

# IMPACT

## INSIDE:

The Grandfriends program at Wellspring Adult Day Services brings generations together.  
PAGE 6



FREMONT AREA  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

FALL 2023

# contents

---

HIGHLIGHTS	P.2
RECENT GRANTS	P.4
FRIENDSHIP ACROSS GENERATIONS	P.6
CONTINUING A FAMILY LEGACY	P.7
OUR NEXT 75	P.8
PRICELESS MONEY LESSONS FOR KIDS	P.9
NOTEWORTHY	P.10
FROM SHELLY	P.11
GIVING THROUGH YOUR IRA	P.12



This has been a busy and rewarding season for us at the Community Foundation. Our calendars have been filled with great events, like College and Career Night Out and our grantee workshop in late September and our Fall Donors Luncheon in October. We also observed Estate Planning Awareness Week and Community Foundation Week this fall.

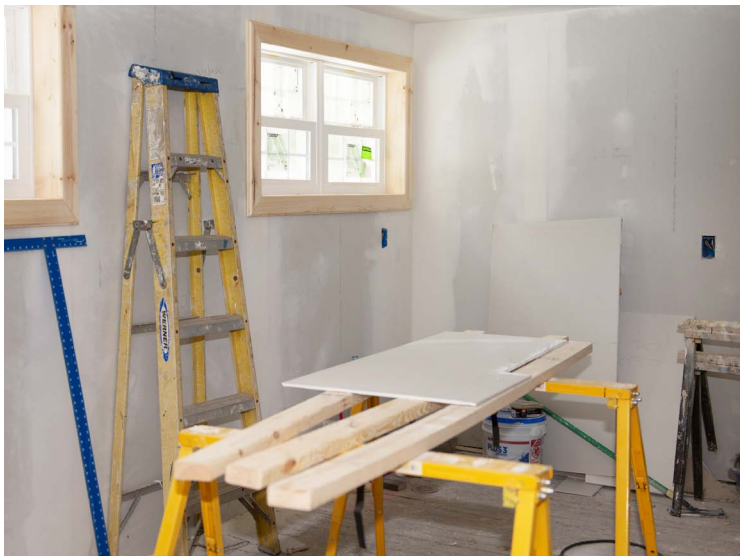
Our staff and grant committees have been busy reviewing community and Bridging Generations Fund grant applications and preparing recommendations and reports for our Board of Trustees. We also recently awarded the first round of grants from our new Housing Partnership Fund, which you can read about on the next page. We’re currently accepting applications for a second round of housing creation grants, which will be awarded in early 2024.

New on our website this fall is a blog series. Monthly blog posts will allow us to update you on our work, the field of philanthropy, and much more. It’s an opportunity for us to give you a more in-depth look at who we are and what we do. Check it out on our website at [fcommunityfoundation.org/news](https://fcommunityfoundation.org/news).

Looking ahead, we are excited about scholarship applications, upcoming grant rounds, and new opportunities to partner with you in 2024. Thank you for serving Newaygo County with us!

## FIRST HOUSING PARTNERSHIP GRANTS AWARDED

---



Our new Housing Partnership Fund awarded its first grants to three housing creation projects in Hesperia and White Cloud. The \$300,000 awarded will also enable recipients to leverage \$3 million in total investments. The grants are made possible through a partnership between the Community Foundation and Newaygo County. County commissioners approved \$1 million to help create the fund, and our trustees earmarked an additional \$500,000. The partnership is a step in addressing a significant local housing shortage. The latest data indicates a need for 300-400 additional units. A second round of housing grants will be open for applications from November 15 until January 5.

## BEA AND DOROTHY SIBLEY

---

Bea and Dorothy Sibley's father bought a Brooks Township log cabin in 1914. Their mother was a rural school teacher in Newaygo County. The family later moved to Detroit to raise their daughters.

Growing up, Bea and Dorothy developed a strong belief in education. Both became teachers for Detroit Public Schools, where Bea taught kindergarten for 36 years and Dorothy taught elementary and middle school for 38 years.

After retiring in the late 1980s, Bea and Dorothy moved to the Newaygo area. They shared a passion for botany and were instrumental in establishing the White Pine Chapter of the Michigan Botany Club. Both were committed to serving their community and dedicated members of Newaygo United Methodist Church.

