

FAMILY FOCUS

NEWS FROM WEST MIDLAND FAMILY CENTER



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SHEPHERD, MICHIGAN

JULY 1991

Programs teach kids to enjoy reading

By GREG DORRIEN

In keeping with the West Midland Family Center's goal of becoming a "learning center" for the entire family, Bookie Bookworm and Library Lion are the stars of two new programs designed to show young children the joy of reading.

The Library Lion Program is designed for children ages four to six. The original goal of 16 participants was quickly met and a second session was added.

Currently, 42 children are enrolled.

"The program is heavily influenced by a reading program at the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library," said Gail Crosby, the Library Lion's originator and an aide in the West Midland Preschool Program.

"Our preschool attended the library's story hour and we saw first-hand how they made the story 'Stone Soup' come alive and I knew then that the kids in our part of the county could really benefit from a summer-reading program," she said.

A typical 2-hour session starts with the children making their

own puppet that they will use in the group story time. The children then get to interact within the story of the day with the large puppets.

"Children also are given time to browse our library shelves and check out books. We feel it's important for the children to actually see the book that was that day's story on a shelf in the library," said Crosby. It's like the ad says on TV ... 'Books, check 'em out.'"

To further encourage family literacy, the Bookworm Buddie Program was developed.

A child is given a bookmarker that looks like Bookie Bookworm.

Children must list 15 books that either have been read to them or that they have read within a three-week period.

When completed they get to choose a new book to keep for their own. WMFC hopes to keep the Bookworm Buddie program on-going.

Special thank-yous must go to the Newcomers Club, the Sunrise Optimist Club and the Literacy Council for supplying the



Gail Crosby makes stories come alive during the West Midland Family Center Summer Program. Crosby, an aide in the WMFC preschool program, helps with the Bookworm Buddie and Library Lion programs, which she designed.

books for the Bookworm Buddie Program, and to Nease Memorial Church of the Nazarene and

Kendra Babcock for the loan of the large puppets in the Library Lion Program.



Ashley Singleton gives Bookworm Buddie a kiss during one summer program session recently. Looking on are WMFC program director Jamie Smith and John McDonald.

Recent donations to WMFC

Recent donations to the West Midland Family Center include:

The Dow Chemical Co.	\$10,000
Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation	\$10,000
Homer Township	\$6,000
West Midland Auxiliary....	\$5,000
Greendale Township.....	\$2,000
Sunrise Optimist Club	\$1,000
Midland Kiwanis Club	\$500
Newcomers Club	\$200
United Scleroderma Foundation	\$20



Mike Ritt addresses parents and participants in the EAL program hosted by the West Midland Family Center.

EAL students honored

By MIKE RITT

The parents and families of the students of the Educational Assistance Limited Junior High College Opportunity Program earlier this year came together to recognize some of the students' achievements and activities of the past 1½ years.

The EAL program is designed to provide students with four years of mentoring while in high school. Students who maintain the program receive four years' worth of higher education.

Students gave reports on different aspects of the program such as tutoring and summer trips to places such as the Fermi Nuclear Science Lab and Wentworth Military Academy.

Other highlights included guest speakers Chuck Infante (EAL board member) and EAL President V. R. "Swede" Roskam, sharing messages about what it takes to make it today.

Students also were recognized for their academic achievements. Sara Ruhle was recognized for having the highest overall grade point average, while Charlie Wilkins was honored as most improved.

Others attending the event showing support included friends, tutors and other EAL board members.

Students are looking toward a very busy summer.

Trips again will include the Fermi Nuclear Science Lab and Wentworth Military Academy. Also, students will be visiting a fine arts camp at Judson College in Elgin, Ill.

Other activities include trips to Michigan State, Michigan and Eastern Michigan University as well as Delta College, Greenfield Village, the Ann Arbor Art Fair, Domino's Farms (international headquarters of Domino's Pizza) and a group retreat.

Calendar

July activity room hours
Monday — 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Tues. — Fri. — 3:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Saturday — 4 p.m. to 10 p.m.

JULY

Humanities Tuesdays
Armchair Aerobics Tuesdays, Thursdays
Karate Wednesdays
Senior Potluck July 29
Kiwanis Beach Party July 30

AUGUST

Country Punks Aug. 8
Mid-Mich Alliance Vol. Picnic Aug. 23
Senior Potluck Aug. 26
Retail Training Program (M-F) Aug. 26-Sept 10
Fall Program Registrations Beginning Sept. 3

President's corner ...

By Win Zacharias

The West Midland Family Center staff can provide services to west Midland County families only when one or more of the following resources is available:

1. Funding
2. Volunteers
3. Agency/Group Sharing

Frequently all three resources come together to form a program. Funding and volunteers are resources that are highly publicized in this newsletter. They are the life-blood of WMFC and perhaps most agencies. Too frequently, however, the good works of agencies and groups go unrecognized.

