



Spring 2022

TRUE TO LIFE

A publication of the Evangelical Child and Family Agency

Pins, Pizza, and Praise!

It's been too long since we last gathered for pizza, smiles, prizes, gutter balls, strikes, and raising funds to support ECFA's life-affirming ministries. However, that delay only added to the enjoyment of the 80 supporters who participated in the 2022 edition of our *Heart for Life* bowling fundraiser, which produced record-setting proceeds of over \$11,000! Bowlers of all ages and skill levels showed their true hearts, generosity, and love for others by contributing their time, money, and laughter to this day of fun and fundraising.

Julie Twohill, Pregnancy Support Services (PSS) Caseworker, started off the day by sharing information about PSS, as well as the story of a current client who has been supported through her decision to make an adoption plan for her baby. Pizza, soda, and cake provided fuel for all as we headed to the lanes

filled with optimism for high scores. Throughout the day over 500 mini prizes were handed out for everything from a strike, to simply having a pet at home! Indeed, a fun-filled day for everyone.

We'd be remiss if we didn't say a few "thanks". Thank you Fox Bowl for your continued partnership in making this a great day. Thank you to the Ozinga Foundation for your sponsorship of the event. Thanks to all of you who couldn't attend, but sent us your financial gifts in support of the event. Thank you to all who joined the event to share in fun, food, and fellowship for the ultimate purpose of helping ECFA serve others and share the love of God. We are blessed!

Mark your calendars now, as we're already scheduled for *Heart for Life* 2023 on Saturday, February 11th. See you at the pizza buffet!!!



*Love in Action
Friday - April 22, 2022
Register by April 11th!
Details inside on page 7*

Golf Outing & Auction

Monday, June 6

10:30 am Registration

Noon Shotgun Start

Warmer weather is on the way and it's time to make plans to join us at the Annual Golf Scramble and College Presidents' Cup Invitational. Get your foursome together and join us Monday, June 6th at the Elgin Country Club in support of ECFA's ministries. Beyond the golf, our silent auction provides the opportunity to walk away with some great items (like 7 nights in a beautiful, lakeside Florida vacation home that's just minutes from the ocean!), while helping raise much needed funds for ECFA at the same time.

Start your day on the driving range and then enjoy a buffet lunch prior to the Noon shotgun start. After enjoying your round of 18 on this exclusive, highly rated course, you'll appreciate the generous appetizer buffet as we close the day by wrapping up our silent



auction, presenting awards, and providing a brief update on ECFA.

For more information on registration, auction item donations, or event sponsorship, contact Tony Malandro at tonym@evancfa.org or 630-653-6400. You can also go directly to the event website to purchase tickets and/or make donations (<https://Scramble2022.givesmart.com>).

Mentoring Moms

For several months during 2020 and 2021, our volunteer translator Rebecca was able to work with our Pregnancy Support Services (PSS) social worker Julie and her client Katie* (not her real name) while Katie was pregnant with her third child. Katie is from another country and was in English classes but felt ill-equipped to have PSS sessions provided in English.

Once Katie's case with PSS was closed, Rebecca stepped in as Katie's mentor. Katie has really

benefitted from being mentored by Rebecca.

Rebecca says that Katie has been reaching out and opening up often about her struggles. Rebecca thinks it's rewarding to offer encouragement and suggestions to help Katie with her parenting. Katie says she feels better after talking to Rebecca and is so grateful to have Rebecca as her mentor.

~ Julie Twohill, MSW, LCSW



Illustration Only

If you are interested in helping mentor the mothers in our Pregnancy Support Services program, contact Faith at 630-653-6400.

ECFA Open House !!

Thursday, May 19, 2022 ~ 3:30 pm to 8:00 pm

1530 N. Main Street | Wheaton, IL 60137

It is hard to believe we have been back at 1530 N Main Street for 2 years. As many of you know, ECFA experienced a devastating fire in May of 2018. We were finally able to move back into our building on March 1, 2020. After enjoying our remodeled space for just a couple of weeks, the pandemic hit. Because of this, we have been unable to host an Open House. However, we

are excited to finally open our doors to friends, family, collaborative partners, and the community.

We would love for you to come and see us on May 19, 2022, between 3:30pm to 8:00pm. You will have the opportunity to tour the building, meet staff, hear about the various services we offer, and enjoy some light refreshments.

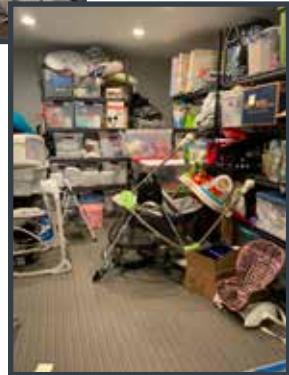
"We went through fire and flood, but you brought us to a place of abundance."

