



Food Pantry and Clothing  
Serving the Community Since 1975

# NEWS



November 2023

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FISH?

Greetings Fellow FISH Family!

November is here and we have been blessed by the vibrant colors of autumn. That beauty is fleeting and now the leaves are raining down and the yardwork begins. November is also the month in which we celebrate all that we have for which to be thankful.

We at FISH are so thankful for the large family of amazing volunteers that serve so kindly and graciously. Our family of volunteers has now grown to almost 200! The total hours a volunteer serves may vary from a half a day each month, a full day each month, to multiple days each week.

There are those who wear many hats within FISH, working in the Pantry, Clothes Closet, food pickup, food distribution, communication, administration, and serving on the Board. Each of those volunteer hours is vital to the operation of FISH.

Every volunteer is valuable and their commitment is deeply appreciated. FISH could not be the life-supporting, life-changing organization that it is without each and every one of you! Your dedication and sincere compassion for helping those in need is evident every day.

We are all in this together!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Joe Benedetti  
President

BE THANKFUL

BE GRATEFUL

BE BLESSED

### IN THIS ISSUE

[Thank You Williamsburg  
Treasured Memories](#)  
Page 2

[WorldFlight Results](#)  
Page 3

[Costume Sale Results](#)  
Page 4

[Donations](#)  
Page 5-8

[Diaper Program  
New Volunteers](#)  
[FISH Focus](#)  
Page 9

[Volunteer Spotlight](#)  
Page 10

Donate



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# THANK YOU GREATER WILLIAMSBURG FOR YOUR LOYALTY AND CONTINUED SUPPORT

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[fishwilliamsburg.org](http://fishwilliamsburg.org)

## *Treasured Memories*



### **Joan Devlin**

FISH recently lost a long-time dear friend, Joan Devlin, who was a regular on the clothing team and volunteered until shortly before we moved from Waller Mill. Many at FISH will miss her cheerful hello as she slowly made her way into the sorting room stopping to talk with all the volunteers. The family has asked that donations in her memory be made to FISH.

[Full Obituary](#)



### **William "Bill" R. Williamson**

William (Bill) R. Williamson, a faithful Food Shopper for FISH at the Virginia Peninsula Foodbank, passed away on Thursday, November 9, 2023. A Celebration of Life Service will be held at Williamsburg Landing at a later date, followed by Interment in Arlington National Cemetery. We will miss Bill's cheerful and caring spirit.

[Full Obituary](#)

*Our condolences to the families of these treasured volunteers.*

## WorldFlight Soars Past Goal!



The goal was \$7500, but the final tally is **\$9035** -- a record for WorldFlight Team Virginia and a significant gift for FISH!

To the teams who contributed hours in the cockpit simulators plus financial support, and to everyone who donated and spread the word about this event - Thank you for Making a Difference!

Congratulations and gratitude to Fred Kurasiewicz for creating this event and opportunity.

*In case you missed the details, please check out the [FISH October newsletter](#).*



L-R: New Volunteer Steve White, Driver Keith Appel, Bill Dean, Long-time Volunteer.

## The Peanut Shop of Williamsburg

We've received two big donations from the Peanut Shop: one with Smithfield country ham and the other with biscuit mix and other food items.



### Holiday Closings

Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, November 22, 23 & 24  
Monday, December 25, 2023 - Christmas  
Monday, January 1, 2024 - New Year's Day



### Donation Receipts

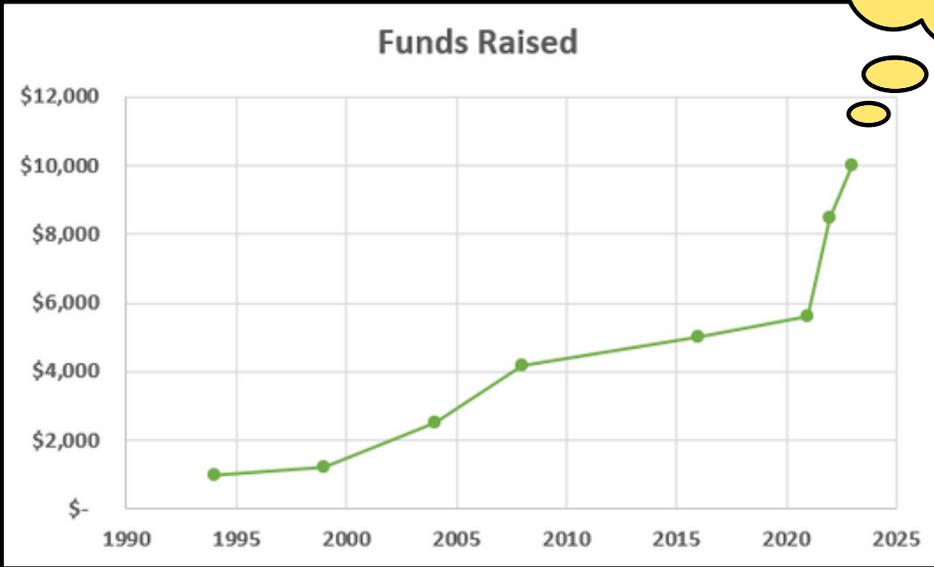
If you have not received a thank you for your donation, it may be that we received your donation from a third party without identification of the actual donor. If you are missing a receipt, please write us at [fishwilliamsburg@gmail.com](mailto:fishwilliamsburg@gmail.com).



