Yes We Can… Celebrate Greatness!

Join us for our seventh year showcasing the wisdom and experiences of people who are 80 and over. Creative 360 launched this innovative program in the winter of 2014 as a way to engage with, and learn from, this dynamic group of seniors who have a wealth of experience and knowledge to share. In the past seven years, we have celebrated more than 350 Great Lakes Bay artists, scholars, scientists and community leaders as they encourage and motivate us all to be more active, contributing community members at every age!

We are inspired by the enthusiastic community support for this program, and think you will be excited about this year’s lineup of events, which include an art exhibition, Tuesday Tributes, and Luncheon Soirees.

Yes We Can! Art Exhibition

Join us for the opening reception on Friday, February 21st from 7:00 – 8:30 pm

The vibrant, strong, interesting art of these Great Lakes Bay artists will be on display through March 22. You won’t want to miss it! Free.

Roz Berlin (81), Marcia Dilling (83), Luther Hale (87), Louise Herringshaw (82), Mary Horning (85), William Horning (87), Robert Iwamasa (83), S. Preston Jones (83), Jerry King (81), Gail Leduc (83), Rebecca Litherland (89), Barbara Plummer (82), Ralph K. Rye (85), John Saam (90), Shirley Sirrine (89), Pat A. Smith (88), Pat Smith (85), Mary Starr (87), Alice Strack (88), Carol Struthers (91), Judy Wear (81), Janet Yerby (80), Patricia Yockey (85), Jan Young, Barbara Zimmerman (87) and more!
Yes We Can! Tuesday Tributes

Draw inspiration from the insights of fascinating octogenarians as they share stories about their lives, creative process, and their adventures. Enjoy lively conversation, tea, treats, and time for Q&A. Most tributes are led by Carol Speltz. Please let us know you are coming.

Pat A. Smith (88) • Artist, Educator, Flower Arranger Extraordinaire
Tuesday, February 4 – 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. – $5

Pat has many interests that include leading aerobics classes, calligraphy, quilting, beading, gardening and flower arranging – for which she is well-known. Through these interests she has made a variety of friends and they are the reason behind many of her travels including the Philadelphia Flower Show she attended just last year!

Pat grew up in Elkhart, Indiana, known at the time as the band instrument capital of the world, was married for 63 years, has two children and three grandchildren. She served as a substitute teacher in the Midland Public Schools for 20 years.

George Saito (80) • Veteran, Community Leader
Tuesday, March 3 – 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. – $5

Most of us can’t imagine what it was like to live in an internment camp. George Saito was born in Oakland, California and was interned as a child at the Topaz War Relocation Center in Utah from 1942 to 1945. As a proud U.S. citizen, George joined the U.S. Air Force where he was stationed at Ashiya, Tachikawa AFB from 1959 to 1961. He came to Saginaw in 1973 and enjoyed a long career with Andersen & Associates until he retired in 2003. George will share the rich history of the Saito family, what life was like in internment, and other stories.

Betty Van Ochten (87) • Writer, Poet, Volunteer
Tuesday, March 10 – 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. – $5

Betty has spent a lifetime writing. Her aspirations to become a newspaper reporter led to a ninth-grade journalism class, writing for the Saginaw High School newspaper, and serving as editor of the Bay City Junior College paper. She later worked for eight years at The Saginaw News. After raising her family and retirement, Betty took a writing class at Delta, and one of her poems was published in The Saturday Evening Post! She is a long-time member of River Junction Poets, enjoys leading poetry programs in elementary schools, teaching OLLI poetry classes at SVSU, writing memoirs, and doing poetry readings. She doesn’t have a book yet, but says it is on her “to-do” list.
Clara Spannagel Hancock • Author, Business Woman, Volunteer
Tuesday, March 31 – 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. – $5

Clara’s parents immigrated to the U.S. from Russia in 1910. She remembers helping them study to become U.S. citizens when she was ten years old, and the big celebration when they received citizenship and were “finally home in America.” Her family history and quest to find a long-lost uncle led to her book, “My Memories” she published in 2018 (available on Amazon). A life-long Michigander, Clara has lived across the Great Lakes Bay Region where she enjoyed a career at Michigan Bell/Ameritech/AT&T. Her many affiliations include, American Business Women’s Association, Big Sisters, Hidden Pines Condominium Association, King’s Daughters, Midland Center for the Arts, Mid-Michigan Regional Medical Center, Our Savior Lutheran Church and Zonta.

