



Food Pantry and Clothing
 Serving the Community Since 1975

NEWS

November 2022



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Fellow FISH Volunteers:

Wow, on the 9th of April, we hosted volunteers and dignitaries at a dedication ceremony celebrating our move to 312-314 Second Street and our new campus. I know I'm getting old, but good grief, doesn't it seem like the time just flew by? We're in the midst of our busiest two months of the year and the number of clients being served is steadily climbing, the result, I believe, of increased visibility on a major Williamsburg thoroughfare and marked increase in need. Food insecurity remains around 10% for adults and 18% for children in this post-COVID period.

Reflecting on our continued success in meeting these daily challenges, I continue to marvel at our volunteers. Joseph Campbell once wrote that "A hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself". Certainly that statement applies to you. You heroes show up daily in either the Pantry or Clothes Closet to serve our fellow citizens without reservation or complaint. You exhibit that one single characteristic so vital to our success--empathy--the ability to understand and share the feeling of others. You understand that our clients would rather be almost anywhere rather than at FISH. But here they are because they have to be, and your welcoming attitude and empathy convey to them that "we get it". Their situation is not of their choosing, and they're all trying to become a "former" FISH client. One of the greatest feelings in the world is when a former client re-appears with a food or clothing donation saying, "You helped me before, now I want to give back".

During the next six weeks or so, I ask that you continue your heroic deeds with patience, love and good cheer. It's going to get very, very busy but we're in a good place (geographically and organizationally) to serve the Greater Williamsburg area with food, clothing, good humor and empathy.

Holly and I venture to Shaker Heights, Ohio, next week to see our daughter-in-law and three granddaughters and celebrate Thanksgiving with them for the first time in three years. Please accept our sincerest wish to you all for a safe, happy and joyous Thanksgiving.

Warmest regards,

Jack Trotter
 President

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Costume Sale Fundraiser Results

Originally published in the Virginia Gazette, November 5, 2022

Combine a hefty dose of generosity from the Williamsburg community with a spirit of fun. Mix in the energy and enthusiasm of our W&M College students. Add sparkle, a surprise stilt walker, and a Blind Bid event that included a remarkable chicken costume, a scarecrow quilt, and assortments of cookies from a local pastry chef. The result was our most successful Costume Sale ever, raising **\$8,502!**

Since 1990, the W&M Catholic Campus Ministry has sponsored this fundraiser, where all proceeds benefit FISH, a local food pantry/clothes closet. On October 19, fifty volunteers from the campus and the community worked together to create a pop-up Thrift Extravaganza in the Sadler Center Tidewater Rooms. Austin Moschler, owner of VA Moving Company, donated a van and driver to move clothes, racks, and 150 boxes and bins to the campus. In 4 hours, the empty Tidewater Rooms were transformed. Bargain hunters found vintage and global fashions, formal wear and costumes, jewelry and shoes. All were donations to FISH that were not needed for the mission to provide practical clothes.

The FISH Clothes Closet, located at 314 Second St., is a 1500 sq ft space where clients make an appointment to select clothes, shoes, and accessories at no cost. Clients can return seasonally. You--our community members--provide gently used clothes. Forty-five volunteers receive donations in person or through the drop-off bin beside the entrance. They sort, size and restock the display racks and shelves five days a week. It's a daunting job accomplished with good humor and comradery.

Funds from The Costume Sale are used to purchase socks, underwear, and items in short supply.

We thank all who keep the Closet filled. Extending care to our neighbors strengthens our entire community.

-- Karen Berquist
Costume Sale Coordinator

Experience the excitement of the students in this 2:20 minute video: The Costume Sale 2022: Opening the doors!
<https://youtu.be/3sFbPd1QZ-w>

Special thanks to Austin Moschler, CEO, [Virginia Moving Company](#), for his gift of moving the Costume Sale items between FISH and the W&M campus.



Mike Motes, FISH Treasurer, dresses for the job in a treasure from the Costume Sale.



Baptist Collegiate Ministries of William & Mary

Baptist Collegiate Ministries of William & Mary delivered a truckload of food and hygiene products collected by students in their annual "Trick or Eat" on Halloween.



Kappa Alpha Theta of William & Mary

Kappa Alpha Theta of William and Mary donated breakfast foods to FISH collected in a "Back to School" service project.



Norge Elementary School



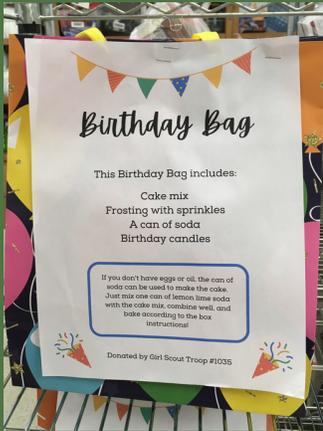
The Norge Elementary School Student Council Association sponsored their annual canned food drive as a competition among the grades.

The competition increased their donation over last year!

Great incentive!

On the left, Jack Trotter, FISH President, accepts the donation from the The Norge Elementary representatives.

Blessings at Thanksgiving



Girl Scout Troop 1035 Birthday Bags

Girl Scout Troop 1035 assembled "Birthday Bags" with cake mix, frosting, candles and sprinkles to help FISH clients celebrate.

They also included a can of soda that could be used as a substitute for oil and eggs, and instructions.

Thank you for your thoughtful planning and packaging.

BellyButton's Boutique

Creative Chloe Riportella suggested that guests bring laundry detergent to be donated to FISH when they attended the Grand Opening of her store, BellyButton's Boutique on October 21.

