



Spring 2018

# TRUE TO LIFE

A publication of Evangelical Child & Family Agency

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## FAMILIES IN CRISIS

Intact Family Services (IFS) is ECFA's largest program but often the least understood. Our staff provides case management services to families who have been investigated by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). In most cases, one or both parents have been "indicated" for abuse or neglect of one or more of the children in their home. This means that there is evidence to substantiate the report of maltreatment. DCFS makes referrals to ECFA to provide intensive, in-home services to these families. Our goal is to ensure the ongoing safety of the children and to prevent them from being placed into foster care.

Intact Family Services focuses on at-risk situations because children may remain in the home with the perpetrator. High levels of stress in these families and the lack of support can result in incidents of abuse and neglect. In some cases, single mothers in the program try to care for their children while struggling financially. Frequently, they lack an adequate support system to rely upon. We can only imagine what it would be like not being able to call one's parent or other family members for help when it is needed.

This year the IFS program has seen a much higher percentage of homeless families than usual. These families may reside in shelters, hotel rooms, or in overcrowded housing with friends or relatives who have temporarily allowed them to reside with them. Many parents also lack transportation which makes it difficult to get to appointments, attend recommended services, go grocery shopping, or utilize

other community resources such as food pantries and job training. It is common for an IFS client to be a single parent with limited resources, unstable housing, and transportation barriers which make the already difficult job of parenting even more stressful. These parents have to figure out how to take their children to medical appointments, go grocery shopping with their kids in tow, look for jobs, and accomplish difficult tasks that are routine in two-parent households.



Helping these families can be very challenging due to the barriers to services and lack of support these parents experience. IFS case managers do all they can for their clients within limited time constraints. It would be so helpful to these families if there were more resources available for transportation and other issues. They most certainly need encouragement and practical means of support.

*continued on page 3*

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Love in Action – May 4th!! – Time to RSVP!!  
See inside for details.

# Let's Celebrate!!! 68th Love in Action Anniversary Dinner

Friday, May 4th at 7:00 pm ~ Doors open at 6:30 pm

Hilton Lisle/Naperville, 3003 Corporate Drive, Lisle

- Featuring the musical group, *Point of Grace*
- Complimentary dinner (reservations required)
- Compelling stories from ECFA clients
- Opportunity to share financially in ECFA's ministries



Shelley Bream, Leigh Cappillino, and Denise Jones have over 8 million recordings sold, 3 Grammy nominations, and multiple Dove awards. Their memorable melodies and soaring harmonies have inspired many to live boldly and keep God's love the foundation of their lives.

Space is limited. Make your reservations now. To RSVP, contact Odette at 630-653-6400 x 214 or email [odetten@evanfca.org](mailto:odetten@evanfca.org). We look forward to sharing an enjoyable and inspirational evening with you.



## BUILD-A-BEAR

On two days in March, different classes of kindergarten students from Wheaton Christian Grammar School, along with their teachers and parents, visited ECFA bringing "Build-A-Bear" gifts. Intact Family Services Supervisor, Brigid Luke, told the children that many of our kids do not have any stuffed animals and only a few toys.

Brigid went on to say that these gifts will put a smile on their faces and a smile on Jesus' face too. The kindergarten students all had names for the stuffed bears they brought. The most common name was "Brownie"!



## FAMILIES IN CRISIS *continued from page 1*

“Emily” (not her real name) loves all her children and wants to be the best mom she can be for them. One child has significant medical needs. Due to a lack of self-confidence and her own trauma history, she has shut down emotionally when at her child’s medical appointments. This behavior was perceived by medical professionals as Emily not listening or caring, but that is far from the case.

Instead, Emily’s anxiety was so profound that she had a great deal of difficulty understanding anything the doctors were telling her. Her IFS caseworker identified the problem and began attending appointments with her. Emily was also referred for counseling at ECFA. Her counselor attended appointments with her as well, and helped her work through her fears and anxiety. Now Emily feels more confident speaking with medical professionals, making appointments, and is consistent in attending services for her children. We found that Emily is not a mom who does not care, but one who needs supportive people in her life.



We are looking for mentors to come alongside young parents like Emily as well as volunteers to take them to various appointments. We would welcome any assistance to help us serve parents and children in our community. For more information about ECFA’s Intact Family Services, please contact Brigid Luke, Intact Family Services Supervisor, at 630/653-6400 extension 226.

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## RIBFEST-IT'S ABOUT KIDS



Every summer the Naperville Exchange Club hosts Ribfest to increase awareness and raise support for local human services agencies that provide domestic violence and child abuse prevention programs. In January, Kristin Rafferty from the Exchange Club presented Board Chairman, Dave Brown, and Executive Director, Ken Withrow, a check for \$3,000.00 to Evangelical Child and Family Agency to help fund our Pregnancy Support Services Program.

