



Food Pantry and Clothing
 Serving the Community Since 1975

NEWS



September 2024

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Summer will soon be a fond memory. The trees are starting to show signs of color and sounds of leaf blowing will replace lawn mowing.

FISH is beginning to get in gear for the upcoming holidays. On the Food Pantry side, turkeys for our clients have been ordered, and we have been stockpiling cans of pumpkin and cranberry sauce to add to our clients' food orders.

Many companies and organizations have already confirmed a date for their annual Fall Donation. If you are interested in having a holiday food drive, please contact Maura Rush at maurarush@hotmail.com to schedule. It takes a generous community to help us make wonderful Thanksgiving and Christmas meals for our clients.

The Clothes Closet side is busy changing from summer to warmer winter wear. We have been fortunate to receive many items recently from Hannah's Closet (see page 6). Our "Free Clothes Racks" outside the Clothes Closet building have become very popular. These items are not counted against a client's regular allotment.

FISH had a display table at the Williamsburg Farmers Market (page 2), and will be there again October 26. In October also is our highly-anticipated and enjoyable Costume Sale (aka Campus Thrift Extravaganza) at the William & Mary Sadler Center. This is a huge event sponsored by the Catholic Campus Ministry, and all proceeds go to FISH. (page 4)

Lastly, I received a lovely note from a donor that I want to share with you all. *"I dropped off some items late this afternoon and observed your volunteers helping a challenged woman select food items and the compassion in which they assisted her. It struck me that she may possibly have a disability or was a stroke survivor. Nonetheless, they were so patient with her and apparently knew her from previous visits as I overheard a comment that she had to carry her items on the bus with the implication that it couldn't be too bulky or heavy."* Thanks to Deborah for sharing her observation while donating to FISH.

Thanks to everyone at FISH and in our community for your support.

Jill Holroyd
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*Thank you,
 You're the best!*

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Donate



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Williamsburg Farmers Market

For the first time, on August 31, FISH volunteers greeted the public from a “booth” at the Williamsburg Farmers Market in Merchants Square. This new opportunity increases our outreach to the community, and while we cannot accept donations at that venue, we can provide information on our organization and show those interested how to donate.

Volunteer Lindsay Lilly (pictured) and President Jill Holroyd represented FISH in August, and will again on October 26.

Stop by and see us!



Heartwarming Experiences

Jeanne Fulks and I had a couple of recent Clothes Closet experiences that gave us an inner feeling of joy.

Jeanne is the team lead on Wednesdays in the Clothes Closet. Although we stop accepting clients in the Clothes Closet at 3:00 p.m., a client arrived a little after that and requested some housewares. She had previously been homeless and had just gotten an apartment. She originally asked only for a crockpot. When she came into the Clothes Closet, Jeanne showed her the crockpot that and asked if she needed anything else. She was so happy with the crockpot that she had tears in her eyes. She said she could use linens and other kitchen items but didn't realize she could have them. She left with bed linens, towels, kitchen dishware and utensils, and some microwave cooking dishes.

As we had been 6 volunteers short due to illness and vacations, seeing her appreciation and helping her get established in her new apartment made for a happy ending to a very exhausting day.

The second experience was with a client that had come to FISH for food in the past but was a first-time visitor to the Clothes Closet. She didn't know what to expect and was a little nervous. She was selecting clothes for herself, her husband, and three children ages 3 and under. The youngest was a 6-month-old girl. I made sure that she felt welcome and comfortable. She knew their sizes and quickly selected the clothing items for her family. She continually expressed her appreciation for FISH helping her family, and told her husband how great her Clothes Closet experience was. She was a true joy to help. Seeing her so happy warmed my heart!

-- Dan Fontaine

Welcome New Volunteers

Eleanor Burchianti, Lucy Gonzalez (new Spanish translator) and Patricia Johnson

Celebrating a FISH Rock Star



Billie Johnston started volunteering in the very early days, when an older home was donated to FISH. Billie and another volunteer managed the clothing at that time, and she continued to serve tirelessly at FISH for nearly 40 years. She is truly a FISH rock star!

Some of her long-time friends gathered at Spring Arbor to celebrate her birthday on the 15th of September with an ice cream cake. While we can guess, Billie says that her age is "top secret".

Billie was totally surprised! I usually take her outside to enjoy the weather, scenery, birds and squirrels. So, when I arrived, she readily agreed to come with me outside. She was so surprised when we went by a meeting room with her friends. She had a fun time catching up on family news.

FISH has a loyal friend in Billie. She even influenced the manager and some employees of Spring Arbor to regularly volunteer at FISH.

-- Dan Fontaine



Back Row: Carol Thomas, Mary Kafes, Marje Peterson and Leah Anderson. Front Row: Billie



Back Row: Carol Thomas, Dan Fontaine, Marje Peterson, and Mary Ellen Theroux. Front Row: Billie



A Fond Farewell to Lucy

Lucy Kunkle left Williamsburg for a new home last month. It was bittersweet for us because Lucy was such an enthusiastic member of our team. Lucy arrived at FISH cheerful and enthusiastic for the day. She was always willing to help clients whether they needed help with registering or to escort them through the closet. She was a blessing in assisting with our Hispanic clients, often one right after another.

