



Star Fish Food Pantry News

Vol. 4, Issue 3—October 2022



1971-2021

Star Fish, Inc. is a tax exempt 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Donations are tax deductible as permitted by law.

A Little History from Kathi DeLucca

Kathi DeLucca was a former director of Star Fish. We thank her for this history and for her years as a volunteer and director.

I was privileged to work alongside Mary Nischwitz (the first director who was a founder along with Eileen Cuniff) starting in 1983. I took over as Director of Star Fish in 1985. I worked with Linda Stanbach and Edna Shanok and many other dedicated volunteers who were on the same 3 day food orders schedule as now.

We bumped into each other in the tiny back room at Covenant United Methodist as we packed bags year round. Other volunteers picked them up and delivered them to the agencies from whom we had been given the family requests. What a blessing of a shared Mission when Covenant later gave us the larger work and storage space!

In addition to our providing emergency food assistance, Linda and Edna operated a children's' clothing "closet" at Washington School in Plainfield with Principal Henry Thompson. When funds allowed, Star-Fish also had an arrangement with Globe Shoes in Plainfield to provide sneakers for residents of the Park Hotel Assisted Living Facility. We were able to purchase blankets and accepted donations of blankets, winter hats and gloves to send with orders in the winter months.

Star Fish was the recipient of the first US Post Office (Letter Carriers) Food Collection program in Plainfield. We didn't know what to expect and were astonished as truck after truck pulled up with bags of donated food. I remember it was a rainy day and some of the boxes and bags got wet. The mountain of food was stacked to the ceiling in a back corner of the great room, outside our party area. It was wonderful to receive all that food and at the same time overwhelming to wonder how we would be able to organize and store it! As always Covenant was more than accommodating and they allotted us that corner for the extra temporary storage space we

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Our mission: *To provide emergency food assistance to families of Plainfield who find themselves in need.*

Board of Directors

Pat Bixel, Executive Director

Michael Townley, Secretary

Kathleen Nitzsche, Treasurer

Sarah Mazzarese, Statistician

Catherine Renga, Chair Holiday Meals

Jerry Zukowski — Chair of Food Procurement

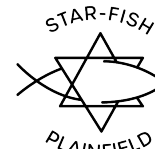
Marie Pase, Board Advisor

Newsletter

We welcome any comments or suggestions. Email us!

If you don't want to receive emails from us, opting out is easy—just send an email to

Secretary@
starfishplainfield.org



History from Kathi DeLucca (cont'd)

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needed.

Our Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter Holiday Orders were made possible partly due to the generosity of Norman Goldberg of Green Brook. Year after year for almost 20 years Norm called me up and asked "How many do you need?" He donated 125 turkeys or hams for each of the 3 holidays.

At Easter we were gifted carloads of gorgeous Easter baskets from Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Scotch Plains.

Faith Lutheran brought their huge Thanksgiving donation with rollers to easily get the sorted cartons of food downstairs! It was a real WOW moment ! Our volunteers and donors were from all around the area as well as Plainfield as they are now. It truly exemplifies our motto "Love your neighbor yourself"



Mary Nischwitz (left) and Kathi DeLucca packing a food bag for a client in 1998

During 1985, approximately 7,500 people were served.

Financial Statement for 1985

Receipts		\$27,191.
Expenditures	Food supplies	\$12,207.00
	Gas, electricity, fuel, water	3,623.00
	Rent asst.	476.00
	Blankets, clothing, shoes	2,476.00
	Hauling	195.00
	Medical asst.	1,721.00
Expenses	Answerphone service	941.00
	Telephone	294.00
	P.O. Box	26.00
	Carpentry, food room	928.00
	Total	\$22,887.00

I was with Star Fish until 2008 when Linda and Edna took over as Co-Directors. Later Marie Pase stepped into the role around 2013.

Marie and her wife Peg had been involved in Star Fish for some years before that as they organized their neighbors and baked beautifully decorated cakes for the Holiday food orders.

Note: our current director, Patty Bixel, took over from Marie Pase in 2020. Editor

A Little Follow-up...

So many similarities between today's operations at Star Fish and what Kathi described above from our earlier days. We will take orders and deliver food to Agencies where clients pick it up. We maintain our relationship with Faith Lutheran Church in New Providence, and expect a food delivery again this Thanksgiving, and just recently received food and a generous donation from the Letter Carriers working from Plainfield Post Offices. Differences? We are giving out food gift cards on the Holidays and we don't have Globe Shoes in Plainfield. But we're still here for the people who need our help and, as always we appreciate your support.

Legacy Gift to Star Fish from Betty B. Willey

Star Fish was recently one of the beneficiaries in the Last Will and Testament of Betty B. Willey who died October 23, 2019. Betty was born in Providence, Rhode Island on July 20, 1924, the daughter of Anne B. Willey and Grafton H. Willey Jr. Betty graduated from CS Lewis College in Massachusetts and went on to get a Masters in Special Education. She taught special needs children in Grandview School in Piscataway for many years.

