

MARCH 2021

FISH LINES

NEWSLETTER

A PLEA TO OUR GOVERNOR ON BEHALF OF OUR NEIGHBORS

Governor Ron DeSantis
The Florida Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

Re: COVID-19 Vaccinations for Homebound Elderly
and Computer Challenged

Dear Governor DeSantis:

F.I.S.H. of Sanibel-Captiva, Inc. is a human services non-profit and United Way House assisting people who live or work on the Islands with various programs, including many senior programs for the homebound elderly and infirmed. Over the past few months, it has become clear that there is an isolated COVID-19 vaccination problem that we need to address – the homebound and the computer challenged.

We recognize that Sanibel and Captiva Islands are certainly not unique in this regard; the entire state has many homebound elderly and infirm residents who cannot get to a vaccine site on their own. As barrier island residents, seniors here deal with many of the same challenges as those in rural and other parts of our state situated far from a vaccine site. For instance, leaving the Islands can take anywhere between 20 minutes to over an hour during high season and typically another 20 to 30 minutes more to arrive at a Fort Myers vaccination site. F.I.S.H. has identified 160 of its clients who are either homebound due to age or infirmities that prevent them from traveling to vaccine sites, or they are suffering from dementia or other diseases, or simply have no access to computers or internet that the rest of us take for granted. No doubt, there are a number of others on the Islands that fall into these categories who do not happen to be F.I.S.H. clients.

- 2 Vaccine Plea Cont'd
- 3 Vaccine Registration
- 4 go! FISH
- 5 Welcome Jennifer
- 5 Farewell Anna
- 6 Easter Baskets
- 7 Resume Writing
- 7 VITA Tax Preparation
- 8 We're Hiring!
- 9 Volunteer Page
- 9 Resources
- 9 Donations Needed
- 10 FISH Volunteers
- 11 FISH Impact

*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



PLEA CONT'D

We respectfully propose a site, either at a pharmacy on Sanibel or the Sanibel Community House, where vaccinations can be administered. The vaccine doses can be delivered to the on-island pharmacy; however, it needs an allocation of the vaccine in sufficient numbers before anything can happen. F.I.S.H. is confident in our ability to offer solutions to this issue locally, including making contact with local pharmacies or identifying potential locations for vaccination sites. We are prepared to provide our own resources to remove obstacles such as transportation limitations for those in need and recruiting retired medical professionals qualified to administer vaccines on a voluntary basis, and others to assist with the paperwork and other logistical aspects.

On behalf of the elderly and homebound residents of Sanibel and Captiva, we respectfully request your assistance in solving this issue, which could serve as a model for statewide application.

Best regards.

Maggi Feiner
President & CEO

Sheridan Snell
Board Chair

cc: Lee County Commission Chair Kevin Ruane
Sanibel Mayor Mick Denham
Sanibel City Manager Judie Zimomra
U.S. Senator Marco Rubio
U.S. Senator Rick Scott
U.S. Representative Byron Donalds
State Senator Ray Wesley Rodrigues
State Representative Adam Botana



COVID-19 VACCINE PRE-REGISTRATION

NAVIGATING WEBSITES TO GET YOU REGISTERED

neighbors helping neighbors

COVID-19 VACCINE PRE-REGISTRATION

Do you need assistance navigating the pre-registration or appointment registration websites for the COVID-19 vaccine? FISH would like to help!

FISH of SANCAP is aware of the complicated obstacles that seniors, especially housebound elderly and chronically ill, may encounter when accessing the COVID-19 vaccine pre-registration/registration systems. We encourage anyone in the community who is or knows of someone who is in need of assistance to contact us so we can evaluate how to best address their circumstance.

On a limited basis, FISH volunteers are assisting those aged 65 and over who are eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine with pre-registration and scheduling appointments. As some may not have computer access or familiarity with online navigation, FISH is assisting the SanCap community with that process. Individuals in need are placed on our buddy system where volunteers with digital technology are available every Monday, Wednesday and Friday to help with registration and securing appointments.

The State of Florida urges eligible residents to save their place in line by pre-registering as soon as possible. For additional information on how FISH can help, please contact Susan Alexander or Maria Espinoza at 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.

2430-B Periwinkle Way, Sanibel FL 33957 239.472.4775 • fishofsancap.org





FISH LINES

go! FISH 2021 A VIRTUAL CELEBRATION



In a year that has been universally challenging, we are inspired by YOU—our neighbors—with your compassion and generosity. For families throughout our community, the pandemic has been catastrophic. Many are faced with dire situations and daunting questions:

How can I feed my family? How do I pay my rent and electric bill?