~ Psalm 66:12



Large Conference Room →

Kitchen ↑



Pregnancy Support Services Closet →



Staff Office →



Work Room ↑



No RSVP needed. We look forward to seeing you!

For I know the plans...

My story starts in Fall, 1971: boy meets girl, girl and boy are intimate, girl gets pregnant.

I was 19 and just beginning college.

In the early 1970s, a pregnant and unmarried girl was a huge stigma to carry. So, my godly mother protected me by hiding the pregnancy. Abortion was not an option I ever considered. With the help of Evangelical Child and Family Agency (ECFA) in Wheaton, I was placed in a foster home for five months to keep the secret from even my family and friends.

From the beginning, I knew that the baby belonged to someone else. When I learned that a pastor and his wife were interested in adopting my baby, I was so glad that this precious life would bring them joy.

On my 20th birthday, July 18, 1972, I gave birth to a healthy 8 lb. 9 oz. baby girl. I saw her only twice. I never held or cuddled her as most mothers do after birth. My prayer was that she would grow up to



Anna and her child, James, Kristy, and Lorna

know the Lord. I knitted her a newborn sweater and in a note to her I wrote, "Someday we will meet in heaven."

I knew my daughter would be loved abundantly by the adoptive parents. I left the hospital, and my baby girl left separately. For years I had to keep my story silent.

In the following years I graduated from college, met my husband, got married, and had three more children. But my story doesn't end there.

In 2011 the State of Illinois opened adoption records for parents and children to find their birth families. My husband, very interested in meeting my daughter, started the paperwork. But he passed away from cancer in 2013. In the meantime, Kristy had requested her birth records from the state and then discovered my married name.

That October I received a letter from ECFA indicating that someone wanted to meet me. Of course I was interested!

So, after 49 years I met my daughter, Kristy, at the ECFA office in Wheaton. My children, James and Anna, met her that day, too. There were lots of hugs, tears, and more hugs.



Lorna & Kristy

What a glorious day! Although I had lost my husband and suffered the tragic death of my youngest daughter, God had planned this blessing all along for me.

Kristy and I see each other regularly now and live only minutes away from each other in Elgin. On Wednesdays, we meet one-on-one for Bible study. We have a sweet relationship, not like mother-daughter, but it's deepening and very good.

Never once have I regretted my decision to choose life for my daughter. Yes, it was difficult and painful to release my baby girl 49 years ago. But I claim the verse in Jeremiah 29:11 "*For I know the plans I have for you,*" declares the Lord, "*plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.*"

~ Lorna

The ECWA Singers

Eleanor Weiberg and her brother, Leo von Busch took us up on our offer to drop by and visit the office. They brought along a piece of our history; a copy of the album of the ECWA Singers. The singers were organized by Harry Hunt in 1967. At that time, the Rev. Robert Murfin was the Executive Director and our offices were at 127 N. Dearborn St. in Chicago. The following people were in the choir in 1972:

Nancy Erickson

Marie Foran

Sarah Jacobson

Robin Lang

Clara Mains

Jack Mains

Dorothy Olson

David Riggle

Frank Salveson

Judy Samuelson

Virginia Saul

Wesley Saul

Carna Schroeder

Paul Schroeder

Twyla Van Vleet

Vernon Van Vleet

Leo Von Busch

This group of singers visited churches all over northern Illinois serving the Lord and helping Evangelical Child Welfare Agency, as we were known back then. Do you recognize any of the names listed here?

The efforts of our volunteers have taken many forms, but none as unique as the choir. The success of the Agency is directly related to the support of so many people through the years and saying thank you hardly seems adequate. And yet we are deeply grateful to each and every one of you. Opportunities still exist, and singing is not a requirement. Give Tony Malandro a call at 630-653-6400 if you interested in volunteering at ECFA.



Leo Von Busch was a member of the ECWA Singers and appears on the cover of the album.

On the left is the almost new album brought in by Leo. On the right you can see the water damaged copy we have that survived the fire.

ECFA Foundation

ECFA Foundation was founded in 1995 through the efforts of Henrietta VanDerMolen, a long-time board member and supporter of the agency. The mission of the Foundation is to promote and support the interests and purposes of ECFA as it offers Christ-centered services to children, families, and individuals.

