

## Wyoming Exchange Students Seek Host Families

BY RACHEL VANDERSTELT, LOCAL CETUSA COORDINATOR

Regina looks like the typical American high school student. She likes watching movies with her friends, loves Justin Bieber and wants to be on the cheer leading squad. Regina is an exchange student from Mexico, studying at Wyoming Public High School for the school year. She is living with a volunteer host family which is excited about the opportunity to learn about another culture and share their home with a student.

"For us, just having her around is the best part," said Host Mom Jamie. "Family game night is way better with three people. Allegan county fair is boring when your wife doesn't like the rides or if you don't have anyone to hold your corn dog while you go on the rides. However, add an exchange student and it is way better. You get a ride buddy while your wife holds your corn dog. Halloween is way better with Regina around. We get to decorate and carve pumpkins without looking odd because we don't have kids."

The Council for Educational Travel of

the United States of America, or CETUSA, is looking for volunteer host families. If you have the ability to spend time with a teenager over dinner, to help them build a better English vocabulary, to introduce them to your friends, and the patience to explain why Americans are diverse and what our freedom really means, then you may have what it takes to be a host parent for students from around the world.

Visiting students are fully screened for English language skills, hold a "B" average or better, pass a physical exam, have school academic and character recommendations, carry their own insurance, and follow State Department regulations. They provide their own spending money while host families provide a bed and meals.

"If you are already considering [hosting], you must want to do it so go for it, said Jamie. I wish I would have done it sooner. It is so amazing that these young students can give up family and friends for an entire school year to come here

to learn. It's not only to work on their already advanced English skills but to learn what they would be learning in school back home. For instance Regina is in Algebra 2, hard stuff. Now imagine trying to learn that in a foreign language. Her courage and dedication amaze me. If you aren't sure if you could do it for a whole school year start with the summer program. But just start, you won't regret it."

The bonds that are formed between the students and their host families and communities create lasting relationships with a deeper and more personal understanding of the world and our place in it. CETUSA is looking for host families for the 2016-17 school year and for a 4-6 week summer program. Contact Rachel VanderStelt, your local CETUSA coordinator at [rachel.cet@gmail.com](mailto:rachel.cet@gmail.com) for more information, to look at student profiles, or to sign up!

MAYOR'S

## Message



This December will again be a busy month for City employees as they hold a variety of programs and events to celebrate the season and the residents and businesses of Wyoming.

The Wyoming Gives Back event will be held from 6-8 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 3 at Rogers Plaza. Attendees of Wyoming Gives Back should bring a new, unwrapped toy to exchange for a raffle ticket. Raffle winners will receive prize packs from generous Wyoming businesses, while the collected toys will be donated to the Salvation Army Angel Tree.

This year's Great Candy Cane Hunt will take place at Pinery Park on Saturday, Dec. 12. This Wyoming tradition features lunch, games and crafts for families and children.

I am thankful for the Wyoming residents who participate in these community events, for the businesses that provide support and sponsorships and to our City staff who organize and volunteer. As always, I encourage you to be involved and be informed.

Mayor Jack A. Poll

## News Briefs

### MICHIGAN BLOOD

BLOOD DONORS make a lifesaving difference. You may be eligible to give blood if you are a healthy person age 17 or older (or 16 with parent's/guardian's consent), weighing 110 pounds or more. A MI Blood drive will be held at Wyoming City Hall, 1155 28th St. SW, in council chambers, on Wednesday, Dec. 9 from 8 a.m. to noon. Donors must sign in, present a photo identification or two forms of non-photo ID. Donors who are 16 years old will also need to present a parental consent form.

### PARKS AND RECREATION

THE GREAT CANDY CAN HUNT event for families with children from three to 14 years old will take place on Saturday, Dec. 12 at Pinery Park at 11 a.m. At the completion of the hunt, participants are invited to warm up at the Wyoming Senior Center, with lunch, games and crafts. Santa will be on hand to personally receive your Holiday Wish List. The cost to attend The Great Candy Cane Hunt is \$4 for Wyoming youth and \$6 for non-residents. Additional family members can enjoy lunch along with the kids for just \$2. For information and registration, contact the Wyoming Parks and Recreation Department at 530-3164 or parks\_info@wyomingmi.gov. Remember to dress appropriately for the weather on the day of the event.

