

FAMILY FOCUS

NEWS FROM WEST MIDLAND FAMILY CENTER

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2

SHEPHERD, MICHIGAN

SEPTEMBER, 1990



MUD DAY — Jenni Rubio tries to keep from getting a face full of mud after she caught a frisbee from coming off the water slide. Mud Day was the second special events day of the Center's Summer Program for youth.

Summer program a big success

More than 125 west Midland County youth participated in what was the most successful summer program in years at the West Midland Family Center.

Youth who participated during 27-day program operation were treated to a host of activities.

Planners of the summer program tried something different this year. In addition to the activities the county's youth have come to expect — such as ball

games and playground activities — the Center personnel frequently accompanied the activities with a "Theme for the Day" to keep things from becoming boring.

Banana Olympics, American Gladiators, Wild and Crazy Day and Mud Day seemed to be youth favorites. As usual, the field trips were filled to capacity for the various swim trips and a special trip to Longway Planetarium in Flint was well-attended.

Clubs, individuals keep bus rolling

Four service clubs and one individual pitched in to alleviate transportation problems for this year's summer program.

"A major engine overhaul was needed and we didn't have any funds to pay for it," said Greg Dorrien, the Center's assistant director. "The Midland Kiwanis Club responded first with a \$200 contribution, followed by the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3611 with a \$150 contribution, then the American Legion Post 165 with a \$100 contribution and finally the Chapter EP of P.E.O. Sisterhood contributed \$30. We would still have been well short of our goal except Bud and Kay Coldwell donated \$1,000 that they received from the Dow President's Community Service Award. The Center was blessed to receive contributions from two out of only seven awards granted throughout the entire nation! The second \$1,000 award came from Orrin Barrett who was recognized for his volunteer role as project



Ken and Kay Coldwell present their \$1,000 Dow President's Award check to Phyllis Breedlove, executive director of the Center.

manager in the construction of our new building. Orrin's \$1,000 contribution was designated for future capital improvements," Dorrien said.



American Legion Post 165 past Commander Gale Klingensmith presents a \$100 check to Greg Dorrien for the bus repair fund.

Safetytown a learning tool

The Red Cross' Safetytown program for children entering kindergarten was held at the Center for many of the preschool graduates.

The three-day program, which includes a road course like the one at right, teaches children about safety through a carefully planned curriculum of play.

The subjects included road signs and signals, use of the telephone, playground, household goods, school bus and many other safety areas.

Red Cross sponsors around Midland County each year. This was the first time the program was presented for Center youth.



Stephanie Wirtz, 'Baby' Sarah Miller, Stacy Fishtorn and Tasha Orvis took advantage of the Center's babysitting class to learn how to take care of children. Not pictured is Kim McNeil, who also took the class.

Calendar

Sept. 4	Tutoring service starts
Sept. 5	Jeanne Arnold, Happy Dinners
Sept. 6	Youth Tournament and Dance
Sept. 7	Cancer Awareness, Happy Dinners
Sept. 8	Friday Night Videos begins
Sept. 9	Bingo resumes
Sept. 10	Basketball clinics resume
Sept. 11	Family activities resume
Sept. 12	Preschool parent orientation
Sept. 13	Karate begins
Sept. 14	Country Pumpkins, Happy Dinners
Sept. 15	Auxiliary Swiss steak dinner
Sept. 16	4-year-old preschool begins
Sept. 17	3-year-old preschool begins
Sept. 18	Youth woodworking begins
Sept. 24	Senior potluck
Oct. 1	Volleyball organization meeting
Oct. 10	Wordprocessing class begins
Oct. 15-17	Adult volleyball team fees due
Oct. 21	Auxiliary steak dinner
Oct. 24	Adult basketball organization meeting
Oct. 29	Senior potluck
Oct. 30	Adult volleyball league begins
Oct. 30	Youth Halloween party
Nov. 6-8	Adult basketball team fees due
Nov. 17	Christmas craft bazaar
Nov. 26	Senior potluck
Dec. 5	Adult basketball league begins
Dec. 15	Christmas open house with Santa

Board and staff

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Board of Directors

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President's report

TO: All donors, families and associates of West Midland Family Center

The board of West Midland Family Center spends a major amount of their collective efforts in planning — financial, program evaluation and human resources. The long-term success of the Center will depend on how well we plan these interdependent activities. If done well, the Center management and staff has a running start on the successful operation of the Center for the benefit of the West Midland community. In coming issues of Family Focus we will briefly cover these areas from the Board's perspective.