Jerry King (82) • Artist, Community Leader, Volunteer
Tuesday, April 7 – 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. – $5

Jerry was born in 1938 and grew up on a small farm near Beaverton, Michigan. He spent as much time outdoors as possible and the thought that he could be an artist never crossed his mind… until later in life when an art class he took at the Community Center (now Greater Midland) brought these gifts to light. He quickly found that filling an empty canvas with something people enjoyed was very fulfilling. This new love of creating soon blended with his love for the outdoors and culminated into paintings of animals, nature (birch trees) and people. His art can be enjoyed as part of the Yes We Can! exhibition in the Creative 360 gallery.

Larry Lage (94) • Educator, World War II Marine Veteran, Volunteer Extraordinaire
Tuesday, April 14 – 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. – $5

Larry loves to learn and loves to teach others. He taught high school at Troy High for 50 years. When he retired, he wanted to keep teaching and has spent the last 20 years volunteering at local high schools and is currently at Windover High School. He and his wife Paddy Kutchey have been supporting students from poor families in India with generous gifts (through Global Compassion Inc.) to help them achieve a bright future. He considers it to be a privilege to continue to help kids reach their potential.

One of Larry’s other passions is golf. He learned to golf when he was nine and continues to play regularly.

Larry loves life and is grateful for all of the opportunities life has given him.
Virginia Florey & Leona Seamster • The Wonder Years - Growing Up in Midland
Tuesday, April 21 – 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. – $5

Virginia and Leona are known for bringing Midland history to life! They both grew up in Midland in the thirties and forties and fondly remember the small-town life where everyone knew just about everyone else. Kids played under the streetlights until their moms called them home. Softball was played in vacant lots. Summer meant picnics and swimming while winter meant sledding and ice skating. Stores stayed open late – until 9:00 - on Thursday nights, because they were pay nights. These best friends and co-authors offer a nostalgic glimpse into these simpler times as only they can.

Yes We Can! Concert
The New Reformation Band
Friday, February 14 – 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. – $15 prepaid, $18 at the door

Since 1970, Michigan’s New Reformation Band has given thousands of performances worldwide playing classic jazz, Dixieland, swing, big band, blues, and ragtime. Featuring founder David Oppermann and “superstar” sidemen, these friendly fellows provide a fun-loving, knee-slapping, toe-tapping entertainment experience!” BYOB.
Each year, Creative 360 honors a Great Lakes Bay Region arts advocate who has made significant contributions through exceptional vision, leadership and commitment to the arts. This year we choose Bonnie McManus for her untiring dedication to her field of social work combined with her love of the arts.

As a Licensed Master Social Worker, ACSW, Bonnie has tirelessly dedicated herself to advocating for youth, the elderly and families. She facilitated the merger of the Midland Area Partnership for Drug Free Youth with The Legacy Center; served as CEO, program coordinator and therapist for Family and Children’s Services; provided assessment and referral services for the elderly. She served as sociology adjunct for both Hope College and SVSU. She has been involved with Rotary, Zonta, Midland Chamber of Commerce, Matrix Midland, Dow Chemical Community Advisory Panel, Lunch Box Learners, the Health and Human Services Council, Creative 360, Children’s Grief Center, Barstow Airport, and much more.

Bonnie joins our honor roll of Sweethearts that includes Dorothy Yates, Ginny Morrison, Barbara Prince-Sovereen, Sally Moss, Judy Rapanos, Nancy Barker, Janet I. Martineau, Ruby Iwamasa, Patty Shaheen, Dick & Donna Dolinski, Ruth & Etcyl Blair, Eugene Yehle, Alice Ralston, Gerry Hath, Paula Ulmer, and Junia Doan.
Joy (93) & Dorothy (90) Arthur • Community Leaders, Educators, Peacemakers

Friday, February 21 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – $30  
(RSVP required by February 17. Space is limited.)

Joy and Dorothy recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary! Both have an eye toward improving life for others and responded to that passion in the life they have led together – she as a teacher in the Midland Public Schools, he as a minister in The United Methodist Church. His calling led him to participate in work projects abroad, attend peace conferences, and participate in the Night Watch Police Ministry in Saginaw. He also participated in civil rights demonstrations and once landed in jail when he protested outside Wurtsmith Air Force Base! Joy always thought he would take over the family farm, and attended MSU after the Navy to study agriculture. He soon realized ministry was his calling. After 38 years in ministry and 25 years teaching, Joy and Dorothy are now retired and enjoying life in a home they built on the Arthur family farm.

