

AN UPDATE FROM YOUR
COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
for **MASON COUNTY**



your
home



your community **foundation**

Photos courtesy of Stephanie Reed, Splash Pad Committee Chair

With the uncertainty caused by the pandemic, you brought hope and a shared sense of community. Through all of our challenges this past year, we were encouraged by the collaboration and generosity throughout Mason County. Whether it was the COVID-19 Relief Fund, recovery housing and programming, children's savings accounts, neighborhood revitalization, family support, web-based mental health programs, classroom supports, Match Day raising over \$450,000 for area nonprofits, or \$148,000 in scholarships, you make a difference.

As we continue toward recovery and a better tomorrow, we look forward to our continued partnership.

Like us on Facebook, facebook.com/cfmasoncounty, to stay current on what is happening!

Together we can do so much. Thank you for loving this special place we get to call home. For Good. For Ever.



Andrea Large
Executive Director

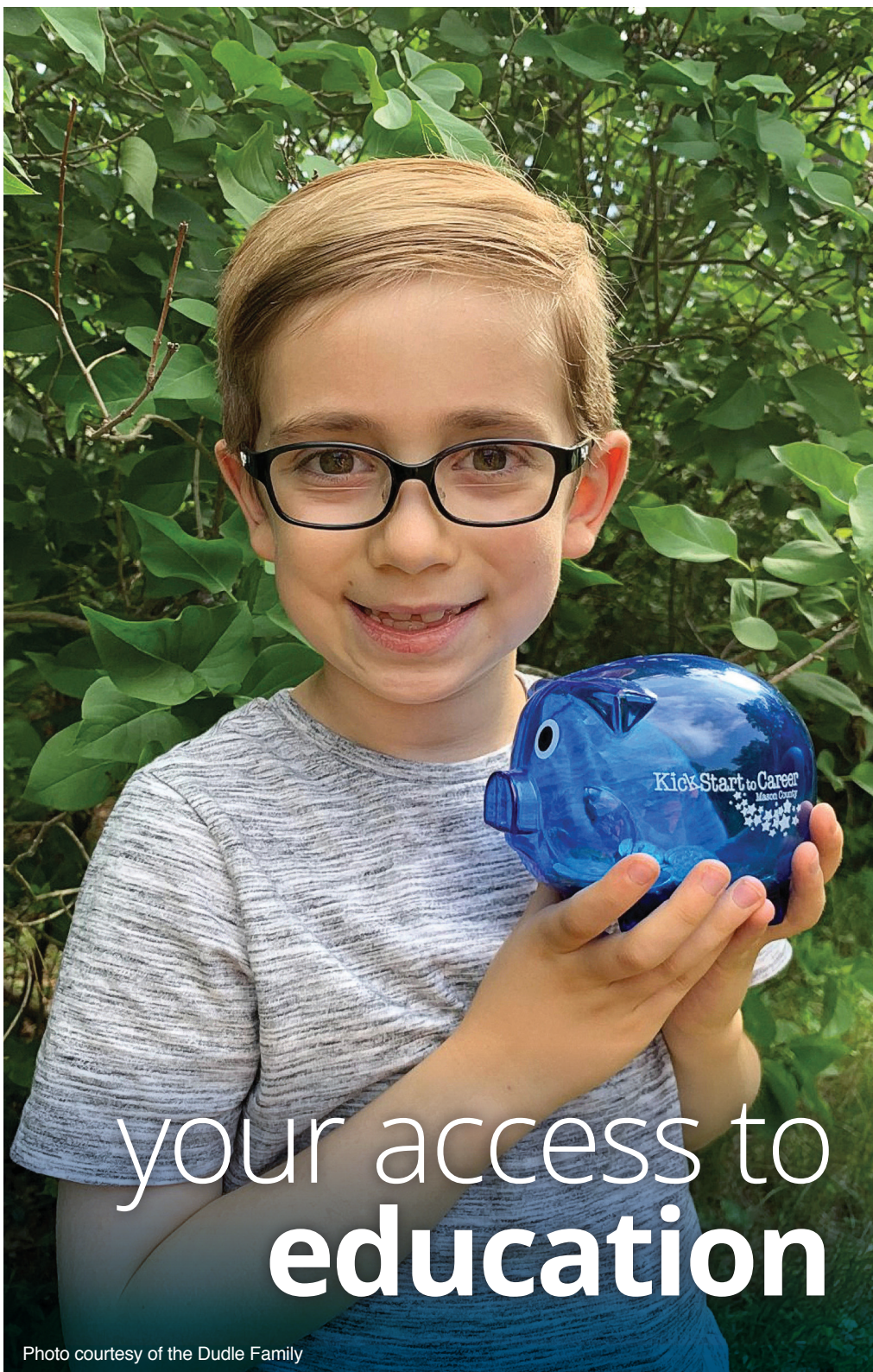


Lynda Matson
Chair, Board of Trustees

Here's what you made happen in Mason County in 2020:

- **340 grants** totaling **\$1,246,772** were approved for a variety of community projects.
- Mason County's **Youth Advisory Council** approved **8 grants** totaling **\$11,232**, including classroom project grants at school districts in Mason County.
- **56 Wish List Grants** totaling **\$49,210** to a variety of nonprofit organizations.
- Awarded **scholarships** to **114** students, including renewals, which represent commitments over the next four years of **\$148,000**.
- **\$1,943,427** in **gifts and grants**.
- **395 first-time donors**.
- **39 people memorialized** with gifts to the Community Foundation.
- Created **4 new named funds**, for a total of **175 funds**.
- **Net assets: \$22,544,606**.





your access to
education

Photo courtesy of the Dudle Family

- Last year, the Community Foundation expanded the **KickStart to Career** children's savings account program. In the 2020-2021 school year, a CSA was provided to a second cohort of kindergarten students in Mason County schools with a \$50 savings account and an opportunity for match and incentive dollars. This year, 612 kindergarten and first grade students have saved **\$4,788** so far! This money was matched by **West Shore Bank**, who added \$10 per kindergarten student; by **Lake Michigan CPA Services**, who added \$10 per first grade student; an anonymous donor, who donated \$3 to every Franklin Elementary School kindergarten and first grade student; and Kelly and Michael Parker of **Nader's Motel & Suites**, who also matched up to \$20 per Ludington Area Catholic School student.
- The **Mason County Promise** is in its third year of providing two years of tuition-free education at **West Shore Community College** to students graduating from Mason County schools with a 2.0 GPA or above. Last year, 220 students were eligible to use the Promise Scholarship, distributing over \$500,000. Of that group, 136 relied on the Promise to pay for classes.

- Our **Youth Advisory Council (YAC)** is made up of 14 students from local high schools. Each fall, they award grants to teachers and organizations that impact young people. In 2020, the YAC awarded grants to support the expansion



of classroom libraries, foldscopes (photo above, courtesy of Ludington Area Schools), heart rate monitors, reading interventions, and more. They also participated in the Ludington Lake Jump to help raise money for the **Lakeshore Food 4 Kids** program.





- The **Mason-Lake Conservation District** currently holds a federal grant from the **National Fish and Wildlife Foundation** to mitigate sediment and nutrient inputs to the Lincoln and Sable Rivers and to improve water quality. A Community Foundation grant was used toward additional match funds for their federal project. This project aims to develop an educational campaign regarding septic system and lawn fertilizer management for landowners around Hamlin Lake and Bass Lake in an effort to minimize toxic algae blooms and other water quality issues.

- The **Ludington Police Department** was awarded a grant to provide funding for officers to attend a three-day training course on Spanish-speaking communities. This training afforded officers the ability to effectively communicate with the Spanish-speaking population of Mason County and assist in building bridges between communities. Local officers and deputies learned Spanish phrases and cultural norms. The overall project goal is to help alleviate misunderstandings between local law enforcement and members of our Spanish-speaking community.
- The Community Foundation provided a grant to the **Village of Custer** sculpture project to provide engineering work to improve drainage. This sculpture will be part of the **Mason County Sculpture Trail** and the **Music Trail**. It will draw historians and visitors from all over to learn more about our history and heritage.
- A grant was provided to **HELP Ministries** to build wheelchair ramps and help with minor home repairs. This project will allow better mobility in and out of the homes of handicap or wheelchair-bound residents of all ages in the county. These families often need small home repairs, like grab bars or special railings, to make their residence more user-friendly. Our hope is that the families we are able to help will enjoy a more satisfying life as a result of increased mobility and in-home security.