The boutique, located at 6623 Richmond Road, Suite E, specializes in one-of-a-kind handmade clothing. Chloe creates each piece from 100% recycled, repurposed, and re-loved fabrics, with the goal of supporting a healthy sustainable environment.



Children's Shoes Needed

We were informed that the 2023 Shoeless Showdown was cancelled. FISH was the benefitting charity and received almost 300 pairs of children shoes at the 2022 event.

Very few children's shoes are donated to FISH. The cancellation of the 2023 Shoeless Showdown will definitely impact our ability to help our clients.

If you were looking for an opportunity for donating to FISH, children's shoes are always welcomed!

Of course, at this time, winter clothes, shoes, and coats for school age children are always needed.

Holiday Closings

FISH will be closed on the following days:

- November 23, 24 & 25 (Wednesday - Friday)
- December 26 (Monday)
- January 2, 2023 (Monday)

Fundraiser at Billsburg Brewery

The Hatcher Group of eXp Realty and Billsburg Brewery organized a food drive and fundraiser for FISH on October 6. Lisa Hatcher (plaid shirt) and Heather McSmith (green shirt) collected over 20 bags of food for FISH and the Brewery donated \$0.25 of any beer purchased that day.

Many thanks for using a fun event to help our neighbors in need.



Thank You

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.

Also, when shopping through the AmazonSmile program, a portion of your purchase price will be donated to FISH. Click the amazonsmile button below to start shopping.



Another convenient option is to donate through the [Target Wish List Registry](#)



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



Volunteers

Parting Thoughts

In 2014, I retired from my front office job at an orthodontic practice. I wanted to follow my 24 years there with meaningful volunteer work. Church and senior center efforts, while pleasing, were not enough.

Then my friend Patsy Magus, urged me to try FISH. I did, and found the people there were delightful, and the service they provided to those who really needed food, clothing and housewares was truly valuable. I was glad to become part of an important effort that genuinely helped people down on their luck in a tough economy.

My eight years with FISH have raced by. As I leave to be near my granddaughters in North Carolina, I have a goal to find something like FISH there!

You have meant so very much to me as friends and teammates. Ling Ngo came to be, for me, the very essence of FISH. She was loving, caring, and made such a difference to everyone who met her. She lived by the words she passed on to us: "Friends are the jewels in our lives".

I have taken much pleasure in recruiting others for FISH, watching the joy and satisfaction they find when they join the team. FISH is an AMAZING team, just AMAZING. I will miss all of you, profoundly.

-- Yve Grundy



Random Acts of Kindness

FISH volunteers are kind-hearted people that like to help. This is true not only while volunteering at FISH, but also in our daily lives. Here's a recent example.

A FISH volunteer was visiting a longtime FISH volunteer at Spring Arbor. A resident in a wheelchair was struggling to get back into the building and to her room. The volunteer asked the resident if she needed some help, which she accepted. It was only a momentary diversion for the volunteer, but was likely a memorable moment for the resident.

It really doesn't take an effort to show a little kindness and brighten someone's day! That's just what FISH volunteers do!

-- Dan Fontaine



New Volunteers

- Bill Williamson
- Cami Bishop
- Lorna Wilson
- Rachel Demnicki - college student volunteering during the holidays
- Richard Thek
- Sande Bishop

Thank you for choosing FISH!

Volunteer Spotlight

The Gift of a Smile by Rosalie Frey, Food Pantry & Clothes Closet

Q1. Why did you choose to volunteer at FISH?

A1. I was introduced to FISH via a bulletin from St. Stephen Lutheran Church. Early on, the local churches assisted FISH in sizing clothes. I wanted to see how FISH operated, so in June, 2018, I began my service in the Food Pantry.

Q2. What do you find most rewarding about FISH?

A2. This past summer, a woman from Afghanistan came to FISH for clothes and food. She also needed a heavy-duty needle and thread to make prayer mats. With the assistance of the Clothes Closet Co-coordinator, Patti MacGillivray, we supplied the client with the needed items, and she left happy. The Clothes Closet has an excellent selection of needles and thread.

I feel it is important to take an interest in our clients and to listen to their needs—that is why FISH is in the community. Small acts of kindness bring joy to the heart. At the end of the day, the clients are leaving better and happier with their supplies, whether it be clothes, groceries, a Food Lion gift card, or simply a SMILE.



Q3. Do you have a specific experience while volunteering at FISH that you would like to share?

A3. A highlight for me was when FISH Chairman Jack Trotter and Cathey Sadowski, Secretary, teamed with the Williamsburg Bike Co-Op to provide bicycles to clients who had only “foot transportation”. FISH links the client to the Bike Co-Op. Community service is about teams, and the Co-Op is a great addition to our other community partners.

Also, when Jack came to St. Stephen's to inspect the chairs that the church was donating to FISH, he observed the new freezers in the pantry and realized that FISH needed new freezers for its Food Pantry. The St. Stephen's representative teamed him up with the Richmond source to make this a reality. What an enhancement to the FISH Pantry!

Q4. Is there anything else you would like others to know about you?

A4. My professional career was centered around “people”. I was a Certified Dental Assistant for many years across the U.S. Next came the position as Escrow Administrator for a mortgage bank. In 2000, I retired from the Pentagon Federal Credit Union where I worked in member service and, in 1996, was Employee of the Year.

My “service to others” has been varied including church altar guild and quilt group, Homeowners' Association newsletters, caregiver, JCC Neighborhood Connections, Hospice House, and sewing for retirement homes. I like to stay busy helping others with my hands, a smile, and as the saying goes, “giving back”.