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Community. If I could only choose one word to describe what the Auburn Cornfest means to me, it would be “community.” For 50 years, the Auburn Cornfest has been a cornerstone in our town and the surrounding area for bringing people together, for building a sense of “community.”

Fifty years of children, young and old, walking down the midway and enjoying an elephant ear. Kids running through the maze house then hopping on the motorcycle ride. Youngsters challenging each other to race down the slide, and then doing it again and again. Teenagers riding the Zipper and the Scrambler time after time until they're dizzy. Young love riding high above the festival on the Ferris wheel holding hands and then playing the games along the midway to win a prize for each other.

Fifty years of music and good times in the entertainment tent. Listening and dancing to the country bands, the rock bands, and of course the lively polka band that concludes the weekend. Enjoying a hamburger, corn on the cob, and a drink while surrounded by the sights and sounds of the festival. Watching the younger generation making the memories that you made here so many years ago.

Fifty years of people coming together and catching up, whether it's after a week apart or 20 years. The planned class reunions and the impromptu ones. The wedding groups that come down to the festival for a drink because they haven't missed a Cornfest since they were four years old. The neighbors who want to enjoy some great music and fellowship. And the folks who come out to the festival to meet new people and make new friends.

Times have certainly changed in the last 50 years, and so has the Cornfest. Rides have changed, bands have come and gone, and the people in charge have retired or moved on. There will still be a parade and children's fishing tournament,

but we've added a dirt drag race and a cornhole tournament in recent years. Regardless of the alterations, one thing has remained constant – the sense of community that began when the festival was originated a half-century ago. I know it just wouldn't be summer for me without enjoying some time at the Cornfest.

I want to personally thank everyone who helped make the 50th Annual Auburn Cornfest a reality. Thanks to our business sponsors and to the countless individuals who have worked tirelessly to bring our community together once again. Many hours have been invested to ensure the Cornfest is a fun, safe event for everyone.

The last year has been difficult, to say the least. But as things are starting to get back to “normal,” I can't think of a better way to celebrate the challenges we've overcome than by getting together to enjoy each other's company at Cornfest. If you're a Cornfest regular, welcome back; we've missed you! If this is your first time, we hope Cornfest will become a favorite summer activity for you and your family. I look forward to seeing you there!

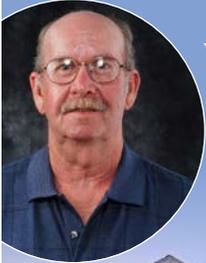
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through community outreach. There are many opportunities that individuals can take to support kids in care, whether it is becoming a foster parent or supporting foster parents and organizations such as the NRC. The saying goes that “it takes a village to raise a child” and this is exactly what the NRC works to provide. There are several ways in which community members can become involved with this non-profit organization including: providing donations to assist foster youths’ needs, volunteering time to help organize

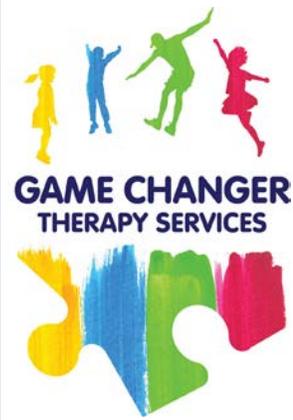
Foster Families NRC

As local licensed foster parents for the last five years, we have had the opportunity to care for several placements in our home. As foster parents ourselves, we know there is a great need in the community to provide foster families and relatives caring for foster children guidance, support, and mentorship, as well as a database of avail-

able resources for other assistance.

We established the Foster Families Navigation Resource Center (NRC) in 2020 to help support foster parents and foster children in a variety of ways. A primary goal of the NRC is changing the perception of foster care and providing education about what foster care means





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the exchange closet, hosting a meet and greet with your local Rotary Club or church group, or making a monetary donation. During the past quarter, Foster Families NRC served more than 150 families, sometimes touching these families multiple times with support. The NRC assisted in handing out more than 50 hygiene packs, which include shampoo, deodorant, soap, hairbrush, toothpaste, etc., to local foster youth. A new

towel and washcloth are included in every pack. While it may seem trivial to some that these basic needs are being met, for kids in foster care, items like these can help restore a sense of dignity and self-worth. Many times, youth come into foster care with few if any belongings. An important resource housed at the Foster Families Center is our Clothing Exchange. We carry sizes from newborn through 3X, offering

foster youth and their families access to our clothing for all age ranges and seasons. We take pride in what we are able to gather and provide for our kids and only carry new or extremely gently used clothing. The NRC has been blessed with support and help from local communities, businesses and organizations. United Financial Credit Union hosted a "Scrub a Dub" event to collect hygiene products, towels,

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and washcloths. Members First Credit Union held a clothing drive. New Life Church in Saginaw collected more than 140 new items of clothing to add to the NRC's Clothing Exchange.

