



December 2007

Happy Holidays!



OUR CITY'S CHILDREN

Holiday Happenings

Take time to enjoy an array of family fun activities offered by some of the area's cultural institutions during this holiday season.

Children's Museum

Penguin Play: Slide into Winter exhibit and activities now through January 13. Call 616.235.4726 for more information.

Fifth Third Ball Park

Nite Lites Christmas Light Display, mile-long trail of spectacular displays that feature countless lights. Open daily through January 5; \$9/car.

Grand Rapids Art Museum

Film: *A Christmas Carol*; December 15 & 16; 1 - 3 p.m. Call 616.831.1000 for admission prices.

Grand Rapids Ballet Company

The Nutcracker Ballet, December 14 - 16 & 20 - 23; DeVos Performance Hall. Call 616.454.4771 for more information.

John Ball Zoo

Christmas for the Animals, December 8, Noon - 3 p.m. feed the animals treats. *Penguin Express* trolley ride between the Zoo and the Children's Museum; games and activities, December 27 & 28. Call 616.336.4301 for ticket information.

Parks & Rec. Dept.

Outdoor ice skating at Rosa Parks Circle through January 4, 2008; \$1 per person, free skate rental. Call 616.456.3378 for more information.

Season for Giving

In Grand Rapids, the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) which consists of 11 agencies that run 19 programs, examines how homeless services are provided and develop appropriate action steps to provide these services.

According to the HMIS, in 2006 there were 4,762 homeless people in Grand Rapids and of those people 1,818 were children under 18-years-old.

To make a donation or to volunteer your time this holiday season, contact the HMIS agencies below.

Emergency Shelters:

- Catholic Charities of W. MI - 456-1443
- Guiding Light Men's Mission - 451-0236
- Inner City Christian Fed. - 336-9333
- Interfaith Hospitality Network - 475-5220
- Mel Trotter: Women's & Children's Shelter - 454-8249
- Booth Family Lodge - 459-9468
- Well House - 245-3910

Transitional Housing:

- Community Rebuilders - 458-5102
- Dwelling Place - 454-0928
- G.R. Housing Commission - 235-2600
- Salvation Army (including the only Teen Parent Center) - 459-9468

Permanent Supportive Housing:

- Community Rebuilders - 458-5102
- Dwelling Place - 454-0928
- Genesis Non-Profit Housing - 988-2897

Winter Wonderland Safety

While enjoying the fun and excitement that this time of year brings, please be sure to keep the following safety tips in mind:

- When sledding, make sure the terrain consists of packed snow free of obstacles and far from traffic.
- Driveways and sidewalks should be well shoveled within 24 hours of snow fall and applied with rock salt or sand.
- Drivers should make sure to watch for children around snow piles when backing out of driveways.
- Fresh Christmas trees should be kept in a container full of water and checked daily and decorated using only UL approved lights and cords.
- Carbon monoxide detectors should be installed to protect sleeping areas.

GRPS Community Dialogue Meetings *Help Plan the Schools of the Future*

December 10 - 7 to 9 p.m.

Palmer Elementary - 309 Palmer, NE
Central High - 421 Fountain, NE

December 11 - 9 to 11 a.m.

Rev. Lyman S. Parks, Sr. Admin. Bldg.
1331 Franklin, SE

December 11 - 7 to 9 p.m.

Union High - 1800 Tremont Blvd., NW
Alger Middle - 921 Alger, SE

For more information
call 616.819.2149

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Mayor Fields Questions From Youth

On Wednesday, December 12, 2007 from 4 to 6 p.m. at Gerald R. Ford Middle School, Mayor George K. Heartwell will address Grand Rapids youth at *Mayor's Youth Night Out*. Mayor Heartwell will field questions and listen to comments about a variety of issues expressed by kindergarten through high school-aged youth.

"I encourage youth to share their thoughts with me about community issues they feel need to be addressed by their Mayor," said Mayor Heartwell.

Youth need only to have a question, a point of view or a comment to share. Registration is required from all young people who wish to attend. Download a registration form at www.grcity.us/ocyf.

Call Shannon L. Harris, Program Coordinator in the Office of Children, Youth & Families, at 616.456.3558 for more information.

Gift Brings New Books

For the past four years, the Grand Rapids Student Advancement Foundation (SAF) has been pairing community donors with schools in the Grand Rapids Public School district to stock their libraries with new books. Last year, the SAF completed a \$1.6 million library campaign.

To date, 48 school libraries are now stocked with new and engaging books thanks to the generosity of various donors. The libraries at North Park Elementary School and North Park Montessori are just the latest to be revealed.

Grand Rapids Student Advancement Foundation, which was established in 1993, is a tax-exempt, charitable organization. It solicits gifts from the community to provide supplemental resources for the Grand Rapids Public Schools.

Mission:

The Office of Children, Youth & Families evaluates public policy and promotes caring partnerships to ensure our children, youth and families thrive within the Grand Rapids community and hold promising futures.

The Office of Children, Youth & Families is a partnership program of the Grand Rapids Public Schools and the City of Grand Rapids.

Office of Children, Youth & Families
City of Grand Rapids
300 Monroe Ave. NW
Grand Rapids MI 49503
Phone: (616) 456-3558

Website: www.grcity.us/ocyf



LATINO

youth conference 2008

Art Contest

Open to All
Interested 8th
Grade Students

Theme: "The Power of Dreams/
El poder de sonar"

Prize: MP3 Player

Deadline: Friday, Dec. 7, 2007

Contact: Lysette Castillo;
819.4120 for contest guidelines.

ACT Prep Workshop

Saturday, January 12, 2008

9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Ryerson Auditorium at the
Grand Rapids Public Library
111 Library Street NE, 49503
Free parking in Library lot
with validated ticket.

*Techniques, strategies, snack,
and a free book!*

Call 988.5402, ext. 5477
to sign up.