



Food Pantry and Clothing
Serving the Community Since 1975

NEWS



September 2023

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT FISH?

Greetings Fellow FISH Family!

As the mornings start to have those pleasant crisp breezes, we know summer is coming to an end. Children are at the bus stops waiting to go to school. FISH will soon have a covered WATA bus stop out front. This will be a blessing to many of our clients, and a relief to Jack Trotter who worked very hard to see this happen.

Many of the temporary workers who were using FISH services have returned home, and the challenge of meeting those added requests has been rectified. Even with that issue resolved, the number of clients continues to rise. Food availability and prices continue to be a concern but, as of now, a concern that we can manage.

It takes individuals, churches, businesses and other organizations combined to make it possible for FISH to effectively serve others. It is through the generosity of our community that FISH is able to be a positive presence in the Williamsburg community.

Thanks for all you do! Together we will continue to serve those in need with kindness and respect.

Joe Benedetti
President

Who is Joe Benedetti?

Some of our new volunteers may not know who Joe, our new president, is even though we have featured him in past newsletters.

Joe was born and raised in Varina, Virginia. He graduated from Benedictine High School and attended VCU where he met and later married his wife of 50 years, Annie. He spent the majority of his working career with Philip Morris, and retired in 2007. In 2008, he began volunteering at FISH specifically working with the "Fourth Friday Team" where he and Annie continue to serve to date. Joe also currently serves as Chairman of the Expanding the Footprint Committee.

Joe and Annie have lived in New Kent County for 28 years, and have one daughter and three grandchildren. He serves as the First Elder in the Williamsburg Seventh-day Adventist Church and teaches the middle school Sabbath School class.

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Donate



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Grocery Grab of the Month

How about adding one item every month to your grocery shopping list for FISH?

While we are low on many items, this month we need peanut butter.



The Grocery Grab collection box is inside the back door of the Food Pantry.

Many thanks in advance from the Food Pantry Coordinators, Jill Holroyd and Maura Rush.

School Clothes Needed

Please help students this school year by donating:

- New Socks & Underwear
- Athletic Shoes
- Jackets
- Hoodies & Sweatshirts
- School Clothes



All sizes needed. Please make sure everything is new or gently used, in season, and clean (no stains or rips) so items can be provided to our clients immediately.



Many thanks in advance from the Clothes Closet Coordinators, Patti MacGillivray and Cindy Tocci.

A Grateful Family

Imagine trying to make dinner in a hotel room with only a microwave and a crockpot!



FISH has partnered with GWOM (Greater Williamsburg Outreach Mission) to provide those living in hotels with food and food-preparation basics. GWOM supplies a "kitchen kit" of utensils, dish towels, can openers, etc., and FISH provides crockpots and groceries. All items are tailored to microwave and crockpot cooking.

In mid-August, a homeless family with a 3 year old were thrilled to receive a kit, crockpot and groceries! What a difference these easy cooking appliances can make to a family struggling to get by!

That Special Item

One of the reasons I enjoy assisting clients in the Clothes Closet is the look on their faces and exclamation of joy when they find that special item.



I recently assisted a lady of a family of 6. She had 4 young boys, so finding clothing was easy. The special moment came when she spotted a waffle maker. She said, "Oh, my boys would love that!" Although she wasn't eligible for housewares, I said that she could have it. She lit up with joy!

-- Dan Fontaine

Donations



Kiwanis Club of Williamsburg



FISH is honored to be selected as a Headliner for the Kiwanis Club of Williamsburg for 2023-2024. This is a "working grant" where FISH volunteers help the Kiwanis at several of their fundraising programs, then receive financial support the following year.

The club's 42nd ShrimpFeast (their biggest and most fun event) was held on September 9, and approximately a thousand folks gathered in the rain at Jamestown Settlement to have all-you-can-eat shrimp, hush puppies, coleslaw, hot dogs and baked beans while being entertained by Brasswinds.

To Volunteers: Mike Motes, Holly Trotter, Ginger Miller, Patti MacGillivray, Cathey Sadowski, Gene Bruss, Maura Rush, Kathleen Pock, and several spouses, I cannot thank you enough for braving the elements and volunteering for the Kiwanis ShrimpFeast. The hot dog team quickly found their rhythm and wrapped those dogs. The display booth volunteers were very thankful for Mike's large canopy. And the clean-up crew took care of the job.

--Jill Holroyd



Lovely roses were left at our front door by an anonymous donor, bringing beauty and joy!



The new brown trash receptacle, generously donated by Bob and Linda Stanzione, encourages cleanliness in the Pantry pickup area.

Workplace Advisory Board at Colonial Williamsburg

Thank you for your faithful support!