Betty was a longtime member of the The United Church of Christ, Congregational, Plainfield. She served on every Committee and Board, and was Chair of the Trustees for a long term. Retirement didn't slow Betty down. She continued her work with the church and was a hard working member of the Plainfield Area Habitat for Humanity. She also became a volunteer for NJ Blood Services. She worked on blood drives in the community and also became a regular blood donor herself!

Our former director Marie Pase recalled: "I knew Betty from a few years ago. Peg and I met both her and her house mate Daphne Willard at the United Church of Christ. Both Daphne and Betty were teachers and lived in Plainfield for most of their professional life on Madison Ave. Daphne is still alive and just recently celebrated her 100 birthday. They have both long been supporters of Star Fish. Actually, it was through them and Bea Danyo that I learned of Star Fish and began volunteering. I am not surprised that she remembered Star Fish in her will."

Her bequest, for which we are extremely grateful, totaled almost \$7,000.00.

Ways to Contribute

Create a legacy that helps Star Fish Food Pantry provide emergency food to residents of Plainfield. Here are a few ways in which you can do that:

- ◆ Matching Gifts: have your gift matched by an employer
- ◆ Donors Advised Funds: consider a grant to Star Fish through your established Donors Advised Fund
- ◆ Your personal legacy can have a lasting impact on the Plainfield community Star Fish helps by:
 - ◇ Including Star Fish in your will
 - ◇ Naming Star Fish as a beneficiary of your retirement plans and life insurance policies
 - ◇ Establishing a Charitable Gift Annuity or Trust to receive income for life and additional tax benefits.

Other ways to help Star Fish Food Pantry

- Contact Michael Townley to coordinate financial donations by email to secretary@starfishplainfield.org
- Volunteer at Star Fish: call Pat Bixel at: 908-755-8888
- Food donations can be dropped off at Star Fish Food Pantry at 631 East Front St., Plainfield, on Tuesday or Thursday from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. (Covenant United Methodist Church, rear entrance—ring the Star Fish doorbell or call the above number)

Recent Activity and Donations



Community Food Bank of NJ in Hillside is one source of food when our donations don't meet our needs. Pictured above are Marie Pase, Michael Townley, and Patty Bixel, who traveled to Hillside with Bob Joseph (not pictured) to pick up needed supplies back in June.



Wardlaw-Hartridge Heroes

We have been blessed with the generosity of students and their families from Wardlaw-Hartridge School in Edison, shown at left with adviser Nicole Nolan.

These wonderful supporters not only bring us food every month, they also stand ready to volunteer when we have projects.

We are so thankful for our WH heroes!

Columbia Bank Employees Deliver for Star Fish



For the second year in a row, the employees of Columbia Bank collected food and diapers to help us meet the needs of our clients. The drive is held once a year and Shannon Jefferys, branch manager at South Plainfield office recommended that Star Fish receive their donations.

The items were collected in a two-week period from the Columbia branches in their South Central region and were brought down to us by two Columbia employees, Patti (second from left) and Rayvon (right).

Besides donating needed food items, we were surprised to see the packages and packages of disposable diapers! What a great benefit they are to our clients with infants. Many, many thanks to Columbia Bank and its generous employees!

Recognition for Service to the Community



Our director, Patty Bixel accepted the Union County Human Relations Commission's 19th Annual Unity Achievement Award for our work in partnership with Covenant United Methodist Church which also received an award.

We were recognized for our over fifty years of service to the people of Plainfield. Pictured below are representatives of Covenant United and Patty, 4th from left.



Star Fish, Inc.

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Plainfield, NJ 07062-0822

Phone: 908-755-8888

E-mail:

secretary@starfishplainfield.org

Donate at

www.starfishplainfield.org

Visit our website, click on the Contact or Donate link in the menu bar, and then click on the "Donate" button as shown below.



We are a group of volunteers from Plainfield and the surrounding area who belong to a tax exempt, 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation in existence since 1971. We operate three days each week throughout the year, preparing and distributing grocery food orders to an average of thirty to thirty-five families in need each week.

Our primary function is to maintain the food pantry. Our volunteers pack and deliver grocery food orders to clients who have been referred to us by local social service agencies. Most of these agencies are listed on our website [Partners page](#).

Using a referral system helps us better manage our resources. These agencies vet the client to help assure that our limited resources are given to those truly in need. We also prepare special food orders for 160 families at Easter, Thanksgiving, and at Christmas.

The generosity of our donors helps us prepare these holiday meals and bags of food each week for those in need of emergency food assistance. You are all "Stars for Star Fish!"

The Food We Provide To Those In Need—Amounts Vary Based on Family Size

Package of frozen meat
Loaf of bread
Box of Pasta
Pasta Sauce
Cans Soup
Macaroni and Cheese
Small bag of tea bags
Jar Peanut Butter
Jar Jelly
Can of Fruit or Jar of Applesauce
Cans Vegetables
Can of Tuna
Cans of Beans
Dozen Eggs
Box of cereal (or Instant Breakfast Cereal envelopes for single persons)
Dry or shelf-stable milk
Paper goods, cleaning product, and personal care items (when available)



You can donate any of these items at any time. Contact us and we'll even arrange to pick it up!

Too busy to do extra shopping? Donate instead and we'll buy it. Just go to www.starfishplainfield.org and click on the "Donate" button.