

# Family Focus

VOLUME 26, NUMBER 2

Thriving, Giving, Growing... Together

Fall 2016

## In This Issue

Expansion Dream Realized .....	1
WMFC Celebrates Best of the West... 1	
Donate Through Amazon Smile.....	2
Volunteers Key to Success.....	3

## Expansion Dream Realized

### The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation Leads the Way Once Again

On June 26, 2016, WMFC announced in the **Midland Daily News** that it had raised \$3,250,000\* from area foundations toward a building expansion budgeted currently at \$3,500,000. "We are exceedingly pleased to be the recipients of yet one more outpouring of love from our local family philanthropic foundations," said **Anne Pankratz, President of the WMFC Board of Directors.**

A new septic system and drain field will be built this Fall and the building expansion will start next Spring.

The purpose of this project is to provide much needed additional space to accommodate the growing needs of the community and staff alike. Keeping true to our mission, the project will provide for expanded educational, recreational and social service

...continued on page 4

The Herbert H. and Grace A. Dow Foundation	\$2,000,000
Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation	875,000
The Charles J. Strosacker Foundation*	375,000
<b>Total Foundation Gifting</b>	<b>\$3,250,000</b>
<b>Total Still Needed to Raise</b>	<b>\$250,000</b>

## WMFC Celebrates the Best of the West

For many people, summer is a time for celebrations: graduations, weddings, reunions and more. WMFC had one of their own very special occasions and invited the entire community to take part in the *Best of the West Summer Celebration*. There were several things being celebrated at this event which included:

**Expansion** - Sharing the great news of the upcoming building expansion was one reason to celebrate. Guests could view the future building expansion

...continued on page 2



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J-Rock performed classic rock hits as part of D-Street Music Foundation's continuing outreach at the Best of the West Celebration.



## Amazon Smile is a Free Way to Donate to WMFC

It's so easy! **Amazon Smile** makes giving to your favorite charity very simple and it costs you nothing! When you enter the **Amazon** website through the Amazon Smile link and select WMFC as your charity of choice, Amazon will donate 0.5% of your total purchase price to WMFC. To continue to donate to WMFC, simply use this link every time you shop at Amazon.com. Please go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) to set up your account.



After 35 years of service, Bingo Auxiliary Volunteer Gene Dauer (pictured front row center in the black shirt) retired from his leadership position. A retirement party was held to celebrate Gene's dedicated service to the community.

## WMFC Celebrates the Best of the West ...continued from page 1

display as well as donate funds toward the expansion. These donated funds will be increased with additional funds through a matching grant from The Charles J. Strosacker Foundation. The foundation matches \$1.50 for every \$1.00 that is raised. Now that's cause for celebration!

**Summer Adventure Program Wrap Up** - There was much to celebrate as the children and families who took part in the Summer Adventure Program came together to wrap up the summer. They shared the friendships and skills that they gained through the children's day camp, parenting groups, family fun clubs, and family camps that took place at Camp Neyati.

**Preschool Kick Off** - The event was also a kick off for the Center's upcoming preschool program. WMFC celebrated the addition of two new classrooms - a second classroom in **Shepherd** at **St. Vincent Church** and a brand new program at the **Westgate School** in **St. Louis**. These are in addition to the existing classes at **Bullock Creek Elementary School**, **Floyd Elementary School**, and four classes at the WMFC location.

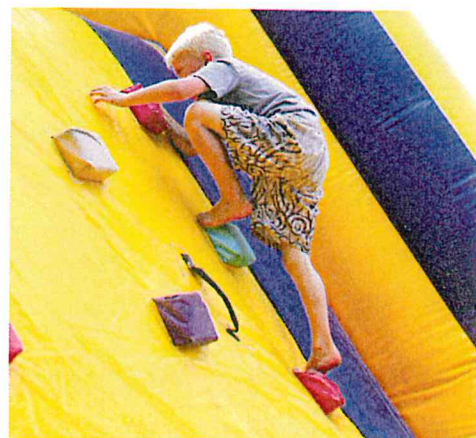
The **Dow College Opportunity Program** - held a Giant Pop Can Wall Build to share in the success of the program and to raise funds toward their college trips and general expenses. **95.3 WCFX** was on hand to broadcast the build and the evenings activities.

**WMFC's Unknown Beauty** - Providing a different twist on the typical 5K run or other racing event, patrons had the opportunity to discover and explore some of WMFC's beautiful grounds through their participation in three specifically designed adventure courses. These courses included the *Baby Bear Course*, which focused on literacy and small and large motor activities, the *Grizzly* which encompassed greater physical challenges as participants made their way through some of WMFC's initiative course stations, and the *Totally "Bear"able Nature Walk* where folks explored the tranquil WMFC trails and looked for some of Winnie the Pooh's most delightful quotes.

**Festivities also included:** Great live music by **J-Rock** in conjunction with **D-Street Music Foundation**, dinner, swimming, inflatables, giant

lawn games, face painting, teddy bear adoptions, lots of drawings for prizes, and various booth activities from community agencies including **TruNorth**, **Mid-Michigan Community Action Agency** and **MSU Extension**.

WMFC would like to thank the sponsors who donated prizes for the event. They include: **Bob Evans**, **Lowes**, **EClips**, **Members First Credit Union**, **Holiday Inn**, **Ace Hardware**, **Krogers**, **Gourmet Cupcake**, **Valley Plaza Resort**, **Cabela's** and **ABC Warehouse**.



Inflatable Obstacle Course provided to Best of the West Celebration courtesy of Greater Midland Community Center.