An update of recent contributions of financial support include:

1. To date, four out of five building donors have agreed to let West Midland Family Center retain the unspent new building funds as seed money for future capital needs to preserve the Center in good condition.

2. Elaine and J.R. Sinclair donated \$14,000 in late 1989 to upgrade and maintain the library.

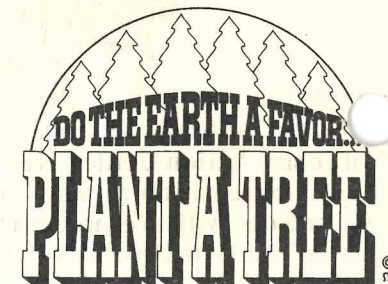
3. The Dow President's 1989 awards totalling \$2,000 volunteers of the year, Orrin Barrett and Kenneth and Kay Coldwell, were gifted to WMFC for furnishings, equipment and bus repair.

4. Memorials designated gifts and other donations from friends and family members have totaled \$1,627 through August 1990.

We are grateful to so many people who contribute time and money to help us cope with furnishings, equipment and special needs to operate the center effectively.

Separate, of course, is the long term endowment needs for generating operating revenues on a shared basis with United Way Contributions, fees, and many other sources of revenue. These challenges we will continue to address in the months ahead.

Sincerely,
Winfred C. Zacharias
President



Volunteering — it's a good feeling

Whenever you come to the West Midland Family Center you will see a lot of people at work.

Some will be staff, but a good majority will get no more pay than the personal satisfaction of a job well done and the knowledge that they helped someone else who needed it.

That is what volunteers are all about and community service agencies like the West Midland Family Center couldn't function without them.

From the time volunteered by the Center board of directors to setting up and taking down tables after Marathon Bingo, volunteers are the lifeblood of Center activity.

Because volunteer help is so vital, the Center is fortunate to be located in an area that places such a great emphasis on helping others.

The Voluntary Action Center of Midland County Inc. filled more than 2,600 volunteer positions in 1989 — an all-time high for Midland County.

And Darryl White, VAC executive director, said he would not be surprised if Midland's percentage of volunteers is as high as 70 percent. Nationally, it is about 50 percent.

And volunteers and volunteer agencies receive the support of the community.

Frank Popoff, president and chief executive officer of The Dow Chemical Co., saluted the areas volunteers earlier this year at the VAC annual meeting. "You're the

most important part of what makes Midland a great place to live. And I'm proud to have you as neighbors," he told the volunteers.

And, he noted, anyone can help.

"One of the most notable aspects of volunteer activity is that it knows no bounds, imposes no restrictions and has no prerequisites for service. People of all ages and backgrounds are eligible. No one is excluded."

So feel good about yourself — volunteer.

Beag wins

ERNIE BEAG was presented the J.T.P.A. (Job Training Partnership Act) Worker of the Year Award for his excellent job performance at the West Midland Family Center. Beag was one of more than 20 youth from Midland County that worked at the Center through the program.

Students typically work eight to 12 hours per week in the reception area, setting up and cleaning work stations, as grounds crew, in the activities room in concessions or as gym supervisors.

Youth employment has been a big part of the Center operation since 1974.

"Many area youth have gained valuable experience at the Center and now are hold jobs in the private sector," said the Center's assistant director Greg Dorrien.