And Austin's Flowers and Gifts in Freeland just completed a new sock and underwear drive. It's only through amazing volunteers, partners, and donors like these that we are able to do what we do. And we are so incredibly thankful!

Through our website, fosterfamiliesnrc.org, we are able to provide an active database that is constantly updated with available local and national resources. We created this database to be simple, easy, and convenient. It was designed for foster families, biological parents, and older foster youth to be able to use with ease. Along with the database, the web site houses a resource guide on



what to expect with fostering, commonly asked questions, and other support.

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We also offer a foster care mentoring program. This helps our new foster families or relative placements to be partnered with a more seasoned family, so they can walk this journey together. We know building relationships is key to support and with this mentoring program we strive to help make that happen.

Children ranging in age from birth to 17 years old can be placed in foster care for a variety of reasons. Many we may not know, but what we do know is that it is at NO fault of their own. Here at the NRC, we work to support the families who choose to take these kiddos in and care for them in



their time of need. The more support we can wrap around the family, the more they can support the children that come into their care. To learn more about the Foster Families Navigation Resource Center and the services they provide, visit www.fosterfamiliesnrc.org. While there, you



can sign up for the NRC newsletter, find ways to volunteer, and even donate. If you wish to mail in a donation, the center is located at 301 W Midland Rd. Ste E, Auburn, MI 48611.

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United Financial is also heavily involved in their local communities. It may be little things like

sponsoring a local t-ball team or donating a gift basket to a golf outing, the credit union also sponsors a couple larger events each year as well. Most recently they were the presenting sponsor for the 50th Anniversary Auburn CornFest, they also put on a 5K/10K race in Freeland; the United Financial CU Walleye Race that is in conjunction with the Walleye Festival in April. You probably have seen our staff volunteering at various local events as well. Follow our Facebook page to see where we go next.

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18th Annual Reece Endeavor of Midland Garden Walk Set for July 13

For just \$10, you can help make a difference in the lives of Midland residents with special needs. Plus, you'll have the opportunity to tour five stunning residential gardens, as well as Dow Gardens and the Whiting Forest Canopy Walk.

The 18th Annual Reece Endeavor of Midland GardenWalk will be held from 2 p.m. until 7 p.m. on Tuesday, July 13, rain or shine. Tickets, which are available at several area businesses, can also be used for admission to the LPGA tournament at Midland Country Club on Wednesday, July 14.

Established by the Reece family in 1957, the Reece Endeavor's mission is to provide affordable, accessible housing to individuals with cognitive, intellectual and physical disabilities. Now in the process of building its 40th home, Reece Endeavor currently provides housing for 87 Midland residents.



“It just shows what a beautiful community Midland is, that we want to be a place where everyone thrives and that includes people with disabilities,” said Maureen Donker, who has served as the organization’s director since 1996. “It’s great to be a part of that work.”

The GardenWalk attracts as many as 1,000 attendees each year. All proceeds are used to help fund affordable, barrier-free housing in Midland. Homes are constructed through a joint effort with the City of Midland and Midland Public Schools Building Trades Program. Another barrier-free duplex will be built during the 2021-2022 school year at the corner of Ashman and Cambridge.

Mary Stutelberg, a veteran member of the Reece Endeavor’s Board of Directors, has been a part of the GardenWalk since its inception. While brainstorming for a different approach to fundraising, a fellow board member suggested that a garden walk would be perfect in a city filled with lush landscaping.

“The GardenWalk has given us a voice, it has given us exposure to the community so that we’re able to raise money to take




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care of people with disabilities in a special way,” Stutelberg said. “It’s a beautiful thing that we’re able to offer to Midland residents with special needs and abilities.”

Stutelberg’s son, Michael, lived in a Reece home after losing his vision and hearing to Mitochondria disease. After graduating from Dow High School, Michael attended the Helen Keller School for the Blind to learn to live independently. He moved into a Reece home on

George Street when he was 19 and lived there until his passing in 1998, just days before his 22nd birthday. The representatives from the Helen Keller School who helped Mike transition to his new home were so impressed with the efforts of the Reece Endeavor that they “went back and started implementing what we had been doing for years,” Stutelberg said.

Because of her son’s experience, Stutelberg’s work with the Reece Endeavor is a true labor of love.

She established the Michael W. Stutelberg Award to recognize individuals and organizations who make a significant, positive impact on individuals served by the Reece Endeavor.

“The Reece Endeavor saved us; they came to our rescue,” Stutelberg said. “Mike lived with dignity the rest of his life. It gave him a semblance of peace. It gave him dignity and he loved it. After he died, I said that I will give the rest of my life to help the Reece Endeavor.”

