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"Opening Doors for Youth"

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One of my favorite summer activities in West Michigan is the local Fairs. Each Fair has its own unique character. What other region has fairs that feature airplanes, balloons, tulips, babies, red flannel, cherries, the Coast Guard, rodeo, great music and always plenty of delicious food? My favorite fair is coming August 8 - 13, 2005, the Kent County Youth Fair. It is a combination of youthful enthusiasm, parental guidance and the unpredictability of the animals.

Last year I was invited to serve as a judge for the Club Booths. I guess they figured even a city boy (we didn't have much livestock in Chicago) could handle that task. I thought I was going to spend an hour or so carrying out my judging duties and then head back home. But I became fascinated watching the kids interact with their animals under the watchful eye of their parents. What a wonderful opportunity for kids to develop their character while having a lot of fun. Linda Patterson, our team processor has been involved with the Kent County Youth Fair for years. In recent years Linda has passed the torch of responsibility to her daughter Nikki. Nikki has gone from youthful exhibitor to Fair Queen to leader to member of the Fair Board.

Please come and join us at this year's Kent County Youth Fair. Our team will be helping to sponsor the Club booth prizes in addition to serving as judges. My partner, Dave Clouse, thought we should get even more involved, so we will have a small tent near the main entrance. Dave has arranged for some special games and activities for your kids as you enter the fair. He has enlisted the help of several of our friends and business partners. He hasn't shared the details with me, but he has been planning in secret for weeks. I think I overheard him talking about face painting, cookie decorating and cow chips. I hope I heard that last part wrong. Why did he remind me to wear my boots and bring a big shovel?

See you at the Fair!!!!

Harry Gribnitz

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PS: The enclosed information will tell you more about the activities scheduled for this years Kent County Youth Fair.