She was always ready with a joke, or to gently prank someone. When she sorted clothing, she had a running commentary about different and colorful clothing, often donning a hat or a costume to make us laugh. And she always danced when she found money in a pocket or purse.

To help Lucy in her new home, we presented her with a box of personal notes, cards, letters, and little gifts to let her know how much we appreciated her time with us.

-- Patti MacGillivray, Director & Clothes Closet Co-Coordinator





Sadler Center, Tidewater A&B

Wednesday, October 23, 8 – 11 P.M.
Thursday, October 24, 10 A.M. – 5 P.M.

Clothes from decades past & around the world
Jewelry, formalwear, [ugly] holiday sweaters, and MORE
Costumes for ALL



sign up to
volunteer

event on
facebook



All proceeds benefit FISH
a local food pantry and clothes closet



Thank You



Hickory Neck Episcopal Church invited Jill, pictured with Joanne Finstrom, to speak at their Sunday morning service on July 14. We appreciate their faithful support to FISH over many years.

-- Photo courtesy of Marina Libro

Members of the **CrossWalk Church - Kingsway Location**, along with Pastor Rafael Santiago, brought a generous food contribution to FISH which was greatly appreciated.



Andrea Fox (left) assisted Beverly Heath, co-owner of **All American Mini Storage (Rochambeau)** in delivering 11 bags of items. Volunteer Lindsay Lilly (right) received the donation.

It's always touching to receive support from a local business.



The **Williamsburg Unitarian Universalist Church** chose FISH to be the recipient of their August "Share the Plate" offering.

President Jill Holroyd spoke at the August 11 morning service to describe FISH's mission and operation. We are grateful for this opportunity and support!

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.



Hannah's Closet Children's Consignment Fall Sale donated children's shoes, jackets, clothing and costumes to FISH. Volunteers Georgia Mamangakis, Eden Glenn, Susie Van Rijn, Patti MacGillivray, and Cindy Tocci picked up the items which filled up 4 SUVs. In addition to the clothing, Hannah's Closet donated proceeds from their early admittance fees to FISH. Thank you Colleen and Robin at Hannah's Closet for your generosity.

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



There is no substitute for books in the life of a child.

-- Mary Ellen Chase

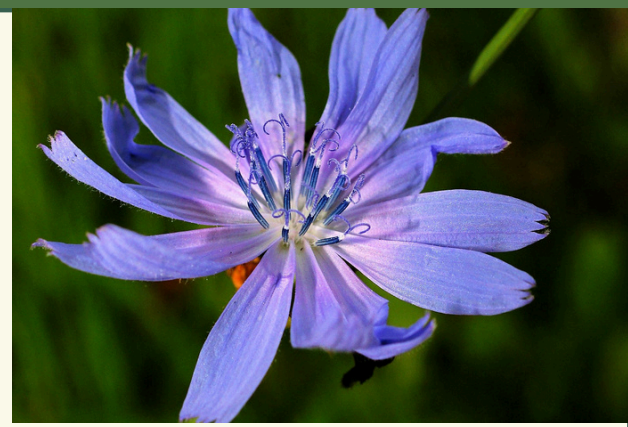
Over the years, many of you have donated books, enabling FISH to pass them on to client children. Sources include Kiwanis Club of Williamsburg, Hannah's Closet, King of Glory Lutheran, a librarian, your personal collection, and many others. We have been able to provide 2-4 books per child, depending on supply. Thank you.



FISH President Jill Holroyd with book display in FISH lobby.

Many thanks to Dr. Catherine Elder, Reading is Fun Chairman for the **Kiwanis Club of Williamsburg**, and Martha Dean, FISH Director, in making this gift of 905 books happen.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT



A HAPPY HELPING HAND

Steve White
Food Pantry

Q1. Why did you choose to volunteer at FISH?

A1. During a previous job, I volunteered briefly with the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore and became aware of how vital their contributions were to the community.

After moving to Williamsburg, one of our neighbors mentioned she attended church with Cathey Sadowski who worked at an all-volunteer food pantry, and I was immediately interested in learning more about FISH. (Cathey is our long-serving FISH Secretary.) I wanted to give back to the community, and FISH provided the opportunity for a "win-win".

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

A2. We are very fortunate and I enjoy giving back to those who are down on their luck and need a helping hand to get back on their feet. I also really enjoy the time I spend there with the other volunteers.

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

A3. I am amazed by how appreciative our clients are. During a recent shift at the Food Pantry, we had received a donation of frozen steaks and after delivering a cart with their order, which included a nice sirloin cut, the client remarked, "Thank you. I haven't had a steak in over ten years." That made my day!

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

A4. My wife, Debbie, volunteers as a docent at Jamestown Settlement, and with our three kids grown and out on their own, we dote on our rescue-adopted Brittany-English Setter mix, Peyton.