PLANNING A BIRTHDAY PARTY, REUNION or other family event? Park reservations for the May 1 through Sept. 30 2016 season can be made starting Dec. 1. Call 530-3164 or stop by the Parks and Recreation Department office in Wyoming City Hall Monday through Thursday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information on facility amenities and costs, visit [www.wyomingmi.gov](http://www.wyomingmi.gov).

### PUBLIC SAFETY

CAR SEAT INSPECTIONS will be available Thursday, Dec. 10 and Thursday Jan. 7 at Wyoming Fire Station #1, 1500 Burton St. SW from 5 to 8 p.m. Pre-register by calling Safe Kids of Greater Grand Rapids at 391-7233, ext. 2.

### WYOMING HISTORICAL COMMISSION

ARE YOU A HISTORY BUFF? Interested in learning more about Wyoming's history? Check out the Wyoming Historical Commission's Facebook page at [facebook.com/wyoming.historyroom](https://facebook.com/wyoming.historyroom).

### LIBRARY

HOLIDAY CLOSINGS are scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 24, Friday, Dec. 25 and Friday, Jan. 1. The library will close at 5 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 31.

ADULT BOOK CLUB is a friendly, informal discussion on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room. The December selection is "Wonder," by R. J. Palacio. January's selection is "The Nightengale," by Kristin Hannah, followed by "A Dog's Purpose," by H. Bruce Cameron in February.

HEALTH INSURANCE ENROLLMENT ASSISTANCE will be available for adults on Thursday, Dec. 17 from 2 to 5 p.m. Cherry Street Health Services enrollment staff and other community organizations will provide information about the Healthy Michigan Plan and assistance in applying. There will be a question and answer session as well as on-site enrollment assistance. For further information, call (866) 299-1339 or visit [www.cherryhealth.org](http://www.cherryhealth.org).

For further details on these and the library's many programs, stop in the library to pick up a program guide, check out [www.kdl.org](http://www.kdl.org) or call 784-2007.

## Telephone Numbers

Mayor's Office .....	530-7227
City Manager.....	530-3173
City Clerk .....	530-7296
Police Department.....	530-7300
Fire Department .....	530-7250
Public Works .....	530-7260
Utilities .....	261-3550
Planning & Community Development.....	530-7258
Parks & Recreation.....	530-3164
Building Inspections.....	530-7285
Assessor .....	530-7231
District Court.....	257-9814
Treasurer .....	530-7280
Utility Billing.....	530-7389
Wyoming Senior Center.....	530-3190
Wyoming Public Library.....	784-2007

## Meetings

**City Council Meeting** | on the first and third Mondays of the month at 7 p.m. at City Hall in Council Chambers.

**City Council Work Sessions** | on the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. at City Hall in Council Chambers.

**Planning Commissions Meetings** | on the third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at City Hall in Council Chambers.

**Zoning Board Of Appeals** | on the first and third Monday afternoons of the month at 1:30 p.m. at City Hall in Council Chambers.

**Parks & Recreation Commission** | on the second Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. at City Hall in the West Conference Room

## Wyoming City Council

Jack Poll, Mayor  
 Sam Bolt, Mayor Pro tem,  
 Council Member-at-Large  
 Dan Burrill, Council Member-at-Large  
 Kent Vanderwood, Council Member-at-Large  
 Bill VerHulst, 1st Ward Council Member  
 Richard K. Pastoor, 2nd Ward Council Member  
 Joanne Voorhees, 3rd Ward Council Member

## Reach Us Online

[www.wyomingmi.gov](http://www.wyomingmi.gov)  
[www.twitter.com/WyomingCityHall](https://www.twitter.com/WyomingCityHall)  
[www.facebook.com/cityofwyoming](https://www.facebook.com/cityofwyoming)  
[www.linkedin.com/company/city-of-wyoming-mi](https://www.linkedin.com/company/city-of-wyoming-mi)