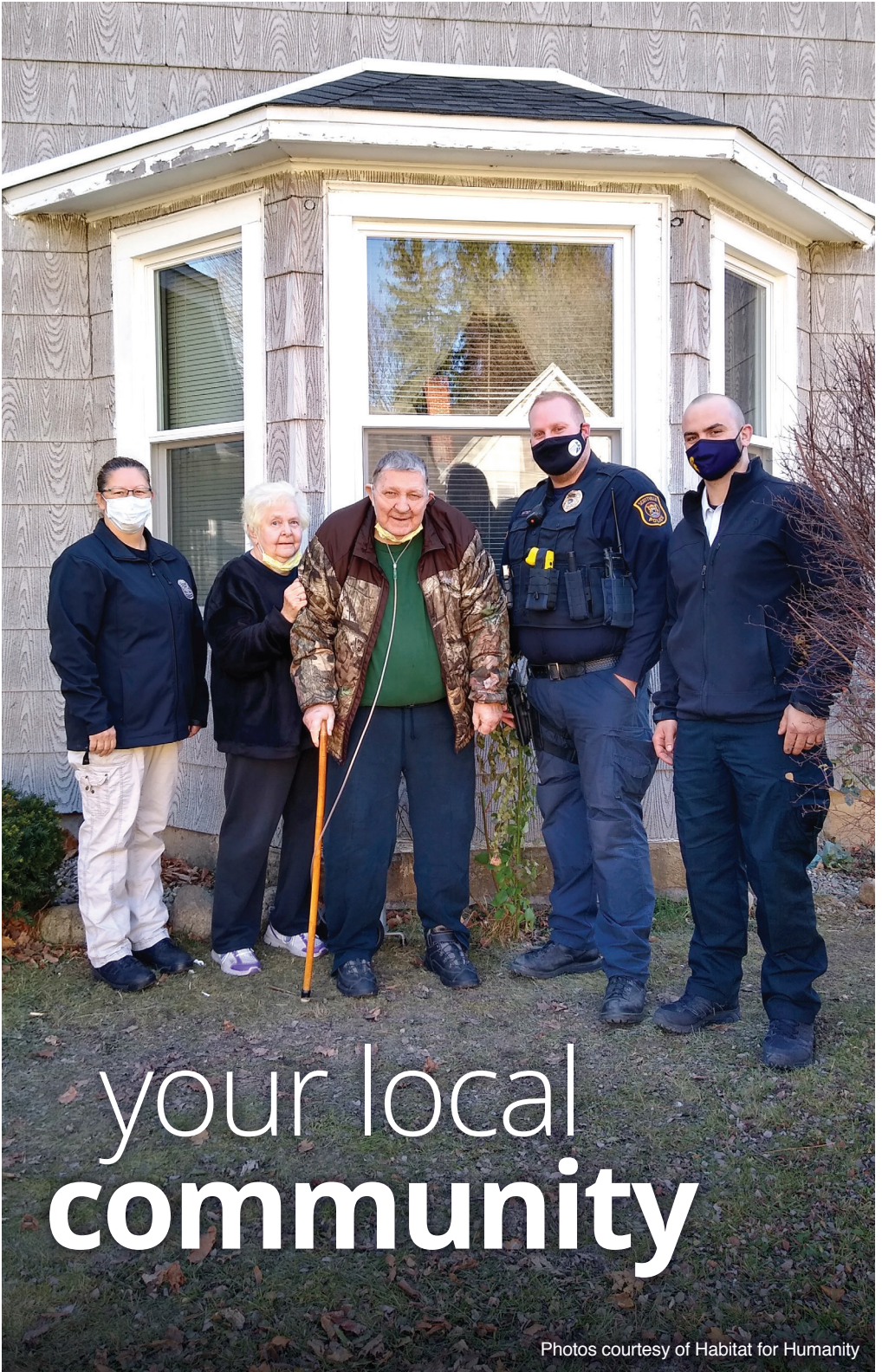
- As part of philanthropy leadership, the Community Foundation is in its fourth year of inviting area nonprofits to share which near-term projects and purchases need financial support from the community. These wish list ideas span a variety of interest areas and are organized into three funding levels: under \$500, \$500-\$1500, and over \$1500. Last holiday season, the **Pennies From Heaven Foundation** offered a “**Meet Us Halfway**” match, covering up to 50% of the cost of each individual wish granted from the first two funding levels. **All of the wishes eligible for the match dollars were granted**, along with several wishes in the third funding level!

