

FEBRUARY 2021

FISH LINES NEWSLETTER

A NOTE OF THANKS FROM BOARD CHAIR SHERIDAN SNELL



As FISH was turning the page on 2019, we reflected on a very positive and “normal” year. We saw a remodeled multi-dimensional food pantry, growth in our programs, and an increase in services which provided our clients pathways to self-sufficiency.

THEN CAME COVID-19! Our agency immediately adopted safety protocols, curtailed volunteer participation, and geared up for what proved to be over 25,000 requests for assistance during 2020.

We can't do what we do without Maggi Feiner, our President, CEO and Chief Volunteer, our Executive Director, Alicia Tighe Orgera, and our dedicated Staff who have never missed a beat during the pandemic. I also wish to thank our volunteers and Board of Directors. who have selflessly given of their time and efforts during a very difficult period.

And to YOU, our generous donors: You have opened your hearts to FISH in record fashion so that we had the means to respond to each and every request for assistance that came through our doors.

We are looking forward to a “normal” 2021 in which we can expand our programs and services, increase our collaboration with other island organizations, and make a bigger difference in our community.

We appreciate your loyal and continued support.

With gratitude.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sheridan Snell".

Sheridan Snell

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*All workshops and offerings
are virtual until further
notice due to COVID-19.*

2430-B Periwinkle Way

Sanibel FL 33957

239.472.4775

fishofsancap.org

email: info@fishofsancap.org





WELCOME STEVE KLUG TO THE BOARD

We are pleased to welcome new member Steve Klug to their Board of Directors. States Maggi Feiner, President & CEO, FISH, "We look forward to working with Steve and are certain his contributions as a member of our Board will build a better future for everyone in our community."

Steve received his MBA (and undergraduate degree) from Northwestern University and law degree from Cleveland State. He began his career in banking and consumer finance and, in 1980 moved to Cleveland, OH, to work with Progressive Insurance, rising to the position of Division President. He later purchased and grew his own business prior to retiring.

Steve and his wife Debbie became Florida residents in 1997, however they still maintain a residence in Cleveland. He has served as President of the Herb Strauss Theater and Board Member of Big Arts. Steve and Debbie have three children and thirteen grandchildren. They have a home on Seaspray Lane and are active members of The Sanctuary Golf Club.

Both Debbie and Steve have been active supporters of FISH for several years. Debbie is an active member of the FISH Development Committee whose main purpose is to create and implement donor strategies that allow FISH to meet its revenue goals while building awareness and attracting new donors to the organization. "I am excited to serve our community by being part of such a fine organization," said Steve.

For nearly 40 years FISH has been a "neighbors helping neighbors" organization as the islands only wrap-around service provider offering a wide range of human services. FISH works through donations, and, with their professional staff and Board, strive to enrich the lives of all people in Sanibel and Captiva Islands as neighbors helping neighbors with social services, education and assistance.

To learn more about FISH, please contact Alicia Tighe Orgera, Executive Director, at (239) 472-4775 or visit www.fishofsancap.org





MARIA ESPINOZA NAMED ASSISTANT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We are pleased to announce the promotion of Maria Espinoza to Assistant Executive Director.



Maria has been with FISH since 2017, when she began with the organization after Hurricane Irma as a volunteer. She soon shifted to a full time employee, during which time she has held positions as the Walk-In Center Manager, Volunteer Manager and Director of Food Programs, proving herself a committed organization advocate.

“This position is new to the organization but an important piece of our puzzle as we continue to grow. Maria has graciously, and gracefully, worn many hats here at FISH so it was a natural fit for Maria to move into a role that focuses the broader scope of FISH’s work,” states Alicia Tighe Orgera, Executive Director. “There are few that know the ins and outs of FISH like Maria so we are thrilled to see her continue to grow alongside the organization.”

Maria is a senior at FGCU working on her social work degree with a minor in political science. She has volunteered at various non-profits in Lee County including Salvation Army’s Center of Hope, Boys and Girls Club of Lee County, and Junior Achievement Programs on SWFL. Before working at FISH, she taught foreign language to elementary students.

