Kent County work to focus on aid for grandparent-headed families

There’s a knock on the door.

"Sometimes it happens in the middle of the night with very little warning," says Linda Dannison, chairperson of family and consumer sciences and developer of a curriculum for grandparent support groups. "It’s a scenario that is being played out in rapidly increasing numbers as more and more grandparents are being forced to parent their grandchildren.

Researchers at WMU are working to develop ways to ease that transition back to full-time parenthood.

The trend has raised a host of troubling problems for both grandparents and grandchildren alike. But a new program being launched in Kent County is providing help to both urban and rural county residents being impacted by it.

The pilot program is coordinated by the Department of Family and Consumer Sciences and the Department of Teaching, Learning and Leadership with the help of $72,000 in grants from the Dyer-Ives Foundation and the Frey Foundation, which are both located in Kent County. The program will offer services at a urban Kent County Head Start site and a rural preschool site.

The new program is taking a holistic approach to the problems and will involve custodial grandparents, grandchildren and early childhood educators in a comprehensive service delivery model that emphasizes resource development. A wide range of important issues will be tackled, including managing personal well-being and finances, school and community relationships, parenting skills and legal concerns.

"Economics is a big issue," Dannison says. "Custodial grandparents’ incomes may not be suitable for raising grandchildren. They may find that they’re isolated, that they’re the only one in their group that has a toddler or a teen-ager that they’re parenting. They may find that there are political issues going on in the family."

"There are issues on the job, it may be harder to provide health care for children or get time off for health care. Basically, we just don’t support custodial grandparents the way we support first-time parents."

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OUT FOR BLOOD—With the WMU/CMU rivalry foremost in everyone’s mind, President Floyd made his sentiments clear. He’s out for blood—but in the very best way.

Floyd checked in at the Read Fieldhouse Red Cross blood drive site to donate blood under the watchful eye of Nancy Lange, a member of the Red Cross collections staff. The drive, the annual “Blood Challenge,” pits WMU’s campus community against its counterpart in Mount Pleasant in a race to donate the most blood. The WMU drive continues through tomorrow, with donation sites set up at Miller Auditorium from 10 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. today and at Read tomorrow from 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. (Photo by Neil Rankin)

Student patrols to help keep post-game peace in Kalamazoo neighborhoods

About 65 WMU students are expected to serve as additional “eyes and ears” for Kalamazoo police to help maintain order after the football game with Central Michigan University this Saturday at Waldo Stadium.

The student volunteers are the major component of Peace’N It Together, an initiative of the Division of Student Affairs that has successfully helped reduce excessive partying in neighborhoods around campuses in years when the WMU/CMU game is played in Kalamazoo.

"As students, we care about the community we live in and want to help out," says Laura Knaffl, a senior from Charlotte who is student coordinator for the program. "The Peace’N It Together program is a way for us to play a proactive role. This year’s theme, 'Reputation and Pride,' is especially fitting because we haven’t had any major problems with rowdiness since we began our peace patrols."

Bonnie L. Hanson, Off-Campus Life Office, is the Peace’N It Together Committee chairperson. She says the reason for implementing the patrols dates back to 1977 when a student party became unruly. In subsequent years, administrators and students worked with local officials and landlords to promote orderly fall celebrations.

Patrol volunteers attend training sessions facilitated by the Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety and WMU staff members. They use two-way radios to notify city police of possible problems, but do not attempt to intervene in any situations themselves.

This year, two staff members from the Kalamazoo Public Schools are joining the patrol effort. The volunteers will be on duty in force between 9:30 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. today and at Read tomorrow from 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. (Photo by Neil Rankin)

Area health care professionals can collaborate on research with faculty, graduate students in new OT effort

A new program coordinated by the Department of Occupational Therapy will make it easier for West Michigan OT and allied health clinicians to do collaborative research with University faculty.

Called Clinical Research Implementation in Kalamazoo, or CLIK for short, the new program started this summer and already has three projects either up and running or in the planning stages, says Stanley Paul, occupational therapy and CLIK program coordinator.