How will I get to work if I lose my car? Can I find a job? WHERE CAN I FIND HELP?

The answer is FISH.

FISH has met the challenges in our community for almost 40 years, and with your help, we will continue to impact the lives of those living and working on our islands. Unfortunately, our current health crisis has caused us to cancel our 2021 go! FISH celebration. This event, which accounts for nearly one-third of our budget, is in large part what allows us to assist over 5,000 neighbors each year.

Thank you to those who have already provided a gift of support through sponsorship and donations to our 2021 Celebration. Your contribution is more important than ever as we continue our work as neighbors helping neighbors. The opportunity to donate through sponsorships and donations will remain open through the end of March. Please visit our [webiste](#) for additional information on [Sponsorship Levels](#) and Island Giving Opportunities. There, you may also read and hear testimonials from our neighbors who are grateful for the support they have received.



neighbors helping neighbors



Welcome Jennifer Pagano Walk-In Center Manager



We are pleased to welcome new staff member Jennifer Pagano to our team. Jennifer is our Walk-In Center Manager, a new position for us this year.

“We’re excited to welcome Jennifer to our team in a position that is so critical to how our programs and client service operates on a daily basis,” said Alicia Tighe Orgera, FISH Executive Director. Jennifer will ensure that the daily operation of the FISH Walk-In Center, which receives many of FISH’s clients, runs smoothly and that FISH programs, including food programs, are running efficiently day to day along with their staff and volunteers.

Jennifer comes to FISH, most recently, from Venice, FL where she was doing nonprofit work. States Jennifer, “I have worked in the social services and educational fields for over 30 years. Being a part of something bigger than myself is the most rewarding feeling. Joining the FISH team has afforded me the opportunity follow my passion, which is to make a difference in people’s lives.”

Jennifer continues, “At FISH, I am able to do that on a daily basis through the critical connections made with our Sanibel community. I am so excited to share in the continued growth and development of not only myself but FISH and our team as well.”

Please join us in welcoming Jennifer to our team and island community.

Farewell Anna Woodall



We said goodbye to Anna, our Office Assistant and Receptionist, in February. Anna is returning to the legal field with a local Fort Myers law firm.

We wish her the very best in her professional journey. Anna, you will be missed!



FOOD NEWS

FISH LINES

EASTER FOOD BASKETS

FISH of SanCap will be assembling Easter dinner and Easter bunny baskets for those needing assistance making their Easter holiday extra bright this year. The dinner basket for families contains everything needed for a healthy, festive Easter dinner. Bunny baskets for children aged 2-12 will be filled with candy, small toys, school supplies and more.



Because of the ongoing effect to business and seasonal visitors during the COVID pandemic, island neighbors are struggling to recover from job loss and reduced work hours. FISH anticipates to provide at least 150 Easter dinner baskets and 120 bunny baskets, however it's expected that those numbers could grow as they did over the winter holidays.

Distribution for bunny baskets will begin Mar. 22nd and food basket distribution will be Mar. 30-Apr. 4. Baskets may be picked up between 10:00am-4:00pm at the FISH Walk-In Center located at 2430-B Periwinkle Way, Sanibel. Basket recipients are those known to FISH through usage of other FISH programs such as the Food Pantry and Emergency Financial Assistance. All baskets are assembled by FISH volunteers adhering to all COVID-19 precautionary measures.

"I want to thank all the volunteers who pick up food and donations, assemble baskets and help on distribution days," states Maria Espinoza, Assistant Executive Director. "Like last year's holidays, it may be challenging to secure large quantities due to the COVID-19 restrictions and limitations on available food products. The Sanibel and Captiva Islands Association of Realtors has set up a food and gift drive for our Easter program, and others have committed to donating as well. We are so grateful for everyone's support."

If you would like to donate food products, grocery gift cards or funds toward this program, please contact FISH (239) 472-4775. If you or a family you know is in need of a Holiday Food Basket, please contact Maria Espinoza at 239-472-4775.

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 & Captiva Island Association of Realtors Easter collection*
- *Sanibel Island Farmer's Market 'Farm 2 FISH' program.*

We cannot thank you enough for your support.



SOCIAL SERVICES

FISH LINES

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP: RESUME WRITING AND INTERVIEWING SKILLS

FISH of SanCap, with CareerSource of SWFL, is offering a job skills workshop entitled 'Interviewing Skills and Resume Writing' on Mar. 24, 2021 from 10:00-11:00 AM. This workshop will be held virtually through the Zoom platform.

