



True to Life

An Evangelical Child and Family Agency Publication

SUMMER 2019



Waiting – Being Actively Still... *Is that even possible?*

ECFA is so blessed to work with Christ-centered, God-pursuing families; we are often left

humbled and speechless as we observe God at work in our pre-adoptive families' lives. This journey of adoption is not for the faint at heart. It takes patience and endurance. This kind of patience is not of this world but can only be found in God. Our culture does not cultivate patience; it demands things in an instant (fast food, drive-thru's, amazon prime, etc.).

The second phase of the adoption process is referred to as "waiting". For some, this may be a month, and others, it may be up to six years. Yes, that's right - six years! Domestic families "wait" for a call from the agency to receive their permission to show their profile. They "wait" to be chosen by a birthparent(s). They "wait" to meet the birthparent(s). They "wait" to see the baby for the first time. And then they "wait" for the termination of parental rights hearing assuring them that the birthparent(s) are confident about their placing decision. International families "wait" for their paperwork and dossier to be approved. They "wait" to be matched with a child. They "wait" for country approval. They "wait" to travel. Then they "wait" to meet their child.

We journey with, but cannot adequately express, how families walk through this phase of adoption. We would like to share some reflections of our current adoptive families in the trenches of "waiting" on God to grow their family.

"Waiting for a child at times can be tear-filled as our



hearts long for something that comes so easily to most. Waiting not just affects us but at times hurts the heart of our daughter as she

asks and hopes for a sibling. But waiting also pushes us closer to our God who has all things planned, a purpose and in turn is constantly bringing peace and comfort in this journey. We could not do it without Him!" -Words of a waiting domestic adoptive mom.

"In the wait, we changed a lot, we went from ASSUMING He would give us what we wanted, to BEGGING Him to give us what we wanted, to getting MAD at God for not giving us what we wanted, and then eventually realizing that what God wants for us is actually better than what we desire. Surrendering your desires to God is NOT easy". -Words of a waiting international adoptive mom

"I am learning to let go of my life even more...and let God hold me and my future in His righteous right hand." Isaiah 41:10 – "Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God.

I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." – Words of a waiting international adoptive mom

In these reflections, it is evident that "waiting", indeed, is being actively still with a fragile heart, open hands, and an attuned heart towards God, trusting Him to know what is the very best!



Both pictures on this page are stock photos

ECFA Foundation, Inc.

The ECFA Foundation was formed to promote and support the mission of Evangelical Child & Family Agency in Wisconsin and Illinois. It is a long-term fund set in place to assist the Agency, as it offers compassionate Christ-centered services to children, families and individuals now and in the future.

The Foundation was initiated with the foresight of ECFA Board member, the late Henrietta VanderMolen. It was her heart's desire to see expectant mothers assisted through their unplanned pregnancies, while offering life-valuing options. In the early 1990's, her home in Wheaton, Illinois, was sold and the proceeds served as the seed money to begin the Foundation in 1995. Led by its own Board of Directors, the long-term goal of the Foundation is to increase funds to resource ECFA's life-affirming services.

The Foundation has helped the Agency in a variety of ways. These include assistance with paving the parking lot at the office, scholarships for agency social workers to acquire a Master of Social Work degree, matching grants for special fundraising events, printing of new adoption and pregnancy support services brochures, and many other needs.

You may choose to donate a tax-deductible gift to ECFA Foundation, Inc. in the following ways: giving a cash donation; designating a life insurance policy to the Foundation; making an estate designation; making a year-end gift, tribute gift, memorial gift, gift of stock, securities, or real estate.

If you are interested in receiving more details about the Foundation, please contact Jennie Tietjen at 262/789-1881 for an informational brochure.

**Check-in: 9 am -11 am
at Bethesda Park, Waukesha**

Travel: The Fox River Trail

**Raise Funds for Moms, Dads & Babies!
\$10,000 Dollar for Dollar Matching Gift
from Anonymous Friends of ECFA**

IN LOVE
1 COR. 13:14
SUPPORTING
MOMS,
DADS
& BABIES

**ECFA's
Bike
& RUN/WALK!**

33rd ANNUAL FUNDRAISER
Saturday, September 7, 2019
9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

ECFA
EVANGELICAL CHILD & FAMILY AGENCY

See enclosed brochure for more information

Financial Stability – Wisconsin Right to Life for the WIN!!