One project now underway is being conducted in cooperation with WMU’s Center for Disability Services. It is testing ways to help people with developmental disabilities become better integrated into the community.

Center clients, working in day activity groups, are learning skills that will help them when going to a restaurant, laundry, shopping or other destination in the community. Results will be presented in November at the national conference of the American Occupational Therapy Association in Reno, Nev.

A second project will test the effectiveness of a new eating utensil for people with Parkinson’s disease-developed by Partner’s in Design Inc. of Harbor Springs. Unlike a fork or spoon, the “bilateral” eating utensil is held with both hands. University graduate students will conduct research on how well it works.

A third project will be undertaken in cooperation with the Ionia County Intermediate School District and test the effectiveness of sensory integration therapy on prekindergarten and kindergarten children with developmental disabilities. Results will be presented in November at the national conference of the American Occupational Therapy Association in Reno, Nev.

"For just starting in the summer, it’s gotten a pretty good response," Paul says. "We wanted to do something for the clinician. A lot of them take our students in their practice, so we wanted to give something back in return."

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Two
September 30, 1999
Western News

Event lets campus community members celebrate Homecoming "on the run"

The field is primed for campus runners who will be among the first to kick off the 1999-2000 Global Business Lecture Series in the Hawsworth College of Business with a talk on campus Tuesday, Oct. 2.

Jack McWhorter, regional vice president of Lincoln Financial Group's Asia-Pacific Insurance in Washington, D.C., will speak on "China and the Future of the Insurance Industry in Asia." This public lecture is free and open to the public.

The program is sponsored by the College of Business.

Bernhard Center. The 1K events will begin at 9 a.m. and the 5K run will begin at 9:30 a.m.

Registration is $10 for adults and $5 for students. Three-person student teams can register for $10. Adult teams are $20 and families can register for $15. A $5 late registration fee will be charged for entries received after Oct. 10.

Top finishers in a variety of categories will receive door prizes. All runners will receive long-sleeve T-shirts, admission to a pre-game tailgate on Hyman Field and discounts on game tickets. A variety of door prizes also have been donated by local businesses for participants.

For more information or to register, call the Office of University Relations at 7-4802.

Around the campus

Student sociology group sponsors tattoo seminar

Tattoos will be the focus of a day-long seminar Oct. 6, as part of the WMU Center for Comparative Research on Country and Culture's annual conference.

Dengyin Tang, deputy director of the Institute of Geography at the Chinese Academy of Sciences in Beijing, and Jie Xie, deputy director of the Institute of Geography's Yucheng Comprehensive Experimental Station at the University of Washington as part of its Visiting Scholars and Artists Program, will make three presentations in all 2734 Wood Hall.

Cost of attending the seminar is $5.

Chinese agriculture, water resource experts to visit campus

Two leading authorities on China's agricultural and water resource research will speak on campus Wednesday and Friday.

The pair will make three presentations in all 2734 Wood Hall. Their talks are free and open to the public.

At noon on Friday, Oct. 8, Xie will join Tang for a talk that will focus on the water resource changes in China and the impact of those changes on agricultural productivity in the lower reaches of the Yellow River. That talk will describe the serious hydrological, economic and environmental impact of depleted water levels in the lower reaches of that river.

Also on Friday, at 4 p.m., Xie will give an overview of the "Agriculture and Water, Remote Sensing and Modeling of the Plant-atmosphere-Soil System." That facility is a leading hydrologic research station and includes The Good Design Award from the International Council of Societies.

"Both of these visitors are well-known scholars and authority figures in China's agricultural ecosystem and water resources management areas," says Chasnge He, who is coordinating their visit.

Designer is Visiting Artist

A renowned Detroit area designer will visit the campus Tuesday and Wednesday, Oct. 12-13, as part of the WMU Center for Art and Artists Program.

