



# FISH NEWSLETTER

Fish, Inc., Dunellen Area  
PO Box 8565, Piscataway NJ 08855-8006

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

As you read this newsletter you will find several stories within the stories which give a small sampling of how our supporters and volunteers make it possible for us to serve our clients. I wish we could individually recognize and thank every one who helps; but, there are far too many. Thanks to all of you for helping Fish!

PHIL COX

## TELECOM PIONEERS AND CREATIONS BY CAMILLE RAISE FUNDS FOR FISH

Our loyal supporters for many years, the Telecom Pioneers, New Jersey Chapter #139 have once again found a novel way to raise funds for Fish. Working with *Creations by Camille*, a hair cutting salon in Middlesex, the Pioneers organized the one day cut-a-thon held on Saturday, April 4. *Creations* donated 100% of that day's proceeds, raising \$623 for Fish to purchase hams and turkeys for our Easter holiday program. The Pioneers also collected several bags of non-perishable food. The Food Program at Fish thanks the Pioneers and *Creations by Camille* for their joint effort and their generosity.

## STUDENTS HOLD CLOTHING DRIVE AT OUR LADY OF FATIMA SCHOOL

During the month of March students at Fatima School held a clothing drive. The activity is part of the students' commitment to participate in monthly acts of charity through the school service club. Ninety-five bags of clothing were collected and delivered to Fish, Inc. We at Fish appreciate the hard work of these young people, as well as the generosity of the contributors. Thank You!

*"... remember the word of the Lord Jesus, . . . 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"-- Acts, 20:35*

## 2009 ANNUAL MEETING

The thirty-ninth annual meeting of Fish, Inc., Dunellen Area, took place at the First Presbyterian Church in Dunellen on Monday, February 9, 2009. After opening prayer, copies of the minutes of the 2008 annual meeting were made available to everyone so they were not read. The minutes were approved as presented. The treasurer and the program and committee chairpersons each gave their annual reports.

The following officers were re-elected for two-year terms: Phil Cox, President; Lisa Couch, Vice President; Merkie Chamberlin, Recording Secretary; Ilene Doran, Corresponding Secretary; Ned Halteman, Treasurer; and Rick Couch, Assistant Treasurer.

Debbie Carr, Judy Cox, and Debbie Turtin were elected from the general membership to serve on the 2010 nominating committee. Gerry Halteman and Dave Casterline were appointed from the steering committee.

The next annual meeting of Fish, Inc., Dunellen Area will be February 8, 2010. This meeting is open to the public.

## ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARIES

Treasurer Ned Halteman reported that total income for 2008 was slightly higher than the previous year. As was planned for early in 2008, Fish did spend more to help clients in this poor economy (See program reports below.).

**Food.** Bob Mitchell, chairperson, reported that the past year saw increases in the number of people needing food, particularly noted during the month of September. During 2008 the food program served an average of 208 walk-in clients per month, compared to 153 per month in 2007. Seniors (each served with two bags of groceries) totaled 258 per month from Middlesex, Plainfield and New Brunswick. The total number of bags of groceries distributed for the year, including walk-ins was 3,096. During the year the food room purchased \$21,000 of food, not including food for our holiday programs.

The food program is grateful for the many area churches and organizations who gave so generously to help keep our shelves stocked.

One example of this is The First Baptist Church of New Market, which runs a once-a-month food drive outside the Middlesex Acme store. In 2008, due to the dedication of their coordinator Steve Glowacki and his volunteers, the church provided Fish with 724 bags of groceries and monetary donations totaling \$4,049.

Bob is most grateful to God for the volunteers who operate the food room.

**Clothing.** Chairperson Gerry Halteman reported that the Clothing Room is currently serving 1,600 families (3,000 children and 2,000 adults). Gerry is grateful to the many corporations, scout troops, churches, schools, and individuals who did clothing collections and made monetary donations to Fish during the year. Gerry especially thanked all the Clothing Room volunteers for their many dedicated hours of service.

Eileen McClelland purchased 129 blankets and 115 pair of sneakers in 2008. In addition, more of these same items were donated. About 300 used blankets plus other bed linens were donated from groups doing "just bedding collections" for Fish. Fish Hospitality supplies families leaving the program with blankets. Fish, Inc. supplied 400 families with blankets in 2008. The request for blankets far exceeds the supply.



In December, the Knights of Columbus #6203 installed a collection bin on the property of St. Mary's Church in South Plainfield, to collect coats and blankets for Fish. Collection bins were also placed inside Our Lady of Czestochowa Church and in the parking lot of Sacred Heart

Church, both in South Plainfield. The Knights hold an annual coat and blanket drive during the months of December and January. The first year they collected 140 coats. Last year they collected over 400 coats and nearly 100 blankets.

Particular thanks go to Payless Shoe store for selecting Fish as a partner in the *Payless Shoes 4 Kids* program. Payless provided 200 \$15 coupons

to Fish, Inc. The clothing program distributed all of the coupons to clients with children before the Christmas holiday.

St. Joseph's R. C. Church in North Plainfield has started a once a month "Clothing Giveaway" and soup kitchen. Their focus is needy families in North Plainfield and Plainfield. This will enable Fish, Inc., Dunellen area to better serve the clients in our area.

**Toys.** Lisa Couch, chairperson of the Dunellen area Christmas Toy Program, reported another successful year providing gifts to 750 children of Fish clients. Several corporations and civic organizations support the toy program each year. Lisa thanks the many churches, organizations, corporations and individuals who contributed so generously to the toy program.

The New Brunswick Toy Program, chaired by Cathy Kobilis, provided toys and warm clothing to 315 families with 709 children. Ten churches, plus eight other organizations, and individuals, assisted in the distribution of gifts.

**Phone Volunteers.** The hard working, dedicated telephone volunteers continue to be a vital link in the chain to provide service to our clients. For the second consecutive year, there was no turnover of volunteers. Chairperson Juanita Hearn thanks all the volunteers for a job well done.

**Computers.** Committee chairperson, Dave Casterline reported that database activity has decreased. The committee also serves as technical support for the various computers and office equipment of Fish, Inc. Dave began working on a web page for Fish in 2008, and he is currently gathering data to be included on the website.

**Fish Hospitality..** Susan Baybutt, Director of the FISH Hospitality Program, Inc., reported that during this, the 19<sup>th</sup> year of service to the community, they served 25 family units, including 26 adults and 27 children. After several months of temporary accommodations for daytime activities, Hospitality now has a permanent day church and two new night churches.

## THE LAST WORD

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

JUDY COX, EDITOR