

# Letters | Feb. 10 Edition

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## **Please help Kelly**

My name is Eric Beemer and I am writing this letter on behalf of my good friend and neighbor Kelly O'Brien.

On the morning of Jan. 25, a fire severely damaged Mr. O'Brien's home, making it unlivable and displacing all of its occupants. Having gone through a similar experience when I was younger, I can relate to the feelings of loss and helplessness from such an event.

I've lived in this amazing place for a better part of my life and started out in the building trades as a teenager working for my father. I now operate a small construction business of my own here on Orcas Island,(Beemer Building Co.).

It's always amazed me how caring and thoughtful this community can be when a tragedy strikes one of our neighbors. I believe strongly in a "pay it forward" way of life and now it's time to step up and help out those affected by this unfortunate event.

Mr. O'Brien has a garage/apartment on his property behind his damaged home that needs finishing. I have volunteered to rally the troops and coordinate getting this apartment finished for him so he can somewhat feel a sense of normalcy again.

In the past, Mr. O'Brien has helped out several islanders by offering rooms to rent and even meals when they had nowhere else to go. If you are in the trades or not, and could volunteer any labor, spare materials, or both to help out, it would be forever appreciated!

The local nonprofit group Orcas Angels stepped up immediately to begin fundraising for materials and other costs. If you can help out in any way, feel free to give me a call with any questions or comments at 376-6968. You can also contact Orcas Angels at 1-800-420-4542 or [www.orcasangels.org](http://www.orcasangels.org).

*Eric B. Beemer*

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