Ruth Adler Schnee, whose work represents a blend of interest in art and cultural studies, will deliver a public talk on "What Modern Was..." at 5:15 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 12, in Oak Hall. Schnee also will deliver campus talks the following day on "Design Around Us" at 10 a.m. and "From Design to Fabrication" at 10 a.m. in 1008 Trimp.

Schnee's work includes textile collections, interior planning and design of a wide variety of commercial and residential spaces, and teaching at several universities. Her design and text "The Body and Art" is the first academic conference sponsored by the WMU's undergraduate sociology organization.

The forum also will include an art exhibition of the artists' work and vendor displays.

"The Tattoo Forum: History, Culture, Art" is the first academic conference sponsored by the WMU's undergraduate sociology organization.

School violence is topic of talk by FBI expert Oct. 5

From Littleton, Colo., to Kalama, Wash., there is an increasing concern of violence to students, parents, teachers, administrators and the general public.

FBI agent Roy Johnson will address the topic in a free public appearance at noon Oct. 5, in 1035-45 Fetzer Center. The program is sponsored by the College of Education Alumni Society.

Johnson has worked for the FBI since 1983, serving in Michigan, Indiana and Virginia. He is responsible for a variety of cases and consult on school violence. More information about his presentation on campus is available from Anthony Varasath, College of Education, at 7-2960.

Campus training set Fall orientation sessions have been set for prospective members of Safe on Campus. Its mission is to provide education for WMU's lesbian, gay and bisexual students.

Members agree to make their offices a safe and comfortable place for all students and faculty. They also are trained to help students identify campus resources and to assist them in reporting incidents of harassment or discrimination.

Safe on Campus will be held Thursday, Oct. 7, at 5 p.m. in 208 Bernhard Center. Those attending the seminar includes faculty and staff members and a few students have joined the group.

To become a member, persons must complete one two-hour orientation session. This fall's sessions will take place in the Bernhard Center at 5:30 p.m. today; Thursday, Oct. 7; 5 p.m.; Friday, Nov. 12; and noon Wednesday, Nov. 18.

For more information or to register for an orientation session, contact Matthew C. Kline, coordinator for lesbian, gay and bisexual issues, at 7-2123 or <kline@groupwise.wmich.edu>.

Prominent journalist is Hispanic Heritage guest

Juan Gonzalez, a columnist for the New York Daily News, is the keynote speaker for the University of Michigan's Visiting Hispanic Heritage Month, which begins Sept. 15 and will continue Oct. 14.

An introduction is planned to recognize Hispanic culture and contributions to American society.

Gonzalez, who is known for his hard-hitting columns on topics such as the labor movement, race relations and inner-city problems, will speak on "Minorities and the Media" in a free public lecture at 10:30 a.m. to noon Friday, Oct. 8, in 208 Bernhard Center. A journalist for more than 20 years, Gonzalez began his career as a reporter in starring roles in the history of Latino in Panama. He is the author of two books, "Roll Down Your Window: Stories from a Puerto Rican in the U.S. Empire: The History of Latinos in America," his articles have appeared in numerous national and Latino publications.

Gonzalez, a native of Puerto Rico, is a founding member of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and of the Coalition of African-American Hispanic Journalists. He also helped found the Young Lords, a militant civil rights organization of the 1960s, and the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights in the 1970s.

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For more information or advertising opportunities, contact the Publications Office, 101 Bernhard Center.

www.wmich.edu/wmulinews
In his second week as a professor, James Ferreira typically can be found at WMU's Communications Resource Center, which is involved in extreme Southwest Michigan. He replaces Tanya Ryskind, who resigned as center director. As center director, Seawood is responsible for supervising WMU's extended learning activities such as information management and student affairs, an instructional video and film laboratory, an instructional television studio and control room, and office space and support services.
Granparents

Children will also be a big part of the program’s focus, Dannison says.

Program researchers have identified five themes common in grandparental children’s lives: grief and loss, guilt, fear, embarrassment and anger. Four-year-old children will participate in specifically designed interactions focusing on the identified themes. Additionally, acculturating childhood personnel will participate in professional training to work more effectively with grandparent-headed families.