# Costume Sale Success !!!

Proceeds from 33 years of The Costume Sale at W&M sponsored by Catholic Campus Ministry (CCM)

\$10,000 . . . and counting!  
Final tally will be available early 2024.



German House tutor claiming her \$250 from the 50/50 raffle.

## Our deep gratitude to:

- This generous community for the donations
- Anonymous donor and Davenport Financial who funded 20 Staff Discount coupons (\$10 each) distributed on Thursday at opening doors and again at 2:30 when many housekeeping staff ended their shift.
- Anonymous donors who "sweetened the pot" of our 50/50 raffle with \$200.
- Anonymous supporter who provided storage for the commercial clothes racks used at the event.
- CCM - Catholic Campus Ministry, who funded over \$200 in parking fees, flyers and posters for campus publicity. CCM also provided last-minute storage for 42 boxes and bins when we ran out of storage space at FISH.
- Bruton High School students who cleaned, sorted, and prepared hundreds of shoes for the sale.
- Anonymous donor who stored nine oversized bins of special items.
- Austin Moschler, CEO, [VA Moving Company](#), for moving the Costume Sale items between FISH and the W&M campus.
- Wonderful supporters and the many student and community volunteers who transported, set up, worked the event, and broke it down at the end!

For historical background on this event, please check out the [FISH newsletters: October 2023 and October 2022](#).

**Inviting YOU to join this wonderful team working for FISH.**



Photos courtesy of Jacque Carter



# Donations

## Brandon Woods



Kim Beagle represented the Brandon Woods neighborhood that donated 100 bags of food! Kim, along with Sharon Villines and the other members of the Brandon Woods Community Action Club, did a great job!

## Williamsburg Campus Child Care

Nicole Norton brought a great donation from Williamsburg Campus Child Care (WCCC) which is a nonprofit organization that has had a successful program in Williamsburg since 1981.

## St Stephen Preschool

Holly Ready from St Stephen Preschool delivered 20 bags of groceries.



## Williamsburg Presbyterian Church

FISH is grateful for the consistent monthly grocery donations from this church.

Toby Lane delivered in October, and Eileen Cameron delivered 22 bags in November.



## Williamsburg Artists Group

The Williamsburg Artists Group Art Show, was held on October 27-28, at Bruton Parish House.

The participating artists donated \$400 to FISH from the sales. Here Monica Schaffler presents a check to Joe Benedetti, President.



# Donations

## NAVSEA



Naval representative Dempsey Bullock donated many blankets to the Clothes Closet.

*Thank you for this timely donation and your service to our country!*

## Kingsmill Realty

Brooke Moore (R), Director of Realty, delivered Kingsmill Realty's 35-bag donation. Volunteer Ruth Bott (L) accepted the donation.



## Norge Elementary School

FISH is so fortunate to have the support of so many in our community. A great example is Lori Harms who is the Student Council Association (SCA) Moderator at Norge Elementary School. Each year, she oversees the SCA food drive for FISH with each grade level assigned a different food item. This year, the Fourth Grade won the competition and will be given a prize, but all the students are winners to us. The donation amounted to about 1200 food items that were quickly put on the FISH shelves.

A special thanks to Dan Fontaine and Bob Stanzione who picked up the donation at Norge which was a big help.



*Amidst the excitement and activity of receiving and shelving donations, the volunteers always try to get a picture and basic information. Any omissions are not intentional.*



# Donations

## Wells Fargo Advisors



Maura and Tom Rush picked up this food collection from Wells Fargo Advisors which asked conference attendees to help FISH serve the community.

