

# FAMILY FOCUS

NEWS FROM WEST MIDLAND FAMILY CENTER



Volume 4, Number 2

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Fall 1993

## Mrs. Arbury was WMFC's 'guardian angel'



Dorothy Dow Arbury



Midland attorney John Riecker honored Dorothy Dow Arbury with his words at the ceremony. Win Zacharias, who was WMFC board president for five years, honored Phyllis Breedlove with a tribute to her work.

It wasn't just to the West Midland Family Center that Mrs. Dorothy Dow Arbury was an "angel."

"Dorothy Arbury prepared mansions on earth for many people she loved and for others whom she hardly knew. Look at some of the things this great lady, who has been called the largest unlisted private foundation in our community has done to bring the quality of a home, a house or a living center to so many people, said Midland Attorney John Riecker during the ceremony dedicating the Arbury-Breedlove Gardens earlier this year.

Riecker, Mrs. Arbury's nephew, prepared the tribute to Mrs. Arbury, a generous supporter of WMFC since its inception in 1974, and who, along with center founder Phyllis Breedlove, was recognized by having the WMFC gardens named in their honor.

Riecker proceeded to list some of Mrs. Arbury's works:

- She was the largest individual contributor to the Midland Kings' Daughters Home, and she visited there every Sunday morning after church.
- She was a long-time supporter of Pinecrest Home.
- She was an initial supporter and provider for Harbour House, a place where a judge can send children temporarily while they are under probate court direction.
- And she was one of the largest contributors to



The plaque in the Arbury-Breedlove Gardens commemorates the work of Dorothy Dow Arbury and Phyllis Breedlove. The two women were honored Aug. 15.

Riverside Place. She even balanced the budget for the project when cost overruns unexpectedly arose.

Dorothy Dow Arbury died June 2.

Mrs. Arbury had been a strong supporter of WMFC since its inception and was a major force in making the current facility and its programs possible. Her contributions over the years to the Center's Endowment Fund total more than \$830,000.

Executive Director Greg Dorrien said: "She's been our

guardian angel for a long time. Her gifts will continue to benefit the people of West Midland County long after we've all joined her. She was a person who wanted to share what she could with people who needed help ... and she did it in her own way."

Roland Weaver, Midland County commissioner, and a long-time director of WMFC, said: "She was one of the most gracious people I have ever met. She really had a

See Mrs. Arbury, page 4



## Holiday Open House

WMFC invites you to attend the Holiday Open House on Dec. 4 from noon until 2 p.m. Casual activities include family crafts, a visit with Santa and Class Act performance at 1 p.m.

## WMFC Calendar of Events

EAL Canned Food Drive ..... Nov. 14  
 Holiday Craft Bazaar ..... Nov. 20  
 3-on-3 Basketball ..... Nov. 21-22  
 Greendale Diners Thanksgiving ..... Nov. 23  
 Immunizations ..... Nov. 24  
 Closed for Thanksgiving ..... Nov. 25-26  
 Special Sunday Bingo ..... Nov. 28  
 Holiday Open House ..... Dec. 4  
 Seniors Sunday Dinner ..... Dec. 5  
 Immunizations ..... Dec. 22  
 Closed for Christmas ..... Dec. 24-26  
 Family New Year's Party ..... Dec. 31  
 Open New Year's Day ..... Jan. 1  
 Commodities Distribution ..... Jan. 19

## Thanks for the help!

The Board of Directors and staff would like to thank all of the following organizations for their recent support:

United Way .....	\$109,500
Midland Foundation.....	15,500
West Midland Auxiliary.....	13,500
Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation .....	10,000
Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation .....	10,000
Paul Oreffice .....	6,250
Homer Township .....	6,250
West Midland Auxiliary (Special Projects).....	5,900
Dow Corning Corp.....	5,000
Lee Township.....	4,000
Charles J. Strosacker Foundation .....	2,500
Allen Foundation.....	2,392
Greendale Township.....	2,000
Kiwanis Foundation.....	1,350
Sunrise Optimists Club .....	1,000
Dow Chemical Company.....	750
Kiwassee Kiwanis.....	500
Midland Kiwanis Club.....	500
Midland Morning Rotary.....	250
Trinity Lutheran Church.....	250
Chapter EP P.E.O. Sisterhood .....	25
TOPS Michigan 1171 .....	25

