



Food Pantry and Clothing
Serving the Community Since 1975

NEWS

July 2023



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FISH?

Greetings, Fellow Volunteers!

As most are aware, Jack Trotter has stepped down as FISH President. To say that Jack has been a good president would be seriously understating his contributions to the FISH organization. He has been an amazing leader! Jack guided us through the most difficult time FISH has experienced since it was established.

FISH was given short notice that we would need to find a new home. That task was onerous and time consuming. To add to the difficulty, this happened during the pandemic. Jack kept the faith and persevered through all the challenges presented. His commitment to raise community awareness of FISH and what it offers to the Williamsburg community has been a much appreciated success.

FISH has always been blessed with faithful leadership. Jack will continue to be a valuable presence to us. I find it an honor to have been asked to serve as your interim president.

We now have a Facilities Coordinator, Bob Stanzione, who has accepted the responsibility for overseeing the health and well-being of our buildings. He was immediately tossed from the frying pan into the fire with plumbing problems. We are happy to report that at this time those issues have been resolved.

I would like to assure all volunteers that the FISH Board of Directors is aware of the new and ongoing challenges that we face today. With the meteoric rise of clients and limited food availability, the Board has been and will continue to be committed to dealing with these problems in the most sensitive and efficient manner as possible.

Thanks to each and everyone of you for all you do!

Joe Benedetti
President

NOTE:

Bob is in charge of building contracts and is not the FISH "handyman". Please use the Suggestion Box in the Food Pantry for comments, suggestions, and requests that may need attention.

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Donate



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Made His Year!

It is so rewarding to help our clients in the Clothes Closet. There was a recent client who was especially memorable.

A client had to leave behind all his personal possessions when he became homeless. His girlfriend was expecting a baby soon, and he was strongly focused on doing right by his girlfriend and baby. He had recently gotten a job and moved into an apartment. He was also in the process of getting a second job.

Although he was only looking for some black pants for his job, he was eligible for clothing. I encouraged him to select any clothing that would help him. As he selected items in the Clothes Closet, he repeatedly expressed how grateful he was to FISH.

Also, even though he was not eligible for housewares yet, I offered him to select some towels, a pillow, and some houseware items. He had a tear in his eye when I said that he could have a toaster oven.

The client had a "sponsor" that came with him to FISH. The "sponsor" had met the client somewhere and was taken by how the client wanted to get on his feet again. The "sponsor" was guiding him to agencies, including FISH, that could help him move forward. The "sponsor" told me that the caring, encouraging, and thoughtful support of the client not only made the client's day but his year!

What a wonderful experience! He's the kind of client that is a true joy to help!

-- Dan Fontaine

Appreciation to our Food Lion Monday Morning Team

In addition to our Foodbank Shoppers mentioned in the June newsletter, we have a team of heavy-lifters who faithfully on Monday mornings pick up and deliver our Food Lion and Dollar Tree purchases. While they might or might not see this as a good workout, we still greatly appreciate their effort and reliability.



L to R: Mark Prosser, Bob Stanzione, Dan Fontaine, Tony Zotto, and Dick Young delivering the Food Lion purchase.

Team Members

- Bob Delo
- Bob Stanzione
- Bob Voigt
- Dan Fontaine
- Dick Young
- Forrest Williamson
- John Ellis
- Mark Prosser
- Tony Zotto



Bob Voigt and John Ellis unload the Dollar Tree purchase.

The Smile Group



Every month The Smile Group selects a different charity or non-profit organization to promote on their social media pages and within the 6 offices of Dr. James Burden, D.D.S. & Associates. Their goal is to raise awareness by promoting education, donating links, volunteer opportunities, etc.

They selected FISH for July and donated \$10 for every person that dressed up in a red-white-blue patriotic outfit and visited their office on "This Terrific Tuesday", July 11. They collected \$200 for FISH !!

Kudos for creativity, and thank you for your brightening smiles and enthusiastic support of FISH!

CMA's Williamsburg Ford

Jess Gentry (front center) and his staff from CMA's Williamsburg Ford presented FISH with a check for \$1500, \$133 in cash and 75 bags of food. Maura Rush (right), Director and Food Donations Coordinator, with assistance from Bob Stanzione (back center), Facilities Coordinator, accepted. Part of this donation was collected by the State Farm office of Steve Sparkman--another great example of our community working together!