Beyond giving ticket holders the chance to tour lovely gardens, the GardenWalk is a perfect opportunity for volunteers to educate the community about the Reece Endeavor.

“My heart is in this,” Stutelberg said. “I want people to know about the Reece Endeavor because it’s a phenomenon that’s needed all over this country but we’re fortunate enough to have it in our small city,”



The GardenWalk is made possible thanks to local homeowners who open up their gardens to the community as well as volunteers from Midland garden clubs and local Master Gardeners.



GardenWalk tickets are available at the following Midland locations: Coffee Chaos, Dow Gardens, Village Green, Heather 'n Holly, Maple Hill Midland, Randi's Green Thumb Plants & Flowers, Smith's Flowers and Gifts, Reece Endeavor, and Trés Dorais.

The list of stops on the 2021 GardenWalk includes:

The Bancroft/Winslow Garden

The garden at 1212 Holyrood Street is a serene setting filled with plantings that hold a meaningful significance for the homeowners. With a variety of annuals, perennials, grasses and fountains, this space has it all! Make sure to look for the sculpture by Craig Mitchell Smith, set among the rhododendrons and intended to look like wisteria blossoms, as well as the rhu-

barb plant honoring the homeowner's mother and the pies they would make together.

The Danielsen Garden

The space at 2209 Ramble Lane brings together fun and functionality to create a quiet oasis in the center of the city! An entertaining area expands out to a pool

and features a bed of colorful annuals, with additional flowers and changing seasonal garden décor used to add interest. Sheds on the property provide functional storage for this family on the move.

The Dombrowski Garden

Designed and created by the homeowner himself, the expansive garden at 4060 East Old Pine Trail is a masterpiece 35 years in the making! Originally featured on the GardenWalk in 2007, this labor of love is loaded with special features such as an inground pool, terraced stone walls, multiple Norway spruce and other specimen trees, and annuals in decorative pots to add pops of color.

The Gunderson/Heeschen Garden

Located at 309 Meadow Lane, this eclectic space is less than five years old and features a

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bit of everything! You might recognize several pieces of art in the garden, like the fox from a previous Downtown Midland art installation and are sure to enjoy the waterfall and stream that cut through the middle of the yard. Other notable features include a sitting rock, path and gazebo. The hands-on homeowners tend to the many plantings in their garden themselves, including annuals and perennials that provide year-round color, along with a dwarf ginkgo tree, Lenten rose, and peony bushes.

The Steffen Garden

Welcome to 3816 Collingwood Street, where nature is nurtured. The fieldstone-lined beds showcase a variety of annuals, perennials, roses, and other shrubs. Along the path into the backyard, you'll find irises, herbs, and ornamental grasses. The backyard also boasts hydrangeas, a Rose of Sharon, wildflowers, and shrubs to attract birds and butterflies. The deck, pond, swing set, and bear sculpture add to the fun for family and neighbors – and you just might see some of the deer and turkeys known to visit the undeveloped property beyond the yard!

Dow Gardens/Whiting Forest

Start your GardenWalk early at Dow Gardens. Your ticket allows you to visit the Dow Gardens campus, which includes Whiting Forest, at any point during the GardenWalk hours of 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Stroll the grounds at 1809 Eastman Avenue and enjoy annuals and perenni-

als punctuated by distinctive bridges and rock structures, an award-winning children's garden, towering pines, and delightful water features. Silent auction items will also be on display in the Dow Gardens Visitors Center.

For more information about the 2021 Garden-Walk or Reece Endeavor of Midland call 989-835-9700 or visit www.reeceendeavor.org.

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Letter from Auburn City Mayor

"Auburn Road, take me home, to the place I belong, Western High School, Auburn Cornfest, take me home, Auburn Road!"

If John Denver had ever visited Auburn, I'm pretty sure the lyrics of his famous song might have gone something like that.

I'm so proud of Auburn! Sure, we're surrounded by the tranquility of cornfields, but we're so much more than beautiful farmland. From the beginning of my time here, I noticed the friendliness of this small town. It's a GREAT place to raise a family in the heart of a community that supports and encourages our children. It's a GREAT place to live, work and play.

Auburn was founded in 1947 by a group of people with the desire to have good, clean running water in their homes. To accomplish that goal, they had to form a city. Auburn's first mayor was a woman, not a common occurrence at the time. As we near our 75th anniversary, I'm happy to report that Auburn is still filled with dedicated, hard-working people who make it a wonderful place to call home.

One of the best parts about living in a small town are the annual community events that bring people together. My favorite is the Auburn Cornfest, which is celebrating 50 golden years. The festival was founded by a group of local busi-

nessmen a half-century ago as a way to promote the city and local businesses and to raise money for community improvements.