Today, their generosity continues through a fund to support older adults and a scholarship for Newaygo County graduates. The funds Bea and Dorothy created at the Community Foundation will leave a legacy for generations to come.





# recent grants

*Our Board of Trustees approved \$2 million in our spring community grant round. Here are a few highlights!*

## Hesperia Community Library

\$10,000



### PURPOSE:

To support circulating materials in 2023-2024, including new publications, large print, audio books, and eBooks.

### WHY IT MATTERS:

In rural communities, libraries provide essential services like free access to books and information, meeting space, internet, educational programming, and much more. Newaygo County libraries offer ever-expanding collections of print, audio, and electronic materials to patrons of all ages. The Community Foundation is proud to provide support to multiple local libraries.

## Fremont Lions Club

\$20,000

### PURPOSE:

To support the Students in Need of Eyecare (SINE) program, which offers access to quality eyecare and glasses to local students.

### WHY IT MATTERS:

After operating the program for Fremont and Hesperia students for several years, SINE is now expanding to Newaygo and White Cloud as well. This means even more local students who have difficulty accessing eyecare will be able to get the exams, glasses, and follow-up care they need from the Michigan College of Optometry at Ferris State University.



## Junior Achievement of the Michigan Great Lakes, Inc.

\$30,400

### **PURPOSE:**

To support Junior Achievement's K-12 programming to increase financial literacy.

### **WHY IT MATTERS:**

By partnering with local volunteers, Junior Achievement delivers programming to local students that covers career readiness, entrepreneurship, finances, and more. The goal of the program is to help students become more prepared and confident to manage their own financial decisions as they grow up.



## Muskegon River Watershed Assembly

\$9,000



### **PURPOSE:**

To support a Discovering Your Watershed program for local students. This award includes \$1,000 from a donor advised fund.

### **WHY IT MATTERS:**

In Newaygo County, we live in the center of the Muskegon River watershed. However, many young people don't realize just how important this natural resource is. This program will include immersive learning activities to introduce local students to more natural experiences and the economic, cultural, social, and recreational value of the watershed.

## Sparta Area Migrant Resource Council

\$16,700

### **PURPOSE:**

To support Farmworker Appreciation Day. The award includes \$1,000 from a donor advised fund.

### **WHY IT MATTERS:**

For 16 years, Farmworker Appreciation Day has celebrated the contributions of the migrant farmworkers who are essential to local agricultural success. Food, clothing, children's shoes, and other items—particularly for kids going back to school—are provided to families. Local organizations are also on-hand to share resources and services they can offer.



# friendship across generations

## *grandfriends*

Since 2016, Wellspring Adult Day Services has provided a safe place for older adults to socialize while offering respite for their regular caregivers. Housed at Reeman Christian Reformed Church, Wellspring guests enjoy conversation, lunch, and a balance of stimulating activities and rest. Programming combats social isolation and helps guests stay active and healthy.

A new program has given Wellspring an opportunity to make an even greater impact not just on their guests, but on others in the community as well. They partnered with Fremont Christian Schools and the Community Foundation's Bridging Generations Fund to create Grandfriends.

Through Grandfriends, eighth graders from Fremont Christian School join Wellspring once a month for lunch, stories, and activities. Participants are matched based on similar interests, and the small groups play games, talk, do crafts, and teach each other. Before the monthly activities began, Wellspring staff also visited the school to teach students about the aging process, memory loss, and what to expect on their first visit.

"Our guests' social circles continue to grow smaller as they age," said Allie Maat, Wellspring's program director. "This program gives them the opportunity to expand their circle and make new friends and new memories. It gives our guests

something joyful to look forward to, and it is so great to see the compassion the youth have developed for our guests."

Staff has watched friendships, empathy, and understanding grow across the generations. They write letters, share stories, and have even attended school functions together.

"We have seen the perception of each generation change, having more acceptance and empathy as well as an increase in understanding and respect," said Allie. "The most rewarding part of the program has been to witness the building of these intergenerational relationships. As they gain a greater understanding of the different generations, we feel this builds a stronger community."