Doris Feagley • Entrepreneur, Community Leader, Volunteer

Friday, February 28 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – $30  
(RSVP required by February 24. Space is limited.)

Doris opened the doors of her fashion boutique, Cambridge House, in 1972 with her friend Irene Sparta. Later, Doris became sole proprietor of the business and also opened Abbey Road to cater to the younger set. She was head of the retail area of the Midland Chamber of Commerce, and directed the “Midland Midland” fashion show at MCFTA and many area fashion shows. She served on Northwood’s fashion board for 25 years, was a board member for Delta College, and conducted business-related lectures at Northwood and both high schools in Midland. Doris was included in “Voices: Extraordinary Woman of Midland County,” is an active member of Memorial Presbyterian Church, and volunteers at the Midland Food Pantry and Saginaw Soup Kitchen. She was a member of the investment group the Finks for many years and still loves learning about different companies.
Marilyn E. Clark Celebration of Life • Educator, Philanthropist, Volunteer Extraordinaire  
Friday, March 6 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – $30 (RSVP required by March 2. Space is limited.)

Marilyn was a devoted member of First United Methodist Church for over 50 years and served in many ways, including as a member of the Pastor Parish Committee, as head of the Memorial Committee, as head of the Memorial Window Project, and as a founder of the Friendship Lunch program. She was an active member of PEO, served on the board of the King’s Daughters Home, and on the Ernest R. and Martha E. Britton Scholarship Committee. A friend provided a wonderful example of Marilyn’s philanthropic nature that resulted in the complete funding of a “tiny house” in Detroit’s Cass Community. After providing a grant that paid for half a house, she challenged church members to donate the rest. And they did!

Marilyn was an elementary and middle school teacher, mother, homemaker and grandmother. She is missed by her children, Lucinda, Dan, Thomas, and Marilyn and her six grandchildren.

Leeds Bird (84) • Educator, Entrepreneur, Performer, Veteran  
Friday, March 13 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – $30 (RSVP required by March 9. Space is limited.)

Leeds has lived in Bay City his entire life. He earned his B.A. in communications and M.A. in theatre from MSU, and also served in the Army. He taught speech and drama for 30 years, and served as adjunct faculty at Delta and SVSU. He has served on the boards of the Bay Area Chamber of Commerce; the Bay Arts Council; Studio 23/The Arts Center, and has spent 60+ years with the Bay City Players and is currently their honorary president. He also owned Bird’s Custom Framing and Art Supplies. After retirement, Leeds delivered more than 500 performances as Mark Twain in New England and the Midwest. His collaborations with nationally-known pianist Kevin Cole resulted in productions in Michigan, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Kentucky.

Walter (90) & Joanne (90) Rupprecht • Community Leaders, Scientists, Volunteers  
Friday, March 20 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – $30 (RSVP required by March 16. Space is limited.)

These Midland natives began dating in 10th grade and have three children. Both earned a B.S. in Chemistry, Joanne at University of Rochester and Walt at U of M. Both enjoyed careers at Dow Chemical—Joanne for 20 years and Walt for 37. As volunteers, Joanne served in church, the Epworth nursery, Sunday school, Jaycee Auxiliary and PEO. Walt was active in the Jaycees; served terms on the Midland City School Board; was elected for eight years as chairperson of the Midland County Republican Party; is a member of Kiwanis Kiwanis and has sung bass for more than 25 years with the Men of Music. Together, the couple volunteers in the Grace A. Dow Library’s genealogy room and helps with cataloging for the Historical Society.
Zoe Club of Midland • Celebrating 80 Years!

Friday March 27 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – $30  (RSVP required by March 23. Space is limited.)

Zoe Club is a women’s organization in Midland. It was founded in 1940 for the purpose of mutual helpfulness, sociability, self-improvement, participation in topics of civic interest aiding in every way possible, any movement for the betterment of the community. In the beginning it consisted of eight members who met in their homes. Today, over 200 women have been members. Charitable giving has always been a big part of Zoe Club. In 1944, Zoe Club designated two “benevolences” of $5 each to the Midland Cancer Fund and King’s Daughters. Since 2016, the club has donated $24,650 to local non-profit organizations.

Arthur C. Frock and Judith L. Frock • Community Leaders, Educators, Volunteers

Friday, April 3 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – $30  (RSVP required by March 30. Space is limited.)