Cornfest was first held in downtown Auburn. As the festival grew, it was moved to its current location on city park land. The much-loved annual event is now managed by AIM, a board created by the Auburn Chamber of Commerce and the Auburn Jaycees to ensure the ongoing success of the festival.

Seeing that big top tent going up always brings a thrill to me – and the city of Auburn. Kids waiting for the rides, all that delicious carnival food, the shows, the special events. It's a whole lot of fun. Don't forget the parade on Sunday afternoon, where people come early with their chairs and line them up along the street for the best view of all the marchers and a chance to enjoy lots of candy tossed to the crowd.

But the entertainment doesn't stop when the Cornfest tent comes down. This summer, the Auburn Williams Lions Club and the Great Lakes Bay Sports Lions Club are joining forces to offer a summer concert series at the city park. Every Wednesday starting July 14, bring your lawn chairs and enjoy the sounds of summer. Admission is free thanks to the generosity of several local sponsors.

Be sure to visit the Auburn Farmers Market - which is starting its fourth season - held at the pavilion on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m. You'll find dozens of vendors and lots of great products.

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Auburn has plenty of activities planned throughout the rest of the year. Another personal favorite of mine is the Auburn Christmas Parade of Lights, sponsored by the Auburn Williams Lions Club and the Auburn Jaycees. People decorate their cars, trucks and trailers with hundreds of lights for a parade to city park and the lighting of the city Christmas tree. Hundreds turn out every year to watch the light show, sing carols, enjoy hot chocolate and doughnuts, and experience the spirit of the season with some good old Christmas cheer.

Some exciting new developments are coming to Auburn, too, including a new park called the Range, which will be built just north of town. The Range will feature plenty of walking and hiking trails for both summer and winter. And it will have a new sledding hill, a perfect place for kids to spend a winter afternoon. The Range also will have the area's premier Frisby golf course.

Auburn has so much to offer. From our schools, to our churches, to our public library, and our parks, Auburn is brimming with groups and organizations who work together for the betterment of the community.

I'm proud of our hometown and the people who live here. And I'm excited about what the next 75 years will hold for this special place.

Lee Kilbourn, Mayor | Auburn, Michigan



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Did you know Lions Clubs International is the largest service club organization in the world? With more than 1.4 million members in 47,000 clubs in 200 countries and geographic regions around the world, Lions are serving locally and globally to help tackle some of the biggest challenges facing humanity.

Founded in Chicago in 1917 as a response to the social problems created by the World War I and rapid industrialization, Lions Clubs International began with 800 members and \$72 in the bank. Three years later, Lions Clubs had grown to more than 6,000 members in 23 states, and it became truly international with the addition of clubs in Windsor, Ontario.

The mission of Lions Clubs International is to empower volunteers to serve their communities, meet humanitarian needs, encourage peace, and promote international understanding. The organization's vision to be the global leader in community and humanitarian service.

Lions Clubs International has five focus areas: youth, the environment, vision, hunger, and diabetes. Restoring sight and preventing blindness has been a major part of the Lions' work from its inception. In fact, in 1925, Helen Keller addressed the international convention of the Lions, urging them to become "Knights of the Blind."

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From May to June of this year, 4,700 Lions clubs from 110 countries took part in the Million Meal Challenge to fight global hunger. Lions provided more than 8.3 million meals, eight times more than their goal of one million meals served.

Lions also responded to the COVID-19 pandemic with more than \$5.3 million in frontline relief grants.

Lions are proud to say that "Where there's a need, there's a Lion." That is certainly the case here in the Great Lakes Bay Region, where several Lions clubs are making a difference every day.

The Great Lakes Bay Area Sports Lions Club is one of the newest clubs in the international organization. Chartered on Jan. 17, 2020, the Great Lakes Bay Area Sports Lions is one of the fastest growing clubs in Michigan and the second largest club in its district.

When you become a Lion, you join a global network of volunteers working together as a community of good. You have the opportunity to develop new leadership skills and make meaningful connections and friendships while having fun. And

you are supported in your work by more than 300 Lions International staff members. Most importantly, you have the privilege of helping your community with your time and energy.

The Lions Clubs International web site says it best: "When caring people join together, roll up their sleeves and take action to make their community better, it's a beautiful thing—and an incredible feeling for everyone involved. That is Lions. Being a Lion is about leading by example, building relationships, and improving the world through kindness. It's 1.4 million caring men and women serving together so they can make a lasting impact and change more lives."

To learn more about the Great Lakes Bay Area Sports Lions Club, look us up on our Facebook page or reach out to me, our club president Matt Tetloff, or any member in our club.



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