



Southwest Region

Michigan Family Support Council

34th ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Welcome to beautiful Boyne Highlands! Whether it's your first time, or your 34th, enjoy the conference and wonderful setting.

Southwest's annual conference was held Thursday, May 19, 2016, at the Berrien County Community Room. We had record attendance with 104 attendees! We were a little crowded, but what a problem to have! We commenced the program with Legislative Updates presented by Ottawa County Judges Jon Van Allsburg and Kent Engle. The Judges were informative and as popular as ever. Next up was Matthew Walny from Jackson County FOC with his presentation "There's a Hole in the Bucket!" I know Matthew experienced a slight technical difficulty but this is no way detracted from his presentation and I have been contacted for his information more than once. He is also on the agenda for this very conference here at Boyne! Lisa Bartoszek, Director of Lory's Place, gave a brief summary of her organization which was our chosen Silent Auction Charity this year. The MDHHS IV-D Director, Erin Frisch, provided an overview of things going on in the Child Support arena. We then were treated to an amazing lunch catered by CK Catering. We had so much (too much) wonderful food and the desserts!! Oh my! After lunch, SW's own Jennifer Granzow spoke on UIFSA 2008. Jennifer also volunteered to step in to cover for a speaker who unfortunately had to cancel. The audience was polled and a Social Media presentation was requested. Closing out the day was Stephen Rambeaux, Court Administrator, Pokagon Band of Potawatomi with a presentation on Tribal Issues. This was excellent and filled with valuable information for those of us who are, or will be, dealing with Tribal issues. It was a great day with fabulous presentations and our evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. As always, we welcome ideas for future conferences to meet the needs of our members in the Southwest region and further afield.

Our Silent Auction enjoyed another successful year. As previously mentioned, our chosen charity recipient was Lory's Place. It was especially poignant due to a recent tragedy in the Berrien County area just prior to our Spring conference. We thank the wonderful people involved with the organization and were happy to donate art supplies and a cash donation. Thanks to Matt Schmid, Kyle Wilke-Bedore and JoAnn Madsen, our Silent Auction committee, for their hard work and dedication in obtaining donations and organizing the auction itself. And I can never express enough our gratitude to everyone who participated and donated to the Silent Auction.

This year the SW Board was cohesive and intact from the previous year. For the first time in many, many years, we have two representatives from Branch County. Thanks to a job move, we "stole" Lona Julien from the Southeast region and she brought along Jennifer Galloway to attend our meetings. I am also pleased to report that under Lona's watch, Branch County will be sending attendees to the Fall Conference.

As always, I would like to thank the Board for all the hard work they do throughout the year and the wonderful support I have received during my tenure as President. The Board continues to amaze me with their dedication to the organization and the wonderful ideas they bring to each meeting. Thanks to Sheila, Terri (who still participates from afar), Erin, Jennifer, Jeff K, Matt, Sherry, Nancy, Donnella, Tami, Kyle, Jennifer G, Lona and Jo Ann.

The Board of Director's for 2015/2016 are as follows: Monica Morris-Moats (President), Calhoun County PA, Jeff Koteles (Vice-President/OCS representative to State Board), OCS, Sheila Waldrop (Treasurer/FOC representative to State Board), Berrien County FOC, and Nancy Schultz (Secretary), St. Joseph County FOC, and Jennifer Granzow (PA representative to State Board), Kalamazoo County PA.

Have a great time at Boyne!!

Sincerely,

Monica A. Morris-Moats
President, Southwest Region
Michigan Family Support Council