Gayla Smith and Mary Lou Spencer, who are the volunteer librarians at the Center, and Youth Newsletter volunteer Rod Converse, talk at the volunteer appreciation dinner.

Appreciation dinner honors volunteers

By Phyllis Breedlove
Executive director

The West Midland Family Center hosted a dinner May 20 for its volunteers — 80 attended and an additional 70 were unable to make it.

The dinner was given in appreciation for all the many hours the volunteers have contributed to the Center while in the old building and in the new.

Darryl White, Voluntary Action Center director, was the keynote speaker and presented an inspirational message for all volunteers.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Orrin

Barrett Volunteer of the Year Award to Charles Norisez. Chuck is not only a board member and Bingo chairman, but in addition, he finds time for our youth and helps with various computer applications — in other words, a dedicated Center volunteer.

Our volunteers are involved in many areas, including the board of directors, the West Midland Auxiliary (which organizes Bingo, dinners, Bingo marathons, bazaars and fundraising), library services, special events, preschool, tutoring, fitness room and senior services.

Volunteers make things happen at the West Midland Family Center. Please join us!



Darryl White, executive director of Midland's Voluntary Action Center, was the keynote speaker during May's appreciation dinner for volunteers. Above, White, left, speaks with Vernon Harry and Julie Boettcher and Center Board of Directors President Win Zacharias (back to the camera).

Students benefit from college opportunity program

With the help of caring businesspeople and the support of the Michigan Division Association of The Dow Chemical Co., there is a unique college opportunity program blossoming at the Center.

Mike Ritt, a 1988 graduate of Alma College, directs the program designed to guide financially disadvantaged students toward setting future goals and to prepare them for college.

At the Center, students receive tutoring and enjoy programs designed to develop their learning, social and emotional lifestyles.

These programs range from relationships to study habits to decision-making and group building activities.

As a supplement to the program, there are many outside programs available to enhance the student's interests, as well as summer trips around the U.S. to expose the students to as many opportunities as possible. During the summer of 1990, there were two such opportunities. Four students attended a military



Students in the college opportunity program enjoy the company of others on the trip South. Students received a 4-to-1 matching grant from the Midland Foundation to help pay for the trip. The students raised \$800 and the foundation contributed \$3,200.

summer school, learning leadership skills and military lifestyle.

Three students attended Aurora University — the culmination of which was enjoying Aurora's Fermi Lab

High Energy Physics Laboratory program. These young women worked with particle accelerators while enhancing their interest in the natural sciences.

All of the students in the program spent part of their

summer fundraising for their trip to the southeast section of the United States. On the trip, the students climbed more than 13,000 feet to the summit of Chimney Tops in the Smokey Mountains.

"This is something the kids never would have been able to do as a group last year," Ritt said of the club. "That's how much the kids developed as a group. Respect and trust for one another and a higher level of maturity are the obvious changes."

The group also traveled to Myrtle Beach, Central Wesleyan College, Atlanta and King's Island.

As the program enters its second year, it will focus on academics.

"The junior and senior years get no easier. It is very important to get a good jump on your grade point average, study habits and test-taking skills," Ritt said. "These are all things that will help the students develop a responsible lifestyle as well as better preparing them for tests that could earn them additional scholarship money for college."

Sanchin-rhy karate classes offered at Family Center

Several recognizable figures such as Bruce Lee, Chuck Norris and now the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles have brought us varying definitions of martial arts. Only someone deeply involved with the martial arts can draw the very

distinguishing line between the movies and the art.

Recently we've asked an organization very capable of making the distinction to instruct karate classes at the center. Sanchin Systems Inc. teach a classical style of karate

titled Sanchin-Ryu which originated in Okinawa, Japan, a renown center of martial arts.

This is a non-competitive style of karate which focuses on self defense, self confidence and self control. They teach students to manage stress, control situations

and to increase all levels of awareness.

Karate classes are offered Wednesday nights from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

This is a program designed towards the individual needs of the students.



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