

Homeowner Story: Wendy's Poem Brings Warm Memories

Wendy, her husband Mark and their two children have been a part of the Habitat Kent Family since 2010. In our New Year's Contest, Wendy wrote a touching poem about her favorite Christmas memory. Last year brought many challenges to us all, but Wendy's poem is an example of a shining light during dark times.

Christmas Memories

- by Wendy

*Time has gone by oh so fast,
Looking back at Christmas past.
I see myself as a young child,
Eyes lit up like fires wild:
I would see the tree and all its treasures,
Shining bright as my greatest pleasures.
Making cookies with my mom and sister,
I never knew how much I would miss her.
As we each aged and became mature,
Our time together became obscured.*

*Now we have our own children to see
As they look upon the Christmas tree.
It brings back many fond memories,
And all that same sense of glee.
This year was harder than any other
With the recent loss of my mother.
But with each Christmas
cookie and craft,
I still can hear my mother's laugh.
I hold those memories so dear to me,
And I love to share them with family.
For the day they sit beside their tree,
They can also think of me.*



Wendy's "Christmas Memories" poem is the winner from our December Newsletter contest!



The Contest is Back and Here to Stay!

Be on the look out to enter into our contest each newsletter. For the March Newsletter, which is women's month, please email dmadison@habitatkent.org a story about the **most influential women in your life by March 21st**. No more than one page.

There will be cash prizes again: The top three entries picked by our selection committee will win **\$50 each!**

Selling your Home?

Are you thinking about selling your home? Perhaps you've been approached by someone or maybe you're simply curious about what selling and moving might look like for you and your family. Here is a friendly reminder to contact Habitat Kent so that we can walk you through your options remembering that in most cases Habitat Kent has the first right to purchase your home according to your mortgage terms.

Also, please be cautious of anyone randomly approaching you and offering cash or a trade for your home. Unsolicited offers from interested buyers are typically much lower than

what a home is really worth. We are here to provide you with free advice that will help you make a fully informed decision about selling or staying in your affordable Habitat Kent home.

Remember: Your home is your biggest asset. Protect your value and know what your home is worth to you.

For more information please contact Melody, Real Estate Development Associate:

Office: 616-558-5249; **Cell:** 616-325-4677

Email: mgeerlings@habitatkent.org

Homeowner Resources

Providing Resources from Local Partners

Free Energy Efficiency Programs for Homeowners and Renters:

Through Consumers Energy's **Home Energy Analysis** and **Helping Neighbors Program**, eligible homeowners and renters can access free services to enhance energy efficiency and make your utilities more affordable.

In both of these programs, a professional will assess your home virtually or in-person and provide tips to help you save energy. They will even provide free equipment like LED lightbulbs, pipe wraps, and showerheads to help make your house more efficient.

If you are interested in learning more or scheduling your analysis, please call **810-429-0627** and ask for Erin.

Pet Pantry

Let's not forget our furry friends! Pleasant Hearts Pet Food Pantry is a great community resource that helps pets stay with families even when resources are tight. You can access their free pet food distribution every other Saturday from 12pm to 2pm. Visit their website to see the schedule.

Address: 1539 Taylor Ave #5, Grand Rapids, MI 49505

Website: www.pleasantheartspetfoodpantry.org

Tips from the MSU Gardening Club!

Spring is on the way! Have questions about houseplants? Your lawn? Maybe a garden this year? Are you wondering why your flowers were a disappointment last summer?

We Have Answers!

- **Gardening in Michigan:**

www.canr.msu.edu/home_gardening/

This website will be your favorite go-to for articles by

Homeowner Videos

Check out our YouTube channel to find Home Owner Walk-Through videos on warranty and maintenance information for your home: <http://bit.ly/3akLkpv>

GED Classes

We are partnering with Ferris State University and Kent ISD Adult Education to offer free GED classes.

Classes begin on Tuesday, February 28, though you can join after this date.

Days: Tuesdays and Thursdays

Time: 5:30-8:00pm

Location: SW Community Campus, 327 Rumsey St. SW, East Parking Lot Entry

Sign-up: Call 231-591-2470, or email

engagement@ferris.edu

Cheap, Healthy Meal Ideas

Looking for cheap, healthy meals for your family?

Check out Budget Byte\$! <https://www.budgetbytes.com/>

Budget Byte\$ provides step-by-step instructions with beautiful pictures, nutrition facts, and a price breakdown of the entire meal and each ingredient so your family can have a hearty meal without spending too much.

MSU Extension staff, short videos, tips and tricks on all things gardening.

- **Ask an Expert:**

www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/ask-an-expert

Ask your questions and get answers from MSU Extension and University experts!

- **Container Gardens:** bit.ly/3iSA1Zw

Learn how to grow your own food right at home with container gardens!

Words To Live By: *With such a historical moment of our first female, black and south Asian Vice President: "Don't let anyone tell you who you are" – Kamala Harris.*

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If you have a new cell phone number or email, please send it to DeShawn: dmadison@habitatkent.org

Visit: HabitatKent.org

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