Raised beds for Lakeshore Food Club, photo courtesy of Sara Bolan



- **Match Day**, developed by the Community Foundation in partnership with the **Pennies from Heaven Foundation** and **Metalworks**, was designed to provide operating support for organizations impacted by COVID-19. Thanks to YOU, we raised over \$345,000! With a match pool of \$106,000, Match Day generated a total of **over \$450,000** to support these organizations and the important work they're doing in our community.
- The Community Foundation teamed up with the **United Way of Mason County** and the **Pennies from Heaven Foundation** to create a **COVID-19 Relief Fund** to support nonprofits who helped our vulnerable community members deal with the fallout of the pandemic. Because of your help, along with support from the Consumers Energy Foundation, DTE Energy Foundation, and Meijer, **over \$100,000** was raised for the fund.
 - + **Lakeshore Food Club** provided food assistance for families
 - + **True North Community Services** offered support for rent and housing
 - + **The Salvation Army** supplied food, rent, and utility support
 - + **Harbor Hospice** launched their Tele-Health program
 - + **Mason County Emergency** secured housing for essential workers





your local
community

Photos courtesy of Habitat for Humanity

- Last year, we awarded a grant to Habitat for Humanity for their **Neighborhood Revitalization (NR) program**. This program is designed to directly impact low-income, owner occupied homes with necessary exterior improvements, including windows, roofing, siding, clean-up, painting, and landscaping. The NR program partnered with the **Neighbor 2 Neighbor Volunteer Initiative** to recruit additional volunteers and encourage community pride in lending a hand to one another. These NR projects help improve the quality of life to the homeowners, create neighborhood relationships, and increase property values.
- The Community Foundation provided matching funds for the **MEDC's Small Business Grants** to support local businesses during Michigan's stay-at-home order. The MEDC launched a **Small Business Survival grant** program, which allocated **\$143,899** to Mason County businesses. Grants ranging from \$5,000-\$10,000 were awarded to 20 businesses across Mason County.
- The Community Foundation worked with the county to establish the **Complete Count Committee for Mason County**. Through a grant from the **Michigan Nonprofit Association**, we coordinated marketing materials for area agencies and businesses to promote filling out the Census (photo left/right, courtesy of the Pennies from Heaven Foundation). Along with other local partners, we helped educate and encourage Census participation by informing our community about the process to complete the Census, important dates, and scheduled Census Hubs.





your health
thriving

Photo courtesy of West Shore Family Support

- **West Michigan Community Mental Health** implemented the **myStrength** web and mobile-based platform to encourage individuals to participate more in their own healthcare, increase community-wide access to mental health supports, and increase overall community wellness.



WMCMH will be entering into a contract relationship with myStrength, a behavioral health company that delivers web- and mobile-based self-management tools. This platform is a population health solution that focuses on creating personalized, interactive user experiences that empower individuals to achieve their goals and attain a strong sense of well-being.

- The Community Foundation awarded a grant to **West Shore Family Support** for their **Baby Bucks Boutique** (photo left, courtesy of West Shore Family Support). The Boutique provides parents with costly necessities like diapers, wipes, clothing, outerwear, blankets, formula, and more. The Boutique is also stocked with bigger items, including infant car seats, highchairs, and strollers. The Boutique serves families with children 4 years old and younger and those who are expecting.

- **Connexion Point** was awarded a grant to provide a new gathering space at The Boon House (photo right, courtesy of Connexion Point), which will allow members to participate in recovery programming. This project was a partnership with the **Ludington Daily News** annual Room Redo project and **Cottage Works** design team and construction crew.



Thank you to the following people who notified us of promised future gifts or created new funds in 2020.

LEGACY GIFTS

Todd & Julie Schrader

Todd and Julie Schrader have always been community supporters as a family through their family's fund at the Community Foundation. They established an estate gift to continue their family legacy of giving forever.



NEW FUND STORIES

Emily & Frank Smiddy Scholarship Fund

Frank Smiddy, former owner of ProAct Environmental Services in Ludington, has always had a passion for STEM-related learning and wanted to give back to the community. He and his wife, Emily, sought to support students going into this type of field so they would have the best chance possible of getting their college education with as little debt as possible. They established the Emily & Frank Smiddy Scholarship Fund, and it is their hope that students who receive this scholarship will be motivated, when they are financially able, to give back to the community to help others see success.



These gifts will do great things in our Mason County community...forever.

Mason-Lake Conservation District Fund

The Mason-Lake Conservation District's mission is to provide leadership in helping our community conserve and improve our natural resources and environment. They established an endowment fund to build sustainability and long-term resources to support this important work forever.

Lakeshore Food 4 Kids Fund

Tara Autrey, Sara Ewing, and Carrie Brandt were inspired to start the Lakeshore Food 4 Kids program when they attended classroom parties and children would ask if they could take the extra food with them because they didn't have any at home. This program provides backpacks of food over weekends during the school year for Ludington Area School District students experiencing food insecurity. They established an endowment fund to ensure long-term resources are available so no child goes hungry.

Dr. Joe & Kathy Grierson Fund

Dr. Joe and Kathy Grierson love this community and recognize the power of philanthropy. They established a donor advised fund to begin their family legacy of giving forever.



for good. for ever.

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Mason County

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