### Programs Endowment Donors

Mrs. Dorothy Arbury.....	103,787
Vada B. Dow Trust .....	10,000
Herbert and Junia Doan Foundation.....	1,000
Consumers Power Company.....	1,000
Mrs. Ludo Frevel.....	100
Larry Sweebe.....	20

West Midland Family Center also would like to thank all those individuals who have made contributions. Our programs would not be as good without them.

## President's view

Just as with local school districts, the activity level at the West Midland Family Center picked up as fall peeped over the horizon.

It is remarkable how many activities are going on.

A couple of weeks ago, a friend of mine visited the center for the first time as preparation for her involvement with Leadership Midland.

"I never realized how much you people do out there," she said after she had spent four hours at the center. "Particularly with the preschool kids. It is just great."

"Out there" is at the center, on M-20 14 miles west of Midland. For those of you who have not yet taken advantage of WMFC operations, let me give you an overview.

Director Greg Dorrien and staff provide a host of programs for those preschool students, youth, adults and senior citizens.

The preschool program for four-year-olds takes place under the direction of teacher Elaine Fabinski.

The program begins in October and ends in May and help our youth make the transition from toddler to kindergarten student. A majority of the classroom students must be children from limited-income households.

Youth activities include student tutoring, a study skills program, the "Card Trix" Sports Card Club, basketball, tumbling, "Just Do It" dances, soccer and our newest activity, Boy Scouts.

WMFC also is the home of the Educational Assistance Limited College Opportunity Program, a program that selects area youth for a four-year high school program in exchange for tuition credits for college.

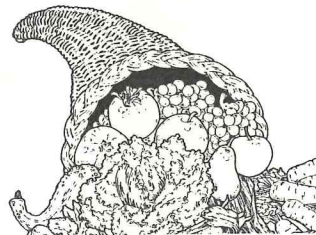
For adults there is Bingo, the Share program, immunization opportunities, aerobics, volleyball and basketball leagues and cooking classes, among others.

Finally, for older adults, there are the Happy Diners, the walking club, senior exercise and potluck dinners.

And that isn't all. There are many activities for families, from the Parents as Tutors program to library services the Building Strong Families the Create Together program.

Come on out and see what WMFC has to offer for you.

— Ralph E. Wirtz



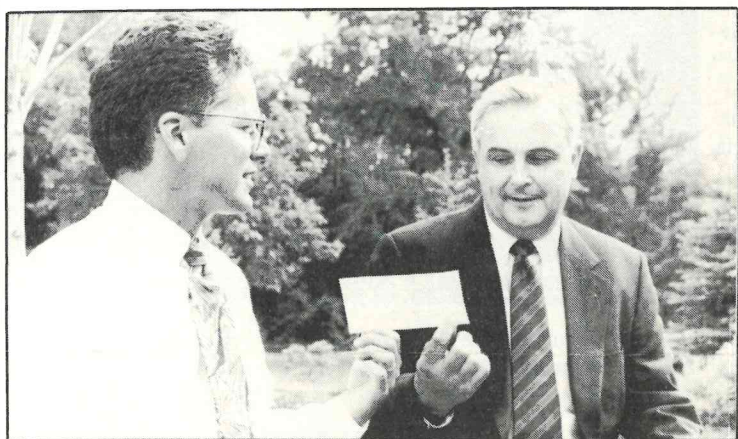
## WMFC directors and staff

### Board of Directors

President .....	Ralph E. Wirtz
Vice Pres. ....	Win Zacharias
Secretary.....	Chuck Norisz
Treasurer.....	Richard Furlow
Trustees.....	Linda Kellogg
.....	Jim LaBean
.....	James LeViere
.....	Jim Burlingame
.....	Orrin Barrett
.....	Joe Dufort
.....	Joe Vanderkelen

