



FISH NEWSLETTER

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

Volume No. 12

Issue No. 1

Spring 2007

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I hope that everyone has experienced the blessings of the Lenten Season and the joy of Easter. Most people think of Easter only as a time to rejoice in Christ's resurrection. We don't usually connect it with our Christian mandate to serve the poor, but Jesus did.

Near the end of John's Gospel, after His resurrection, Christ appears to his disciples on the shore of the sea of Tiberius. After they have eaten together, Jesus says to Peter "Simon son of Jo'nas, lovest thou me more than these?". Peter answers "Yea Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." Then Jesus says "Feed my lambs". This exchange is repeated two more times to emphasize its importance.

There are several ways to interpret these words. The literal part of their meaning is that Jesus told his followers to provide for his people's spiritual and physical needs.

We at Fish are fortunate to be able to follow this command of God by helping to feed His people who are in need.

Phil Cox, president

VOLUNTEERS AND DONORS ARE A BLESSING

Fish is blessed with a wonderful network of volunteers. There are those who sort clothing, assist the clients, or organize appointments in the Clothing Room; the dedicated, hard working group of regular volunteers in the Food Room; faithful telephone volunteers; and those who assist with sorting and packing toys for the holiday programs. All those who assist the chairpersons with the operation of their programs are what keep Fish working to help others.

In addition, many contribute in other ways. Individuals and groups from churches, scout troops, corporations, social clubs, and schools, organize and carry out many varied collections that benefit people in need in our community. Those who contribute financially enable Fish to obtain supplies needed to help others.

Ways you can help: The Clothing program needs

additional people to sort clothing for the Spring season. There is a need for a few responsible people to help unload a large delivery truck once a month on a regular basis. Volunteers are needed for the Holiday Toy Program, and new telephone volunteers are always welcome. For more information, call the Fish Hotline, 732-356-0081, and ask to speak to the particular program chairperson.

NEW SEASON – NEW NEEDS

With the coming of Spring, there is a need for spring and summer clothing for children. Sheets, blankets, towels, etc. are always needed. Donations may be brought to the Clothing Room, 456 New Market Rd., Piscataway, Mon. through Wed., 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Please save winter clothing until Fall, as storage space is limited.

Food Room shelves are usually lightly stocked during spring and summer. Let's not forget that people in need are hungry year round, not just during the holidays. Donations may be brought to a nearby church that participates in the Fish Food Program, or to the Food Room, 456 New Market Road, Piscataway, Mon., Wed. and Fri., 9:00 a.m. till Noon.

2007 ANNUAL MEETING

The thirty-seventh annual meeting of Fish, Inc., Dunellen Area, took place at the First Presbyterian Church in Dunellen on Monday, February 12. Attendance was small, but much was accomplished. After opening prayer, the Treasurer and the program and committee chairpersons each gave their annual reports. Election of officers was conducted.

Officers 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.

Karl Mueller and Brian Mortensen were elected to serve as Steering Committee members. Bob Mitchell, Steve Glowacki, Carol Papi, Art McClelland, and Dave Casterline will serve on the nominating committee for the 2009 elections.

Annual Report Summaries

Treasurer: Ned Halteman reported that although our present assets are about \$6,000 less than they were one year ago, Fish continues to be in good financial health. One unexpected expense was the increase in insurance cost for our truck as a result of adding additional drivers.

Clothing Program: Chairperson Gerry Halteman reported that the Clothing Room is open Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Clients are permitted to visit the Clothing Room two to three times a year, by appointment.

In 2006, the Clothing room served 30 to 45 families a week, totaling about 3,500 children and about 1,000 adults for the year. Gerry expressed appreciation for the many donations of clothing. She also thanked the corporations, scout troops, churches, schools and individuals who held clothing collections and made monetary donations to purchase new items such as sneakers, socks and underwear. Gerry also thanked the clothing room volunteers who do the varied tasks necessary to make this program successful.

One of the Clothing Room's very faithful volunteers, Betty Jordon, passed away this past December. Betty always had a smile and loved her work at Fish. She will surely be missed.

Food Program: The Food program concluded another successful year thanks to the support of many organizations such as churches, Boy scouts, Girl Scouts, U.S. Postal Carriers, schools, corporate donors, and individuals. The total number of families served was approximately 4,560. In addition to the walk-ins who come monthly, Fish served senior citizens from Middlesex, Plainfield and New Brunswick.

Special thanks go out to Our Lady of Mt. Virgin in Middlesex and students of Bishop Ahr High School for their annual turkey drives; the First Baptist Church of New Market for their monthly collection at Middlesex Acme; and Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church in Piscataway for their weekly donations; and the faithful volunteers in the Food Room.

In August volunteers completed a major cleaning and refurbishing of the Food Room. The renovation helps the flow of traffic in the Food Room.

Toy Programs: Lisa Couch, chairperson of the Dunellen area Christmas Toy Program, reported another successful year providing 545 children of Fish clients with new toys and clothing. Some corporations and civic organizations chose to each help a family. Eight families were assisted confidentially in this manner. This year toys

were distributed from the Clothing room where clients could come by to receive their gifts.

Lisa thanks the many churches, organizations, corporations and individuals who thought of others this holiday season by contributing so generously to the toy program. Just by word of mouth the toy program gained two new corporate sponsors. She welcomes all who would like to become involved with the toy program in 2007.

The New Brunswick Toy Program, is chaired by Kathy Kobilis. Again, working with the Central Jersey Chapter of the Navy League, the program provided toys and clothing for approximately 422 children of service men and women stationed out of Earle Naval Base and Activities New York Coastguard; 203 children from the Ozanum Shelter in Edison; and clients from New Brunswick, Perth Amboy, Edison, Highland Park and East Brunswick.

Twelve churches, numerous corporations, and several other businesses and schools participated by sponsoring children or donating items to the Angel Tree Program. In addition to the gifts donated for the children, many businesses donated supplies or services, including such things as wrapping paper, copying services, even food for volunteers on toy packing day.

Telephone Volunteers: The hard working, dedicated telephone volunteers continue to be a vital link in the chain to provide service to our clients. One of our most faithful volunteers, Betty Thomas retired this year, having served for over 30 years as a telephone volunteer Chairperson Juanita Hearn thanks Betty and all the volunteers for a job well done. Two new volunteers, Betty Gill and Debbie Turton, started last year. They, and a few of the other 13 volunteers, work extra days to fill in the schedule requirements. Additional volunteers are always needed and welcome.

Computer Committee: Dave Casterline reported that the need for databases has lessened because most clients now pick up the food that Fish provides.

Susan Baybutt, Director of the FISH Hospitality Program, Inc., thanked Fish, Inc. and their volunteers who have provided food, clothing, and other supplies for the guests in the Hospitality Program.

THE LAST WORD

Do you need help? Could you contribute or volunteer? Call Fish, Inc. - Dunellen Area at: **732-356-0081.**

Judy Cox, editor