



FISH NEWSLETTER

Fish, Inc. - Dunellen Area
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FROM THE PRESIDENT

This past year, It has been my privilege to work with our volunteers at Fish to make life a little bit better for families in our area who need help. Our officers, committee chair persons, and volunteers truly understand the words of our Lord as written by his disciple Matthew: "as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me."

I often wonder who will take the place of our volunteers when they must move on. I may have found my answer in the story that follows. As long as schools and churches continue to encourage community service by young people there will be adults with a desire to help others.

Here are some of our future volunteers.

Phil Cox, President

GREEN BROOK STUDENTS COLLECT CLOTHING FOR FISH

Members of THE CLUB at Irene E. Feldkirchner Elementary School in Green Brook collected new and gently used hats, gloves, mittens and scarves for the clothing room of Fish, Inc.- Dunellen Area. Each grade was assigned a particular item, which was then placed in bins set up in the hallway by the cafeteria. These much needed items were distributed to clients from the Fish Clothing Room. THE CLUB's advisors are Mrs. Pam Ostrander, School Nurse; and Mrs. Robin Siminoff, Computer Teacher.

The I.E.F. School is a K-3 elementary school. While CLUB membership is limited to 3rd graders, its mission is for the entire school population.

In addition, students in the Bengal Community Service Club of the Green Brook Middle School held a winter coat and boot drive for the Fish

Clothing Room. The group's advisor is Mrs. Ann Kessler, school guidance counselor (left).

We at Fish thank all the students, their teachers, and advisors for their hard work to help make this winter a little warmer for some folks.

Submitted by Lisa Couch, Vice President

2008 ANNUAL MEETING

The thirty-eighth annual meeting of Fish, Inc.- Dunellen Area took place on Monday, February 11, 2008 at the First Presbyterian Church in Dunellen. The meeting opened with a prayer by Recording Secretary Merkie Chamberlin. President Phil Cox welcomed those attending, including some folks new to Fish, Inc. The program chairpersons gave their annual reports.

Report Summaries

Treasurer: Ned Halteman's report showed that our financial condition remained good at the end of 2007. A decrease in truck insurance premiums has reduced expenses. Financial contributions from individuals, businesses, churches and foundations made it possible for Fish to continue to assist those in our area who need help.

Clothing Program: This has been another busy year. There are about 30 to 45 families coming in every week the clothing room is open. This past year showed an increase in requests for Spanish language bibles. Two hundred pairs of sneakers were distributed. And there are never enough blankets. The Clothing Room gives out about 800 new or gently used blankets each year.

Gerry Halteman thanked the many individuals, corporations, scout troops, churches, and schools who held clothing collections or made monetary donations. Gerry also thanked all the clothing room volunteers. There are now three sorting groups: the first Friday of the month; Tuesday evenings; and Saturday mornings.

Special thanks to Karen Lowande who does all the data entry, to Ken O'Rear who does clothing donation pick-ups, and to Art & Eileen McClelland who shop for new sneakers, socks, underwear, diapers and other items.

Food Program: Our food program continued to be successful thanks to the support of many organizations such as churches, civic, scout troops, U.S. postal carriers, schools, corporations, and individuals. In 2007 over 5,000 families were served. The First Baptist Church of New Market again collected for Fish outside the Acme in Middlesex every third Saturday of the month. Due to the efforts of faithful volunteer Steve Glowacki and his dedicated helpers, the church provided Fish with 739 bags of food and over \$4,000 in monetary donations.

Other contributors to the food program include Our Lady of Mt. Virgin in Middlesex and students of Bishop Ahr High School in Edison who collected holiday turkeys; and Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church in Piscataway for their weekly donations.

Chairperson Bob Mitchell says that, as always, without the volunteers who faithfully run the Food Room, our success would not be possible.

Toy Programs: The toy programs were again very successful. The Dunellen area Toy Program once again distributed toys to clients from the Clothing Room. In addition to providing gifts for clients from New Brunswick, Perth Amboy, Edison, Highland Park and East Brunswick, the New Brunswick Toy Program again worked with the Central Jersey Chapter of the Navy League to provide toys and clothing to children of service men and women of the Coast Guard.

Telephone Volunteers: The phone volunteers continue to do an excellent job. Two of our volunteers who came on board last year, Debbie Turton and Betty Gill, continue to serve several days a month as needed to fill the schedule.

Computer Committee: The work of the computer committee has been light for the last couple of years. This left more time to consult on other office equipment and issues in the Fish building. The database is still maintained in order to be able to generate reports or other documents.

FISH Hospitality Program: Our sister organization celebrated its 18th year of service to the community in 2007. Since the

program's inception in 1990, 607 adults and 664 children have been served, representing 568 family units. The program operates through eleven night (host) churches, five day churches, and six support churches. Host church recruitment is an ongoing priority. Fatima House, the building at Our Lady of Fatima church, was closed down in February. The Hospitality program is currently seeking another permanent day facility.

Fish Hospitality held several fundraising events during the year, plus a volunteer recognition dinner and children's Christmas party. All these events were held at their host and support churches.

Executive Director Susan Baybutt, the Board of Directors, and staff of FISH Hospitality are extremely grateful to FISH, Inc. for the clothing, food, blankets, use of the truck and office space throughout the year.

THE LAST WORD

Do you need help? Could you contribute or volunteer? Call Fish, Inc. - Dunellen Area at: **732-356-0081**. A telephone volunteer will return your call.

Wishing You All a Blessed Easter

Judy Cox, editor