Evidence of the sharp rise in the number of custodial grandparents is well documented. Since 1990, the number of children living in grandparent-headed households with no biological parental present has increased 66 percent, according to the Children’s Defense Fund. The trend affects more than two million children and 10 million adults.

The rise in grandparent-headed families is fueled by several issues, among them the “four Ds”—drugs, divorce, separation and death. Others include the high rates of adolescent pregnancy and incarceration, mental illness and an increase in families affected by AIDS.

Dannison has been involved in the issue of custodial grandparents for several years and designed a curriculum for grandparent support groups that now is in its fourth printing. The guide is available to support groups nationwide.

Calendar
The master calendar maintained by the Office of University Relations in Western News is available through WMU’s home page on the World Wide Web. Select WMU News and then look for Calendar of Events. You can also link directly to the calendar at www.wmich.edu/wmu/news/.

Thursday, Sept. 30
Exhibition (through Oct. 31), TATTOO: Art and Practice, Ann Arbor photographer Diane Mansfield, Space Gallery, weekdays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sat., Oct. 2, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Exhibition (through Oct. 1), Photography Group Show, Craig LaCourt and Kirsten Field, Rotunda Gallery, East Hall; reception, Friday, Oct. 1, 5-8 p.m.
Salsburg Hispanic Heritage Month talk, “Disadvantaged Small Businesses in Michigan,” Conrad Valle, an official with the Small Business Administration in Detroit, 211 Bernhard Center, 6:30 p.m.
Friday, Oct. 1
Department of Biological Sciences seminar, “Maturity and Plasticity in the Olfactory System,” Peter C. Bruns, Department of Psychology, University of Virginia, 1718 Wood Hall, 3:30 p.m.
Mathematics and statistics colloquium, “Magic Squares,” Walter W. Turner, emeritus in mathematics, Alavi Commons Room, sixth floor of Everett Tower, 4:10 p.m. (refreshments served at 3:45 p.m.)
*Hockey, Bronze & Gold game, Lawson Ice Arena, 7 p.m.
Saturday, Oct. 2
The Tattoo Forum, sponsored by The ASO/Ciation, Undergraduate Sociology Organization, Knauz Hall, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Southwest Fest
*Football vs. Central Michigan, Waldo Stadium, 6 p.m.
Sunday, Oct. 3
*CD Release Concert, Western Jazz Quartet with Timothy Noble, Dalton Center Recital Hall, 3 p.m.
*Faculty recital, Karen Winklund, soprano, Dalton Center Recital Hall, 8 p.m.
Monday, Oct. 4
Faculty recital, Center for Teaching and Learning, “ Civility in the Classroom,” WMU’s Student Code,” Diane Swartz, dean of students, and David Parrott, associate dean of students, Clocktower Conference Room, University Computing Center, noon-1:30 p.m.
Art exhibition (through Oct. 8), Watercolor Group Exhibition, Rotunda and South Galleries; reception, Friday, Oct. 8, 5-7 p.m.
Faculty recital, pianist Lori Sims, Dalton Center Recital Hall, 8 p.m.
Wednesday, Oct. 6
Ten Years After the Wall lecture series, “Transforming Education for New Democratic Societies,” Elena B. Lisovskaya, teaching, learning and leadership, Lee Honors College Lounge, 7:30 p.m.
*Volleyball vs. Northern Illinois, University Arena, 7 p.m.
*Guest artist recital, St. Petersburg (Russia) Conservatory Faculty Ensemble, Dalton Center Recital Hall, 8 p.m.
Thursday, Oct. 7
Board of Trustees meeting, Connable Board Room, Bernhard Center, 9:30 a.m.
Retirement reception for Robert Kotecki, teaching, learning and leadership, the Orchards, 3-5 p.m.
Faculty Senate meeting, Fetzer Center, 5 p.m.