

for Soviet Jewry, working alongside Scoop's staff members like Dorothy Fosdick and Richard Perle to raise attention to the plight of Jews and prisoners of conscience in the Soviet Union. She made many speeches and met individually with family members seeking to have their loved ones freed, work she continued long after Senator Jackson's death.

Two decades later the Jackson Foundation partnered with the famous Refusenik Natan Sharansky after his release from prison, and Elena Bonner, widow of the renowned dissident scientist Andrei Sakharov, to celebrate the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, which helped hundreds of thousands of Soviet Jews emigrate from the USSR. An extraordinary moment for the Jackson legacy, it was fitting that Helen traveled to Israel to soak in the adulation of the crowd. I served as her right-hand staff member at that Jerusalem conference and as her unofficial translator for the Russian emigres eager to convey to Helen what Senator Jackson's leadership—and her own efforts—had meant to them. It was a special role to play. She shared Scoop's commitment to human rights and fully participated in the marking of this crowning achievement.

Given her lifetime of leadership in human rights, the Foundation was proud to establish the Helen H. Jackson Chair for Human Rights at the Jackson School in her honor a decade ago. Dr. Angelina Godoy, the first holder of the Chair, oversees a human rights center that is on the vanguard of activism and scholarship nationally. It is a lasting tribute to Helen.



Helen with John Simpson, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and then director of the Jackson School Jere Bacharach (standing) and Lara Iglitzin, at a signing for one of the endowed professorships given to the School.

Unfailingly gracious and supportive of us all, Helen greatly appreciated the effort to continue the Jackson legacy, which meant the world to her.

Helen, we will miss you.

Lara Iglitzin, Executive Director



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