



# GRATITUDE REPORT

# The FISH NET

## Winter 2021-22

## Combating Hunger Today: Sharing Food with Impact and Safety

### Pivoting to Keep Families Nourished and Safe



Photo used with permission by The Columbian.

We envision a community where no one is hungry. But we are astounded that Covid-19 has turned our world upside down for nearly two years. We have all had to react, adapt and transform into new ways of living. In March 2020, we at FISH reacted by changing our food distribution model and, for their safety, sending our beloved older volunteers home.

We adapted by rearranging our pantry so that we could safely provide food boxes for our clients in a contact-free manner plus we added drive-thru events. And we transformed the pantry so that we could package and distribute bags of produce, meat, bread, dairy and more with food boxes. Hundreds received food each day. It wasn't always easy but it worked!

We are now welcoming back volunteers and making plans for a new client choice pantry. We can't wait to open the doors to see our friends back in the building. They will find a market-style pantry, rows of produce, shelves of food that they can choose from to meet their needs and preferences. A covered portico will protect all from rainy weather. And more improvements are coming up. Stay tuned Thanks to your support, 2022 is going to be a very exciting year at FISH! Thank you for joining us as we move forward.

### The FISH Medical Team



From the left, Dr. Beth Lee, Dr. John Greves and Dr. Sandford Plant.

What do you do when a deadly pandemic develops and you provide an essential service – food for families and individuals in need? You keep serving. At FISH, we are very lucky to have three medical doctors on our Board of Directors. Under the recommendations of Drs. Beth Lee, John Greves and Sandford Plant, we quickly pivoted to a no-contact system of distributing food. In fact, our early protocols were shared with pantries around the state. “We’re looking forward to operating normally as soon as our county hospitalization and infection numbers are down,” Dr. Lee reports. “With the combined protection of vaccines, masks and social distancing, we know we can keep our volunteers and our clients safe.” Thank you, Beth, John and Sandford for all your critical work!

## We Are So Very Grateful

**James Fitzgerald, Executive Director** – How can another year be coming to a close? How can it be that we are still in a pandemic? I don't know the answer to either of those questions, but I do know how FISH has stayed the course with your help. Our community has stepped up and supported us to help others in a big way.



With client numbers rising it is no small endeavor to keep food flowing to those in need in our community, but with donors, staff and volunteers, we are able to do just that. As I write this, holiday boxes are being distributed. We get to help families enjoy the holidays a bit better because they don't have to worry about the food they need to have a great family meal. What could be better than that?

We want you to know we do not take this lightly. We always want to be the best stewards of the funds you entrust us with. We are so thankful for each and every one of you.

In looking ahead to 2022, we look forward to opening our shopping style pantry, to obtaining more culturally appropriate foods for our diverse population, and to implementing many new initiatives that will be coming out of our current Strategic Planning process. More details to come on that! May 2022 be a year of growth, health and change for the good.



**Anina Estrem, Operations Manager** – Despite the scarcities in the world around us, I can't help but celebrate the abundance we experience here at FISH. This year we welcomed back veteran volunteers and applauded the introduction of new ones, who offered us an abundance of their time, labor and kindness. They also distributed an abundance of food, ensuring that our guests felt well-nourished and not just fed. And

our bountiful food supply is thanks to the generosity of this community. Whether we needed bottled water, jam or cat food, Clark County demonstrated a resolute commitment to providing us with needed resources.

## Welcome Megan Brown, Our New Volunteer Coordinator

It is our distinct pleasure to introduce you to our new Volunteer Coordinator, Megan Brown. She joined us in October and has hit the ground running with all that the job entails. She comes to us with a BA in International Studies with a minor in Food Studies and Spanish from University of Oregon. She is passionate about food access, food insecurity and reducing hunger. She is a wonderful addition to our team in helping us strive to have the best volunteer program possible. Welcome, Megan!



## FISH OF VANCOUVER BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Retired Principal, UrbanWords Group

**Thomas Lingo, Secretary**  
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President, Odoms Home Mold Remediation

**Bruce Paris**  
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**Sandford Plant, MD**  
Retired, Physician and Medical Director

**Larry Smith**  
Community Advocate and Past Vancouver  
Council Member

**George Kaufer, Emeritus**  
Past President, FISH of Vancouver  
Retired CPA and IRS Official

## STAFF

**James Fitzgerald, Executive Director**

**Anina Estrem, Operations Manager**

**Megan Brown, Volunteer Coordinator**

**Plus our dedicated volunteers who  
donate thousands of hours each year.**

## Welcome, New FISH Board Members



**Terry Murphy** - A native of Wyoming, Terry has lived in Clark County for more than 35 years and has been a business owner for most of that time including Terry Murphy Interiors. She has served on boards of non-profits as well as capital campaigns for many other non-profits including the boards of Swift, the Y Housing Board, and the YMCA plus multiple capital campaigns. Terry is actively assisting with

FISH facility improvements. Welcome, Terry!

