

FISHline

News from GHP FISH Food Bank & Community Services



Spring 2021

Note from Ron Community keeps caring for others

Even after enduring a year of the COVID pandemic, our Gig Harbor community continues to care for others. Because of the generosity of this community, GHP FISH was able to provide over \$75,000 in housing and utility assistance in January alone, compared to \$13,000 last January. This was in addition to making sure those needing assistance had plenty of food.

GHP FISH also launched a new program to help eligible individuals sign up for their COVID-19 vaccinations. This is especially important for people who are elderly and those without internet access. One couple, who

Continued on page 3

Our mission: Neighbors helping neighbors in need with food and other assistance as they move toward self-sufficiency.



Signs near the food bank and the new site tell the good news.

The future breaks ground this spring

You may have seen the signs on Burnham Drive: Gig Harbor Peninsula FISH Food Bank and Community Services is getting a new home! We are moving forward on a new 10,000-square-foot facility—just 376 feet away from our current location.

With hard work by the GHP FISH Building Committee and others, in less than one year we've met a number of significant milestones. Most recently, the City of Gig Harbor Design Review Board approved our building design, on Feb. 25. We appreciate the Design Review Board's time and effort in reviewing our design.

We also submitted our major site plan application in October 2020 and our initial building permit in December 2020. Site work is scheduled to begin in June, and we're hoping to start actual building construction in Fall 2021.

Project development and permitting is like "the gestation of an elephant; it takes much longer than most people are aware of or can believe," said Wade Perrow, who is GHP FISH's owner's representative for the building project. The Building Committee is working through the permitting process step by step, he said, "and so far each step has been accomplished on time, much to the credit of architect Jeanne Ratcliffe-Gagliano

Continued on page 2

Building plans are well underway

Continued from page 1

and Zerah Florance at Washington Patriot and Scott Kaul at AHBL,” he said.



This new, larger home will help GHP FISH serve clients, volunteers and the community well into the future. The additional space will allow us to process and store donated food and other goods more effectively and to offer more fresh food. We'll be able to enlarge and improve the food shopping area and provide additional space for a variety of nutritional food choices.

The new building will also have room for an expanded clothing and household goods area, a conference room for groups, and private offices to provide a place for confidential client meetings.

"Gig Harbor has a strong tradition of taking care of our neighbors, and this new facility will ensure that the tradition will continue for generations to come," said Ron Coen, GHP FISH Board president.

While additional permits are still needed, Perrow doesn't expect any challenges to securing them. He hopes the city of Gig Harbor "recognizes the tremendous importance of the project and will continue to support a comprehensive and timely review of our submittal."

Perrow and his family have been supporters of GHP FISH for over 30 years. "We recognize the need ... and challenges, and as such we wanted to be a part of the solution. It's a passion to help carry on the legacy of Ron and Jan Coen into the future."

Thank you, in-kind donors

Along with the extraordinary efforts of our Building Committee volunteers, GHP FISH is deeply grateful for the support of many experts, professionals and vendors, whose in-kind donations have helped us successfully move forward on this project:

Bill Acker Consulting Services - cost estimating

Donkey Creek Holdings, LLC - labor and materials info

First Western Properties – real estate leases/coordination with adjoining property owners

Gray Road Holdings, LLC - construction project management services

Eric Lazar Fire Protection - engineering review of the design

Ratcliffe Gagliano Architects - design services

Star Rental - equipment rental; free use of an excavator to dig test holes

WA Patriot Construction - donations of pipe and labor; supplies and services for soil engineering studies

COVID-19 Challenge: The past 12 months

Total people served: 9,996 Number of meals possible: 209,916

Financial assistance: \$576,965

Caring community comes through

Continued from page 1

had spent weeks trying to sign up for their first shot, was signed up in just one day, thanks to our COVID Angels volunteers.

Bill Mumford, our first employee, has started working in the half-time position of operations facilitator. He brings a wealth of experience in retail management and will play a key role in helping us expand.



This year's toy distribution program was a fantastic hit. More than 10,000 toys were donated along with \$11,000 in gift certificates. The warehouse (shown at left) was brimming, and volunteers matched 665 children from 250 families with several toys each.

It is unclear when the food bank will be able to return to in-person shopping. Due to space limitations in our current facility, we cannot provide the required social distancing; so for now, our volunteers will continue to prepack the basics, shop for client-selected additional items and deliver them to the parking lot.

The space crunch makes it abundantly clear that we need a new building, and we don't have time to waste. As ***The Future breaks ground*** article explains, permitting and design are well underway. We are now working on an interior design plan that will be welcoming and efficient for our clients and volunteers. If all goes as expected, we hope to celebrate the groundbreaking along with our 45th anniversary later this spring.

Thank you for all that you make possible.

Ron Coen

Board President



What does FISH stand for?

It's a question we often hear. As many of our volunteers already know, it's not an acronym. For us it stands for a community caring for each other. This ancient symbol used by early Christians has come to signify foundational faith principles, like sharing each other's burdens and loving our neighbors like ourselves. That holds true for FISH-style food banks across the country and around the world.

Go to the [Mission and history](#) page on our website (www.ghpfish.org) for the rest of the story and a link to our own [GHP FISH tale](#).



Gig Harbor Peninsula FISH
Food Bank & Community Services

PO Box 154
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

Food Bank
4425 Burnham Drive
Gig Harbor, WA 98335

Contact us:
Office: (253) 858-6179
Financial Aid (253) 851-8800

www.ghpfish.org
[Facebook](#) (GigHarborPeninsulaFISH)

Catch this news in the FISHline

Building plans are moving forward—right next door
Community’s caring weathers the year of COVID-19
What FISH really stands for

For more news & information, visit our website
(www.ghpfish.org) and click on:
[Feature articles](#) under the ‘About Us tab’
How to [Help](#)

Thank you for your support. You can give now by mailing a check, dropping off your gift during open hours or clicking the Donate Now button on our website.

To remove your name from this mailing list or share your email address, please call (253) 858-6179 or email ghpfishmedia@gmail.com

Hours we’re open

Monday
9:30 AM – 3:30 PM
Tuesday – closed
Wednesday
9:30 AM – 6:00 PM
Thursday
9:30 AM – 6:00 PM
Friday
9:30 AM – 3:30 PM
Saturday/Sunday
Closed

Holidays Closed

President’s Day
Memorial Day
Labor Day
Columbus Day
Veteran’s Day
Thanksgiving
Christmas
New Year’s Day