PORCH

Sarah Weiser happily delivered the donation from PORCH, an all volunteer, grassroots hunger relief organization in Williamsburg.

PORCH collects food and cash donations through monthly neighborhood food drives and distributes those donations to feed hundreds of at-risk families in our community through distribution partners. Holly Hills is the first neighborhood participating in this area.



Bruton Parish Episcopal Church



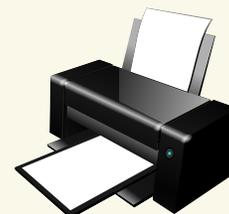
The parishioners of Bruton Parish donated 122 bags of food on June 24, and helped sort and shelve the items.



New Printer

Jan and Howard Gibeling donated a printer which is a terrific upgrade and a cost-saver on printer ink.

Jan, Howard and FISH Secretary Cathey Sadowski collaborated on the install.





ATTENTION

Flashlights:

Emergency flashlights are available in both FISH buildings.

Pantry:

both are in a cubby right outside the volunteer restroom.

Clothes Closet:

one is by the phone and the other one is on the supply shelf opposite the utility sink.

Clean Donations:

Our Clothes Closet provides clean, usable items to our clients. Please pass the word that while we appreciate all donations, it is critical that they be clean and without stains and tears.

Being more accessible in our new location means increased donations, but it is essential that these donations be clean. We will include the request on our website and on signs on the Drop-box and the Clothes Closet door. Thank you in advance for your help.

FISH wants to thank everyone that contributed to the Williamsburg Area Meals on Wheels Summer Meals for Kids program. We received a lot of juice and snacks, as well as a couple of monetary donations. Thank you again for your generosity.

-- Holly Trotter
Food Coordinator

What's in the box? Sox?

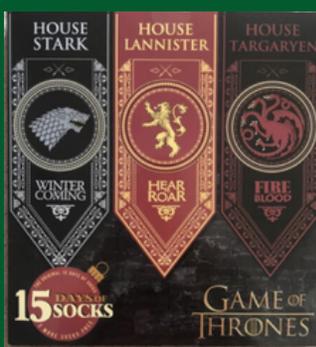
More fun items arrived!
4 pairs of pizza socks great for casual wear.



New Volunteers

Barbara Perelman
Catherine Dix Allen
Kellie Unsworth

Welcome to FISH!



15 days of Game of Thrones socks.

-- Cindy Tocci, Director & Clothes Closet Co-Coordinator

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.

Volunteer Spotlight

ALL IN TOGETHER

Dale Huebner, Food Pantry

Q1. Why did you choose to volunteer at FISH?

A1. Since retiring in 2002, I have always volunteered. During the summers I volunteered at a thrift shop in a Methodist church where people from the community dropped off clothing, bedding and household items. We cleaned them and sold them for reasonable amounts of money. When I moved to Williamsburg in 2013, I looked around for another organization where I could help and found FISH at our previous location on Waller Mill Road. I was in charge of donations and worked many days a week keeping the shelves stocked. Now we are in a lovely facility on Second Street and I have continued working several days a week by helping with deliveries, donations and stocking the shelves in the Food Pantry. Also, when there is a need, I deliver surplus items to Williamsburg House of Mercy to support one of our community partners. Volunteering is just part of my life and I really enjoy the time I spend on Second Street.



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

A2. One of the most rewarding aspects of being at FISH is seeing so many others give their time to help out others. They are very generous and kind and have the same kind of core that I do. And, I thoroughly enjoy their company!

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

A3. On occasion, I have had opportunities to sit at the front desk, receiving and checking in the clients. Working in that capacity is probably one of my favorites. People who really have a need come in to receive either food and/or clothing and patiently wait to receive whatever they came for. They are so very grateful for whatever supplies we can give them. I have never seen or heard a complaint about our service and what the clients receive. It makes me feel so good that all of us are here to serve those who have a need.

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

A4. I was a teacher and consultant in New Jersey for forty years. Along with that, I managed mid-rise properties for ten years and had my own management company for three more years. After ten years into retirement, along with my partner, we owned and managed housekeeping cottages while also running a successful laundromat.

For many years I have had an extensive collection of 1940s political memorabilia and in 2022 published a book on the 1940 Presidential election between FDR and Wendell Willkie.

On the side, I help a few friends out with their financial planning.

