



Food Pantry and Clothing  
Serving the Community Since 1975

# NEWS



May 2025

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Welcome to the Merry Month of May!

FISH had set a \$5,000 goal for the GiveLocal757 funding day held on May 6. It was 24 hours of giving, with prizes and matching funds all day long. We finished our day at \$6,680. A huge **Thank You** to all who participated and donated to FISH!

We received a generous grant from the Williamsburg Presbyterian Church that will enable us to purchase adult and children's underwear. See picture on [page 4](#).

Food and clothing donations are still coming into FISH regularly. Please remember we can offer a receipt for your donated items.

There were hard rainstorms during the past few weeks. One of those wet days, Williamsburg House of Mercy (WHOM) called and asked if we could supply clothing for their Harbor Day Shelter clients whose clothes were soaked. FISH's Clothing Closet jumped in and had a large number of assorted shirts and pants ready when the WHOM van arrived. This is another example of our partnership with the other nonprofits in our area. We were happy to help!

If you can spare a few hours and help us by translating Spanish for our clients, please email us at [fishwilliamsburg@gmail.com](mailto:fishwilliamsburg@gmail.com).

Enjoy this wonderful springtime and know that FISH is ready to help those in need.

Jill Holroyd  
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cell: 757-903-7839



## IN THIS ISSUE

Give Local 757 Results  
Announcements  
[Page 2](#)

Farewell Laura Custance  
Joys of Volunteering  
[Page 3](#)

Donations  
WPC Grant  
Next-Gen Donors & Volunteers  
[Page 4-5](#)

Volunteer Spotlight  
Kim Labiaga  
[Page 6](#)

Donate



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[fishwilliamsburgnews@gmail.com](mailto:fishwilliamsburgnews@gmail.com)



Azalea hedge - Nottingham Road

**RESULTS**  
134% of our goal!



FISH received \$6,680 --134% of our goal during this fundraiser. Thank you!

**You give because you care!!**

Vicki Mahr (left), part of the Haitian ministry of **Saint Bede Catholic Church** and Fr. Bertrand DesForges (center), St Joseph's Church in Thomonde, Haiti, honored us with their recent visit to learn more about FISH.

Jill Holroyd, President (right), and Maura Rush, VP (blue top), provided a tour of the Food Pantry and Clothing Closet.



FISH helped Williamsburg House of Mercy with their mobile Food Pantry pop-ups on March 21 and April 25 at the Williamsburg Community Chapel.

Many FISH volunteers distributed food, bagged groceries, and assisted clients to their car. Together we served families that went away with full bags of food -- a big help to each family.

Thank you to Lindsay Lilly, Holly Trotter, Ruth Bott, Tracy Parris, Laura Stanford, Susie van Rijn and our amazing Spanish translator Wilma Caban. A very special thanks to Steve White (left) and Robert Hopkins (right) who transported food, canopies and supplies to each location in our van, even picking up other donations between the event setup and takedown.

Thanks, everyone!

-- Jill Holroyd, FISH President

## Welcome New Volunteers

Bill Easton  
John Phillips

thank  
★ you ★



# Farewell to our Traveling Volunteer

## Laura Custance Food Pantry and Clothes Closet



My husband and I, our two kids (Lucy, 13, and Andy, 16), and two dogs are moving to Sofia, Bulgaria, this summer. Before living in Williamsburg for the past three years, we lived in Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Ethiopia, and Laos. Something draws us to this lifestyle, and we are thankful for how these experiences have expanded our view of the world.

Here in Williamsburg, as I managed a long-term recovery from knee surgery, I was temporarily unable to do my speech therapy work with young children. I searched for a way to help people in the community, and FISH was the perfect answer! I felt welcome immediately and quickly became a member of the Wednesday morning Clothes Closet Team. Even when I began work again at CDR doing Early Intervention, I kept my Wednesday mornings dedicated to FISH.

My family and I move every 2-3 years, and it's hard to feel attached to a place. I can also be a quiet person. FISH allowed me to join a community doing something to help people in need. The Wednesday team is so fun and kind. Sometimes it's just nice to have a group of people who seem happy to see me--and I'm happy to see them! I've fallen into the role of organizing the outside racks and bins and enjoy interacting with clients inside and out. I hope to find a way to continue volunteering in Sofia. Service to others and showing love and respect for others are so important. I will miss my Wednesday FISH mornings!

*We will remember Laura's warm, kind smile. Please see Lucy's (Laura's daughter) book donation in the January 2025 newsletter.*

## The Joys and Rewards of Being a FISH Volunteer

Being a FISH volunteer is one of the most fulfilling and enriching experiences one can undertake. Here are some reasons that volunteering is a valuable endeavor.

**A Sense of Purpose** - Volunteers contribute to something greater than themselves and are motivated to continue giving their time and energy to a cause they care about.

**Building Connections** - Volunteering brings together individuals from diverse backgrounds who share a common goal of helping others, creating lasting friendships and professional connections.

