



Food Pantry and Clothing
Serving the Community Since 1975

NEWS



August 2026

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are anticipating our Big Move to our New Home at 7129 Pocahontas Trail. FISH is waiting for the final inspections and the all-important Certificate of Occupancy from James City County; then we will begin the move from our Second Street location.

Please watch for updates and timing on our Facebook page: [FISH Williamsburg](#). Several groups have offered to assist with our move, and we will let you know as soon as we can.

A large group of FISH volunteers came to FISH three times this past weekend to help sort and shelve a sizable food donation from **Saint Bede Catholic Church**. Our FISH van was parked at the church, ready to receive bags and boxes for delivery to our Second Street location. You can find pictures of this on page 4 of this newsletter. This is just one example of how so many groups, churches, offices, and others recognize that food insecurity is not just an occasional problem but an everyday one in the Greater Williamsburg Area. We truly appreciate the time, effort, and bounty we receive, which we share with our neighbors in need now and throughout the year.

It's Back-to-School Time for students at all levels of public and parochial education. Please consider dropping off basic school supplies so these students can begin this year with necessary items. Please see page 5.

FISH is honored to be a Headliner for the Kiwanis Club of Williamsburg at its **45th Annual Shrimp Feast**. The event is September 12, 4:00 -7:00 p.m. at Jamestown Settlement. Look for FISH volunteers in FISH t-shirts. Hope to see you there!

As the Capital Campaign begins to slow down, I truly thank each one of you who has donated toward our new building!

Jill Holroyd
FISH President
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*Truly
Grateful
for you.*

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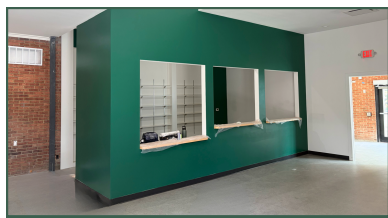
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Donate



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Acknowledgements and Announcements



Update for FISH New Home

7129 Pocahontas Trail



The changes to the interior of our new home are dramatic now, especially with the installation of the flooring, which was specially designed to make volunteers' work easier on their feet and backs.

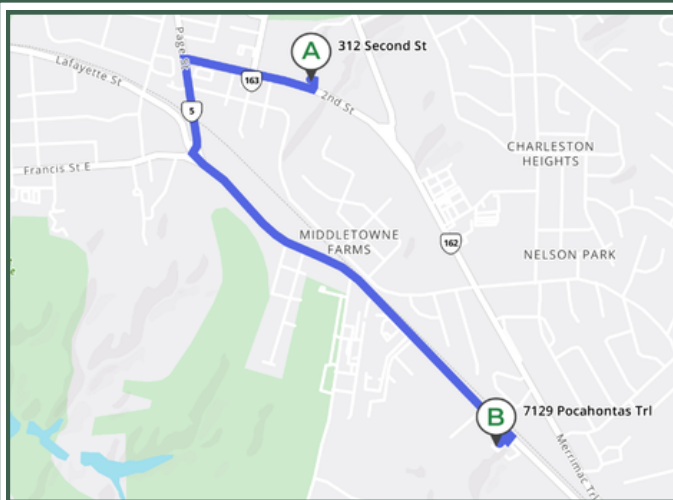
We will have an additional 1,000 square feet over our current location, a water fountain, a kitchenette, and improved traffic flow for donation drop-off and client parking.

James City County's Certificate of Occupancy (CO), which will allow us to begin move-in, is expected in late August. Once we have obtained the CO, we will arrange FISH volunteer tours for advance viewing.

We had a goal of \$2 million. With your help, we hit the initial \$2 million. Due to rising costs and county requirements, the final cost will be \$2.15 million. To date, we have received 97% of the revised \$2.15 million expected cost to move into our new home debt-free.

[CLICK HERE TO
SUPPORT THE
CAMPAIGN](#)

The generosity of this community has been amazing, and we are so grateful. Could you please help get us across the finish line?