Mrs. VanDerMolen's vision has come to fruition as the Foundation's contributions to the agency include the following:

- Scholarships for employees to complete their Masters of Social Work (MSW) degree
- Funding for new programs
- Assistance for equipment and automobile purchases

- Matching grant funds for major ECFA events
- Initial funding for new ECFA positions

ECFA has also partnered with the Barnabas Foundation to assist individuals in preparing wills and estate plans which prudently provide for bequests to Christian charities. In addition to direct donations and bequests, gifts of appreciated stock or other assets are also opportunities for contributing to the Foundation.

Please prayerfully consider an investment in ECFA Foundation, a gift which keeps giving back to the Agency in the future.

For further information, please contact Tim Carrick at 630-653-6400.

INTERNS



Alley Erickson



Liliana Salas

ECFA offers a distinct opportunity for graduate level college students to develop their ability to integrate their Christian faith with professional practice. Coming from diverse backgrounds, interns learn how to hone their skills and contribute their talents in the field of human services. These emerging professionals are preparing for future careers in child welfare, clinical practice, and other areas of social service.

Alexandra "Alley" Erickson began her internship in July of 2021 with our Pregnancy Support Services program.

Alley says: "I am thoroughly enjoying my time at ECFA! I've been learning how to engage with families and teach them parenting skills in a manner in which they can receive and understand them. This internship has confirmed that the most important relationship besides God, is the one you have with your family."

We wish Alley all the best following graduation from Aurora University.

Liliana Salas is currently pursuing a degree in Applied Psychology and Child Development at Judson University. She began her internship with our Pregnancy Support Services program on March 7. Liliana has always wanted to work with children and is grateful for this internship opportunity.

Liliana says, "When researching different agencies, I learned about the impact of ECFA on our community. I am eager to be involved and learn more about the ways ECFA is helping children, women, and families. I am so looking forward to learning as an intern at ECFA."

ECFA is pleased to work with Liliana as she learns more about the field of human services.

Love in Action

After a two-year hiatus prompted by Covid restrictions, our Love In Action Anniversary Dinner is back and better than ever! You won't want to miss this

amazing evening of inspiration and praise, celebrating ECFA's 72nd Anniversary. In addition to an ECFA "update" from Executive Director, Ken Withrow, you'll be inspired by the music of gospel artist and America's Got Talent Semi-Finalist, Sharon Irving.



Abby Johnson

Our keynote address will be presented by Abby Johnson, former Planned Parenthood Director turned pro-life activist. Abby has appeared on numerous TV and radio shows, spoke at the 2020 National Republican Convention, authored two books (one of which became the 2019 feature film "Unplanned"), and started her own ministry that

supports abortion-clinic workers' efforts to leave the industry.

This year's celebration is Friday, April 22nd at Abbington Distinctive Banquets in Glen Ellyn. There's still time to register by April 11th. There is no cost to attend, though an opportunity will be given during the evening to support the ministry of ECFA. Tables seat 10, and table sponsorships (\$360/table) are GREATLY appreciated.

For more information or to register, contact Tony Malandro by phone at 630-653-6400 ext. 7210, via email at tonym@evancfa.org, or register at our event website, <https://LIA2022.givesmart.com>. We hope to see you there!!



Sharon Irving

Coming Events

Stride for Life - September 17th

People often ask how they can "support" ECFA. One very simple answer is to participate in one of our fund raising events! Mark your calendars now and plan to join us for our annual Stride for Life fun run/walk/bike event on Saturday, September 17th at scenic Herrick Lake in Wheaton. Bring family and friends for outdoor fun.



Auction - November 11th

Another opportunity to have a great time AND support ECFA is our Annual Benefit Auction, which will be held Friday, November 11th at Abbington Distinctive Banquets in Glen Ellyn. Look for future event updates in our newsletter, or check out the "Events" section on our website at www.evancfa.org.



Memorials and Tributes

In Loving Memory

Dale Bonga

From: Bill and Marilyn Newell

Virginia Celmer

From: Frank and Beverly Kvasnicka

Forrest L Haney

From: Doug and Linda Haney

Maurice Hellmer

From: Joanne Gill

Eleanor Hill

*From: Suzanne Evans
Marie Davis*

Addie Jurs

From: Jerome Jurs

Jean Schultz

From:

David and Diane Baeza

Sue and Camby Compton

Barb and Glenn Cook

Tarry and Laura Dozark

Jack and Sue Olthoff

Tim and Tara Russelle

Dennis and Joyce Selix

Randall and Janice Swart

Barry Voss

TOPS Club of IL Thornton Chapter #790

Jim Stanels

From: Mr. and Mrs. David Tregay

Doris Wheeler

From: Curtis Smith

In Honor of

Dante Buchanan

From: Mrs. Marlene Brokaw

Brooke Malcolm

From: Lee and Nancy Lewis