**Personal Fulfillment** - It is a way to develop a range of skills from communication and teamwork to leadership and problem-solving, which can boost confidence and resilience. It can bring a deep sense of personal fulfillment and happiness and contribute to one's well-being.

**Making a Tangible Difference** - Volunteers create positive change in clients' lives, and the effect multiplies, resulting in a stronger, more connected community.

-- Dan Fontaine



## Thread Local Charities

Thank you to **Thread Local Charities** for their donation of new underpants for children and sports bras for women. We always need those items.

In addition to making donations to local organizations, the non-profit's mission is to keep numerous bags of stained and torn items from ending up in landfills.

To learn more about this organization, see their website: <https://www.threadlocal.org/>

-- Cindy Tocci, Director & Clothing Co-Coordinator

## King of Glory School

Many thanks to the children and staff of **King of Glory School** for the tremendous donation they collected for FISH. Our thanks to Michelle Clauberg (right) for organizing it and Steve White for bringing it to FISH in our van.



## Williamsburg Presbyterian Church

A generous grant from the **Williamsburg Presbyterian Church** will allow us to buy an abundance of adult and children's underwear.

Presenting the check to FISH President Jill Holroyd is Hank Vernon.



Laraya Billups, Library Marketing Coordinator for the **Williamsburg Regional Library**, did a great job coordinating weekly collection and pickup of books during February. Thank you, Laraya!

Once again, **PORCH** continues to grow and exceed expectations! Eight contributing neighborhoods brought 2,826 pounds of food and hygiene items to help fill our shelves. Many thanks to Sarah Weiser and her team for doing such a wonderful job.

-- Maura Rush, VP & Food Donations Coordinator



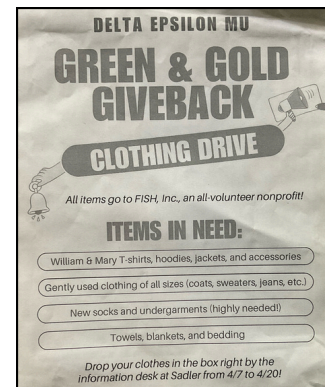
## Next-Gen Donors and Volunteers

Continuing our next generation theme from April, students from William & Mary donated their time and energy last month to aid us in the Clothes Closet.

Alex de Jesus (right, center), one of our translators and clothing volunteers, and two of her field hockey teammates brought in donations from our overloaded donation box and from a truck load of clothing and housewares from a drive held by Patriot's Colony.



Members of **Delta Epsilon Mu (DEM)**, a medical studies service organization, held a clothing drive. They collected many W&M-branded clothing and other items for both the Clothes Closet and our annual Thrift Extravaganza (Costume Sale). We are grateful to Bryan Coleman (in doorway) who initiated this first-ever-campus drive and all at DEM for their support.



Joylyn Aghetiafa, Jazmine Klinedinst and other members of the **Zeta Phi Beta Sorority** held a clothing and housewares drive focusing on clothing for teenagers and young adults. Their donations filled many shopping carts and will find many new homes.



A special thank you to these W&M students for balancing their studying and practice time with doing things that contribute to improving our community.

-- Cindy Tocci, Director & Clothing Co-Coordinator  
and Karen Berquist, Thrift Extravaganza 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.





*Rugosa Rose - Colonial Williamsburg*

## **VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT**

### **How Much This Means**

#### **Kim Labiaga Clothes Closet & Food Pantry**



Volunteering at FISH is amazing. Living in Williamsburg is amazing.

Just over two years ago, we retired here from Southern California. We definitely made the right decision. With family in Norfolk and Virginia Beach, we spend every Sunday afternoon together eating and laughing, and I even win at cards once in a while. Moving to Colonial Heritage, we began a wonderful, healthy lifestyle. The only thing missing for me was how to give back.

When I called FISH and spoke with Cindy Tocci, Director and Clothing Co-Coordinator, I told her to assign me wherever I was needed. She said, "We need you in Clothing." I quickly learned why. This team digs in and works. Bags and bags keep coming through the door. Cars pull up at 3:59 p.m., and we all shake our heads at the generosity of our community. One of my favorite moments is when sorting, I find a beautiful piece of clothing and hang it up...then someone I am helping picks it up and says, "Oh, this is so nice." We have very nice clothing, and we ensure we include only items we would wear ourselves.

I speak Spanish, and that's a game changer. Even if I say a word incorrectly, the clients will give me a big smile and say, "That's ok!" They appreciate that we are all trying to make this the best experience possible.

I have started working in the Food Pantry and love that it's like a well-oiled machine. It is humbling to see how grateful people are for basic food. Last week I was pulling food for an elderly gentleman and included a razor and some personal hygiene items. He said, "Oh darling, you don't know how much this means to me."

Actually, he doesn't know how much this means to me!

I am so proud to be a part of this organization.