Directions from 312 Second Street to 7129 Pocahontas Trail

- Turn RIGHT out of the FISH parking lot onto Second Street
- At the traffic light, turn LEFT onto Page St (US-60)
- At the next traffic light, turn LEFT onto Pocahontas Trail (US-60)
- Travel 1.2 miles
- Turn RIGHT into the New Home parking lot

Approximately a 4-minute drive; less than 2 miles

“

A client who had been through all 3 phases at FISH (pantry, clothing, and housewares) said,
“You have treated me like a human.”

-- Maura Rush, VP and Food Donations Coordinator

”

Acknowledgements and Announcements

A Happy Ending

One of our dedicated supporters stopped by after hours on a recent Friday to leave a clothing donation in our drop box. She left the bag untied to make it easier to slide through the drop box flap. On the drive to FISH, she placed her wallet on top of the bag. When she arrived, she slid the bag into the box—only to realize that her wallet had gone in with it!

Panicked, she emailed FISH right away. The volunteer who monitors our inbox quickly forwarded her message to the FISH President, the Clothing Leads, and me.

When I saw the FISH email Saturday morning, I called her. She met me at FISH, and together we carefully removed donations from the drop box until we spotted her wallet. Instant joy! She had brought her passport so I could confirm the wallet was hers. I am not much of a hugger, but when she asked if she could hug me, I happily obliged. It will always be one of my favorite FISH memories.

Being a FISH volunteer brings me so much joy—you never know when the next opportunity will come to bring someone else a little joy, too.

– Dan Fontaine

Did You Just Turn 73?

If you are in the age group where it is mandated that you take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your IRA or 401(k), you need to do this annually by December 31.

If this amount goes to a non-profit organization, it is not considered income for tax purposes but does count towards your RMD.

Please check with your tax advisor, if you have any questions.

If you are considering donating to FISH and want your donation to support our new home, please note **“Capital Campaign”**.

Thank you.

-- Jeff Deel, Director and Treasurer

A Client's Thank You

A client came into the Clothing Closet to share a picture of herself and a friend taken on Mother's Day. She explained they had been to FISH the Friday before and had been helped by Volunteer Karen Berquist, Thrift Extravaganza Coordinator. They felt wonderful dressed so well by FISH and had received many compliments.

The client was so nice, and sharing her experience sure made us feel good at the end of a long day.

– Susie van Rijn

Director and Special Events Co-Coordinator



Thank you, **Frothy Moon**, for spotlighting local nonprofits at your 2nd Annual MissionFest, and for your continued support of FISH.

Representing FISH at the event were Volunteers Jane Fernandes (left) and Susie van Rijn.

Welcome New Volunteers

- Dawn Weideman
- Diane Kieffaber
- Ilse Deel
- Mary Ellen Davis
- Monica O'Leary
- Vanessa Reid

DONATIONS

Saint Bede Catholic Church

The parishioners of **Saint Bede Catholic Church** generously responded to the food drive held by the **Knights of Columbus** to benefit FISH. We are so fortunate to be able to fill our shelves with 4108 pounds of food items from this drive.



Many thanks to Sam Samorian and all the Knights who worked with our Steve White and his crew. A big thanks also goes to the FISH volunteers who gave up their weekend to make this all happen.

It is truly inspiring to see the parishioners and FISH come together to respond to the needs of those we serve in our shared community. Our shelves are very well stocked across many food categories, for which we are very grateful.

-- Maura Rush, VP and Food Donations Coordinator

Bonnie McNail, Volunteer, sorts fresh produce from an anonymous donor.

We are thankful for our generous donors.

-- Tracy Parris
Director and Special Events Co-Coordinator



PORCH – KINGSMILL

Volunteers Steve White and Tom Thomason were once again impressed by the generosity of the **PORCH** neighborhood of **Kingsmill**. Led by Linda Whittaker, the residents collected 1682 pounds of food for FISH.

Linda graciously collects the donation in her garage. Her effort in organizing, coordinating pickup, and storing is an additional gift.