In ECFA's spring newsletter, our Pregnancy Support Services program shared about the housing partnerships that we have developed in the Greater Milwaukee area for our homeless clients. Another partnership we have cultivated through the years is with Wisconsin Right to Life and their Emergency Grant Program. This grant assists pregnant women who are at risk of homelessness, facing eviction, or simply have fallen on hard financial times. Any agency working with a pregnant woman can apply and receive this money to help provide financially for a pregnant woman's needs. ECFA has partnered with Wisconsin Right to Life on numerous occasions, requesting funds for several of our clients.



“Sarah” (not her real name) was homeless and pregnant when she entered our services. Together, with Sarah, we were able to find a pregnancy home (New Beginnings) for her to live in, but there was a \$250.00 deposit

required. Wisconsin Right to Life emergency grant provided the needed funds for Sarah to move into New Beginnings.

“Shantel” was 8-months pregnant and newly sober. Part of her probation included a stipulation that she needed to live in sober living and participate in sober living programming. Most sober living housing is not free. Shantel was not employable due to being late in pregnancy and her required sobriety programming was a priority for her. Shantel was accepted into Cedar House Sober Living but needed to find a way to pay for the monthly rent of \$700.00. Wisconsin Right to Life's emergency grant approved her request of payment for two months. Shantel has maintained her sobriety, is successfully parenting her son, and has been recently employed.

Sheryl” was pregnant with her second child; both she and her toddler were sleeping on the floor because they couldn't afford a bed to sleep on. Wisconsin Right to Life paid their rent for a month so Sheryl could use her funds to purchase a bed.

“Shaylyn” was working full-time at PetCo but had no benefits and no maternity leave. She needed to pay her rent. She had one eviction on her record and if she received

another, she was at great risk of being homeless with her newborn son, who was born three weeks early. ECFA requested the emergency grant, and



Shaylyn's rent was paid. She was able to spend time bonding with her son in her apartment, free of financial stress, thanks to Wisconsin Right to Life. Shaylyn stated at the close of services, *“I truly could not have done it without all of you, you saved my life in a big way! And I say thank you, keep up the great work. One day I hope I can help a girl like me!!!”*

At ECFA, our goal is to share our love for Jesus with our clients. But, it is nearly impossible to serve clients' deeper needs (mental health, spiritual, emotional, parental, behavioral, etc.) when they are in constant financial crisis. Thank you, Wisconsin Right to Life, for helping many of our clients maintain financial stability. What a blessing this partnership has been!

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RIGHTTOLIFE



35th Anniversary Celebration Banquet

An inspiring evening was experienced by everyone who attended the Anniversary Banquet at the Marriott Milwaukee West Hotel on May 17th. A \$15,000 matching grant given to the agency by a like-minded, pro-life, Christian organization was met in full and surpassed with nearly two-thirds of the match reached before the evening began. At the agency, staff have praised our wonderful God for the blessing of these added funds.



By affirming this heritage, tribute was paid to ECFA's solid foundation and ongoing vitality. To set the tone for the recognition, Pastor Andrew Hopgood, on staff at New Testament Church gave a heart-stirring invocation. His church was among the agency's earliest supporters.



The evening was powerful as we celebrated the foundation upon which ECFA was built. Honor was paid to some of the original Task Force members, who, beginning in 1982, worked tirelessly to bring the Agency to life. Ed Plagemann, our emcee for the evening,

was one of the original members. Recognition was also given to past Wisconsin Directors who continued the mission to the present.



During the evening, Chad and Tosha Lindemann, one of our adoptive couples, shared the story of their daughter's adoption. Dorinne Geldon, ECFA's long-serving, adoption social worker, facilitated the recounting of the trials and joys of bringing their daughter to her forever home. The ICPC (Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children) adoption took



A Celebrated Past – A Confident Future



place in Texas. They shared many aspects of this particular path including costs and their reason for an ICPC adoption.