**Bruce Paris** - Born and raised in Seattle, Bruce is a graduate of Western Washington University and the University of Washington Pacific Coast Banking School. He has lived in southwest Washington since 1980. Bruce was a commercial and private banker for 43 years before retiring. He has served on many boards including March of Dimes, Free Clinic of SW Washington, YMCA, Swift, Vancouver Rotary Club, Vancouver Rotary Foundation, Clark College Foundation and Clark County Historical Museum. We are delighted that he is a new member of the FISH Finance Committee.



**Sandford Plant, M.D.** - Born and raised in Napa, California, Sandford attended Lewis and Clark College. She graduated from medical school at OHSU in 1985. She practiced internal medicine at the Vancouver Clinic for 28 years, and during that time, served as the Medical Director of the Hospice program at PeaceHealth for 20 years. She is an active member of the FISH Medical Team, which is

directing Covid-19 safe protocols for our organization. Welcome to FISH, Sandford!

## Danny Fallon and Steve Orr: Going Above & Beyond at FISH



We often say that volunteers are the life blood of FISH. With dozens of active volunteers on our roster, it is absolutely true. Two volunteers, Danny Fallon, left, and Steve Orr, right, add much oxygen to that life blood.

If **Danny Fallon** had a formal title at FISH, he would choose “Warehouse Wizard.” And he is one. Danny works three or more shifts per week doing a variety of warehouse jobs from sorting and filling food boxes, to supervising work parties to operating the FISH forklift. “My parents raised me to volunteer,” he says. Plus it’s a workout. “I do good deeds AND get exercise. It’s like going to the gym.” In addition to all his FISH hours, for more than 20 years Danny (aka Ras Danny) has produced weekly, three-hour radio shows focused on reggae music at KBOO 90.fm community radio station. The current show runs at 3 a.m. but you can stream it from KBOO at any time. Check it out!

Every building needs a person who keeps a close eye on it. For more than three years, **Steve Orr** has filled that role with great skill at FISH. If he had a formal job title, he says that “Maintenance Guy” would be a good choice. Weekly or more often Steve comes in to “make the rounds” to see if anything is broken. He has taken on whatever is needed including plumbing, carpentry, painting, equipment assembly and vehicle maintenance. And he has donated new van tires, tools and other needed items. “I have always liked giving to people,” says the retired Navy veteran. “I tell them at FISH ‘Anytime you need me, call me up! I’ll be there!’” And he has been, sometimes on a daily basis.

“While Steve and Danny are doing behind-the-scene work, they are certainly not unseen,” says FISH Executive Director James Fitzgerald. “They are the ones that keep things working right around the building and food flowing out to our clients. We couldn’t do it without them.” Thank you, Danny and Steve!

# Thank You, Donors! Your Contributions Make a Major Difference!

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## THANK YOU TO ALL OUR DONORS!

This donor list reflects contributions made from October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021. We strive to accurately list all names and donation levels and apologize for any discrepancies or omissions. Please contact us at 360-433-2244 to report any changes. Thank you!

### Thank You to Our Major Food Donors

7-Eleven	Panera Bread
Big Town Hero	Safeway
Chuck's Produce	Seize the Bagel
Clark County Food Bank	Starbucks
Clark Neighbors Food Project	Sunshine Division
Dave's Killer Bread	Walk & Knock Local Food Drive
Grocery Outlet	The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
New Seasons Market	

### WHY I DONATE:

"I support FISH because it makes our community stronger."  
 ~Larry Smith



## The FISH COUNT July 2020-June 2021

Total Pounds of Food Distributed **1 million lbs.**  
 Total Households Served **13,199\***  
 Total Persons Served **35,025\***  
 Volunteer Hours **14,200+ (6.8 FTEs)**  
 Children Served **27%**  
 Elderly Served **24%**  
 \*Includes duplicated households and individuals



### WHY I DONATE:

"I support FISH because it was a lifeline for my family while growing up in Vancouver."  
 ~Eddie Odoms



## Spotlight on Food Donations at FISH: Where Does Our Food Come From?

Food is a constant need at FISH. On a typical day, we provide food for 60+ households feeding more than 200 individuals. Plus we distribute lunch bags to approximately 60 people who are without housing each weekday. Where does this food come from? About 60% of our food comes from the Clark County Food Bank. Each day, our vans pick up food at the CCFB and a larger food order is dropped off weekly. Our haulers also drive our two vans to grocery stores each morning to pick up food donations. Community food drives provide additional food. While much of our food comes without cost, we also purchase food when necessary to ensure that we have a healthy supply for our clients.