This year’s Ribfest will take place at Knoch Park in Naperville from Wednesday, July 4th through Saturday, July 7th. Daily hours are noon to 10 p.m. Thanks Exchange Club volunteers for your hard work and commitment to the community!

The Exchange Club can always use volunteers for this event. If you would like to support this all-volunteer community group contact ECFA at 630-653-6400 or email [mail@evanfca.org](mailto:mail@evanfca.org). We’ll be there!



# GOLF SCRAMBLE

**ST. ANDREWS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB**  
**2241 RT. 59, WEST CHICAGO**  
**TUESDAY, JUNE 19TH**  
**SHOTGUN START: 9:30 AM**



We are starting to swing into SCRAMBLE mode for the upcoming Annual Golf Classic Scramble! The early bird registration fee is \$175. (After May 31<sup>st</sup>, it increases to \$200).



Start with a light breakfast, warm up with a bucket of balls, play 18 holes of golf with a cart, and enjoy lunch on the course. A chance to win prizes, awards, and appetizers are part of our short afternoon program following the rounds. Invite your family and friends to come and join us. Space is limited so register early. We encourage you to bring a foursome! We will also be hosting our 5th ECFA Christian College Invitational held simultaneously with the Golf Classic.



Come for a day of fellowship and fun to help our Pregnancy Support Services program reach out to mothers and their families facing unplanned pregnancies.

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## PUT YOURSELF IN OUR PICTURE!

**Volunteers** have been the lifeblood of ECFA since our inception in 1950. We are looking for caring, willing, and reliable volunteers to partner with us. With your help, we can bring about positive change in people's lives and transformation in our community.

Our urgent need is for evening receptionist volunteers, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm. This person will be responsible to welcome clients with appointments during these hours and to let the staff know their client has arrived. In addition, the volunteer may help with light clerical work if there is a need during the hours of volunteering.



If you are interested in serving in this capacity or in any other opportunities, please give us a call at 630-653-6400 ext. 214 or email [odetten@evancfa.org](mailto:odetten@evancfa.org).

We look forward to hearing from you!

# A WINTER BLAST AT FOX BOWL WHEATON



It was a blast! The snow storm a couple of days before our “Have a Heart for Life” Bowl Classic at Fox Bowl in Wheaton didn't keep away our 71 bowlers on Saturday, February 10th. It was a blast of fun drawing prizes, pizza lunch, sweet treats of cake pops, muffins, brownies and pretzels. Also, thanks to “Personal Touch Realty” for our t-shirts. It was so much fun to see all those blue shirts worn by our players. What a great time to bond together with family and friends! Most importantly, we want to thank God for a great day!

To all who supported the event by praying, bowling, sending financial support and volunteering, thank you! We also want to thank the businesses who provided prizes. The New Testament writer Paul wrote, “I thank my God every time I remember you.” (Philippians 1:3). Through the generosity of many friends, we raised over \$7,500 to help our Pregnancy Support Services. You certainly “Have a Heart for Life!” Don't miss the fun next year!



# KIDS KORNER

## "Connecting Children to Families"

### *Family ~ What Does Family Mean to You?*

Little girl in Germany says, "Family, that's a strong word. For me, it means to feel secure, to have someone who you can count on, who shares your problems. But it also means to have respect for each other and responsibility."

Little girl in Denmark believes, "Family is a really important word. I think it is a word we use about people we love."

Little girl in Spain reports that, "Family is very important because parents are always with you when you need them and they can also give you pieces of advice with your problems."

Little boy in Spain states, "For me my family is something very important in my life, because they are people you know will never fail you...."

### *A Call to Action ~ Get in the Game!*

Thousands of children worldwide are without a family to call their own. They may be in a loving foster home or orphanage that provides all of their daily needs, but it is not the family that provides the complete sense of belonging; a sense that "this is my family, and I am wanted here forever"! As believers in Christ, we belong to (are adopted into) God's family forever. (Ephesians 1:5 NIV). He will never leave us nor forsake us. Can/Will you provide that same "sense of family" for a child that needs a permanent family?

### *Opportunities*

**Orphan Hosting:** Host a child/sibling group from the Philippines or Colombia for 3 to 5 weeks during the summer. There is still time to "orphan host" this summer!

