

WEST MIDLAND FAMILY CENTER Family Focus

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Thriving, Giving, Growing... Together

FALL 2017

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Same Mission-Different Statement...by Susan Love

Since 1974 **West Midland Family Center (WMFC)** has been on a mission to enhance the quality of life for each generation by providing growth and achievement opportunities within a caring environment. Over these many years, our focus has indeed been to enhance the quality of life for the local community, and it remains so today.

Clearly there are a multitude of ways to state such a fact and understandably communication changes over time. The result of surveys conducted as part of our recent strategic plan

were in favor of a mission statement update. Therefore, WMFC has taken a step toward the future with a revised mission statement that is more succinct and reflective of modern vernacular.

Therefore let it be known that from this day forward WMFC remains on a mission to: ***Enhance the quality of life for each generation by providing growth and achievement opportunities within a caring environment.*** This is our mission - and we're sticking to it!

Training to Succeed

...by James Sira

The evening of June 23, 2017 is a date that Midland residents will talk about for years to come. That evening, mass flooding caused many to lose their homes and caused tremendous hardship for hundreds of others... however few experienced that fateful evening like those of our friends on the **Lee Township Fire Department (LTFD)**.

In the early hours of June 24, LTFD responders were called to an emergency involving a woman in a submerging vehicle. Upon arriving to the scene, two LTFD firefighters attached themselves to tethers and, putting themselves in extreme danger, swam out to the submerged vehicle. When they reached the vehicle, the firefighters attempted to gain access to the panicked woman inside as the vehicle began to sink. Stuck in the middle of the deep, rapidly flowing water, with their only platform quickly disappearing from beneath



Volunteers from all walks of life come together to help make the new WMFC Bus Maintenance Facility a reality.

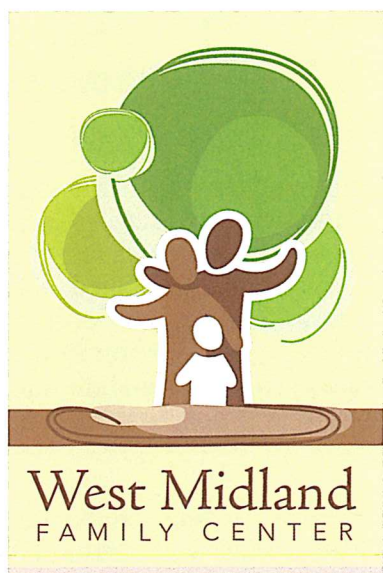
New Digs....by Greg Dorrien

The WMFC expansion and renovation project remains on course with no major setbacks. As with all projects, there have been surprises, but nothing to fluster the capable team from **Three Rivers Corporation**. The new expansion will be completed around Thanksgiving. Then, renovation work on the existing structure will occur from November until the New Year.

Community patrons have kindly endured numerous inconveniences associated with this project and we are most grateful for their

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Training To Succeed with Lee Township Fire Department...continued from page 1

their feet, the firefighters reached into the vehicle, felt around the front seat for the driver and got a firm grip on the woman. Moments later the two brought the woman safely ashore, successfully completing the rescue.

LTFD's Fire Chief, Daryl Amrozowicz, is adamant that the rescue would not have been as successful had the LTFD not had previous water rescue training. "Training is vital to success because it aids in building muscle memory," explained Amrozowicz. "The mind subconsciously remembers the patterns used during trainings, which it then uses when under adrenaline in real emergencies. This is why repetitive training is the key to success."



WMFC Lifeguards practice back boarding a spinal victim with Lee Township Fire Fighters.

"Previous water rescue training helped LTFD firefighters successfully perform the life-saving procedures needed during that rescue," continued Amrozowicz. "Skills such as putting the victim into a proper streamline position so that her head would be positioned above the water while pulling her to shore, is a skill that is practiced repeatedly prior to a real emergency. The value of training is often ignored. People tend to look at an emergency without grasping the number of hours, and even years, of training that has gone into a well-executed Emergency Action Plan."

Some of the LTFD's water rescue training has taken place at the West Midland Family Center (WMFC) with the **WMFC Lifeguard Staff**. These trainings have covered a multitude of topics including strapping guards to backboards while practicing water spinal cord rescues and working as a team in CPR scenarios. Each training yields new information to both teams which prepares them for future situations. The trainings have also served to build relationships and a trust between the lifeguards and firefighters that will help them work better together should an emergency arise at WMFC in the future.

"Working with the WMFC staff is beneficial for many reasons. Every location in **Lee and Greendale Township** is unique. Visiting different locations provides firefighters with firsthand knowledge of each location, including building layouts and special considerations/hazards that might be present during an emergency," explained Amrozowicz. "Firefighters can then formulate plans for "what-if" situations."

"On our visits, firefighters will visualize the layout of a building filled with billows of smoke. This exercise can help assist us in finding faster and safer routes in future events. This mindset turns a simple visit into a training exercise," explained Amrozowicz, "and it could mean the difference between life or death."

However, this isn't the only perk of working with WMFC according to Amrozowicz. "One of the greatest benefits of training with community members is meeting people when they are not having the worst day of their lives. Firefighters often meet people during terrible situations; it's rewarding to work alongside them in a positive atmosphere."

Is training and all the time used for training, really as important as Amrozowicz stresses it to be? "Having the equipment and knowledge without the value of hands-on practice is not adequate. Training is the best way to be successful when emergencies happen," answered Amrozowicz.

Thank you to all medical personnel, firefighters, law enforcement officers, and countless others who helped assist all those in our communities during the events of June 23, 2017. And thank you for the many hours of training that you complete to ensure that you are ready to come to our aid!