“I am grateful for the opportunity to continue to grow with FISH. I feel extremely motivated and encouraged by the support of the FISH Board and exceptional team of dedicated professionals and volunteers,” stated Maria.

FAREWELL ANTHONY!

Anthony resigned from FISH to begin a new position with ACT, a fantastic nonprofit that serves survivors and those affected by domestic violence and abuse.



Anthony will be serving in an education/outreach role, and we know he will succeed as he has served our clients with kindness and compassion during his time here at FISH. His last day was January 26th.

Thank you Anthony for your service to FISH. We wish you the very best in your new adventure and professional journey!



FOOD NEWS

FISH LINES

VOLUNTEERS ASSEMBLE BACKPACKS



FISH Volunteers Carol and Gerry Gorby assisted with our Backpack Program -- easy to prepare non-perishable, nutritious foods for kids provided weekly at no cost. All backpacks contain protein, fruits/vegetables, snacks, milk, juice and occasionally a sweet treat. In 2020, we distributed 1,974 backpacks to school aged children. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on school and after school programs, we saw a large increase of participation in the Backpack Program.

FRIENDLY FACES LUNCHEON, VIRTUALLY

FISH OF SANCAP, with George & Wendy's Seafood Grill, hosted the community-wide Friendly Faces Luncheon in a virtual format on Tues., Jan. 19.

Last months luncheon featured not only delicious food, but a special project where participants made braided dog pull toys out of T-shirts. Those without dogs will donate the handmade toys to the Gulf Coast Humane Society. Participants played a virtual game of Trivia and a playdough sculpture guessing game.

The Friendly Faces luncheon, held virtually on the third Tuesday of each month, consists of a cold entree, side, water bottle and dessert, delivered to islanders by FISH volunteers following COVID safety protocol. Meal choice details are provided upon sign-up and reservations are required no later than the Friday before the luncheon date. Once registered, FISH will provide an emailed link and meeting ID number for access.



BIG THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- *Bailey's General Store for weekly donations and drop off site*
- *Bank of the Islands, an ongoing non-perishable Food Pantry donation site*
- *Jerry's Foods for weekly donations*
- *Sanibel Island Farmer's Market 'Farm 2 FISH' program.*

We cannot thank you enough for your support.



SOCIAL SERVICES

FISH LINES

VIRTUAL PRESENTATION: COVID UPDATE VACCINE NEWS, REDUCING RISK, COPING

FISH of SanCap, with Lee Health, offers 'An Overview of the COVID-19 Vaccines and Isolation During the Pandemic' on Wed., Feb. 24, 2021, beginning at 10:00am. This presentation is virtual via the WebEx platform.



Dr. Mary B. Saunders, Lee Health System Medical Director of Epidemiology (Infection Control) will discuss the current state of Lee County numbers and status, prevention measures (masks/handwashing/etc.) and latest vaccine news. Dr. Saunders will also offer best practices for disease prevention as well as insights on the available vaccine options. Mary Beth Saunders, D.O., FACOI, MPH is the System Medical Director for

Epidemiology, Infection Prevention and Antimicrobial Stewardship, a position she has held since 2016. She has been a practicing Infectious Disease and Internal Medicine physician in SWFL since 1997 and with Lee Health since 2007.



Dr. Paul G. Simeone, Lee Health Vice President and Medical Director of Behavioral and Mental Health will discuss the dangers of self-isolation during the COVID pandemic, not only to the senior population but also to the community as a whole. Dr. Simeone received his M.A. in experimental psychology from Mount Holyoke College, and his M.A. and Ph.D. in clinical psychology from The Institute for Advanced Psychological

Studies at Adelphi University in New York. Most recently, Dr. Simeone was Associate Director of Outpatient Psychiatry at The Cambridge Health Alliance and maintained a private independent practice in Belmont, MA. His clinical & academic interests include: integrative models of evidenced-based/informed psychotherapy, cultural aspects of psychopathology and normal functioning, and program development at the interface of community and behavioral health service needs.