Socks & Underwear Shower

The Williamsburg Baptist Church annually holds a "Socks & Underwear Shower" for FISH before the school year starts as a memorial to Mickey Halpin who was the Shoe Lady in the FISH Clothes Closet for many years.

Sorting the generous donation from left to right are church members Colleen McKenney, Kay Cheves, and Cathey Sadowski, also FISH Director and Secretary.



Thank You

PORCH

PORCH, the all-volunteer, grassroots hunger relief organization has again shared food they collected through monthly neighborhood food drives.

Accepting the large donation from Sarah Weisner of PORCH (right) is Maura Rush, FISH Director and Food Donations 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.



Mark Your Calendar!

Twilight Sale starts an hour earlier this year - 8:00 PM

THE Costume Sale

Thursday

October 26

10 AM – 5 PM

W&M Sadler Center
Tidewater A & B

Cash – Credit – Venmo

Below thrift store prices!

- ✦ Costumes for all ages
- ✦ Formals, Tuxes, Furs
- ✦ Vintage & Global Fashions
- ✦ Jewelry, Purses, Accessories

& MORE

Twilight Sale

Wednesday, 10/25

8 PM – 11 PM

All proceeds benefit FISH
Local Food Pantry & Clothes Closet

Free reserved parking adjacent to the Sadler Center.

Fall Changeover

Cooler weather will be here soon and the Clothes Closet is ready.

On Saturday September 2, volunteers packed up the summer items and restocked the shelves and racks with clothes for Autumn and Winter.



Back row (L-R): Patti MacGillivray, Charlene Little, Elaine Wasserman, Barbara Riebe, Jeanne Fulks, Dan Fontaine

Front row (L-R): Laura Stanford, Peggy Parker, Cindy Tocci

Helpers missing from photo:
Lori Forcucci, Janis Walby, Sue Williams

*The Clothes Closet welcomes donations of new or gently used, clean **winter** clothing for men, women, and children including jackets, hoodies, jeans, leggings, and long-sleeved tops. Clean sheets, blankets, towels and pots & pans are also needed.*

Let's beat 2022 -- our most successful
Costume Sale ever, raising \$8,502!

2023 - What's your prediction?

To help, contact Karen Berquist at kabergq@wm.edu,
or sign up in the FISH Conference Room.

Costumes, formals, vintage and global fashions marked
"FUNDRAISER" can be donated through September 30.

Welcome New Volunteers!

- Cheryl Jackson
- Constance Cook-Hudson
- Dale Richards
- Kim Norton
- Linda Wever
- Lindsay Lilly
- Malika Ailes

TEAM ANNONI

Karen and Tony Annoni

Tony

In a way, Tony's association with FISH began before he and Karen even moved to Williamsburg. Following his retirement in 2000 and realizing how important essential transportation is to people whose physical or financial means hampered their independence, he became a volunteer driver for a local Red Cross program providing transportation to medical appointments in the local area.

After moving to Williamsburg, Tony searched for a similar volunteer opportunity and soon discovered FISH's medical transportation program, matching clients with medical appointments with volunteer drivers to take them to their appointment and return them home. Without this service, these clients had no other practical way to obtain transport to what, in most cases, were non-routine and often non-local appointments.



Until the program was discontinued, Tony transported clients around Williamsburg and often as far as Hampton to the East and Richmond to the West. One of his longest trips was to a sleep clinic on the far side of Richmond. In that case, he partnered with another driver so he didn't have to wait until the client woke up in the morning!

When the transportation program was discontinued, Tony joined in the monthly trips to the Virginia Peninsula Foodbank to shop for supplemental pantry items. Since the pandemic, he and Karen have worked together in the Food Pantry.

Karen

After contributing food and clothes to FISH for several years, Karen decided to be a part of this important community resource on a more personal level. The first team of wonderful volunteers that Karen worked with included Ling Ngo, who started FISH in Williamsburg. That was over 10 years ago.

From Karen and Tony

Through all of the changes (pre-filled bags, social distancing, and slowly progressing to normal Pantry operations in the new location), it is rewarding to know that we play a small part in contributing to the fulfillment of critical human needs; and it's always a pleasure to see how much clients appreciate FISH providing an irreplaceable service during a vulnerable time in their lives. The great value of volunteerism is that when you give some of your time and resources to area organizations, the community becomes stronger as a result.

Note: Transportation for medical appointments and treatments started when the Society of Friends began working with FISH in the early 1980s. An answering service referred calls for food and clothes to a daily volunteer who made selections and delivered items. Ride requests went to the transportation scheduler who contacted a list of volunteer drivers. The FISH transportation service was moved into the Peninsula Agency on Aging's RIDES program in 2015.