### West Midland Family Center Staff

Exec. Dir.....	Greg Dorrien
Prog. Dir.....	Lisa Panepento
Off. Mang. ....	Kahren O'Brien
Maint. Sr. ....	Gerald Burkett
Bldg Sr. ....	Diane Dauer
Fam. Dir. ....	Gail Crosby
Teen Dir. ....	Jennifer Holcomb
Rept./Sec. ....	Judy Wirtz
EAL Prog.....	Tracy Meister
Intern.....	Ken Ziel



## Consumers endows

Consumers Power Company recently donated \$1,000 to The West Midland Family Center for the Center's Programs Endowment Fund. "We had initially talked with the Consumer's Power Foundation in Jackson for support. The Foundation had already given all they could to other organizations, so I couldn't have been more pleased when Dick Stuart, Consumers Power area manager, called and asked to set up a time when he could deliver a check," said Greg Dorrien, WMFC director. "The fund provides a stable base of revenue for our programs that we can count on every year, whether in good economic times or bad," said Dorrien. "Mrs. Dorothy Arbury had foreseen the need we would have for such a fund when she established it in 1991." Anyone interested in knowing more about endowment giving is encouraged to call West Midland Family Center at 832-3256.





## Learn by doing

The "Jump into Summer" program participants learn what it's like to be physically challenged on "Everybody Counts" day. This was just one of six special-event days that took place during the 1993 Summer Program, which provided fun and learning opportunities for more than 100 children ages 7 through 12.

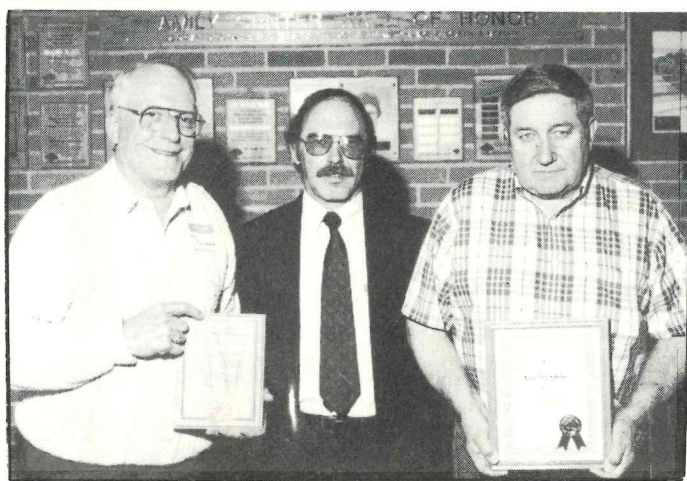


## Top volunteers

Diane Dauer has won the West Midland Family Center's Phyllis Breedlove Friend of the Center Award for her many years of volunteer support at the center. Dauer, who also is night supervisor, spends many off-hours at the center helping kids. Charlie Wilkins won the Youth Volunteer Award. Wilkins is a member of the just-graduated, first-ever EAL-COP program (see story, page 4), and one of the center's most ambitious volunteers. Janet Miller was named the Orrin Barrett Award as the center's top volunteer. Miller helps the center with many of its activities.

## Awards

West Midland Family Center board member Win Zacharias, left, and Roland Weaver, right, were presented with special awards this year. Zacharias was recognized for his five years service as president of the board and Weaver was named as an honorary board member for his exemplary service during the past 19 years. Lawrence Wyman also was designated as an honorary board member, but was unable to attend the ceremony. Wyman also served 19 years on the board. The awards were presented by WMFC board president Ralph E. Wirtz, center.



