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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **IVAR'S DISCONTINUES ITS 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JUL-IVAR'S FIREWORKS PROGRAM**

*Devotes efforts to feeding the hungry*

SEATTLE—April 3, 2009—This year, fireworks displays around Puget Sound will burst forth with one less program. After 44 years, Ivar's Seafood Restaurants has opted to discontinue its "4<sup>th</sup> of Jul-Ivar's" community fireworks show, Ivar's President Bob Donegan announced today.

"With so many fireworks displays in the Puget Sound, it made more sense for us to put our resources into other areas that really need help: Feeding the hungry," Donegan said.

Through its partnership with Northwest Harvest, a statewide hunger relief agency since 1967, Ivar's will focus more of its efforts on feeding families in the communities it serves. In a typical month, the Northwest Harvest network provides 600,000 client services to Washington State's most vulnerable people. More than half of those served by Northwest Harvest are children and the elderly; others include those with limited incomes and households facing medical or other emergencies. Northwest Harvest reports that the economic downturn has increased the number of families asking for food by 19 percent since this time last year. In addition, a record breaking number of clients have been visiting its Cherry Street Food Bank in Seattle since last fall, with well over 2,400 clients per day on the busiest days.

"The problem of hunger in the Puget Sound has grown dramatically and we are pleased to expand our efforts with Northwest Harvest, focusing on those who need it most," Donegan expressed. "Ivar's will continue its many other community involvement efforts that have supported hundreds of causes throughout Puget Sound."

The 4<sup>th</sup> of Jul-Ivar's fireworks show started in 1964 at Green Lake when Seattle native and Ivar's "flounder" Ivar Haglund was given a last-minute chance to save the town's annual Seattle fireworks show from cancellation. Haglund funded the entire show. As the only fireworks show in town, its original pyrotechnic partner, Hitt Fireworks Company, created a thrilling display that drew attendance from King, Snohomish, Pierce, Kitsap and surrounding counties. In its heyday, the 4<sup>th</sup> of Jul-Ivar's had shows in Lake Union then moved to Elliott Bay. It had over ten thousand shells bursting in air annually, and grew into a daylong festival with music stages, a Kids Fun Zone, Air Parade of vintage aircraft from Museum of Flight, beer & wine gardens and various local food booths. The 4<sup>th</sup> of Jul-Ivar's was also broadcasted on STAR 101.5 and KOMO 4 TV.

Over the years, roughly three dozen fireworks shows have cropped up around Puget Sound, the biggest of which include the Chase Family 4th at Lake Union, the Bellevue Family 4<sup>th</sup>, Renton's Fabulous 4th of July, Everett's Colors of Freedom and Tacoma Freedom Fair and Air Show.

### **About Northwest Harvest**

Northwest Harvest, Washington's own statewide hunger relief agency, provides a proven, successful, and cost-effective model for getting nutritious food to those who need it. More than half of those served by Northwest Harvest are children and the elderly. Its food provides a bridge from temporary crisis to stability, allowing those on limited incomes to use their cash for medical expenses, housing, transportation costs, utilities, and childcare. Northwest Harvest supplies 18 million pounds of food each year to more than 300 food banks, hot meal programs and elementary schools across Washington. It is

also committed to providing the freshest, most nutritious food possible to its clients with fruits and vegetables accounting for 60 percent of the food it distributes. Northwest Harvest's no-fee policy enables its partners to do more, providing a combined half million food services in communities each month. Much of its work is made possible by volunteers of all ages, who give more than 46,000 hours of their time each year to feed the hungry. Northwest Harvest receives no city, county, state, or federal funding for operating expenses and relies solely on contributions from individuals, businesses, foundations, and other organizations.

### **About Ivar's Seafood Restaurants**

Ivar's Seafood Restaurants began on Seattle's waterfront in 1938. Today, there are 27 Ivar's fast casual Seafood Bars and three full service restaurants: Ivar's Acres of Clams, Ivar's Salmon House and Ivar's Mukilteo Landing. Ivar's Seafood, Soup and Sauce Company markets and sells its award-winning soups, chowders and sauces both nationally and internationally. The company also operates 20 regional stadium concessions including Safeco Field, Qwest Field, Husky Stadium and the Comcast Arena at Everett Events Center. Learn more at [www.ivars.net](http://www.ivars.net).

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