Approximately 50 percent of all the activities at WMFC are the result of cooperation between WMFC and an agency/group. A partial list of agencies/groups that provide services through the WMFC are as follows:

1. Midland County Council on Aging
2. Midland Preschool, Inc.
3. Midland-Gladwin County Mental Health
4. Midland County Health Department
5. Say Yes to Youth
6. Mid-Michigan Alliance
7. Midland/Bullock Creek Education Consortium
8. Literacy Council
9. Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network
10. Midland County Intermediate School District
11. Voluntary Action Center
12. Michigan Division Employees Association
13. Midland Community Center
14. Probate Juvenile Court
15. Red Cross
16. 4-H
17. The Girl Scouts of America
18. Arnold Center
19. West Midland Family Center Auxiliary
20. Alcoholics Anonymous

By working with all of these agencies WMFC is able to provide broader and higher quality programs to the WMFC people. It eliminates duplication of services within Midland County and provides the WMFC staff a continuing opportunity to grow by seeing other groups teach and train.

We encourage all agencies/groups wishing to serve the people of west Midland County to contact WMFC staff to see how we can work together.

In addition, West Midland Family Center wishes to thank all of the above agencies/groups for providing services to west Midland County families and we look forward to working with you in the future.

West Midland Family Center

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Foster care adults have special night

Adults from foster care homes throughout Midland County will be converging on West Midland Family Center every Tuesday beginning in July for community bingo and exercise night.

"The idea is to get these people involved in the community in a fun way," said Diane Dauer, building supervisor at WMFC. "But, you don't have to live in a home to attend. We would like everyone to attend — either to play or to volunteer."

Bingo for prizes, drop-in games and activities and exercise classes led by Bonnie Larsen will be available.



Members of the Educational Assistance Limited Junior High College Opportunity program — from left, Teri Cassell, Lavina Ross, Jacque Harnick, Stacy Grigar and Jody Emrick — tell tutors, parents and those involved with the program about the group's trip to Washington, D.C., the U.S. Naval Observatory and the East Coast earlier this year.

History comes alive!

Great Lakes Historical Educational Association President Bob Meyers and Charlie Bailey came to West Midland Family Center in March to do a Humanities presentation for the center's senior citizens' group.

Immediately following lunch, 40 people stayed to view the 1760-1800 period artifacts and listen to Bob and Charlie talk about the early Michigan settlers.

Bob Meyers came dressed as a French Voyager. As a trader in 1760, Bob explained that Voyagers traveled in 26-foot to 40-foot birch canoes. They traveled the Great Lakes to trade with the Indians. The Voyagers used "Trade Beads" in exchange for furs. During that era, the Indians hunted by arrow and the White Man

hunted with the French Tulle (gun).

Charlie Bailey came dressed as an Eastern Long-Hunter. As trappers and explorers in 1810, Charlie informed us that during this time Long-hunters were very much in conflict with the local Indians.

The trappers hunted with the Pennsylvania Long Rifle and traveled light because the Eastern area was so dense.

The basics were a bedroll/tent, long knife and gourd canteen.

Both dedicated longtime history buffs, Bob 30 years and Charlie 14 years, were educational as well as entertaining.

The Great Lakes Historical Educational Association is comprised completely of volunteers.



Don Huber, left, Kathy Presnell, far right, and Bertha Swift, center right, listen to how it was in 1760 from Charlie Bailey, dressed as an Eastern longhunter, after he addressed the West Midland Family Center senior citizens' group.

From the desk of the executive director:

Almost two years have gone by since a group of great people, working together, made a dream come true.

The new West Midland Family Center building and grounds just keep getting more beautiful everyday. The blossoms on the trees simply are gorgeous.

The WMFC is the heartbeat of the western part of Midland County. An important message sent by WMFC is that people do care. And everyone is very important to the center.

My heartfelt thanks go out to the great staff at WMFC for the fine job they are doing, to the board of directors and committee

volunteers with their professional contributions, and to the hundreds of volunteers at the WMFC with all their special skills.

And special recognition should be given to the Orrin Barrett Volunteer of the Year award winner, Gene Dauer. Next year it could be you.

Maybe you would like to be a board member or on one of our committees; you may be a person who would like to help us make a rock garden or maybe you would just like to give a donation.

Whatever it is — large or small — WMFC needs you.



Mary Neuhaus, far right, works with, from left, Aaron Terrian, Jay Slesseman, Neil Neuhaus, Nick Neuhaus and Ashley Neuhaus to help beautify the grounds at the West Midland Family Center.



Green Thumb workers Claude Tripp, left, maintenance; Verlyn Kraft, center, librarian and Imogene Johnson, right, kitchen enjoy their jobs at the West Midland Family Center.

Senior citizen workers benefit community

By GREG DORRIEN

If you're a senior citizen (age 55 or over) and would like to work and get paid, READ ON.

Green Thumb, Inc. is a 25-year-old national, non-profit training and employment program funded through the Department of Labor. It was established

in 1965 to improve the social and economic condition of older Americans.

This has been accomplished by placing older workers in community service jobs that have greatly benefited communities and non-profit organizations.

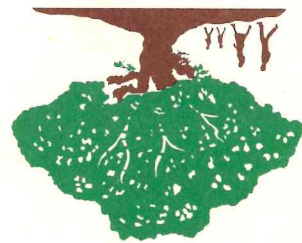
"What's nice about the Green

Thumb program is the senior worker can choose the type of job they want to do at the center and then do it at a pace that is right for them," said Phyllis Breedlove, West Midland Family Center executive director.

"We have one senior in maintenance, one that works in the li-

brary and one that works in the kitchen through the Council on Aging," Breedlove said. "They seem to really enjoy their jobs and that's evident by their excellent attendance."

Anyone interested in knowing more about the Green Thumb program should contact WMFC.



Non-profit organization

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