Have you purchased your tickets for our annual Festival of Trees event yet? Well, if you haven’t, don’t delay. We sold out last year, and even though we have rearranged the seating plan to add a few more tables to this year’s event, we expect it to be another sellout. A new option has been added to allow you to be a table host this year, so invite your family and friends to join you at a table for the fun and excitement of this annual holiday event.

Plans are well underway to ensure this year’s event is bigger and better than ever. Russ Farnsworth has agreed to be our auctioneer for the evening, and you don’t want to miss the fun and excitement he will bring.

A jewelry raffle will again be a featured part of the evening, as well as our traditional ornament raffle.

We are very fortunate to have secured many sponsors for the event, including Golden Garland sponsors Ann Cole, Medina County Women’s Journal, Medina Gem Co., and Katie Horn Woodcock; Tree Topper sponsors Betty and Dick Lynham, Therapeutic Associates of Medina, and Western Reserve Masonic Community; and Silver Bells sponsors ABC Therapy Ltd., Barbara Dzur, and Medical Mutual of Ohio.

A wonderful array of live and silent auction items have been streaming in, including a park bench from Medina County Parks, a week’s stay at a Florida condo, a hand-crafted wooden table, a hot air balloon ride for one, a pair of tickets to a Great Lakes Theater performance of your choice, an Italian artisan glass bowl, a pair of Browns tickets for the Bengals game on Dec. 6, many gift baskets and gift certificates, as well as numerous decorated trees of all sizes. (See page 3 for a full list of auction items.)

It’s not too late to contribute a tree, gift basket, gift item or monetary donation to this year’s Festival of Trees. We would appreciate any contribution you would like to make.

For more information, please contact Karen Glass, event co-chair, at 330-667-2365 or medinacountywef@gmail.com.

**Festival of Trees**

**When:** Thursday, Nov. 5, 2015
5:30 p.m. Registration opens
6 p.m. Event begins

**Where:** Weymouth Country Club
3946 Weymouth Road, Medina

**Register:** www.akroncf.org/FestivalofTrees

**Deadline:** Purchase tickets by Friday, Oct. 30
The Battered Women’s Shelter of Summit & Medina Counties is celebrating its 15th year of providing shelter to women and children experiencing domestic violence in Medina County. In addition to providing shelter to families who have many times left their homes with only the clothes on their back, they also offer support groups, a hotline, and support in the court system.

Thanks to recent grants from the Medina County Women’s Endowment Fund and other organizations, the agency has helped 220 people participate in support groups facilitated by BWS so far this year. Staff members have also responded to 367 hotline calls, provided 36 individuals with 1,813 nights in protective shelter, and supported 254 victims in Medina County courts.

Mike Ryan, the Medina services manager, has a great passion for the work that he does. He highly praises his staff and volunteers for the fantastic job they do on a daily basis to help these victims of abuse. They provide a clean, caring and safe environment for those who have experienced domestic violence to help empower them to break free of the cycle of abuse. Medina County support groups continue to grow in attendance due to the compassionate and supportive environment provided by present and previous support group facilitators.

Rebecca Hewit, grants manager, said she’s very grateful for all the grants they have received from individuals, organizations and businesses in the area, but added that donations of goods and services are also much needed and appreciated.

While BWS receives canned goods on a regular basis, they are always in need of many other items people don’t often consider donating, including toilet paper, paper products, cleaning supplies, laundry detergent, and anything else you would need to run a standard household. In Medina County alone, BWS averages 17 to 22 residents on a daily basis, so the agency requires approximately four to five times the amount of supplies an average household would have. Rarely do they receive highly perishable items like milk, eggs and meat because few people know they can contribute anything besides canned goods.

If you would like to help the Battered Women’s Shelter with any of these items, or to donate clothing, linens, vacuums or other household items, please contact Kathy, the donation coordinator, at 330-723-2163. If you would like to volunteer your time or inquire about an internship, contact Brittany, the outreach and education coordinator, at 330-374-0740.

Women who are in need of help can call the agency’s 24-hour hotline at 1-877-414-1344.

In addition to funding support groups facilitated by the Battered Women’s Shelter, MCWEF also recently provided funding to help stop the cycle of abuse before it even starts. A grant to the Rape Crisis Center supported the Tina Project, which helps prevent teen dating violence by educating middle and high school students about healthy relationships.

Thanks in part to this grant from MCWEF, the Rape Crisis Center delivered 80 presentations between Jan. 1 and July 31, 2015, reaching 4,749 students in the county. In addition, the agency has responded to 175 Medina County crisis hotline calls and provided 15 Medina County sexual violence survivors with direct in-person supportive services.

Learn more about the programs MCWEF has supported this year at www.akroncf.org/MCWEFgrants.
Author shares key fundraising tips with MCWEF board

On June 11, renowned author Carol Weisman came to Northeast Ohio to speak with board members from the Medina County Women’s Endowment Fund about the keys to successful fundraising.