## Fraternal Order of Eagles Aerie 4548

Our local Fraternal Order of Eagles presented FISH Directors Maura Rush (L) and Jill Holroyd (R) with a \$1,000 check!



Your gift will bring smiles to many clients over the holidays!

## Williamsburg Chapter, NSDAR

Joe Benedetti and Dan Fontaine (back row) attended the DAR ceremony at Cedar Grove Cemetery on October 11, and collected a caring donation.



## Williamsburg Montessori



Angela Tambone from Williamsburg Montessori with a very generous donation from the preschoolers.



Donations

## PORCH



Sarah Weiser and her very generous neighbors support FISH every two months by supporting her PORCH Communities initiative. This month, they helped with Thanksgiving items which were needed.

## Philanthropic Educational Organization

PEO is an international women’s organization (US and Canada) which has goals of raising funds for women’s scholarships and philanthropic projects. There are five chapters in Williamsburg. These donations were made by Chapter BQ.

*You lightened the burden of many parents with your large donation of backpacks, socks, jackets and school supplies that arrived before the school year!*



## Commonwealth Senior Living



Jacquelyn Samuels planned a Thanksgiving meal then brought enough for 8 families to enjoy a Thanksgiving dinner complete with a turkey and trimmings.



Dan Fontaine (L) and Bob Stanzone (R) assist a representative from Commonwealth Senior Living with their thoughtful food donation.



## We Have Diapers + Drivers Needed



FISH is now a partner with the Greater Hampton Roads Diaper Bank and will pick up diapers monthly for our clients in need.

We join 45+ other service groups and churches who also provide diapers for little ones.

If anyone is interested in contributing to this necessary program, or possibly driving to Chesapeake monthly to collect our allotment, please contact Jill Holroyd at 757-903-7839 or [theholroyds1@gmail.com](mailto:theholroyds1@gmail.com).



Although the day was rainy and cool, the FISH Clothing volunteers were in the holiday spirit on Halloween.

Pictured are Left to Right: Patti MacGillivray, Barbara Eddins, and Cindy Tocci. Their outfits were appreciated by volunteers and clients alike!

## Welcome New Volunteers!



- Jean Petkofsky
- Jim Nebgen
- Laura Custance
- Lauren Ramsey-Felts
- Saige Stinson
- Shelley Downing
- Steve White
- Suzanne Wall
- Vicki Henninger

## FISH FOCUS

A special shout-out to those who work behind the scenes with the administration of FISH, ranging from data entry to website management.

While they prefer no credit, we want to recognize them for their gifts of time and expertise, in addition to the time they contribute to other FISH services.

- Cathey Sadowski
- Cela Schmidt
- Dave Banks
- Kate Roessler
- Kathleen Pock
- Reta Johnson
- Pat Kerr



# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

## PAYING IT FORWARD X 2

**Cela Schmidt**  
**Pantry - Clothing - Data Entry**



### **Q1. Why did you choose to volunteer at FISH?**

A1. When I retired, I wanted to give back to my community in ways that weren't possible when I was working full time. I was very impressed by what FISH was doing for their clients and the fact that the entire organization was run by volunteers. I knew several people from my church that volunteered at FISH and one of them suggested that I contact Martha Buell to work in the Pantry. I started working in the Pantry shortly after contacting Martha. I enjoy working with computer programs, and after working as a Pantry volunteer for some time, I also started doing data entry once a week. Once we split the buildings, I started working in the Clothes Closet as well.

### **Q2. What do you find most rewarding about volunteering at FISH?**

A2. Sometimes, after seeing the news, I feel overwhelmed with a feeling of helplessness at all of the seemingly endless problems in the world. When I'm at FISH, I realize that maybe I can't solve the big picture problems, but I can help someone choose an outfit to go to work, or to school. I can make sure that person has a warm coat or a decent pair of shoes. In any given day, I can fold towels, clean housewares, stock shelves or sort clothing, and in these everyday tasks, help provide a solution for one person's immediate problem. That sense of being able to do something, no matter how small, to alleviate someone's burden is very rewarding.

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

A3. I had an experience recently when a woman brought a large amount of expensive men's clothing to donate. She said she always brings donations to FISH because she had been a FISH client several years ago and she would never forget how kind everyone was to her during a difficult period in her life. I was very touched by her story and thrilled that she was now in the position to be a donor.

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

A4. I love to travel, do puzzles, walk and read, not necessarily in any order. I also feel that I have been very fortunate to have had wonderful support from family, friends and mentors in my life. I know many others have not been so fortunate, so I'm glad to have a chance to pay it forward.