



# Fish Newsletter

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**Fish, Inc., Dunellen Area**

*Serving our neighbors since 1970*

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## Ned and Gerry Halteman Honored at 2018 Annual Meeting

In 1970, a movie ticket cost an average of \$1.50 (\$14 today), the Federal minimum wage was \$2.50 an hour (\$7.25 today) and the national debt was \$450 billion (\$21 trillion today). It certainly was a different time. It was during this time in history that Fish, Inc. Dunellen Area became incorporated and began its journey of becoming a staple of help and support in the community.

One dedicated and faithful volunteer has served Fish since its beginning and upon her recent retirement, was honored for almost five decades of service to Fish, Inc. Mrs. Geraldine "Gerry" Halteman has been a constant at Fish right from the start. Gerry had served as the clothing room chairperson for many, many years. She began by collecting clothing in her garage and distributing it to the clients who called Fish for help. In those early years, Gerry reflects that Fish served approximately 10 families who she knew by name. Today, there are over 1200 families registered with the clothing room.

Kind, sweet, faithful, dedicated and nice are just some of the words our clients have used to describe Gerry. She was always willing to help those in need with clothing, shoes, winter coats and bedding. Gerry would put in many, many hours outside of the regular schedule to see that no donation was ever turned away or that a client was served. She always had a kind word and a listening ear but more than that, Gerry has a compassionate heart. With a strong faith, Gerry always believed that God would provide what Fish needed to continue to serve others.

Gerry's husband Ned Halteman, has also been a dedicated volunteer. Ned served for many years as the Treasurer for Fish, Inc. and then as Assistant Treasurer. Under his watchful eye, Fish has been able to provide the necessary food and clothing when donations fall short as well as continuing to meet the operating expenses of our organization.

At the Fish Annual Meeting on May 10<sup>th</sup>, Ned and Gerry were recognized and honored for their many dedicated years to Fish. The plaque Gerry holds in the picture below hangs in the entry way to our Clothing Room. We are grateful for their dedication and leadership given to Fish and the legacy they leave. Their names will always be synonymous with Fish, Inc. Dunellen Area. Those they leave behind are grateful to have worked alongside them and privileged to know them. As we tearfully say good bye, we wish them both much happiness and good health in their retirement



*The plaque reads:  
"In Grateful Recognition of Geraldine Halteman for her more than 49 years of dedicated service to this organization." As a founding member, Gerry held several offices and retired as Clothing Room Chairperson, always concerned for the welfare of Fish while tirelessly working to improve the spiritual and physical well being of the most vulnerable."*

# **Fish, Inc. Annual Meeting**

**May 10, 2018**

## **President's Report:**

Lisa Couch told us that while the loss of Gerry Halteman as Clothing Program chairperson was a significant challenge, dedicated volunteers kept the clothing room functioning. We still need a person to continue the work that Gerry began more than 40 years ago. Lisa thanked our dedicated volunteers who work to accomplish all that Fish does.

## **Treasurer's Report:**

Rick Couch reported that our financial condition was sound. In 2017 our income exceeded our expenses by \$7,450. Rick also reported that we have sufficient reserves to cover anticipated expenditures.

## **Telephone Chairperson Report:**

Deborah Turton reported that our 11 telephone volunteers are the face of Fish for those who call us for help. They schedule food and clothing appointments for those we can aid and provide phone numbers of other organizations that may be able to provide services that Fish cannot. Deborah trains new volunteers at her residence. Delores Delvecchio joined Fish as a new phone volunteer in 2017.

## **Communications and Publicity:**

Judy Cox stated that the Communication Committee worked to inform people in our communities about services provided by Fish through our newsletter, brochure, flyers, and press releases. Kelly Mchale reached out to 15 congregations in Edison and Highland Park to encourage support for Fish. Many were already helping Fish programs in various ways.

## **Food Room:**

Lisa Couch reported that The Food Room provided food each month for residents of Piscataway, Dunellen, Middlesex, South Plainfield, Edison, Highland Park, and Green Brook. Additional holiday foods were provided for Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. Most of the food required was donated by

local supermarkets, restaurants, scout troops, civic and fraternal groups, houses of worship, and individuals. Food not available from donations was purchased from the Community Food Bank of NJ at reduced prices. We are truly grateful for all the food and monetary donations and especially for the work of our dedicated volunteers that allows the Food Room to continue to serve our clients.

## **Christmas Toy Program:**

Christmas gifts were provided by request for children, age 12 and under, of our food and clothing room clients. Program chairperson, Lisa Couch, thanked St. John the Evangelist Church, Our Lady of Fatima Church, St. Francis Cabrini Church, All Saints Lutheran Church, Liberty Corner Presbyterian Church, Colgate-Palmolive, and IEEE for providing beautiful gifts. Special thanks to Rick Couch for many hours organizing, lugging, and help handing out these gifts.

## **Clothing Room:**

In 2017 Gerry Halteman, our original Clothing Room Chairperson, was not able to continue in that position. Since there was no replacement available Lisa Couch stepped in as acting chairperson so the Clothing Room could continue to operate. Clothing Room hours were changed to coincide with Food Room hours. Records were installed by Martha Egbert on a lap top computer financed by Sally Chiang. Various other changes were made to allow easier access to the clothing. Lisa thanked the schools, corporations, houses of worship, scouts, and civic and fraternal organizations that collected clothing for Fish to distribute. Volunteers, the heartbeat of Fish, deserve special thanks for their efforts, guidance, and support during this time of transition.