Weisman shared easy-to-use tips from her book “Fundraising Superheroes,” which she wrote to make fundraising achievable for even the most novice board member.

In the book, Weisman strips away the myths while humorously describing examples of how to ask for money. She also explains that fundraising doesn’t always mean asking for money directly; it can also be about forming a relationship. From reaching out to a single individual to hosting an event for a large potential pool of donors and volunteers, Weisman makes the process understandable and easy to implement.

During the workshop, board members learned helpful tips for “making the ask” and building relationships with members of the community.

Weisman also talked about how each member of a board can use her individual strengths and talents to help advance the mission of the fund. Workshop attendees left the session feeling more confident in their fundraising abilities while learning several strategic ways they can grow the endowment.

Gifts

Thank you to the following businesses, organizations and individuals who have donated an auction item for this year’s Festival of Trees:

**ABC Therapy Ltd.** — Tickets to the Browns/Bengals game on Dec. 6
**A Cupcake A Day** — Holiday basket with baking supplies, gift certificates, T-shirt, apron and cookbook
**Antiquation** — 36” Ohio wall art
**Buehler’s** — BBQ dinner for six
**Bunker Hill Golf Course** — 18 holes of golf
**Catch Up Balloon** — Hot air balloon ride for one
**Chill Ice Cream** — Certificate for ice cream-making experience and three canisters or products
**Christmas Around the World** — Decorated wreath and 10 tickets to the Christmas Around the World Craft Fest
**Deer Pass Golf Course** — Two gift certificates for four golfers’ green fees
**Finery By Flora D** — Handmade jewelry items
**Linda Garrett** — One week’s stay at a Florida condo
**Great Lakes Theater** — Two tickets to one show during the 2015-16 season
**Half Moon Yoga** — 10 yoga classes, yoga mat and water bottle
**Ironwood Golf Course** — Golf-themed gift basket with four 18-hole rounds of golf
**Kappa Mu Sorority** — 3-foot “Joys of Childhood” tree
**Beth McGuire** — 7-foot bird tree
**Medina County Park District** — Memorial bench with engraved plaque
**Medina County Park District** — Nature-themed tree
**Medina Raptor Center** — Raptor “experience”
**Pier 1 Imports** — Italian glass artisan bowl
**Porthouse Theatre** — Two tickets to a performance during the 2016 season
**Potomac Bead Company** — Party or class for four and a gift certificate
**Reflections Hair Studio & Spa** — European facial
**Rinky Dink Family Fun Center** — Gift certificate
**Rose Hill** — Gift certificate
**Sew Fine Fabric** — Hand-crafted quilt and accessories
**Something’s Popping** — Sports popcorn basket
**TITLE Boxing Club Medina** — Two pink duffle bags, two pairs of pink boxing gloves and wrist wraps, and two free one-month memberships
**Village Clip Shoppe** — Spa package with massage, manicure and pedicure
**Western Reserve Historical Society** — Tickets to the Cleveland History Center or Hale Farm
**Western Reserve Masonic Community** — Keurig machine, K-Cups, coffee mugs and other goodies, along with $50 in gift cards
**Katie Horn Woodcock** — Handbag, scarf and small purse

Gifts to MCWEF

June 1 — Aug. 31, 2015

ABC Therapy Ltd.
Anonymous
Peggy & Lloyd Culp
Barbara Dzur
Faye Holvey
Dick & Betty Lynham
Medical Mutual of Ohio
Dana & Renee Schneider
Katie Horn Woodcock
MCWEF grant helps prevent suicide among local teens

One local organization is quietly trying to reduce the second-leading cause of death in teens and young adults: suicide. They do this by giving presentations to students in all of the middle and high schools in Medina County, as well as most of Northeast Ohio.

LifeAct gives these presentations over just a two-day period of time, but in that short time, the presenters are able to connect with the teens, help them understand the signs and symptoms of depression, and give them the tools they need to get help.

In 2014 alone, LifeAct reached almost 18,000 teens in 98 schools in Northeast Ohio. Of those, 1,200 came forward for help for themselves or a friend. Thanks to a recent grant from the Medina County Women’s Endowment Fund, they are able to continue this lifesaving outreach in Medina County.

Each year, LifeAct also hosts a memorial walk called the “Into the Light Walk” at the Cleveland Zoo.

This is the 12th anniversary of the walk, which raises money and awareness for suicide prevention programming and offers hope and healing to those affected by suicide and depression.

This year’s walk, which was held on Oct. 4, aimed to raise $100,000. One local team set a goal of $1,000 and walked in memory of a Medina County teen who committed suicide five years ago, shortly before his 16th birthday.

Prior to the walk, team members had raised nearly $2,500 — more than double their original goal — in memory of their loved one.

See photos of the Into the Light Walk and other LifeAct programs at www.akroncf.org/LifeAct.