

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fellow FISH Volunteers:

Every month, when I sit down to jot a few notes that will hopefully emerge as a coherent and helpful message to my fellow FISH volunteers, I marvel at the number of moving parts that this small non-profit organization has.

I'm also struck by how many people are needed to keep these parts moving seamlessly, so that FISH can accomplish our central mission of helping our less fortunate neighbors.

Two perfect examples come to mind. In late 2021, a small group headed by Dan Fontaine, including Patti MacGillivray, Maura Rush, Martha Dean and Martha Buell, began reviewing our existing "Policies and Procedures" to make them current and complete. This laborious process identified conflicts and omissions in our existing documents and identified fixes. Bear in mind that this was being done as we were planning our move, starting demolition in both buildings, and determining necessary renovations in our new campus. As an organization, we had a lot on our plate! This time-consuming, very detailed effort was completed in late Spring, and was forwarded to your Board in June. After ample time to review the finished product and offer comments, the Revised Policies and Procedures were formally approved by the Board on August 4, 2022. I want to publicly thank Dan and his talented, dedicated team for a superlative job of creating a complete "living" document which will serve as a guide for current and future FISH volunteers.

A second major project was undertaken this Spring after our move and involved a complete makeover of the FISH website, our face to the public. Jeff Deel, Cathey Sadowski, Dave Banks, Kathleen Pock and Kate Roessler worked tirelessly to create a site that is both complete, functional and beautiful. The result is at <https://fishwilliamsburg.org>. The new website was also approved by the Board on the 4th of August. Please check it out. I want to thank Jeff, Cathey, Dave, Kathleen and Kate for a wonderful job creating a wonderful product for FISH. As with the Policies and Procedures document, the website is also a "living" document. Both will be reviewed regularly and enhanced, as required.

As promised last month, the Board also discussed the current masking mandate and decided that a change was in order. Effective immediately, masking will be optional and voluntary for all volunteers. It was felt that in the Pantry, the plastic shields at the Reception Desk offer adequate protection for our volunteers and that they are effectively separated from clients by locked doors.

Similarly, Clothes Closet volunteers would be adequately protected by keeping clients out of the work areas. Our clients will still be required to be masked in the waiting area and in the Closet. We will provide masks to clients who need them.

Volunteers who escort clients to the clothing area will also be required to wear masks at all times. All that said, our primary goal is to keep our volunteers (our most precious resource) and our clients safe at all times. "Breakthrough" infections among fully-vaccinated and boosted individuals have occurred, so if you're concerned at all, mask up!

Regards,
Jack

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FISH Featured in Next Door Neighbors

Did you see the Next Door Neighbors' article, "Helping Fill a Home", featuring FISH with Jack Trotter?

The magazine prefers to focus on one person only, so Jack kindly represented FISH in the August issue, and you may read the article and click-through the entire publication [here](#).



We are grateful to Next Door Neighbors for supporting our effort in reaching the community!

Observations on Giving

Sometimes FISH volunteers have the opportunity to witness true charity. Recently a woman arrived with boxes upon boxes of food, clothing and housewares--items that she had purchased throughout the month to donate. The donation was similar in size to what a neighborhood or church would bring. Her car wasn't the newest or the fanciest. Volunteers had the impression she was not giving from her surplus. When she left, she said she would see us near the end of July, and right on schedule, she delivered another huge donation.

The "frequency guidelines" that FISH follows work well most of the time, but be sure the hungry homeless man on a bicycle gets food, even if he was served just two weeks ago. The amount of food he could carry on his bike then, and how much he can take today are taken into consideration.

Be sure the woman the police took to Avalon last night will get clothes, even if she received clothes recently. Those clothes are not available to her today, so FISH will make sure she has the clothing she needs.

-- Don Butts
Former FISH President

New Website

FISH is proud to announce the release of our brand new website. The fresh site provides clients, volunteers, donors, and the community with an easier way to learn about FISH's services and support our mission.

Please visit our new site at <https://fishwilliamsburg.org>.



Clients needing car or booster seats

The Virginia Department of Health offers a free child safety seat or booster to eligible clients. To check eligibility, call 1-800-732-8333 or visit their website [here](#).



**Virginia Department of Health
Safety Seat Distribution and
Education Program**



The Safety Seat Program is a statewide child safety seat distribution and education program offered free of charge to eligible families.

