

## WEST MIDLAND FAMILY CENTER'S

# Family

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ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR AREA RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES

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## Foundation Renews 3-to-1 Match through 2008!

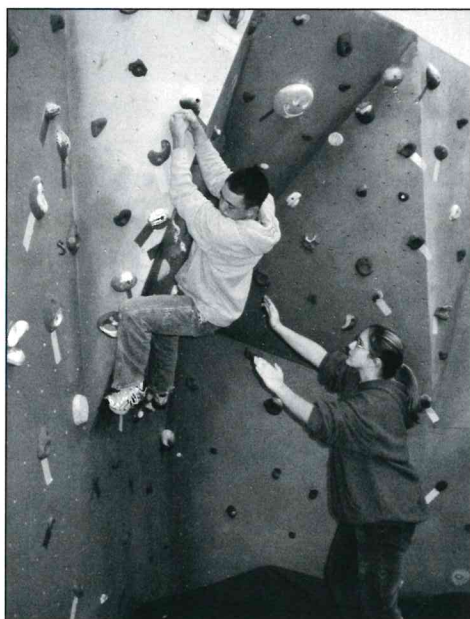
In 1999 The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation generously challenged our community: raise \$333,333.33 and they would then provide a three-to-one match.... making that \$333,333.33 become \$1,333,333.33. In December of 2003, with the extraordinary support of foundations, organizations, families and individuals just like you...WMFC met its match! An awesome accomplishment by a dedicated community. Each and every dollar made that million possible!

In this Election year we were inundated with the notion that every vote counts. At WMFC we know this to be true:

For us, "votes" came in the form of your monetary support that will sustain the valuable programs provided at WMFC for many years to come. We are honored by the loyalty demonstrated by all those who saw fit to endorse WMFC in this manner. But there's more....

Not only did the foundation fulfill their commitment, they have again extended this extraordinary offer until 2008. We begin anew the quest for three-for-one match dollars.

The challenge is to again assist WMFC in collecting \$333,333.33 for the Program Endowment Fund.



A community effort: Heather Duchene spots Taber Lower as he climbs West Midland's "Pride Rock" which was financed through a grant from the Midland County Youth Action Council, a committee of the Midland Area Community Foundation. Funding to provide staff for the wall comes from WMFC's Program Endowment Fund.

Contributed dollars are carefully invested. Interest income appreciates from these investments and is used annually to offset the cost of providing programs at the Center. Your initial contribution remains invested to grow and provide security over time. This partnered with the match by The

Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation, provides a unique opportunity. One does not have to donate large sums of money to have a meaningful impact.

With the recent difficult economic climate, West Midland Family Center, like many other families, has had its share of financial difficulties. These challenges force us to think creatively to maintain our current level of services. In order to keep valuable programs afloat, we've had to redirect certain new foundation donations to our operating budget. Previously, these funds would have been invested in the Program Endowment Fund. This essential redirection of foundation funds makes us increasingly dependent on individual donors to meet our new \$333,333.33 goal.

At WMFC we like the number *THREE*. Three dollars, thirteen or thirty, it all adds up to \$333,333.33, which magically becomes an added million with the perfect mix of philanthropy, generosity and community. If you find yourself in a position to help, please make each dollar you contribute count as three and join this proven tradition of investing in the future of others. Interested in helping? Donation form provided on page 4.

## WMFC Car Donation Program: A Foundation for Independence

Transportation ~ something most of us really take for granted. We all understand the temporary nuisance experienced when *one* of our cars is in the shop: "How am I going to get to work?" "How will I get the baby to the doctor?" "We really need to buy groceries today."

But if you can, imagine that this scenario isn't temporary. Imagine that this is your

life. Each day [in addition the other issues on your mind i.e. finances and work stress, sick children or no food in the house] you are faced with the reality that you have no power to make anything happen without the assistance of others.

"Mom can take the baby to the doctor for me, if Friend A can drop me off at work, then maybe, if Friend B is willing, she

could pick me up from work and we could just stop at the gas station so at least there will be milk in the house." *Try living that day after day.* This is indeed life's reality for many good people in our community. Try as they might they can't get or keep a job. They are viewed as unreliable because of their lack of transportation.... not because they are irresponsible.



# Dow College Opportunity Program-Collaboration at its Best

In 1988 a truly collaborative effort established one of WMFC's most notable projects. That year the Michigan Division Association of the Dow Chemical Company in cooperation with Educational Assistance Limited funded the Dow College Opportunity Program (Dow COP). In 1989 thirty-four deserving students were selected to participate. In 1993 twenty-two of the original 34 graduated from high school and entered college. At that time, the Dow Chemical Company, the Dow Corning Company, the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation, the Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation and the Charles J. Strosacker foundation agreed to continue support to make this effort an on-going program. Through this community effort the Dow College Opportunity Program was born.

