

Charitable Contribution Spotlight

Sea Islands

WATER WELLNESS MISSION

Just down the road from Kiawah lies Wadmalaw Island, a quiet Sea Island known for the Charleston Tea Plantation and Firefly Distillery. It would surprise many people to know that Wadmalaw Island lacks the infrastructure of city water lines running to their residents; therefore, each home operates on a well. There are currently 23,000 residents on Johns and Wadmalaw Islands, of which 3,700 are at or below the poverty level. Of this subset, many do not have clean, safe water in their homes due to contaminated wells. Their well conditions are failing with rusty pipes, saltwater intrusion, and high Iron/Sulphur content. In addition, those homes have little to no water pressure, the water smells rancid and stains the family's clothes brown when they wash clothes. Many of these families cannot afford to get their wells fixed. With no other alternative, they have to buy water from the grocery store to drink, cook and wash clothes with, something they can ill afford to do.



Through the efforts of Shirley Salvo, a Kiawah resident and the founder of Sea Island Hunger Awareness Foundation (SIHAF) and Bill Britton of Seabrook Island, Water Wellness Mission was created in March of 2016 to respond to this need. Since the beginning, volunteers like, Bill Britton, John Carpenter and John Sandy, have made it their mission to help provide clean, safe water by raising funding for families to have new wells and water filtration systems. The average cost per family to install the well, pump, tank and water filtration system is \$5,000.

To date, Water Wellness Mission has successfully installed 50 wells and have approximately 38 families on a growing waiting list. The project will potentially impact over 700 minority, low-income individuals, which amounts to about 250 homes. John Sandy is the manager of field operations and visits Wadmalaw daily, sometimes more than once a day, taking applications, checking on families who have received water wells, and communicating schedules with the well installation company, Pure Water Drillers.

How it Works: A licensed water/well contractor and a member of the Foundation visits a family in need, assesses the need and provides a plan to the Foundation to improve the water service. The Foundation pays the contractor directly. No funds go to the recipient, and they



are not asked to pay for any portion of the approved work. The Foundation assists as many residents as funding allows. Water Wellness Mission is continuously striving to make Wadmalaw and Johns Island a better place by helping deserving families have the clean water. Not only is funding necessary for the equipment and wells needed, but also awareness and educating the public plays a huge part as well.

This year, the Town donated just over \$14,000 helping make three wells possible. Less than 5% of funds received by Water Wellness Mission are used for accounting and marketing. All administration and management of the organization are voluntarily allowing for the funds to go directly to the people in need.

“It’s a dream come true for those of us who have the opportunity to live on Seabrook and Kiawah Island. That makes it even more difficult to believe just around the corner there are many people including seniors, children, disabled, who go without clean drinking water for most, if not, all of their lives. The generosity shown by the Town of Kiawah as well as many of its residents are allowing us to make a difference for these people” said Bill Britton, Founder and Co-Project Manager.

Water Wellness Mission has helped a lot of people so far, but there are many others in need. For more information or to make a donation visit www.fightislandhunger.org/water-wellness-mission. If you have any questions or know of people in need, contact either Bill Britton (Bill.Britton@NVRealtygroup.com, (843) 421-6360) or John Sandy (John.Sandy1@gmail.com, (843) 708-0654).



On August 15, Mayor Craig Weaver and Council Member Diana Mezzanotte visited a well site with Water Wellness Mission.