# Volunteers Continue to be Key to WMFC Success

Many groups of volunteers came out to the Center throughout the summer to give of their time, treasure and talents. Here's a snapshot of a few:

Sixteen students from the **First United Methodist Bible School** spent two days and an overnight at the Center designing and constructing two water activity boards and a music activity board which will be enjoyed by WMFC children and families. The group also helped beautify Center grounds by weeding gardens and helping the WMFC maintenance staff spread mulch around the plants and trees. In addition, this group of energized teens readied the Center for the arrival of summer program students by cleaning various rooms and creating and organizing new storage spaces in the Center.

"When I asked the students what they liked best about volunteering," explained **Melina Garcia, WMFC Connect and Serve Volunteer Coordinator**, "they said that they really enjoyed being allowed to use their own creativity to make the activity boards. They liked the creative and design process. They also enjoyed trying the activity boards out with the children and bonding with the WMFC staff, and with one another, while they worked."

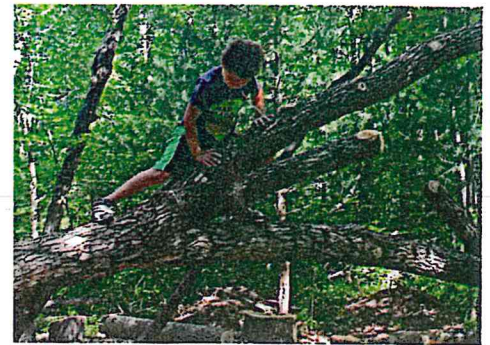


*The First United Methodist Bible School was just one of many groups that volunteered at WMFC during the summer of 2016.*

**Trinseo** is a company that returns year after year with a group of volunteers to lend a hand at WMFC. This summer, eight Trinseo volunteers spent approximately three weeks devoting nearly 400 volunteer hours to provide community families with all kinds of wonderful new and fun outside activities.

Trinseo designed and created a wonderful new WMFC Outdoor Nature Classroom. Studies show that the health and well being of children throughout the United States has been severely compromised because of the extensive amount of time that children spend indoors as opposed to the time they spend outside. This new outdoor nature classroom will help WMFC reverse this trend for WMFC children.

In addition to the new outdoor nature classroom, Trinseo raked, power washed, fixed the sandbox in the "big kids" playground and built a brand new sandbox for the infant/toddler playground. They built benches at the baseball field and power washed and stained the Center picnic tables. They also installed railroad ties along the outside border of the WMFC Parking Lot. The work of Trinseo hands will be a blessing to the WMFC community for many years to come.



*Studies show that time outside is critical to the health, self-concept and future school success of children. The new WMFC Outdoor Nature Classroom built by Trinseo, will give children an opportunity to spend more time each day exploring and learning about the fascinating elements that can only be found in the great outdoors.*

WMFC's recent *Best of the West Celebration*, would not have been possible to host without the tremendous support of volunteers. Thirty-five volunteers, working a total of 860 hours, spent the afternoon assisting WMFC staff members with event set up and clean up, family event registration and family activity facilitation.

"I often ask these kind people why they volunteer at West Midland Family Center," explained Garcia, "and they tell me that they want to give back to their community, often times because they grew up here. Some come because they want to learn more about the Center, while others just want to use their time and talents to be a blessing to others."

WMFC has become what it is today because of the thousands of hours that have been given by the hundreds of volunteers, who have faithfully shared their time, talents and treasures with our organization. Through August, WMFC has been blessed by the work of the hands of 385 volunteers who have given 2,930 hours of their time. WMFC could not do what we do if it wasn't for our volunteers!





*Taking a break from swimming and all the fun at WMFC Family Camp at Neyati.*

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## Expansion Dream Realized

T1 P1  
35

*...continued from page 1*

opportunities. Major features of new **expanded space** include four new preschool rooms, a multi-purpose (gross motor play, music and art) room, a bus maintenance facility, a two lane bowling alley, a program storage room, a dining room chair storage room, and a pool chemical storage room. Major **renovations** to the **existing space** include dedicating two rooms to the After School Program/Summer Program, enlarging the Emergency Food Pantry so patrons can choose their own food, enlarging the Donated Clothing room, adding a conference room and three offices, adding adult and child sized sinks to a child care room, adding security protection features to the Welcome Center and entryways, replacing the cabinetry in the Senior's Kitchen and Teen Room, adding a commercial dishwasher and a walk-in freezer to the preschool kitchen, adding a covered walkway to the cottage, replacing carpeting in many areas with a vinyl tile product, installing a new modern road sign at the corner of M-20/Alamando road, replacing old lobby furniture and lots of paint!

**"The Charles J. Strosacker Foundation's\*** gift is a matching grant", said **Greg Dorrien, WMFC Executive Director**. "The Foundation will give us \$1.50 for every \$1.00 we raise, so we need to raise the final \$250,000 to qualify for their full gift of \$375,000. During the next nine months we will be asking additional foundations, service clubs, churches, businesses and individuals to help us complete this project."

"We've been blessed to serve so many for so long. We've seen first-hand and documented the ways in which the West Midland community has improved over the last 40 plus years. While our mission is far from accomplished, the faith demonstrated by the foundations listed above and stalwart supporters like the **United Way, The Dow Chemical Company, Midland Area Community Foundation, Alden and Vada Dow Family Foundation, The Harry A. and Margaret D. Towsley Foundation**, both **Kiwanis** clubs and both **Rotary** clubs and so many others, assures that the next 40 years will see much community growth and family success", concluded Dorrien.