-- Maura Rush, VP and Food Donations Coordinator



DONATIONS



Ready for School

Thank you to all donors who have contributed Back-to-School items. The Clothes Closet is ready to provide clothing, athletic shoes, new socks, and underwear to students.

We still need items for students, especially preteens and teenagers, sizes 7 and larger.

Community Volunteers

Thank you to the volunteers from **Mt. Vernon United Methodist Church** for helping us every Tuesday morning in July. They prepared children's clothing for the Clothes Closet.

In addition to those weekly volunteers, youths from **Williamsburg Baptist Church** donated items and their time one afternoon. The participants folded hundreds of socks for our clients.

Preparing for Winter

A warm thanks to Lisa, Assistant Manager at the **1st Advantage Federal Credit Union, Commons Branch**, for knitting and donating 205 hats for men, women, and children. This incredible effort and gift will provide comfort in the colder months.



Accepting hats from Lisa (left) are Volunteers Barbara and Nan Eddins

-- Cindy Tocci, Director and Clothing Co-Coordinator

Great Beginnings

Thank you to a talented member of the **Ford's Colony Crafters Group**, Barbara Petrovits (modeling), and to FISH Volunteer Gayle Justice for providing something extra for our pregnant clients. Barbara sews diaper bags, and Gayle fills them with items new moms and their babies need. Bags are given to clients in their last trimester.

After the babies are born, the Clothes Closet provides infant clothing, bibs, blankets, and other necessities, and the Pantry provides diapers.



A Mother's Love

I recently helped a client with three boys aged 4 to 12. She skimmed through shopping for herself and was eager to find clothes for her sons.

Seeing her delight in our selection and her joy in choosing outfits for her boys was rewarding. Every so often, a client reminds us why we volunteer—her motherly love was one such reminder. FISH makes a difference daily in so many ways for our clients.

– Dan Fontaine

Continuing our focus on generational volunteers, whether the relationship is mother/father-child, in-law, or grandchild, these bonds strengthen FISH's legacy.



Jenny

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Tricia Landen, Mother

Jenny Landen, Daughter-in-Law



Tricia

When Tricia Landen and her husband retired to Williamsburg about 30 years ago, Tricia wanted to get to know people in the community and do meaningful volunteer work. Through friends, she discovered FISH, which gave her life meaning and fulfilled that desire until she retired from FISH 10 years ago. She is now in her 90s.

After the Landens moved here, Jenny and her husband (their son) visited Williamsburg annually. Tricia gave Jenny a tour of FISH's Waller Mill location near the old K-Mart many years ago, which inspired her. When Jenny retired as a nursing professor at Virginia Commonwealth University several years ago, she wanted to carry on the family legacy of helping at FISH.

Both Tricia and Jenny feel the same way: the reward in volunteering at FISH is getting to know and help clients, as well as the fun of working with other volunteers.

Tricia remembers working with Sue Williams (our beloved shoe wizard) when she started at FISH!

Jenny appreciates what clients tell her about their situations; some are heartbreaking while others are hopeful. She also appreciates the occasional surprise hug of gratitude from a client who is thankful for a successful shopping spree. Not long ago, she felt like she had won the lottery when she reached into a pocket while sorting clothes and pulled out \$200! A nice donation to FISH!

Tricia and her husband both attended the College of William & Mary over 70 years ago! They recently celebrated their 68th wedding anniversary! They now live at Williamsburg Landing, where Tricia enjoys sitting on her front porch and visiting with neighbors.

Since relocating to Williamsburg over 5 years ago, Jenny and her husband enjoy visits from their two adult sons, who live in New York and New Mexico. They also enjoy regular travel adventures, including trips to South Korea (where Jenny's mom is from) and a recent trip to Indonesia to see orangutans and Komodo dragons.



Left: Jenny in action in the Clothes Closet, loading the CHKD truck.

Right: Jenny, Charlene Little, Lessel Johnson, Cindy Tocci.

For more than 12 years, Lessel has driven from the CHKD warehouse in Norfolk to pick up our out-of-season clothing and housewares. We're grateful for the kindness and friendship Lessel brings with him every week.