Members of the Leckrone family

# continuing a family legacy

## *the leckrone family*

Dorsey and Sally Leckrone were farmers, teachers, and parents of eight. They made sure there were always magazines, books, and other reading material available at home and instilled a strong belief in the importance of education in their children.

Their son Donald Leckrone noted that education was something of a family calling. At least four of his father's siblings were teachers, as were several of Donald's siblings. From teaching and seminary to nursing, philanthropy, and entrepreneurship, the Leckrone siblings "did not lack for get up and go," said Donald. "Keeping the 85 billion neurons in your cranium active is healthy. Your mind needs stimulation—your spirit as well—and that gray matter has to be exercised."

The Leckrone family has also had connections to the Community Foundation since its earliest years. Donald's younger siblings received scholarships to attend Interlochen Center for the Arts. Donald also received financial help to attend college and seminary, and his first job in 1955 was to run the projector on Wednesdays for a Bessie Slutterback-inspired program at the Community Foundation.

"All eight of us kids benefitted from the Community Foundation in one way or another," said Donald.

Those connections remained over the decades as Donald began to donate to the Community Foundation whenever he was able. Later, a story about a scholarship created in

memory of his classmate Richard Crandell sparked a new idea. "The thought occurred to me that we could do the same to memorialize our parents," he said.

Together, the Leckrone family created the Dorsey and Sally Leckrone Family Scholarship to support local graduates, particularly from Fremont Public Schools where Dorsey and Sally taught. The scholarship was awarded for the first time this spring, with several family members making the trip back to Newaygo County for the ceremony.

"We want to help a student who may not have the means otherwise to further their education," said Donald. "We're paying it forward."



## OUR NEXT 75

### Joan and Cathy Obits

The Eagle Fund grew out of an idea Cathy Obits first mentioned on an evening walk with her mother, Joan Obits. Joan moved to the area in 1954, and Cathy has lived here her whole life outside of her military service. They love the people, the open country, and the light traffic, and they both believe strongly in giving back. Creating a fund together was a way to help meet needs and care for their community.

“It’s not that we have much to give,” Joan explained. “We just give little by little, and the fund keeps growing.”

Because their fund was created near both of their birthdays, “It was like our birthday present,” said Joan. “It makes me happy. I feel like we’re giving to humanity.”

#### *Why is giving important to you?*

**Cathy:** It’s fun to give and to know that you’re helping. You may not even know the people who benefit, but you know you’re helping. If we can give someone a leg up or help them have a life that’s a little better than they had before, we want to do that.

**Joan:** It makes me happy. And if I can make someone else happy, or ease their life a little, I want to. I like happy, for myself and for others.

#### *Why give through the Community Foundation?*

**Cathy:** It was a good way for our gift to go on in perpetuity.

**Joan:** It was a good place to start. It’s investing in humanity. I’m leaving a little sunshine for someone down the road.

To join Our Next 75, we ask three simple things:

#### **1. Give today**

*Establish a named fund or make an annual gift of \$250 or more to an endowed fund at the Community Foundation.*

#### **2. Give tomorrow**

*Include the Community Foundation in your estate plan.*

#### **3. Share your story**

*Share with us why you chose to give back to the community.*

*To find out more about Our Next 75, contact a member of our philanthropic services team at 231.924.5350.*





# pro - advice

---

**CASIE EITNIEAR**  
*Financial advisor*

## PRICELESS MONEY LESSONS FOR KIDS

Did you know that kids who are more financially savvy are more prepared for life on their own? Our day-to-day lives are full of teachable moments that we can and should share with our children. Talking about money doesn't need to seem like a hard, scary topic.

In our house we have always had open dialogues with our daughters regarding money without making it seem like a sit down "lesson." It is as easy as having conversations while grocery shopping or browsing through Target. Get your kids involved by asking simple questions like how much does an item cost. Is it something we really *need* or something we *want*? You can also have conversations about the need to save up for something and even discuss ways to earn money. Allow them to have some say in how they spend money. For example, let them choose between two smaller pieces of candy or buy one bigger one and experience the consequences of their choices.

Now, as a mom of two teenagers, there are a lot of bigger financial conversations being had.