Following the Lindemanns, a Pregnancy Support Services client, Jamia, shared her amazing journey from considering abortion to choosing life for her twins. She told how Dottie Enders, Executive Director of Eye Witness for Life, an ECFA partner, worked together with Alycia Johnson, PSS social worker, to serve her and her family.

If you were unable to attend and would like to view either of these testimonies, you may go to www.ecfawisc.org/banquet.html, or the Evangelical Child and Family Agency of Wisconsin's Facebook page and view them there.



The music by Pastor Dan Forness was inspirational and touched many hearts. Our guest speaker Janet Parshall's presentation was undoubtedly challenging to every believer

in the room. She thoughtfully and thoroughly reviewed the setbacks and triumphs of the pro-life cause from her Washington, D.C. viewpoint. It was encouraging to realize that the work of ECFA is both necessary and increasingly persuasive.



We look forward to seeing you Friday, May 15, 2020, at the Marriott Milwaukee West Hotel for our 36th Anniversary Celebration Banquet featuring Point of Grace. Please plan now to join us.

REBUILDING ECFA - Illinois

It has been over a year since a devastating fire utterly destroyed our main office building at 1530 North Main Street in Wheaton. Fire inspectors determined it was caused by an electrical failure in the wiring above the ceiling in the children's playroom. Since then, our staff has been working from two temporary locations, one in downtown Wheaton, and the other in Lisle, Illinois.



We are happy to report that progress is being made in restoring our building. All our architectural plans have now been approved by the City of Wheaton. The roof has been reconstructed, rough plumbing has been done, the HVAC system is being installed, doorways are being built, windows are being replaced, and the interior framing is underway. We are anticipating that the building will be ready for occupancy by summer's end.

*Celebrating
500 Adoptions!*



An afternoon of fun for Adoptive Families



Sunday, August 11, 2019

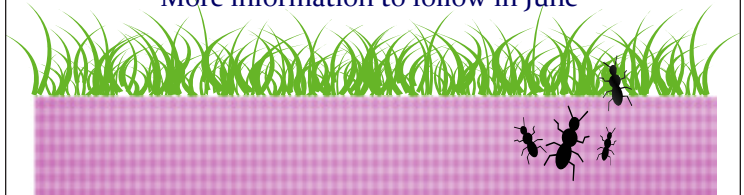
1:00 pm

Featuring:
**Professional Magician &
ECFA Adoptive Dad**

ProHealth Care Park

2950 S Sunny Slope Rd, New Berlin

More information to follow in June

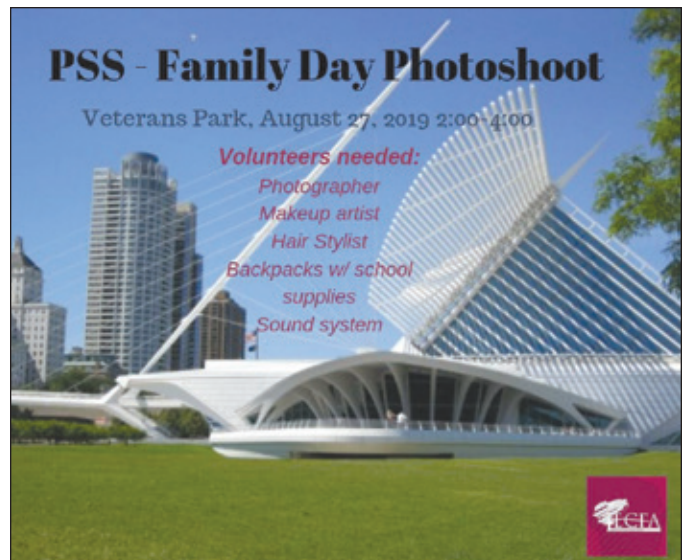


PSS - Family Day Photoshoot

Veterans Park, August 27, 2019 2:00-4:00

Volunteers needed:

Photographer
Makeup artist
Hair Stylist
Backpacks w/ school
supplies
Sound system



ECFA Office WISH LIST

- 1 Newborn/Preemie clothing for girls and boys
 - 2 Children's Books for 0-24 months
 - 3 Leggings - to go with our many onesies 0-24 months
 - 4 Volunteers for PSS Family Day Photoshoot
- Call Dawn at ECFA 262-789-1881





With A Grateful Heart

There is a continual outpouring of blessings received by this ministry.
As a result, there are many individuals to be grateful for in each quarterly newsletter.
"I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart; I will tell of the wonders." Psalm 9:1

♥ Thank you to all the dedicated volunteers who assembled mailings for the agency on April 23rd & July 9th:

Claudette Ahlgren	Sue Kusnierz
Ron & Jan Baer	Barb Pogorzelski
Jane Brooks	Karen Ridder
Annette Cernohous	Nancy Roets
Barb Chernouski	Jane Runnels
Joyce Dankert	Micki Schmitz
Jeanne David	Beverly Schrieder
Kim Dobernig	Dave Tietjen
Kathy Dow	Leah Valentine
Ruth Engelhardt	Sophia Valentine
Friends of ECFA	Margo Whitcomb
Anita Julius	Tina Wienss
Beverly Kuntzsch	Judy Zwitter

Serving at Our Office:

- ♥ Four beautiful flower pots in front of our office and weeding of our gardens by Tina Wienss.
- ♥ Serving as regular volunteers in the office - Annette Cernohouse, Tina Wienss, Carol Yule, Micki Schmitz

Pregnancy Support for our Baby Blessings Boutique:

- ♥ Preemie baby bath holder & nursing pillow from a friend of ECFA.
- ♥ Crocheted baby blankets and baby socks from Frieda Kamentz.
- ♥ Baby clothes, blanket, onesies, washcloths, baby socks, toys, and newborn hat from Lois Gantner.
- ♥ Pregnancy Support books from Maureen Riordan.
- ♥ Baby bath holder from a close friend of ECFA.

Miscellaneous Gifts:

- ♥ Banquet program printing from Amanda Johnson at Eagle Printing.
- ♥ Beautiful design work on our Banquet invitations and programs by Becca Schwartz.
- ♥ Four various size bicycle baskets for our Bike & Hike from a friend of ECFA.

Memorials

In loving memory of:

My husband, Richard Dean, Alycia's "Grampy"
who was so proud of her and all she is doing.

From: Donna Dean



In loving memory of:

Our brother, Michael Gallow

From: Al & Susan Sanchez



In loving memory of:

Bernice Heron

From: Gladys Ramsey, Kathy Sowiak
Dave & Jennie Tietjen and Peter & Doreen Tietjen



In loving memory of:

Our sweet friend Frank Oslin

From: Bob & Karyl Kennedy



In loving memory of:

Richard "Dick" Price

From: Dave & Jennie Tietjen



In loving memory of:

Our mother, Mildred Schildt

From: Ken & Gerry Connor



In loving memory of:

My wife, Jan Schley

From: Jerry Schley



In loving memory of:

Our friend, Richard Steliga

From: Ray & Jane Brooks

Tribute

In honor of:

Our adopted son from ECFA, Alec Sanchez
From: Al & Susan Sanchez



Evangelical Child
& Family Agency
1617 South 124th Street
New Berlin, WI 53151

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ENCLOSED:

Bike
&
Hike
Brochure

Prayer
Pathways
Card

Join Us!

Mark Your Calendars for 2019

ECFA's
**Bike
& HIKE!**
Supporting Moms, Dads & Babies

33rd Annual Bike & Hike Fundraiser, Supporting Moms, Dads, & Babies

Saturday, September 7th at 9 am, on the Fox River Trail.
Meet at the Bethesda Park Shelter



2nd Annual ECFA Benefit Auction,
on November 22nd, Doors open at 6 pm
at Sheraton 375 S Moreland Rd, Brookfield

For information regarding these events,
contact Sue at the office
262.789.1881 or suec@ecfawisc.org