The dual purpose workshop, led by Kim Fenty, Career and Development Representative, CareerSource of Southwest Florida, will teach participants how to write a resume and cover letter that will get them noticed and possibly land their dream job. It will also help prepare job seekers for interviews. Kim has worked with Fortune 500 companies and a number of advertising agencies. She specializes in customer service, written and oral presentations, and local workforce programmatic assistance.

BIG THANKS TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



"We hope you will join us for this very informative workshop," says Susan Alexander, Senior Services and Community Engagement Director. "CareerSource can help you enhance your current resume or build one from scratch. Whether you're seeking a new job or changing your career path, CareerSource can help."

Please register in advance by contacting Susan at the FISH Walk-In-Center, 239-472-4775. Once registered, FISH will provide a link and meeting ID number for access to the Mar. 24 Zoom workshop.

TAX RETURN PREPARATION ASSISTANCE BY UNITED WAY IRS TRAINED VOLUNTEERS

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.



VITA will offer a socially distant tax preparation service at the FISH Walk-In Center from 10am – 1pm on March 12 and 26 and April 9. Those seeking assistance will drop off their documentation at the side door of the FISH office and pick up approximately one week later.

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 secure an appointment time.





WE ARE HIRING!

If you, or anyone you know, are interested in working with FISH, please review the following opportunity and submit your resume to events@fishofsancap.org.

Receptionist/Office Assistant: Provides support to programmatic staff and direct client interfacing to provide the array of social services FISH offers. The Receptionist will work to provide day to day front desk operations and administrative/programmatic support to office staff. The Receptionist will also work directly with clients to ensure they are directed to appropriate staff and services.

Qualifications:

- Organized and ability to multitask
- Proactive and independent work style with excellent time management
- Ability to prioritize tasks in fast-paced, changing environment
- Superior communication and organization skills
- Positive attitude and customer service skills
- Bilingual (English and Spanish); Creole or other language skills a plus
- Proficient in Microsoft Office Suite.
- Associates degree or some college preferred
- [Additional information located here.](#)

Responsibilities include but not limited to:

- Provide front desk reception duties for the office including handling of all phone calls
- Keep detailed and accurate records of visitor requests and calls
- Keeps a safe and clean area by complying with procedures, rules, and regulations
- Receive and greet visitors in a professional and warm manner
- Collect and distribute all incoming mail and prepare outgoing mail
- Organize and maintain filing system
- Data entry of client information into Apricot, case management database.
- Maintain office supplies and ordering such as stationery, furniture and equipment
- Receiving and dispatching deliveries
- Assist clients with Food Pantry and Backpack programs
- Assist Walk-In Center Manager with Backpack Program and other seasonal programs with tasks such as ordering, checking/maintaining inventory, phone calls to clients, etc.
- Work with volunteers and volunteer scheduling; perform duties when volunteers are unable to complete tasks.
- Assist with Food Pantry such as stocking and delivery
- Assist with various tasks as-needed

We appreciate your understanding that we will not accept inquiries regarding these positions over telephone



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:**

[March Phone Duty](#)

[March 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 [f](#) 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**

FISH
OF SANCAP



FISH LINES

OUR VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION!

From assembling Backpacks, stocking Food Pantry shelves, delivering Smile Boxes and more, you are our **TRUE SUPERHEROES**





IMPACT 2020 FACTS

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



26,933

SERVICE REQUESTS
WERE ANSWERED IN 2020 BY
FISH OF SANCAP
MEETING VARIOUS NEEDS AND
HELPING OUR NEIGHBORS



6,412

MEALS-BY-FISH
WERE DISTRIBUTED
BY OUR GENEROUS VOLUNTEERS



ADOPT-A-FAMILY
PROVIDED GIFTS FOR
287 KIDS



1,974

FOOD BACKPACKS
WERE DISTRIBUTED



6,488

FOOD PANTRY
VISITS
BY **977** FAMILIES
UTILIZED



517

HOUSEHOLDS RECEIVED
HOLIDAY
FOOD BASKETS



3,589

REASSURANCE
CALLS
WERE MADE TO CONNECT
WITH ISLAND SENIORS



494

INSTANCES OF
EMERGENCY
FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE



193

CHILDREN RECEIVED MUCH NEEDED
SCHOOL SUPPLIES

246,545

POUNDS OF FOOD
EQUATING TO
205,454
MEALS

CHANGING LIVES IN OUR COMMUNITIES SINCE 1982

Please consider FISH as your island nonprofit partner.

92% of every dollar spent goes directly to our over 30 programs and services. Together, we will continue to be there to remove obstacles, fill in the cracks, and meet individual needs—*neighbors helping neighbors.*

2430-B Periwinkle Way, Sanibel FL 33957 239.472.4775 • fishofsancap.org