"This informative discussion will provide the community with the latest information on the COVID-19 vaccine and its effects on individuals and people in the community," says Susan Alexander, Senior Services and Community Engagement Director, FISH. "Please join us with experts from Lee Health System for updates on vaccine news, reducing risk and coping with isolation during these uncertain times. If you are unfamiliar with the virtual WebEx platform, we will guide you through the simple process of setting it up on your media device."

To take part in this very informative discussion, please RSVP by Mon., Feb. 22 by contacting Susan Alexander at FISH, 239-472-4775. Once registered, FISH will provide instructions on how to join the presentation.

BIG THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



We invite you to join these very informative discussions. Please RSVP by contacting Susan Alexander at FISH, 239-472-4775. Once registered, we will provide call instructions



SOCIAL SERVICES

FISH LINES

TAX RETURN PREPARATION ASSISTANCE BY UNITED WAY IRS TRAINED VOLUNTEERS

The United Way Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program offers tax assistance for qualified taxpayers. Households who make \$66,000 or less and who need assistance in preparing their tax returns qualify for the VITA program. These households may have their returns completed and filed for them at no cost. VITA preparers are IRS certified trained volunteers that can inform taxpayers about special tax credits that may be applicable.

Those wishing to have their tax return completed through the VITA Program must bring the following:

- Photo identification
- Social security cards for you, your spouse and your dependents
- All wage and tax statements, including Forms W-2, W-2G, 1099-R, SSA-1099
- Interest and dividend statements
- Last year's tax return
- Any other tax documents you received



Beginning Fri., Feb. 5, VITA will offer a socially distant tax preparation service at the FISH Walk-In Center from 10am – 1pm. Those seeking assistance will drop off their documentation at the side door of the FISH office and pick up approximately one week later. Additional appointment dates are:

February 12, 19 and 26
March 12 and March 26
April 9.

Appointments are required and fill up quickly! Please contact Susan Alexander at the FISH Walk-In Center (239-472-4775) for additional information and to reserve an appointment time.

BIG THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



United Way of Lee, Hendry & Glades Counties



ANNUAL MEETING VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

FISH OF SANCAP, the island ‘neighbors helping neighbors’ nonprofit that provides programs and services for those that live, work on or visit Sanibel and Captiva Islands, will hold their virtual annual meeting and volunteer recognition luncheon on Wed., Feb. 17 via Zoom.



“The depth and breadth of the services we offer would not be possible without our generous donors and dedicated volunteer force,” says FISH President & CEO, Maggi Feiner. “We run on a lean staff of about 7 full-time employees so the majority of our work from delivering hot meals to seniors, stocking our food pantry, filling kids’ food backpacks, and delivering medical equipment is being carried out by our roughly 200 volunteers.” FISH volunteers will receive a letter of thanks and a coupon for Joey’s Custard prior to the event. The Zoom presentation will contain a short video showcasing their volunteers and highlighting the organizations successes over the past year.

The vision of FISH is to create island communities where all people have the supports they need to thrive. With support from the community, their mission, to enrich the lives of all people in Sanibel and Captiva Islands by neighbors helping neighbors with social services, education and assistance is carried out on a daily basis. In 2020, FISH answered over 25,000 service requests and distributed 246,545 pounds of food through their Food Pantry Program. The Meals-by-FISH program increased dramatically, mainly due to the COVID pandemic, with 6,412 meals delivered last year.

States Alicia Tighe Orgera, Executive Director for FISH, “We are grateful to our community for their support. Like everyone, we did not know what to expect as the health crisis unfolded but the islands ensured that FISH was running on all cylinders.”

The link to the Zoom presentation will be emailed to volunteers and posted on the FISH website at www.fishofsancap.org/volunteers where highlights of the meeting will also be posted. For questions about the Annual Meeting, please contact Maria Espinoza, Assistant Executive Director, at (239) 472-4775 or visit the FISH website at www.fishofsancap.org.



