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Newwaygo County Career Tech Center students, joined by educators, state legislators and young children from the Building Bridges Preschool program, celebrated on Monday morning after hear-

ing the announcement of the establishment of the Newwaygo County Promise Zone and the prospect of guaranteed higher education scholarships for graduates of Newwaygo County high schools.

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FAMILY DOLLAR

SMART WAYS TO SAVE!

See Insert For Details

Newwaygo County students get their own Promise

By R.C. Wheeler Sr.
First thing Monday morning, a crowd of students, educators, community leaders and others celebrated the start of something that is expected to dramatically improve the higher education outlook for Newwaygo County students.

Thanks to several years of advance work and recent legislation sponsored by state Senator Geoff Hansen, signed in February by Gov. Rick Snyder, Newwaygo County became Michigan's newest Promise Zone.

"We will now have the ability assure that all Newwaygo County students have a tuition-free path to at least an associate's degree," predicted Dr. Lori Tubbergen Clark, Superintendent of the Newwaygo County Regional Educational Service Agency, which will administer the new Promise Zone.

The superintendent, Sen. Hansen, state Rep. Jon Bumstead and Promise Zone expert Chuck Wilbur of Public Policy Associates announced the formation of the Newwaygo County Promise Zone to the students at the Newwaygo County Career Tech Center and a delegation of younger students from NCRESA's Building Bridges Preschool program. "Our Promise Zone," said Superintendent Clark, "will change the dynamic for some students living in poverty when 'if' they are going to college to 'where' they are going to college, a powerful motivator."

Establishment of Newwaygo County Promise Zone could mean guaranteed scholarships for county's high school graduates

Born in Kalamazoo

The Newwaygo County Promise Zone will be the latest outgrowth of the ground-breaking Kalamazoo Promise that was started and supported by anonymous donors. Announced in the fall of 2005, the promise offered college scholarships to all Kalamazoo Public Schools graduates.

Funding from Murphy Oil led to the creation of the El Dorado Promise in Arkansas. Other promises followed.

Michigan Gov. Jennifer Granholm called for the establishment of Promise Zones in economically distressed cities. In January of 2009, state legislation (sponsored by Sen. Gerald VanWoerkom) authorized the creation of as many as 10 Promise Zones in Michigan. The zones were designated on a first-come, first-served basis. Newwaygo County's application was the 11th.

Second chance

When the NCRESA superintendent

learned that the Jackson Promise Zone was to be discontinued, she inquired with the Michigan Department of

Treasury about Newwaygo County getting the designation as the 10th promise zone. Treasury officials told her that the law did not allow for such a change.

Sen. Geoff Hansen went to work on a legislative solution, gathering support from several other senators. Rep. Jon Bumstead supported the legislation in the state House. Governor Rick Snyder signed Public Acts 9 and 10 in February. The new laws cleared the way for Newwaygo County to be designated as a state Promise Zone.

Clark said that the Newwaygo County Promise Zone will start with a fund-raising effort as local leaders work to raise money to fund the first scholarships. After a couple of years of operation, the promise zone will qualify to begin taking advantage of a tax increment financing mechanism to capture half of the growth in the state education

tax, collected through property taxes. Instead of going to the state, the captured money will be used to supplement the local fundraising efforts and broaden the reach of the scholarship program.

Authority

Each Michigan Promise Zone is governed by an 11-member Promise Zone Authority. No more than three members of the authority may be government officials. In Newwaygo County, nine of the authority members will be appointed by NCRESA, with the leaders of the state House and Senate appointing the other two members.

The Promise Zone authority will be charged with creating a development plan, determining what the promise will be, and how it will be funded. The Promise Zone Authority must decide when a Promise program will begin, and whether it will be for a two-year degree (the legal minimum), a four-year degree or something in between. The authority will also decide if the Promise will extend to any categories of students not mandated by the law.

In the Baldwin Promise Zone, grad-

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"You can do this in Newwaygo County. You can definitely do this."

Chuck Wilbur
Senior Policy Consultant
Public Policy Associates

Newwaygo

Home and Garden Show coming Saturday

By Ken DeLaat
Each year, the River Country Chamber of Commerce Home and Garden Show helps area residents welcome in spring by bringing the concept of one stop shopping to homeowners looking for ways to spruce up their dwellings.

The annual event will be this Saturday, April 16 at Newwaygo Middle School from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will feature an appealing collection of vendors with information, giveaways and demonstrations, all designed to offer some great ideas for making the homestead a little homier.