LTFD and WMFC Lifeguard Staff Members have trained together at the beginning of each summer for the past 17 years. During that time, there have been NO life-threatening emergencies at the WMFC swimming pool.

WMFC Staff Surpasses United Way Goal

At a recent safety day training, **WMFC Executive Director Greg Dorrien** posed a challenge to staff members. Dorrien challenged the staff to work together to achieve 100% employee participation in the 2018 United Way Campaign and surpass last year's donation total of \$11,814.

The staff rose to the challenge. United Way forms were returned in record time and 100% employee participation was quickly achieved. When the forms were tallied, funds promised were a bit short of the financial goal of \$13,000 so the staff organized a penny war and bake sale to make up the difference. In the end, WMFC surpassed their United Way giving goal with donations totaling \$13,199. An 11.7% increase!



WMFC volunteers are racing toward completion of the new bus maintenance facility.

New Digs...continued from page 1

tremendous patience. The Center was forced to close twice due to various water issues, we've had periodic gymnasiums closures, and numerous areas simply aren't very attractive as existing flooring is being replaced. The outdoor swimming pool was more intimate this year as a privacy/wind screen was added to minimize construction related sand from blowing at the patrons and into the pool area. The screen did however effectively reduce the eye sore created by the construction project.

On the positive side there are hints of a beautiful final product. The new Welcome Center offers one such clue. In addition, anyone who remembers the taste of the old raw water certainly knows there has been a wonderful improvement with the addition of a new well. And, let's talk about the lovely new drain field... it's no longer located by the pool and everyone except the maintenance director has forgotten all about it. (That's a good thing!)

Major components of the new expansion include four preschool classrooms, a large motor/art multi-purpose room, a bus maintenance facility, a two lane bowling alley and program storage rooms. Renovations include the Welcome Center, security vestibules, additions to childcare and afterschool program areas, and stunning new vinyl plank flooring throughout most of the building. We anticipate showing off our new digs with a large open house after the first of the year - details to follow. We hope you will consider stopping by.

Dow COP Students Take Advantage of Educational and Volunteer Opportunities During Summer Recess

One of the main factors contributing to a student's ability to complete college is finding the right fit. Many schools have great programs, caring staff, and student networking opportunities, but if a student does not feel at home on campus, their chances of leaving college prior to completing their college education greatly increases. This is why the **Dow College Opportunity Program (Dow COP) College Tour Summer Trip** is so important and is the capstone event for every junior COP class.

This summer, the **Dow COP Class of 2018** toured four different colleges. Students attended admissions presentations and campus tours at **Eastern Michigan University, Albion College, Western Michigan University, and Grand Valley State University**. The trip gave students the opportunity to visit a variety of schools in different settings. This will help them in narrowing down their college choices going into their senior year of high school. Exposure to different schools, and their surrounding cities, will also help students find that right fit which will help them in reaching their goal of attaining a college education.

The **Dow COP Classes of 2019 and 2020** participated in a service trip for a week on **Mackinac Island** this summer. The **Island Public School** was gracious enough to host the students, giving them the opportunity to explore and volunteer on the island. Projects that the students took on included painting storage sheds at the school and trenching the **Lakeshore Trail** around **Mission Point** on the island. Digging out the paving stones lining the path of the Lakeshore Trail was a tough job, but the students put in a great effort and definitely made a beautification and safety difference! The **State of Michigan Parks Department Staff** commented that the students had accomplished **TWICE** as much as the previous volunteer group and encouraged our group to return in the future.

The **Class of 2017** toured the **Heartland of America** for their final New Horizons Experience. The students were responsible for planning, budgeting and raising funds for their final trip together. Stops in **Chicago, St. Louis, and near Lake Lemon, Indiana**, provided the group with many great, new and wonderful experiences and many lasting memories!



Dow COP Class of 2018 hanging out in front of a picture of SWOOP, the Eastern Michigan University Mascot, at Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, MI.

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Thank you Midland Area Community Foundation and Midland Rotary Foundation for our beautiful and functional new road sign!

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Only the Exceptional Need Apply

Bus drivers needed. Only the exceptional need apply. Exceptionally kind that is - exceptionally caring and considerate.

It is a little-known fact that West Midland Family Center operates a fleet of eight (various sized) busses. These busses are used to deliver young children to and from pre-school, shuttle older children from school to the WMFC After-School Program and occasionally transport families to and/or from evening events. Associated with these busses is a truly marvelous behind the scenes band of dedicated staff members. While unknown to the general public - they are much adored by the people they serve.

WMFC bus drivers are exceptional because of the varied role they serve. However, WMFC bus drivers are a first point of contact for secluded families that may live miles away from other people. Our drivers look for opportunities to help. Our drivers are a familiar and friendly face for parents, reassurance that their child is in good hands. They are always quick to offer a kind word as parents put children on the bus.

These folks are reliable and dedicated to the children and families for whom they are working. Our drivers make certain that children attend class safely and regularly.

Regular program attendance is important especially when it comes to early childhood programs where children learn to love school. Our bus drivers help children learn to love school!

If you are looking for a job with rewards well beyond the standard of assuring that your charges arrive safely, please consider joining our team of well-loved individuals. You too can make sure that everybody gets there safely AND arrives happily with abundant smiles! If you find such an opportunity intriguing and hold a Chauffeur's License or a CDL with a "P" endorsement, please contact **Judy Wirtz** at (989) 832-3256 or wirtzj@wmfc.org

We have the perfect job for you!



*WMFC Bus Driver, Glenn Kistler
greet every child with warmth and kindness.*