OUR 2021 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sheridan Snell
Chair

Maggi Feiner
President & CEO

Lisa Ann Miller, M.D.
Vice Chair

Jim Metzler, Ph.D.
Treasurer

Willy Ocasio
Secretary

Robert Bowden

Melissa Congress

Steve Klug

John Morse

Jim Nelson

Kathy Samson

Ellen Sloan

Ann-Marie Wildman

Nicole McHale
Past Chair



WE NEED GREAT PEOPLE LIKE YOU!

Although certain duties are limited during the COVID crisis, **we still need volunteers!** Please consider our volunteers opportunities, including phone duty, meal delivery, food pantry, and more. *Contact Maria Espinoza, 239-472-0404, for details. Click on the links below for a calendar download for the following services:*

[February Phone Duty](#)

[February Meal Delivery](#)

RESOURCES

Below are online shopping links to make your generosity that much easier. An online account is required for ordering. For direct shipments to our Food Pantry, please send to: *FISH c/o Food Pantry, 2430-B Periwinkle Way, Sanibel, FL 33957.* Please include a gift note so we know who it's from and can acknowledge accordingly! *As always, thank you for thinking of our neighbors in need.*

[Amazon Prime Pantry](#)

[Bailey's General Store](#)

[Jerry's Foods](#)

[Publix](#)

FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS NEEDED

Food is one of our most basic survival needs, yet there is a significant portion of our community who struggle to put food on the table. We are working daily to reduce that number by providing assistance through our food programs thanks to our generous donors, volunteers, community partners, and staff. We are proud to offer supplemental groceries to our island neighbors five days a week by way of our 'Choice' Food Pantry. *We are open from 10:00am-3:45pm Monday—Friday, allowing our clients to shop according to their own life schedules that may otherwise prevent them from getting the resources they need.*

Our Food Pantry is always in need of the following items:

- Canned protein
- Canned fruits and vegetables
- Cereal
- Crackers
- Nut butters and jellies
- Pasta, rice, beans
- Ready-to-eat meals and soups
- Visit our [FOOD PANTRY PAGE](#) to learn more

During the COVID-19 health crisis, Food Pantry patrons will not be allowed to shop but instead will be handed bags of food.

neighbors helping neighbors



stay connected to FISH by visiting us on or at our website: fishofsancap.org

ABOUT FISH

FISH of SanCap is a nonprofit, staffed by more than 170 volunteers. Professionals staff the Walk-in Center and are available Mon. through Fri. to assist islanders and visitors with an array of services and programs. FISH is Sanibel and Captiva's only *neighbors helping neighbors* organization offering a range of human services including:

- **Temporary Emergency Financial Assistance**
- **Food Pantry**
- **Medical Equipment Loan**
- **Hurricane Packets**
- **Hot Meals Program**
- **Kid's Food Backpack**
- **Community Seminars**
- **Youth Scholarships**
- **Referrals & Resources**
- **Monthly Luncheon and much more!**

FOOD PANTRY DROP-OFF INFO

We accept donations to help stock our Food Pantry. Items must be unopened, unexpired non-perishables.

Perishable items accepted Mon-Fri from 8am-3:30pm at the Walk-in Center

Other drop off sites include:

- **Bailey's General Store**
- **Bank of the Islands**
- **Sanibel Fire Station**
- **South Seas Main Gate**



COVID-19 COMMUNITY UPDATE WITH LEE HEALTH SYSTEM

VACCINE NEWS, REDUCING RISK AND COPING WITH ISOLATION

neighbors helping neighbors

COVID-19 VACCINE NEWS

This informative discussion will provide the community with the latest information on the COVID-19 vaccine and its effects on individuals and the community. Please join FISH and experts from Lee Health System for updates on vaccine news, reducing risk and coping with isolation during these uncertain times.