### Three of Our Major Food Donors

**Grocery Outlet** held a month-long promotion for FISH in October. Shoppers added dollars to their grocery bills. At the end of the month, Grocery Outlet and shoppers donated \$10,000 to FISH in store credits which were spent at the store on turkeys and other holiday foods. This was a tremendous gift at a very crucial time of year. Thank you, Grocery Outlet for your commitment to ending hunger!



**Clark Neighbors Food Project** formed four years ago in Clark County's Truman neighborhood. Leaders approached FISH with the idea of a bi-monthly food drive with neighbors filling a special green bag with extra food while shopping. Would we like participate? A resounding "Yes!" was our answer. The program has since expanded to multiple neighborhoods and cities, benefiting many other food pantries. In 2017, the first neighborhood event yielded 375 pounds of food for FISH. Four years later the project donates approximately 8,000 pounds of individually-chosen, quality, non-perishable foods every two months to FISH of Vancouver which we sort and distribute to food insecure households. Food donors, we can't thank you enough!



This great program even inspired a limerick by Beth Lee, FISH Board Member and CNFP participant!

*My neighbors and I rush around,  
A million projects with kids all abound.  
On the road we wave hi,  
But then fly on by,  
But on Green Bags we unite all around.*

*We're not talking just a carload or two  
On "FISH Saturday," my neighbors come thru!  
FISH's lot gets quite packed,  
With pallets of green sacks;  
We know how to give, YES WE DO!*

**The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints** has delivered three huge semi trucks, each filled with full pallets of everything from peanut butter and pasta to baking supplies and canned goods, since April 2020. They have donated more than 90,000 lbs. of food for households served by FISH. Their donation allowed us to replenish our warehouse, fill food boxes and feed thousands of food insecure individuals. In a time when there was (and is) much need and many food drives put on hold due to Covid, this was a tremendous donation. In addition, many volunteers from the local stakes have worked in the warehouse and pantry. We can't thank you enough for your wonderful food donations and your service!



Would you like to hold a food drive for FISH? Contact Anina Estrem, our Operations Manager at [aninae@fishvancouver.org](mailto:aninae@fishvancouver.org).

# FISH Donor Spotlights: You Truly Make a Difference in the World!

## 2021 Give More 24!

For the past seven years, FISH has participated in Give More 24!, southwest Washington's annual day of giving that is produced by the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington. Give More 24! has evolved into a



*Boundless*

remarkable 24 hours of philanthropy. Held in September, this year's event raised more than \$3.3 million for 207 local groups. FISH set records this year with donations totally \$78,474! We were delighted to be at or near the top of the leaderboard for the full 24 hours. Thank you to 119 donors, another personal best for FISH, who contributed on that day. And infinite thanks to two anonymous donors who gave \$25,000 in matching funds and \$15,000 respectively and our many matching funds donors. Finally, we salute the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington for coordinating this extraordinary day of giving. We simply could not do our work without your leadership and generosity!

## Business Friends of FISH (BFFs)

"We get by with a little help from our friends" is a familiar song lyric, right? Actually, we would say "We **thrive** with a LOT of help from our friends" – Our Business Friends of FISH (BFFs). Our BFFs make substantial monthly financial contributions or provide significant services. CE John and Ginn Group (through the Ginn Gives program) each make very large monthly donations to FISH. These regular monthly donations provide stability and sustainability and we are enormously grateful.



Other BFFs support FISH through needed services. Thank you to Garon Roofing and Sheet Metal, Norlift, Waste Connections, Millenium Building Services, The Al Angelo Company, IB I.T. and Blairco Heating and Air Conditioning for your services. We would love to welcome your business to our BFF program. If you are interested, please contact James Fitzgerald at 360-433-2244 or jamesf@fishvancouver.org.

## FISH Sustaining Circle Members

Are you looking for a way to help combat hunger in our community? The easiest way is to support FISH of Vancouver by becoming a monthly giver through our Sustaining Circle. You can quickly and safely make an automatic monthly donation via your credit card or checking account.

You can spread your financial impact across the year while creating sustainability and predictable income for our programs, ensuring that FISH is always available for food insecure families and individuals.

To set up a monthly donation, contact our Treasurer Alice Davies at [aliced@fishvancouver.org](mailto:aliced@fishvancouver.org) or sign up through our Donate button at [www.fishvancouver.org](http://www.fishvancouver.org).

We love our Sustaining Circle Members! They truly make a difference. Thank you very much!

**WHY I DONATE:**

"I donate to FISH because what could be more important than feeding hungry people?"  
~Betty Sue Morris