

# Family Focus

VOLUME 28, NUMBER 3

Thriving, Giving, Growing... Together

Late Fall 2018

## In This Issue

Doak and Amy Stolz.....	1
Special Friends .....	1
WMFC Exceeds United Way Goal.....	1
WMFC Happenings .....	3
Helen Roth Award Recipient.....	4
Tammy Screws Joins WMFC Board..	4



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## Doak and Amy Stolz Help Those in Need

**Doak and Amy Stolz** are two of the reasons that Midland is such a wonderful community. In the 1980's they were enrolled at **Bowling Green State University** and like so many other young people they met ... while playing Whirlyball? "Think bumper cars, lacrosse sticks and basketball goals and you're on the right track," quipped Amy.

Then, in 1988, Doak was drawn to Midland with a job offer from investment firm **A.G. Edwards** where he built his financial services practice. He is now a founding member of the **Stolz-Smith Financial Consulting Group of Wells Fargo Advisors**. Amy currently works as a yoga instructor after working in the banking industry before their children arrived. Their most successful project was indeed having four 'junior partners' join their household. Dennis is a Northwood University graduate and now works

in Doak's practice, Abbey, a U of M senior, Scott, a Dow High Senior, and Anna, a Dow High sophomore.

Another thing they get right is helping West Midland Family Center during the annual fundraising campaign. "We first started gifting in 2004 after hearing from WMFC Board member **Jim Burlingame** (RIP) about the great work the Center does on behalf of the entire family. Reading the updates in the **Family Focus**



Amy and Doak Stolz

has helped us find a way to do more whenever we can. We hope others can find a way to help our neighbors in need this holiday season" they concluded. Namaste.

## How WMFC Childcare Effects One Little Girl

According to the **American Academy of Pediatrics**, "All of a child's early experiences, whether at home, in child care, or in other preschool settings, are educational. Statistically, 60% to 70% of children younger than six years regularly attend some type of out-of-home early childhood program. For many families, high-quality child care is not affordable, which results in compromises."

**Stephanie Varner** is the WMFC 3's Preschool Teacher/Director. Her daughter **Finley**, is enrolled in West

## WMFC Staff Exceeds United Way Giving Goal

West Midland Family Center employees see first-hand how **United Way** funds are used within the organization.

"United Way funding helps children build strong character and socialization skills. United Way funding helps senior citizens stay strong and healthy. United Way funds allow parents to meet with mentors free of charge to help them through a rough



...continued on page 2

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## How WMFC Childcare Effects One Little Girl ...continued from page 1

Midland Family Center Childcare.

Here, from her perspective as a mom, Stephanie shares her experience as part of the WMFC child care family: "Even though Finley was born with special needs, I want to give her a typical high quality child care experience," "I find WMFC a perfect fit for Finley and our family for many reasons. One difference I have found between WMFC and other child care centers is the staff. I really appreciate that the director, **Jillian Westphal**, is so engaged in the daily operations. Parents have a voice. Their concerns are addressed quickly and appropriately," explained Varner. "The staff is energized, they care about each child and are open to trying new things. I have actually been given opportunities to educate staff and answer questions regarding my child's special needs."

"WMFC is affordable. I have a friend paying \$1500 - \$2,000 per month for child care, which is a cost our family could never afford," exclaimed Varner. "At the same time, WMFC is the only child care that I know of that has access to such an awesome facility filled with so many varied opportunities. On any given day, Finley and her classmates can be found playing on the playground, in

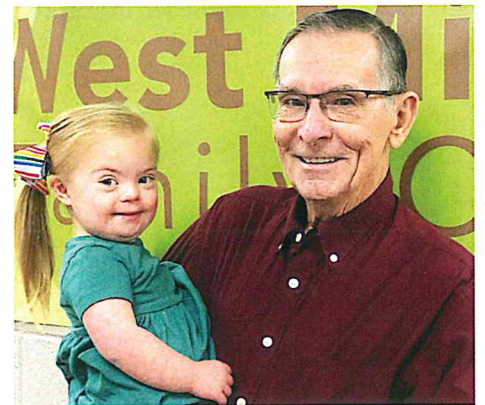
the gyms, or the multipurpose room ...and what other child care center has a bowling center? At the age of two, Finley is learning how to bowl!"

WMFC Childcare is under the same roof as the **Greendale Senior Center**. Intergenerational experiences are an important part of programming. "One of the best parts of Finley's day is seeing her friend **Gerald (Burkett)** who visits the senior center every morning. Gerald and Finley really hit it off and have become fast friends," explained Varner, "We actually leave home early every morning so that Gerald and Finley can have their time together at the Welcome Center before I have to get her to child care."