United Way of the Lakeshore will serve breakfast from 8 to 10 a.m. with pancakes, sausage, juice and coffee on the menu. Donations for the breakfast will support the funding United Way provides to local non-profit agencies.

Identity theft is a big topic these days and as part of this year's Home and Garden show, an onsite shredder will be available for anyone wishing to put to rest any paper items no longer needed. There is no need to remove staples or paperclips and boxes, bags and folders can all be consumed by the machine for

free from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. While there will be some familiar faces at the show, many new vendors will be there for the first time.

"The River Country Chamber is committed to enhancing community awareness of the goods and services available locally," said chamber Executive Director Colleen Lynema. "It's great that small local businesses have a venue to showcase the diverse services that can be accessed without traveling to a larger city."

"It helps us all when residents choose

to shop and dine locally."

Admission to the Home and Garden Show is free thanks in part to show sponsors Kohley's Superior Water and Propane, Mellema Nursery and Patriot Realty.

Newwaygo Middle School is at 850 76th St in Newwaygo.

For more information, call the River Country Chamber of Commerce at 652-3068. Information is also available online at www.rivercountrychamber.com.

Fremont

Photographers to share new Michigan images



Photographers Brad and Todd Reed will present their new book on April 28 at the Fremont Area District Library.

Live @ the Library, a series of events including author visits and writing workshops, will welcome photographers Todd and Brad Reed to the Fremont Area District Library to present their new book on Thursday, April 28 at 7 p.m. at the Fremont Area District Library.

The Reeds were originally scheduled to present in March, but due to inclement weather, they have been rescheduled to speak on Thursday, April 28 at 7 p.m.

Todd and Brad Reed are a father-son outdoor photography team based in Ludington. Todd Reed has won dozens of industry awards for his photos portraying Michigan and is considered one of the leading photographers in the U.S. Son Brad Reed followed his heart and his father's footsteps into photography and has quickly become a national leader in the field. They will present their new book, "Todd and Brad Reed's Michigan: Wednesdays in the Mitten." The

book showcases the beauty of Michigan's upper and lower peninsulas.

An additional Live @ the Library event is coming in May. Terry Wooten, a poet and the creator of Michigan Stone Circle poetry recitation, will read from his Michigan Notable Book titled "The Stone Circle Poems" on Thursday, May 5 at 7 p.m.

More information is available online at the Library's website: www.fremontlibrary.net/adults/live-the-library.



Croton

Author to present "Journey of the Letters"

"A Thousand Letters Home" author Teresa Irish, will present the inspirational and life-affirming story of "The Journey of the Letters" on Wednesday, April 27 at 2 p.m. at the Croton Township Library.

Following the 2006 death of her father, Aarol W. "Bud" Irish of Saginaw, Teresa Irish



opened the Army trunk that had been in the family home for her entire life. There, nestled in row after row, were her father's nearly 1,000 letters from world War II. Visited only by him over the course of six decades, the letters were postmarked from Nov. 1942 to Dec. 1945. The fragile and yellowed pages were written back in Hemlock, and to the sweetheart who would later

become his wife.

Born in Saginaw, Teresa Irish is a 1984 graduate of Michigan State University. She has worked in higher education, the staffing industry, and most recently as a vice-president for a national home health and hospice company.

Five-and-a-half years after finding her father's letters, Teresa Irish brought "A Thousand Letters Home" to print as the book's author, publisher and distributor. She has been featured at nearly 200 venues and has appeared on ABC News, National Public Radio, Veterans' Radio, Frontlines of Freedom, The

National Defense, and Military Author Radio.

Irish retired in April, 2012 to devote her time to sharing the journey of the letters and the accompanying message of citizenship in today's world. She lives Northville and is married to Col. Brad Foster of the United States Army Reserve.

The April 27 program in Croton is supported by funding from the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Newaygo County Promise

Continued from page 1

uates of Baldwin High School are promised scholarships of as much as \$5,000 per year for four years at any university, college or community college in Michigan. Baldwin will be the first Promise Zone to issue scholarships. Until now, it was the state's only rural Promise Zone.

The state's other Promise Zones are in Battle Creek, Benton Harbor, Detroit, Hazel Park, Lansing, Muskegon County, Pontiac and Saginaw.

How to make it work

In an informational meeting after the announcement on Monday morning, Senior Policy Consultant Chuck Wilbur of Public Policy Associates said that, while the law allows the creation of the Promise Zone, it is up to the community to make it happen.