## **Fishes & Loaves Café:**

Fishes and Loaves Coordinator Lisa Couch reports that Fishes and Loaves Café I serves a free lunch on the 3rd Thursday of the month at Christ United Methodist Church, Hoes Lane, Piscataway. This meal is served between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. to anyone in need of good food and fellowship. Similarly, Fishes and Loaves Café II serves a free dinner on the 3rd Friday of the month between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. in the cafeteria at Our Lady of Fatima Church, New Market Road, Piscataway.

## Scout Projects Benefit Fish, Inc. Dunellen Area

It sure was a hot summer, but that didn't deter the determination and drive of two Scouts working on projects to benefit Fish, Inc.

Working on the rank of Eagle, **Nicholas (Nick) Couch**, a Life Scout with Troop #129 in Green Brook built an enclosure for the garbage dumpsters and two new outdoor benches. Over the course of two months, Nick and his crew built the garbage enclosure along the back of the parking lot allowing for the dumpsters to be moved from their location right next to the entry doors of the Food Room. This move not only made the entry way aesthetically pleasing but made it much easier for the garbage truck to access the dumpsters.

The benches are located along the sidewalk that leads into the Food Room. Food Room clients now have a sturdy and safe place to sit while waiting to be served. This is especially important to those clients who have disabilities or problems standing in line.

Nick is waiting for his final Eagle Board of Review and if approved, hopes to have his Eagle Court of Honor in the spring. Nick is a Senior at Watchung Hills Regional High School.



**Emily Chase** is an eighth grader at Von E. Mauger Middle School and a Girl Scout with Troop #60850 in Middlesex. For her Silver Award, Emily worked to provide "Safe Foods 4 All", her campaign to collect gluten and allergy free foods for the Fish Food Pantry.

Emily engaged the congregation of her church, Our Lady of Mount Virgin in Middlesex, Curves in Green Brook and the SunButter company to donate non-perishable foods that fit this category. The SunButter Company makes a natural sunflower seed spread, similar to that of peanut butter and has donated many cases to the food pantry. Through all of her efforts, Emily collected over 700 pounds of food for this campaign. Individuals requesting help with special dietary needs such as gluten/peanut/allergen free diets have become more frequent in recent months. These foods typically are more expensive and are less likely to be donated. Emily's campaign has made a significant impact on our ability to meet the needs of those seeking help with these dietary requirements.

Emily was awarded her Silver Award this past May.



We are grateful to Nick and Emily for selecting Fish as the recipient of their hard work. We applaud them for their perseverance and dedication to their individual projects. We congratulate them on their achievements and wish them a bright, successful future.



## Giving Garden at Wagner Farm Arboretum Donates Produce



As in summers past, the Giving Garden at Wagner Farm Arboretum in Warren has been donating fresh produce to our food room throughout this summer. Food room clients have been able to pick from a selection of such things as fresh tomatoes, squash, eggplant, basil and green peppers to name just a few. This produce donation plays an important part in helping our clients make balanced, nutritious meals for their families. We are grateful to Wagner Farm Arboretum for including Fish in their distribution.

In addition, Fish would also like to thank the members of our community who anonymously drop off produce from their personal gardens to benefit our clients. It is an honor to be part of such a caring community.



### Clothing Room Hours

The Clothing Room is now open on **Mondays and Wednesdays**, 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. This coincides with the Food Room operating hours. We hope that this schedule will mutually benefit volunteers and clients of both programs.

### Coming Up ---

*Fishes & Loaves Café I:* Due to a fire in the kitchen area of Christ United Methodist Church, Fishes & Loaves Café I is closed until further notice.

*Fishes & Loaves Café II:* September 21, October 19, 2018: Free hot dinner 5:00 to 7:00 pm, at Our Lady of Fatima Recreation/Learning Center Cafeteria, 499 New Market Road, Piscataway. *Dinner is served the third Friday of every month.*

*Thanksgiving Food distribution:* Monday-Friday, November 12-16, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon; Saturday, November 17, 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.; Monday and Tuesday, November 19 and 20, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 Noon.

*Christmas Food distribution:* Saturday, December 15, 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.; Monday, December 17 to Friday, December 21, 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon.



### Come Join 'THE FISHNET'

If you would like to hear from us when we have a specific need, become a member of *The Fish Net*. To subscribe, visit us at [www.fishdunellenarea.org](http://www.fishdunellenarea.org) and click on "The Fish Net" tab.



Follow us on Facebook at "Fish, Inc.-Dunellen Area"



### The Last Word

For assistance, or if you would like to contribute or volunteer, call the Fish hotline: **732-356-0081**. For more information about Fish, Inc., please visit our website: [www.fishdunellenarea.org](http://www.fishdunellenarea.org).

*Fish, Inc., Dunellen Area qualifies as a nonprofit corporation and is exempt from Federal Income Tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue code. All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law. We follow IRS requirements for receipts.*