Art and Judy married in 1960. Both Miami University graduates, their careers began in Ohio – Judy as an elementary school teacher and Art as a school administrator. Moving to Midland in 1985, Art became superintendent of MPS. He has served on several boards and committees, and chaired fundraising drives for United Way and Junior Achievement. He is a recipient of the Gerstacker Award and the Dr. Martin Luther King Recognition Award. Following his retirement, Art served as professor of Educational Administration at SVSU. When Judy taught in the Coleman Schools, she was recognized by CMU and the VFW for excellence in teaching. She was also recognized as one of the Extraordinary Women of Midland County, served on the Symphony board, was president of the Chippewa Nature Center board, and a founding board member of Mackinac Straits Raptor Watch. Judy remains active in League of Women Voters, the Midland 100 Club, and as president of her P.E.O. chapter.

James Kendall (92) • Community Leader, Legal Counsel, Volunteer

Friday, April 17 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – $30  (RSVP required by April 13. Space is limited.)

James was born and raised in Midland. He helped develop many of the organizations we enjoy today including the Midland Music Society and the Midland Area Community Foundation. James assisted with getting Northwood Institute (University) started by serving as legal counsel and trustee for several years, as well as the development of Saginaw Valley College (SVSU). He is an honorary member of Rotary and started the pancake supper as Rotary president, and is a founder of Eagle Village. James served as Republican Party chairman “when politics was civil.” He is an elder and trustee at Memorial Presbyterian Church and has enjoyed 63 years of marriage to his wife Tooney.
Carol Coppage (81) • Community Leader, Arts Administrator, Educator, Volunteer

Friday, April 24 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – $30  (RSVP required by April 20. Space is limited.)

Carol was born and raised in Lancaster, Pennsylvania and moved to Midland with her husband John in 1961 where they raised three daughters. She holds a degree in biology and worked as chemical analyst. Her interest in art history – and many volunteer hours – led to a position as administrator for the Midland Art Council of the MCFTA. She also served as executive director of the Northwood University Alden B. Dow Creativity Center, supervised a Fellowship Residency Program, and established the annual International Conference on Creativity in Colleges and Universities. She was on the Creative Education Foundation Board and a charter member of the American Creativity Association. She organized the Alden B. Dow archives, where she served as director. She retired in 1998, and enjoys an active and interesting life in California.

Janet Yerby, Ph.D. (80) • Author, Educator, Volunteer

Friday, May 1 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – $30  (RSVP required by April 27. Space is limited.)

Janet is a retired Professor Emerita from CMU in the Department of Communication where she taught both undergraduate and graduate students and conducted research in interpersonal communication for 22 years. She has authored a book on family communication and published several research articles. Janet has been involved in Creative 360 since its founding. She has served on the board of directors and was the board’s third president. She credits Creative 360 with nourishing her interest in the arts and humanities. Over the years, Janet has done poetry performances and participated in many arts events and shows.

Douglas Bloodgood (80) • Entrepreneur, Performer, Sailor, Veteran

Friday, May 15 – 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. – $30  (RSVP required by May 11. Space is limited.)

Douglas grew up in Grand Rapids and had an early instinct for business. As a child, he earned money delivering newspapers, and sold gourds he grew to a florist. At 14, he had saved enough to buy his first sailboat – a class C racing scow that he and his father raced. At the same time, Douglas discovered a love for theatre and performed in high school plays. All three interests – business, sailing and acting – are passions that shaped his life. Following his service in the Navy, Douglas studied business management and began his banking career at Michigan National Bank. When he retired, he filled his days with community theatre, cross-country skiing, biking and sailing. Douglas is grateful for family and friends, fair winds, apple pie and Creative 360’s gallery, stage and entertaining programs.
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Creative 360 is a not-for-profit community arts and wellness organization founded in 1994.

Creative 360’s Mission:
To create environments that allow people of all ages and abilities to experience the creative process, and to enhance physical, mental and spiritual wellness through the arts and humanities.

Creative 360’s Core Values:
Inclusiveness – No matter your age, gender, race, beliefs, skills or life circumstances, you are welcome at Creative 360 and are free to be yourself.

Creativity – We believe that imagination and free expression are essential to any person’s life. We see creativity not as a finished product, but a journey of discovery, so we provide a non-judgmental atmosphere where all work is treasured.

Respect – We respect not only people, but also ideas. We are open to new and non-traditional programming. We believe in the power of saying “yes”.

Community – We believe that unity and compassion are components of a strong society. We work to bring people together.

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