It's so important kids learn about and develop a healthy relationship with money before they are handed a credit card for the first time. You can help set them up for success by teaching some essential skills. For example, teach them how to use an ATM card, how to write a check (or make a payment online), how to deposit money, and how to balance their account. Share stories about how you financed your first car or student loans and explain in concrete terms how the interest rate affected the overall purchase price.

Through a purposeful approach, these important day-to-day interactions will help shape the way kids approach their finances as they grow. In giving your child the gift of financial literacy, you're helping set them up for a brighter future.

*Casie Eitnietar is a financial advisor at Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. and Karsten Financial Group. Casie is also a member of the Community Foundation's Professional Advisors Board.*

# noteworthy

## FORMER AND CURRENT TRUSTEES GATHER

We held our first Emeritus and Board Dinner in August. Following conversation and Community Foundation trivia, the group took part in a discussion on trust-based philanthropy, grants that have made a lasting impact in our community, and civility. We're grateful for the knowledge and expertise they bring to help us guide our work!



## ILYASAH SHABAZZ VISITS IDLEWILD

We partnered with Lake County Community Foundation, Mid-Michigan Idlewilders, and Pathfinder Community Library to welcome award-winning author, speaker, and educator Dr. Ilyasah Shabazz to Lake County on August 24 and 25. Ilyasah—the daughter of Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz—spoke to community members in an evening event and then to local young people the next day. She talked about her memoir, *Growing Up X*, but also about the legacies of her parents, living with character, and using our voices to live a more fulfilling life.



## GRANTEE WORKSHOP

This fall, we hosted more than 100 representatives from nonprofit organizations across the region for a grantee workshop. The workshop covered our updated strategic plan and refreshed goals, changes to our online grant application, and revised grantmaking guidelines. Organizations also had the chance to attend breakout sessions specific to the type of grant they are applying for. It was a wonderful opportunity for nonprofits across Newaygo, Lake, Mecosta, and Osceola counties to come together!





# recently

---

SHELLY KASPRZYCKI  
President and CEO



*We recently launched a new monthly blog on our website. Shelly's November blog post is reprinted below. We hope you'll visit [facommunityfoundation.org/news](https://facommunityfoundation.org/news) each month to read more!*

Fremont Area Community Foundation, like other nonprofit organizations, welcomes year-end giving. It is estimated that 30 percent of charitable giving is done between November 1 and December 31. Gifts to the Community Foundation benefit so many; your donation becomes part of a larger invested pool of funds that grows significantly over time.

Each year, the Community Foundation gives more than \$9 million in grants and scholarships. Agencies depend on our support to carry out their work in poverty reduction, to help libraries purchase books, to fund new homes through our housing partnership, to support the sustainability of local arts and culture institutions, and to ensure our young people are able to attend training or higher education.

Most importantly, the Community Foundation belongs to the community. Your gift means that we can meet the charitable intent of donors and adapt to the needs of the community as they change.

What makes giving to the Community Foundation so popular is the flexibility and the ability to give to the causes you care most about. Our Community Foundation remains the second largest per capita in the country, and that is thanks to you. My husband and I are proud to be monthly donors to the Community Foundation, and I hope you'll consider the Community Foundation one of your best options for giving too. Contact us today to find out how to give, whether through cash, securities, IRA, life insurance, donor advised funds, or even real estate.



FREMONT AREA  
**COMMUNITY**  
FOUNDATION

4424 W 48th Street, Fremont, Michigan 49412  
ph. 231.924.5350  
fcommunityfoundation.org

NONPROFIT  
US POSTAGE PAID

## IMPACT

The biannual newsletter of Fremont Area Community Foundation

**CFNS**  
ACCREDITED  
FOUNDATION



### GIVING THROUGH YOUR IRA

Don and Ann Bont are retired educators who believe in getting involved in their community. They are also longtime partners of the Community Foundation. Making a qualified charitable distribution from their IRA is one way they've given back.

Giving through an IRA is a simple way to support your community. People aged 70 ½ or older can transfer up to \$100,000 from their IRA as a qualified charitable distribution and avoid including the distribution in their income. The gift also qualifies for all or part of a required minimum distribution and will help others in Newaygo County have a brighter future for years to come.

Interested in learning more? Contact our philanthropic services team at 231.924.5350.