To qualify for a free child safety seat or booster, applicants must be:

- Eligible for WIC, Medicaid or FAMS
- A resident of Virginia
- A custodial parent, legal guardian, or foster parent of a child who is seven years old or younger, or at least in the last trimester of pregnancy and whose child fits within the program's safety seat manufacturer's guidelines
- Attend a safety seat installation and use class in its entirety
- Sign a waiver of liability release form

For more information concerning the program or a local distribution site near you, call the Injury, Violence and Tobacco Prevention Program information line at 1-800-732-8333 or visit our web site at www.safeseatva.org. Supplies are limited, so be sure to apply early.




Community Events

Socks & Underwear Shower

The Williamsburg Baptist Church holds a "Socks & Underwear Shower" for FISH before the school year starts.

Mickey Halpin was the Shoe Lady in the FISH Clothes Closet for many years. Sue Williams replaced Mickey in this role (see May, 2022 newsletter).

For your convenience, you may leave new socks and underwear at the FISH office.



Representing FISH:
Jack Trotter, Jill Holroyd and Patti McGillivray

WJCC School Social Work Event

On August 11, FISH participated in an event called SPARK (Supporting Parents and reaching Kids) which targets families who are experiencing housing challenges.

The WJCC School Social Workers invite about 250 students and their parents, or guardians to meet with several community agencies to educate families on available resources.

City of Williamsburg Human Services Community Resource Event

In June, FISH participated in the City of Williamsburg's Human Services Community Resource Event, to introduce families to the many area resources available to them. We provided Food Lion gift cards, informational flyers and brochures.

Holly Trotter and Cathey Sadowski (not pictured) attended the FISH table.





Donations

CMA's Williamsburg Ford dealership recently made a very generous donation of \$2,330 to FISH.

Pictured below are (L to R) Michael Motes, FISH Treasurer, Jess Gentry, CMA, General Manager and Jack Trotter, FISH President.



A local church donated \$50 for children school shoes. We were able to use the money to purchase 10 pairs of clearance shoes at Target!

Donating Made Easy

Online donations may be made by clicking this Donate button

Donate



or scanning this QR code



To scan a QR code:

- Open your cellphone's camera.
- Focus the camera on this QR code.
- Follow the instructions on your phone screen to complete the action.

All donations directly support FISH services to our neighbors in need.

Thank You



Volunteers

Helping a First-Time Client Feel Comfortable

As we serve our clients, we do our best to help them feel physically and emotionally comfortable. This is especially important with a new client that may be apprehensive and nervous during their first visit to FISH.

We recently had a new client with some physical limitations that requested some clothes for a family of three and some housewares. A clothing volunteer made her feel welcome and took the time to get to know her and her needs. Our volunteer positioned and moved a chair in the Clothing Closet for her to be comfortable as the volunteer found out what she would like and helped her select some clothes.

The client was so thrilled to get a 2-piece outfit for church. Finding a scarf and purse to match the outfit made her day.

If we ever wondered whether we should stock hats, she is one reason why. Her doctor had encouraged her to wear a hat to minimize a medication side effect from exposure to the sun. We had the perfect broad-brimmed, sun-protecting hat.

Our volunteer was so pleased that she could help her out and make her feel a little better about herself and her situation.

This was another example of how FISH makes a difference in the Williamsburg community - one volunteer at a time!

-- Dan Fontaine

New Volunteers

Andrew Lind
Laura Arndt
Laura Engelund
Susan Woloszyn

Welcome to FISH!



FISH Focus

A special shout-out to the ladies who prepare and mail thank-you notes to donors. This is an essential volunteer position that few realize exists.



Ronda Roberts
Cathey Sadowski
Mary Ann Brown

Thank you for adding additional roles to your already busy schedules!

Examples of how You and FISH Impact our Community

FISH STORIES

FISH Helps a Grandmother

A lady unexpectedly became the caregiver for her grandchildren and needed clothing. She was so grateful that FISH was able to provide her some outfits.

Cap & Gown

There was a W&M student whose parents could not afford a cap and gown for him to graduate. We found an appropriate cap and gown. He was overwhelmed with gratitude.

Helping During a Time of Loss

A little boy and his dad needed a suit to go to a funeral. FISH found two suits for them.

Baptismal Gown

A couple needed a dress to baptize their daughter. FISH had a baptismal gown that they altered for the little girl.

High School Memories

A client could not afford to buy a dress for their daughter to go to the prom. FISH found and altered a dress so that she could attend her high school senior prom.

A Christmas Present

There was a man who needed a coat for the holidays and was so excited when FISH found a leather coat that fit him. It was like an unexpected Christmas present.

Re-entering Society

Parole officers refer clients to FISH who need clothing as they re-enter the community. FISH will also supply clothing to the client's family.