"Every community has had to find its own way to do this," said Wilbur, who helped write the 2009 legislation when he worked as a policy advisor in Gov. Granholm's office.

Wilbur noted that all nine of the other operating Promise Zones are issuing scholarships.

Wilbur said that the Promise Zones that have been the most successful have been those that began with broad support from community leaders.

"Make the table as big as it needs to be," Wilbur said. "You need that support."

Wilbur noted that the state's other Promise Zones started as Michigan's property tax revenues were declining with the Great Recession, meaning that the tax increment financing mechanism did little or nothing to help fund scholarships. Now, with those property

values starting to rise again, it is a good time for the Newaygo County Promise Zone to get started.

"This Promise Zone is being formed at exactly the right time to take advantage of that growth in tax revenue," Wilbur said. "You might be the new arrival in class," he added, "but I think you'll move to the head of the class before very long."

Wilbur is scheduled to return to Newaygo County later this month to conduct another "community conversation" session for the general public on April 28. Superintendent Clark said

that details about that session will be released later.

Chuck Wilbur noted that each of the nine other Promise Zones in Michigan have fulfilled their scholarship promises to their students.

"You can do this in Newaygo County," Wilbur said. "You can definitely do this."

Church Yard Sale

Holton United Methodist Church
9530 Holton Duck Lake Road

April 21-23, 2016

Thursday and Friday 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.

Saturday 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Many items to choose from including:
Dishes, Furniture, Bicycles, Antiques, Clothing

GREAT PRICES!

Accepting items April 18, 19, & 20, 2016

Contact: Shirley Schnick, 924-0446
or Erba Younts 821-2132



Vera Wilsie Elementary
140 Main Street
Newaygo, MI 49337
(231) 652-6371
**Kindergarten
Registration Form**

We are looking for children who will be at least five years of age on September 1, 2016. If you have a child who will be starting school in the fall, please fill out the form below and return it to our school.

Child's Name: _____
 Date of Birth: _____
 City and State of Birth: _____
 Mother's Name: _____
 Father's Name: _____
 Address where you reside: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 House Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____
 Preschool Attended: _____

You must provide the following items; you may send them in ahead of time, or bring to round-up with you:
 1. Birth Certificate
 2. Proof of residency (utility bill, rental agreement, notarized statement if you share a home)
 3. Shot Records

**Parent Night will be
Tuesday, April 19th 5:30 - 6:30 pm
Please RSVP for dinner**

**Kindergarten Round-Up dates
Monday, April 25th and
Monday, May 2nd
Call 231-652-6371 for an
appointment time**

Births

WOLFFIS - Elizabeth and Jonathan, of Fremont, a boy, Owen Blake Wolffis on March 25 at Mercy Health Hackley Campus in Muskegon. Grandparents are Ken and Jane Wolffis of Fremont and Brian and Barbara Sikkenga of Grand Haven.

WARNER - Kasey and Nicholas, of Twin Lake, a girl, Kinsley Nicole Warner on April 2 at Spectrum Gerber.

SOVINSKI - Erika and Jason, of Newaygo, a girl, Lakelyn Dee Sovinski on April 5 at Spectrum Gerber.

HANDY - Jessie and Daniel Jr., of New Era, a boy, Finnian Daniel Handy on April 7 at Spectrum Gerber.

First Congregational Church of Fremont and Friends present:

VAUDEVILLE COMEDY SHOW 2016

Great local talent present a great variety show with lots of comedy and great music. Also includes some super juggling and acrobatics.

Saturday, April 16, 7:30pm

DOGWOOD CENTER for the Performing Arts

The Show is FREE to all but a free will offering will be appreciated.

Free cookies, cider, and coffee also served

For more info, call at 924-4710

ENTRY DEADLINE

NCCA-Artsplace Statewide Photography Competition Application Deadline is April 16, 2:00 p.m.

The 2016 Juror is Photographer Stacy Niedzwiecki. Competition is open to any Michigan resident 18 and older, open subject, full details and an application can be found online at www.NCCA-Artsplace.org or stop in to pick one up at NCCA-Artsplace, 13 E. Main Street, downtown Fremont.

EXHIBITION UPDATE

Nature's Beauty: The Art of Woodturning April 23 • 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Free Public Reception and Demonstration

Meet talented Michigan woodturners and enjoy a live woodturning demonstration. On exhibit in the Ray & Phyllis Jansma Gallery at NCCA-Artsplace through April 30.

THE NEWAYGO COUNTY
Artsplace
COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

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ncca-artsplace.org
Phone: 231.924.4022