Varner is a teacher, so she is able to have her children at home with her during the summer. "This past summer, Finley stayed home rather than attending childcare. In the fall, a month after returning to WMFC, I noticed a profound shift in Finley's development and a change in her that was so dramatic it utterly amazed me. While at WMFC Finley is so much more outgoing and independent... characteristics that don't often reveal themselves at home," shared Varner, "The interactions that Finley has with the staff and her classmates challenge and motivate her. Her language use

expands and she has a different aura about her...she is so much more confident," continued Varner, "when she returns home from child care, Finley interacts differently with her brother. She stands up for herself and expresses herself in ways that I know are the result of what she has worked on here."

"WMFC is constantly evolving, changing and investing in its programs in ways that pay the highest dividends for each child. For Finley, WMFC is home because she is accustomed to being here and everyone knows her. For our family, WMFC is family away from our family," concluded Varner.



*"She is a darling little girl who stole my heart from the first smile she shared with me," stated Gerald, "I love her to pieces."*

## WMFC Staff Exceeds United Way Giving ...continued from page 1

patch when faced with personal crisis, just to name a few of the services offered," said **Greg Dorrien, Executive Director of West Midland Family Center**.

"It is no surprise then that when it comes to personal gifting West Midland Family Center employees also step up and help out as well.

Once again 100% of WMFC employees participated by gifting to **United**

**Way of Midland County and United Way of Gratiot/Isabella Counties** during this pledge season.

And once again WMFC employees exceeded last year's total and gifted \$14,761.60 (an 11.8% increase).

100% of new staff members gave a minimum of \$50 or more.

86% of employees increased the size of their gift over last year.

"West Midland Family Center would have had the doors closed permanently in 1981 when the federal grant that was funding the Center was no longer available. Instead, the United Way answered our call, and they are still helping our community grow stronger. We're very proud to do our share to help this year's campaign be a little more successful," concluded Dorrien.



# Happenings at



Licensed Child Care (Infants - 12 Year-Olds)

WMFC Preschool (3 & 4 year-olds),  
At Five Locations .

After School Programs (Youth and Teen)

Summer Programs (Youth and Teen)

Summer Food Service Program

Family Retreats at Camp Neyati

Community Service Opportunities

College Opportunity Program (High School Students)

Family Services (Parent Education, Family Fun Events,  
Social Services, Counseling)

Emergency Services (Food, Shelter, Assistance)

Vehicle Donations

Public Computers and WIFI

Bowling, Basketball, Volleyball, Martial Arts,  
Baseball & Softball, Pitching Machine & Batting Cage,  
Zumba, Aerobics, Room Rentals,  
Fitness Room/ Weight Training

Outdoor Swimming pool and lessons

BINGO (Saturday Nights 6:00pm Early Birds, non smoking!)

Greendale Happy Diners  
(Senior Services of Midland County)

*Find out more at 832-3256  
or visit us at [www.wmfc.org](http://www.wmfc.org)  
4011 West Isabella Road*

Change Partners of:





WEST MIDLAND FAMILY CENTER  
P.O. Box 1985  
Midland MI 48641-1985



*Helen Roth (right) spent the day working with this group of Chemical Bank volunteers...WMFC's nature classroom is now in top-notch shape as a result. Volunteers Rock!*

### 2018 Board of Directors

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Ben Dollard, President  
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Rod Dishaw, Secretary

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#### Family Focus Newsletter

#### Publisher and Webmaster:

Renee Allen  
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## Tammy Screws Joins WMFC Board of Directors

Tammy Screws has joined the West Midland Family Center (WMFC) Board of Directors for a three year term.



*Tammy and Jeremy Screws with son James at last year's WMFC preschool graduation.*

She is an ordained minister, former youth pastor and also worked as a staff member in the WMFC pre-school and childcare departments. Tammy currently serves on the **Shepherd Parent Teacher Organization**,

is an active member of the **Shepherd Women's Club** and is part time caregiver for her sister who has a TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury). Tammy's husband **Jeremy**, serves as lead pastor of the **Oil City Assembly of God Church**. Tammy and Jeremy have three children, **Makayla**, **Aliyah** and **James**, all in elementary school. One bunny and two dogs complete the Screw's busy household. Copper, their oldest dog, is a member of **Therapy Dogs International**. During exam weeks at **Central Michigan University**, Tammy enjoys handling Cooper as he provides stress relief for college students. Tammy is honored to serve on the board of directors and looks forward to continuing to support the Center.

## Helen Roth Named Heart of the Center Award Recipient

**Connect and Serve Volunteer Coordinator, Helen Roth** recently received the **Diane Dauer Heart of the Center Award** for 2018. The "Heart of the Center Award" was established in 2007 to celebrate the unique qualities that beloved employee Diane Dauer brought to the Center during her long tenure.



*Helen Roth*

Diane placed the needs of others above her own. She demonstrated special care and consideration to the personal well being of Center patrons. Diane consistently went "above and beyond" for everyone she met. The award recognizes a staff member who embodies the heart and spirit of who Diane was. Congratulations to Helen for a job well done!

*Kindness is a language  
which the deaf can hear  
and the blind can see.*

*~ Mark Twain*