**Adoption:** Adopt a child/sibling group from infancy into the teenage years, either domestically or internationally.

*For more information contact Barb Hellmer at 630-653-6400 or [mail@evancfa.org](mailto:mail@evancfa.org).*

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## 5 K 4 Kids Saturday, August 11, 8:00 am

Looking ahead to summer, we are prepping for our 5K 4 Kids event on Saturday, August 11th at Danada Forest Preserve, District Headquarters Exercise Track, 3S580 Naperville Road, Wheaton, Illinois. Registration will begin at 8 am with the 5K Run/Walk to start at 8:45 am. The Toddler Trot will begin at 9:45 and the ½ Mile Fun Run for kids at 10 am. For those who want to ride bikes, maps will be provided

for you to follow a 10 mile course. You may bring strollers, wagons and even dogs (who are free but must register!) Join us for a morning of recreation at this family friendly event to help resource the outreach of ECFA. Early registration is \$30; same day registration is \$40. Kids' races are \$20; same day registration for kids is \$30.

For more information, contact Odette at 630-653-6400 ext. 214  
or email [odetten@evancfa.org](mailto:odetten@evancfa.org) to register.

You may also go to [www.active.com](http://www.active.com) – key word: ECFA

# ECFA INTERNS

ECFA offers a distinct opportunity for master 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 services.



**JULIE TWOHILL** – Julie is a MSW graduate student at Aurora University and has her internship in the Intact Family Services Program. She feels that the ECFA staff is supportive and she says that the agency provides a very pleasant work environment. She has found working with difficult client families to be both challenging and rewarding. In the future, she would like a position as a case manager in the adoption field or to work as a pregnancy counselor.



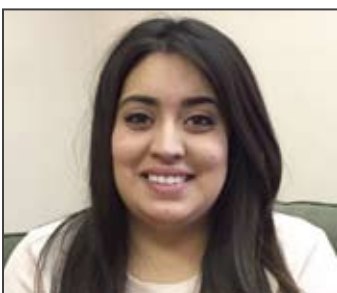
**MARIOLA FERENC** – Mariola is a MSW graduate student at the University of Illinois and she is completing her internship in the Intact Family Services Program. She has enjoyed the training that she has received at ECFA. She feels that she has had excellent guidance in dealing with clients from her supervisor and members of the IFS Team. She says, “I found ECFA to be a great agency that offers a very stable and welcoming environment.” After graduating, Mariola plans to find a position as a caseworker and would like to become a licensed clinical social worker.



**MICHAEL KRUEGER** – A MSW student at Aurora University, Michael is completing his internship in the Intact Family Services Program. He has a strong interest in acquiring social work skills through professional training opportunities at ECFA. He enjoys working collaboratively with others and has become a valued team member. Michael always wants to try new things to increase his professional growth. He plans to enter the child welfare field after completing graduate school.



**RENEE CAVILES** – A Master in Social Work (MSW) student at Aurora University, Renee has completed her internship in the Adoption Program. She stated that she found her experience at ECFA to be very beneficial and practical. She made improvements in her interviewing and writing skills while at the agency. She says, “From the beginning, the whole staff was welcoming and encouraging. I was treated with respect and kindness.” Her vocational goal is to find a position as a social worker in a public school setting.



**JESSICA NUNEZ** – Jessica is also a MSW graduate student at Aurora University and is completing her internship in the Intact Family Services Program. She is bilingual and has been gaining experience working with Spanish-speaking clients. She relates well with the case managers on staff and feels she has been learning valuable techniques from each one. Jessica says, “I have enjoyed my internship at ECFA and am thankful for the opportunity to learn and work with a wonderful staff.” After graduating she plans on working or studying child and family law.

# Memorials and Tributes

## In Loving Memory

### **Jay Buikema**

*From*

Bishop Hardware and Supply Co.  
(dba Ace Hardware)  
Mr. and Mrs. Bob Buikema  
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Eldersveld  
Mr. and Mrs. John Heap  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Laskowski  
Mr. and Mrs. John Meyer  
Mr. and Mrs. Glen Wiersema  
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Wiersema

### **Corey Anderson**

*From*

Sharon Watson

### **Mark Danielson**

*From*

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Todd

### **Edward Bryant**

*From*

Mr. Nicholas Lown  
Mrs. Donna Kelly

### **John and Shirley Hofstra**

*From*

Lance and Nancy Banninga

### **Jenna King**

*From*

John and Tamara McParland

### **Rev. Henry Soles Jr.**

*From*

Mr. and Mrs. Ken Withrow

## In Honor of

### **Dante Buchanan**

*From*

Marlene Brokaw

### **David and Jennie Tietjen**

*From*

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Wagers

### **Dennis and Sharon Shogren**

*In honor of their 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary*

*From*

Dave and Carol Ginsburg  
Mel and Marsha Katz  
Larry and Alice Tarson  
Mort and Fran Zelman



ECFA Foundation Inc. exists to become a significant funding source for ECFA services. If you would like more information about investing in ECFA's long-term future, please contact: Tim Carrick or Ken Withrow at 630-653-6400

**ECFA True to Life – Spring – Second Quarter 2018 Vol. 46, No. 2**

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