WED FEB 24, 10:00A

VIRTUAL PRESENTATION

Dr. Mary B. Saunders, Lee Health System Medical Director of Epidemiology will discuss the current state of Lee County numbers and status, prevention measures (masks/handwashing/etc.) and latest vaccine news. Dr. Saunders will also offer best practices for disease prevention as well as insights on the available vaccine options.

Dr. Paul G. Simeone, Lee Health Vice President and Medical Director of Behavioral and Mental Health will discuss the dangers of self-isolation during the COVID pandemic, not only to the senior population but also to the community as a whole.

Please register by February 22 with Susan Alexander at FISH, 239-472-4775. FISH will provide WebEx instructions for access to the presentation.



Dr. Mary B. Saunders, Lee Health System Medical Director of Epidemiology



Dr. Paul G. Simeone, Lee Health Vice President and Medical Director of Behavioral and Mental Health

DATE:

Wednesday, Feb. 24

TIME:

WebEx Virtual, 10:00am

RSVP:

By Feb. 22 to FISH
239-472-4775



neighbors helping neighbors

food programs • island based education • social & senior services • helping hands & financial assistance

FISH continues to help our neighbors in meeting their physical, mental and emotional needs. As always, we are committed to being a safety net for all.

At the end of the day, our message is simple— FISH is for everyone.



Feb & Mar 2021

community events & workshops

food programs • island based education • social & senior services • helping hands & financial assistance

COMMUNITY EVENT: *Scams, Identity Theft & COVID: Recognizing Red Flags*

Mon, Feb 8, 10:00a—Virtual via Zoom

Dr. Kim Swanson, Lee County Sheriff's Office, will discuss new 'scam' calls targeting the general public that relate to COVID and the vaccine, pandemic updates or products, as well as other identity theft schemes. Dr. Swanson will offer ideas for self-protection and provide answers and tips to help citizens recognize red flags.

COMMUNITY EVENT: *Friendly Faces Luncheon*

Tues, Feb 16, Noon—Virtual via Zoom

The lunch, prepared by George & Wendy's and delivered by FISH volunteers to islanders, will include activities, games and lots of good 'ole conversation. **FISH is treating all participants to the Feb 16 lunch.** Reservations and meal choices are required by Feb 12.

COMMUNITY EVENT: *FREE Tax Preparation by VITA*

Fri, Feb 5, 12, 19 and 26, 10:00a to 1:00p—FISH Walk-In Center -- Drop off/pick up at side door

Fri, Mar 12 and 26, 10:00a to 1:00p—FISH Walk-In Center -- Drop off/pick up at side door

Fri, Apr 9, 10:00a to 1:00p—FISH Walk-In Center -- Drop off/pick up at side door

IRS certified United Way volunteers prepare taxes for households earning \$66,000 or less per year.

COMMUNITY EVENT: *COVID Updates: Vaccine News, Reducing Risk, Coping*

Wed, Feb 24, 10:00a—Virtual via WebEx

Dr. Mary B. Saunders, Lee Health System Medical Director of Epidemiology, will discuss the current state of Lee County numbers and status, prevention measures and latest vaccine news. Dr. Saunders will also offer best practices for disease prevention as well as insights on the available vaccine options. Dr. Paul G. Simeone, Lee Health Vice President and Medical Director of Behavioral and Mental Health will discuss the dangers of self-isolation during the COVID pandemic, not only to the senior population but also to the community as a whole.

COMMUNITY EVENT: *Friendly Faces Luncheon*

Tues, Mar 16, Noon—Virtual via Zoom

The lunch, prepared by George & Wendy's and delivered by FISH volunteers to islanders, will include activities, games and lots of good 'ole conversation. **FISH is treating all participants to the Mar 16 lunch.** Reservations and meal choices are required by Mar 12.

For more info or to RSVP for workshops and events, please contact Susan Alexander at FISH, 239.472.4775

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

Walk-In Center & Food Pantry will be CLOSED:

Monday, Feb 15

