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**JOHN'S ISLAND SERVICE LEAGUE
RAISES THE PHILANTHROPIC BAR**

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John's Island Service League raises the philanthropic bar



Hope Woodhouse, Betsy Fox
and Pat Thompson. PHOTOS: KAILA JONES

BY MARY SCHENKEL
Staff Writer

Under normal circumstances, the John's Island Community Service League has supported its charitable endeavors primarily through fundraising events and revenue from the Tambourine Shop. But as everyone knows, this past year has been anything but normal.

Curtailing their funding of local charities was never an option for this philanthropic group, who despite the forced cancellation of their 40th Anniversary Gala last March, dispersed a then all-time high of more than \$1.2 million in 2020, which included grants to charitable agencies, to the United Way COVID-19 Fund, and to scholarships to John's Island employees and their children.

Through sheer determination and the generosity of residents and sponsors, the JICSL this fiscal year (May 1, 2020 to April 30, 2021) has surpassed even that amount, distributing more than \$1.5 million back into the community.

Included in that \$1.5 million, grant co-chairs Lynne Whipple and Sarah Jane Moore allocated \$1.118 million



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Sue Ann Siegelbaum and Sallyann Pelletier.

to 39 agencies and \$55,000 in scholarships for John's Island employees and their children.

COVID came to town just two months before Betsy Fox began her two-year term as JICSL president, and as the situation began to unfold, she says they recognized that food, rent and utility assistance would soon become a priority.

As a result, they issued a successful \$200,000 challenge grant to again sup-

port the United Way COVID-19 Fund (an initial \$50,000 had been granted in March).

Around the same time, Ellen Kendall and Michelle Julian pivoted their efforts from an Affordable Housing Task Force in partnership with the John's Island Foundation, to a collaborative HEART (Housing Emergency Advocacy Response Team) program. The JICSL is currently funding a dedicated legal aid attorney at Florida

Rural Legal Services to assist local residents faced with evictions and foreclosures.

"We had all hoped that the pandemic would be over by the fall and things would go back to normal for us and everyone else. We were wrong," says Fox, adding that the next hurdle was raising money without events.

"Our fundraising has always been event-driven, and events dropped from our calendar one by one. We were all wondering what we were going to do, and then Pat Thompson sprang into action and got it started," says Fox.

Mandated to shelter at home, Thomson kept herself busy by compiling a cookbook with help from family and friends. The resulting "Kitchen Captive" has already sold more than 1,000 copies.

"It is a compilation of about 100 recipes collected by Pat and contributed by members. Pat tested every single one and it's got a lot of her wonderful personality in it. It's really a huge success," says Fox. "She created the momentum of 'we can do this; we'll figure out another way.' It's ingenuity like Pat's that made us realize there is more than one way to do this."

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Sarah Jane Moore and Lynne Whipple.



Kathy Leahey, Terry Osteen and Susan Dallas.



Dianna Piumelli, Julie O'Connor and Joan Hoffman.



Karen Keating and Colleen Bonner.



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