

# Truckload of flowers blooms for autism



SUN PHOTO BY DAVID LIAM KYLE

This American Gardens mobile flower bed drew stares and smiles at the Chagrin Falls sidewalk sale last week. The owner is raffling off \$2 tickets to win a seasonal truckload worth of plants to benefit the Cleveland Clinic Center for Autism.

By Kim Wendel  
Staff Writer

The green mint-condition 1952 Chevy truck caught the eye of many men last week. But it was the truck's bed, overflowing with flowers and plants, that attracted the women walking by.

That's exactly what American Landscapes owner Jeff McIntosh wanted.

Not to attract clients for his Maple Lane landscaping business, although he admitted that would be a nice, unintentional result.

McIntosh is selling raffle tickets for a truckload of greenery to raise money for the Cleveland Clinic's Center for Autism. His girlfriend, Mandi Rickelman, is one of the center's teachers, and the young couple wants to do their part.

"We've been selling the tickets all summer," he said. "You'll see the truck at different locations throughout August and the first few days in September."

The center, inside the Cleveland Clinic Children's Hospital for Rehabilitation on See FLOWERS, page A10

# Flowers

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Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Cleveland, provides services and support to children with autism, as well as fostering autism research.

Autism is a neuro-biological, lifelong disorder that affects the functioning of the

brain and interferes with the normal development of reasoning, behavior, social interaction and communication.

Steve and Stella King loaned McIntosh the Chevy truck, but the vehicle is not included in the raffle.

"The winner will get fresh nursery stock compatible with the fall growing season. We'll deliver it free locally but we

won't be planting it for the winner," he added.

Locally, he said, means the Chagrin Falls, Bainbridge, Solon and Moreland Hills area, and as far east as Aurora. The assortment will include flowering plants, shrubbery and "a couple of trees."

McIntosh's [www.americangardens.net](http://www.americangardens.net) Web site is loaded with humor about the fund-

raiser. "Anytime you see someone wearing an American Gardens T-shirt, ask them about the raffle, then tell them to get back to work," i reads.

Tickets are \$2 each, "or send a couple of bucks and a (self-addressed, stamped envelope) to American Gardens, 1 Maple Lane Chagrin Falls, Ohio, 44022. Just two bucks, less than a (Starbucks) decaf grande mocha frappuccino. You can swing it," McIntosh says.

Tickets are also available through Labor Day in Chagrin Falls at: The Popcorn Shop, 53 N. Main St.; Paw Prints Bakery in StepNorth, off East Orange Street;

Jason's on the River, 43 Bell St.; Cottonwood/Mitchel Gold, 19 N. Franklin St.; The Village Herb Shop, 17 E. Orange; Find Me, 24 N. Main; and the River Street salon, 49 W. Orange.

The winning ticket will be pulled out of a 20-gallon Stetson cowboy hat on Labor Day "somewhere public, maybe in front of the Popcorn Shop," McIntosh said.

The winner will be notified "by whatever contact info you've given us (because) our telepathy is temporarily out of order."