This program is unique both at the Center and in Midland County. The heart of the program promotes the enrichment of lives through the pursuit of higher education. Financially eligible students from Bullock Creek, Coleman, Meridian, and Shepherd High Schools apply to the program in the fall of their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year. A screening program ensues and qualifying inductees are admitted to the Dow COP in the winter of their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year. Students participate in activities geared to support their academic

progress or promote community stewardship, enrich their cultural lives or build social skills.

The mission of the Dow COP program is to:

*help financially challenged students become self-sufficient through a college education, mentoring, cultural exposure and the development of community stewardship, academic and social skills.*

The impact of the initial philanthropic venture can be measured in terms of human potential. The youth that qualify for Dow COP, do so because of the significant financial challenges faced by their families. Yet everyone who has helped this program succeed can take pride in these "real world outcomes" as we show off a small sample of what these "kids" are doing now!



Jennifer Reidlinger in Alma College graduation regalia

Jennifer Reidlinger graduated from Alma College with a degree in Biology and Communication she worked for two years at Peirgo Drug Company. She is currently on a three-month sabbatical volunteering in Ireland.

Diana Wilson is enrolled in the honors college at WMU and in that capacity studied in France while she worked on her honors thesis. She will graduate in December.



Diana Wilson at her art show in France



Jan Shinkle Ricker proudly displays her NMU diploma

Jan Shinkle Ricker Graduated from Northern Michigan University and is practicing Nursing in Tennessee.

Devon Wilson is the Assistant Webmaster for the U.S. Senate in Washington D.C.

Sara Smith graduated from Albion College where she ran track and cross-country. Sara is currently attending Ave Maria Law School.

*Continued on back page*



COP students "cut loose" at Sleeping Bear Sand Dunes.

## WMFC Car Donation

*Continued from cover*

These individuals need reliable well-maintained cars that will become the foundation for their newfound independence. Something that will enhance their quality of life, not become one more cause for stress and frustration.

To that end we herald the many community members that chose to part with a vehicle so someone else would benefit from its remaining years. Among the many are Norm and Nancy Ott. Their fine donation has provided Delta college student Laura Merritt the freedom and independence to pursue her studies. Donated vehicles have provided a measure of peace for parents of

children with crisis medical needs, for single moms and dads trying desperately to

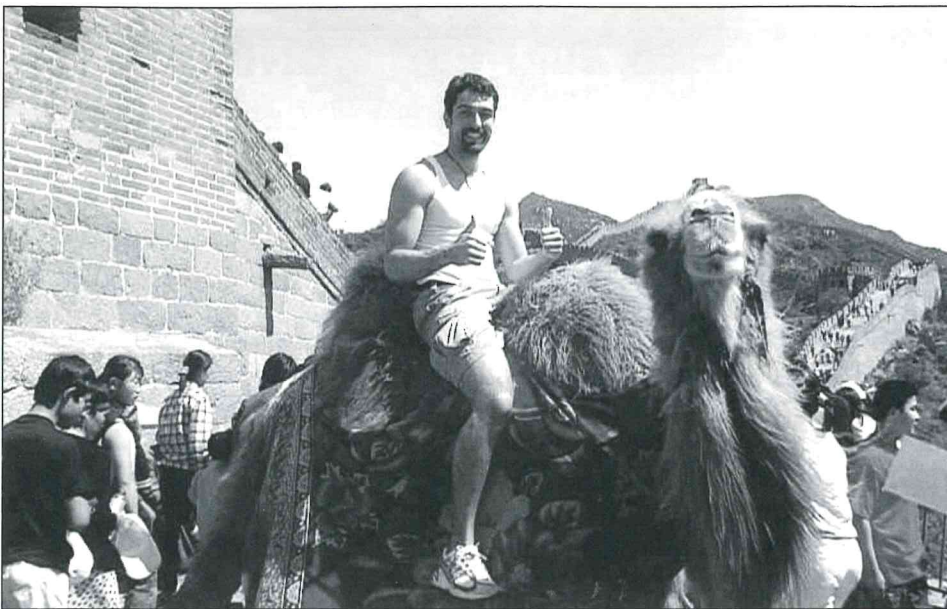
provide for their children, for hard working underemployed parents struggling to make ends meet.



College student Laura Merritt and her "New" Car. Donated by Norm & Nancy Ott

West Midland Family Center's "Otto" program has distributed 53 vehicles since 2002. During that time 43 individuals or family units have benefited from the generosity of community members that took it upon themselves to fill a need. Ten vehicles were sold and the profits used to help repair the 43 donated vehicles. Also providing financial support for this program has been the Blessed Sacrament Community Parish and the First United Methodist Church.





Dow COP graduate Ralph Griffith, at the Great Wall of China - Alma College study abroad program.

## Where Are They Now?

Paul, Lisa and their proud mother, Mary VanWert posed in this photo for this new Family Focus feature. Paul was a T'NT member during the summers of 1996 and 1997, Lisa during the summers of 1997 and 1998.

In the true spirit of T'NT they were mentors to younger children and assistants to the group leaders. Children looked up to them, held their hands, turned to them for help. They provided Summer Program group leaders with an extra pair of hands to help, an extra pair of ears to listen and a voice to calm a crowd.

