

Gig Harbor Peninsula FISH Food Bank & Community Services

Physical address: 4425 Burnham Drive, Gig Harbor, WA 98335

Mailing address: PO Box 154, Gig Harbor, WA 98335

www.ghpfish.org (253) 858-6179

Update on the progress of a new facility.

This past year, Pierce Transit turned over 1.1 acres of surplus property on Hunt Street to the City of Gig Harbor with the intent that the property will be made available to GHP FISH. Working directly with Pierce Transit, the City is working on a direct transfer of the property to us. It looks promising that the City Council will be able to vote on the transfer in the not too distant future. Getting the property is one of many steps as progress is made. There are technical studies that must be done, new building designs to be completed and funds to be raised.

Why do we need a new facility? PEOPLE. The number of neighbors needing our help continues to increase. As the Gig Harbor/Key Peninsula population continues to age, many of the elderly living on a fixed income are barely holding on financially and struggle to afford a well-balanced, healthy diet. Additionally, a recent study by United Way indicates there is a large population of working families (A.L.I.C.E. – Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) in our community who are one unexpected bill away from being in financial trouble. Whether it's hours cut, illness, injury, car or major home repair, we need to be there for these neighbors.

A larger building will help us to better serve our neighbors who are striving to get ahead. Having an increase in square footage means we can efficiently process and distribute more food, clothing and household goods, be able to house social service agencies, have more much needed storage space. A larger facility means we can better meet the challenges of the future.

We are fortunate and appreciate our current landlords, the Eagles. They are wonderful and continue to look for ways to help us serve the community. The process of getting a new facility is not something that will happen overnight and we will continue to depend on the Eagles for their support for some time to come. We are most thankful for the way they continue to work with us.

Finally, a special thank you is in order to the 200+ volunteers who have worked thousands of hours to serve the community this past year. Thanks to their efforts and to the generosity of the Gig Harbor Community at large, many of our neighbors have been helped and new opportunities have been opened up to them.

Thank you Gig Harbor! Ron Coen



Save the Dates

MUSIC FOR MEALS

For His Glory Women's Ensemble

Nov. 17, 3-5 p.m.

Concert details inside

BE A HOLIDAY VOLUNTEER

November and December

are extremely busy months at the food bank, and extra hands are vital to our program's success.

Go to our website at www.ghpfish.org to sign up to volunteer during the holiday season. It's a great way to see how GHP FISH helps our struggling neighbors. You may find your own Christmas spirit soars.

Schedule appointments for Christmas toys & food baskets:

TOYS: Nov. 12 – Dec. 5

FOOD BASKETS: Nov. 12- Dec. 14

Mondays & Fridays 12- 3pm

Wednesdays & Thursdays

12- 5:30 pm

Applicants must live within our service zip codes and be low income.

“Some Help”

"Is this where I can get some help?"

She was wearing just a light sweatshirt and had three very young children by the hand. We had just opened that frosty morning and she was the first client of the day. Looking for someone to ask, she spotted me just behind the divider by the clothing sorting room. I smiled and asked her where she lived, to which she replied, "Me and my girls are just in my car for now and I need to find some food for them."

Not unusual for a first time visit by a client. This one, however, was different in that she apparently had no permanent address, making it difficult to establish whether or not she was in our service area. They come in all sizes, ages and circumstances—young single mothers out of work, disabled military vets, elderly singles with little or no income—all disadvantaged by life in some way, slipping through the cracks in the wealthiest nation on earth.

One thing they all have in common is a very basic need. They are our clients and the reason so many of us donate or volunteer. Our reward is in simple moments like these:

- An elderly gentleman "shopping" our food aisles found a birthday cake donated by one of our partner grocery stores, telling us with a grin, "I never had a birthday cake before!"
- A little girl had picked out a stuffed bear from our toy section asked her mother if she could take another, to which the mom replied, "No, Honey. We need to leave them for some other child."
- "I'm so happy you care about animals and give me dog food each month," a petite elderly woman told her volunteer shopper. "My dog is my best friend and if he doesn't eat, I don't."

Thank goodness GHP FISH is there for them.

— *A clothing department volunteer*

A CHANGED LIFE – Thanks to you!

I attended the Nursing (RN) Associate Degree program at TCC beginning in Fall 2016 and learned of the GHP FISH student assistance program through two other students. I reached out and was offered assistance for fuel and bridge tolls. This helped tremendously because I crossed the Tacoma Narrows 5/week (\$25/week) and drove from the Key Peninsula. I moved to Gig Harbor in 2015 with my husband and son. I struggled to find a job in my same industry. I began taking prerequisites for the nursing program in preparation for a career change. Going from a double income family to a single income family proved to be a struggle, but we persevered knowing that my future career was within reach.

My family is so appreciative for the help that we got from the Student program at GHP FISH. Thank you! I am excited for the journey ahead of me as a Registered Nurse and look forward to future opportunities to help in the Gig Harbor community. — *A grateful aid recipient*

GHP FISH Rolls Out a “Planned Giving/Legacy” Option



Have you thought of honoring or remembering Gig Harbor Peninsula FISH Food Bank and Community Services in your estate planning? A planned gift allows you to leave an enduring expression of your deeply held values, while also taking care of your loved ones. A planned gift invests in a better world and GHP community—one where children, families, students and seniors get nutritious food, clothing, financial support and the warm welcoming spirit of neighbor helping neighbor as they move toward self-sufficiency.

Talk to your estate planning professional to determine the potential tax benefits of philanthropic donations of cash, stock, property, life insurance policies and charitable gift annuities.

GHP FISH is committed to ensuring confidentiality of our member’s gift plans, respecting any request for anonymity. However, if you’d like to notify us of your gift and become a member of our Planned Giving/Legacy Society, we would be proud to recognize you in print and at various special events.

For information on Planned/Legacy Giving, contact us through our website, Facebook, mail or phone 253-858-6179.

Who did we help in just half a day?

On an average day, GHP FISH volunteers and donations serve nearly 50 individuals working through a variety of challenges. But no one is a number at the food bank: Food bank coordinator shared this “snapshot” of the neighbors served one morning this summer.

7 seniors with very low incomes, trying to manage on social security, embarrassed to ask for help but needing food support

Grandparents needing help with groceries due to additional costs involved with paying attorneys’ fees as they attempt to get custody of a grandchild due to a difficult family situation

A mother of 3 preschool children, all with disabilities, trying to keep her little family going

2 families with working parents struggling to feed their children

3 families needing help with school supplies and food

2 adults with disabilities living on SSI, but low on food

Plus many phone calls asking about how to donate, how to apply for food, where to find inexpensive rentals and other needs

***Food Drives at Safeway are held the first Friday and Saturday of each month.
Thank you for supporting GHP FISH!***



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PO Box 154
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Or current resident

A Growing Need

In August GHP FISH fed 382 families with 894 family members. This is an increase of 50 families in one month! Of these, 214 were over 55 years of age; it is difficult to find work as a “senior.”

The remainder needed food assistance because of emergency situations, like the 13 who are new to the area and haven't received a check from their new job yet. Fourteen were homeless individuals. Thirty-three had unexpected expenses that used their food money for car repairs or medical bills.

GHP FISH volunteers thank everyone who has helped us care for our neighbors in need. To remove your name from our mailing list, please call (253) 858-6179.

Hours of Operation

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