## The Frog Crew

Stephanie Wirtz, Patrick Brooks, Eddie Burns and youth coordinator Jennifer Holcomb were the crew for the West Midland Family Center's entry, the S. S. Frog, in this year's Milk Jug Raft Race during Riverdays in Midland in July. The team finished second in their division, but everyone had a great time on a warm, pleasant day. They competed in the raft race from M-20 to the Tridge.





The 22 graduating seniors from the EAL program.

## New class begins

# EAL graduates 22 students

It was a year of firsts for the Education Assistance Limited College Opportunity program.

First, 22 seniors, the first group to participate in the program under WMFC auspices, went off to college.

Then, the program changed its course a little, selected 13 freshmen and began anew under the direction of new director Tracy Meister.

And the students already are gaining valuable experience.

This time it was the Adopt-A-Grandparent project recently held in conjunction with the Day of Sharing project sponsored by the United Way.

Two senior citizens were selected for the project based on their need for assistance with some household duties.

The students were divided into two teams, with Coleman and Meridian High students visiting Pat Johnston and Bullock Creek students stopping in on Fannie



The Dow Chemical Co. Michigan Division General Manager Larry Washington offered words of encouragement and advice to the 22 seniors graduating from the program.

Shipley.

EAL helpers trimmed trees, hauled trash and washed windows for Johnston, while at the Shipley residence volunteers trimmed the grass, cleaned out cupboards and vacuumed.

Most of the students commented that they found the activity worthwhile.

# Mrs. Arbury

Continued from page 1

grasp of the needs of the people of this county." Weaver also remembers Mrs. Arbury's love for the history of Midland County.

"We had several discussions about history over the years," he said. "Whenever she wanted to talk about something, you'd start off talking about history, and when she was ready to talk business, you'd talk business. The entire community will miss her."

In addition to Mrs. Arbury's projects listed above, she was a major contributor to the Chipewewa Nature Center and set up the Dorothy Dow Arbury Environmental Fund which allows financially disadvantaged youths to attend programs at the center. She was a supporter of Pinecrest Home.

Among the many honors she received during her lifetime were; Volunteer of the Year by the Michigan Non-Profit Homes Association in 1992; The Paul Harris Fellow award in 1986 from Rotary International; and The Citizen of the Year award by the Midland Civitan Club in 1981.

She was the first woman appointed to the Midland Social Services Board and served for 20 years. She served for more than 30 years as Vice President and Trustee of the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation Board.

Mrs. Arbury was 85 at her death. She was the youngest daughter of Herbert H. and Grace A. Ball Dow.

Riecker said his friend Dr. Walt Trapp first approached Mrs. Ar-

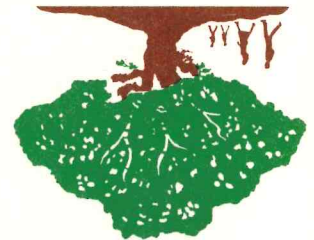
bury about the WMFC project, the first chapter being the restoring of the Greendale Elementary School as a center in 1974.

"Obviously, she not only liked the idea but applied her same, lifelong interest in quality of the life and people's surroundings to make this the activity center bridging Midland and Isabella counties. Under the guidance of people like Win Zacharias and Orrin Barrett, she has substantially created a fund which will guarantee the high level of activity of the center for a long, long time.

"So it is with a great sense of honor and thanksgiving that I salute Dorothy's deeds and memory today as well as the ongoing activity of Greg Dorrien, before him Phyllis Breedlove and all the wonderful staff of this center. Dorothy truly was a person who tried and succeeded in bringing the beauty and grace of her own house and gardens to many other enjoying people," Riecker said.

Riecker said that when Mrs. Arbury became ill in December 1991, family members thought she might die. "She suddenly recovered mightily and went right back to her old habits of giving for the next year and a half. I would like to think that when she first got ill that December two years ago, God simply didn't have her mansion in the sky ready for her.

"Things were not just quite right with it. I think he told her to 'do my work a while longer' while he perfected a home for one of his finest servants."



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Non-profit organization

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