So we wonder... "Where are the former T'NT members Paul and Lisa now?"

Lisa is a sophomore at Western Michigan University and is following in her mother's footsteps by studying Nursing. Paul is currently stationed at Fort Bragg North Carolina with the Army's 82nd Airborne Division awaiting his second tour of duty in Iraq. During his first tour, Paul narrowly escaped serious injury when his tank hit a roadside bomb.

Mentors then and leaders now, these two young people are fine examples of the citizenship we have come to expect from our former T'NT members. We wish both Paul and Lisa well in their chosen fields, endeavors that are based on self-sacrifice and placing a priority on the needs of others. Well done Paul and Lisa, you make us proud!



The VanWerts Lisa, Paul & mom, Mary



## Look For These Friendly Faces At WMFC:

<b>Board President</b> .....	Bob Dostal
<b>Vice President</b> .....	Ben Dollard
<b>Secretary</b> .....	E.J. Herst
<b>Treasurer</b> .....	William Schmidt
<b>Directors:</b> .....	Greg Bergtold, Rod Dishaw, Larry Reeves, Sue Thumma, Cheryl VanConant, Joe VanderKelen, Win Zacharias
<b>Advisors:</b> .....	Jim Burlingame, Michael Custer, Bob Hermann, Thomas Misner, Chuck Norisez, Alan Oman, Jerry Schaar
<b>Executive Director</b> .....	Greg Dorrien
<b>Director of Programs</b> .....	Gail Crosby
<b>Family Services Director</b> .....	Renee Young
<b>Financial Director</b> .....	Jason Green
<b>Recreation/Aquatics Director</b> .....	Renee Allen
<b>Teen Program Director</b> .....	Stacey Urbani
<b>Youth Program Director</b> .....	Stephanie Ponte
<b>Early Childhood Specialist</b> .....	Elaine Fabinski
<b>Family Consultant</b> .....	Lois Burton
<b>Dow College Opportunity Program Director</b> .....	Lynn Heil
<b>New Initiatives Coordinator</b> .....	Susan Love
<b>Office Manager</b> .....	Diane DeMott
<b>Administrative Assistant</b> .....	Missy Finney
<b>Maintenance Director</b> .....	Jeff Myers
<b>Computer Class Instructor</b> .....	Peggy Hoff
<b>Reception Staff</b> .....	Diane Dauer, Sheli Myers Christy Chappell
<b>Maintenance Staff:</b> .....	Mike Kirby, John Tyler, Gerald Burkett
<b>Youth &amp; Teen Staff:</b> .....	Tammy Screws, Dave Matthews, Joe Spencer, Jen Anderson, Jenny Heistand, Jessica Herron, Scott Paige, Bob Morales, Sheligh Burton, Taber Lower, Heather Duchene, Mike Ware, Amber Heal, Angela Hayner, Nathaniel Newsted, Mary Renko-Haag, Tyrell Ross, Cheryl Wolters, CJ Wolters, Martina Campbell
<b>Preschool Teachers</b> .....	Elaine Fabinski, Wendy Plewa
<b>Early Childhood Staff:</b> .....	Barb Simons, Christy Barton, Diana Laporta
<b>Kinder Kare Staff</b> .....	Vivian McWethy, Eileen Burch, Sheena Burch, Autumn Kline, Penny Owen, Eva Searfoss
<b>Senior Program Staff</b> .....	Susan Wells
<b>Catholic Family Services</b> .....	Larry Quinn
<b>Council On Aging Site Manager</b> ..	Tammy Jerome
<b>Council On Aging Staff</b> .....	Sandra Engle, Barb Fenby, Marsha Orwig

*\*Each staff member is listed once although many serve multiple roles at the center.*

# Gift Quadrupling! That's Right

The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow  
Foundation will match your gift to  
the Program Endowment Fund on a  
Three-to-one basis.

Example: your gift of	\$100
Foundation's match	<u>\$300</u>
Quadruple gift to	
WMFC	\$400

Since it is an Endowment Gift  
your money will be invested  
and used to help children and  
families forever!



- Clip & Send Please! -

## PLEASE HELP!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to WMFC, 4011 W. Isabella Rd, Shepherd, MI 48883

Tax Deductable of Course!



- Clip & Send Please! -

*Dow COP continued from page 2*

There are so many wonderful things that can be said about Dow COP. However, nothing illustrates the benefits of this program so eloquently as the words from someone with first-hand knowledge.

And so, a note from Tammy Reamsma Screws, COP graduate and recent college graduate:

From the bottom of my heart, I say thank you to the Dow College Opportunity Board and other key contributors for helping me to arrive at the present through your support and giving. It is difficult to put on paper the gratitude I have for my past. I have been very blessed and it is my personal goal to be a blessing to others. Please continue to support this program with your time and money. I wish all youth could have and take advantage of all of the opportunities that I had while going through high school. I would not be the same person today, with the same attitude and personality, had I not been given the many opportunities to receive a well-rounded education. Thank you for the major part that you all had in shaping my life. God bless you.

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