



TRUE TO LIFE

Summer 2019

A publication of Evangelical Child & Family Agency

Jason's Story...

A little over two years ago Jason was placed with Norberto and Gretchen as their foster son with a plan towards adoption. That day finally came on June 13, 2019 when his adoption was finalized on the same day he graduated the 8th grade. It was a joyful day for him and his family.



Norberto and Gretchen shared the following: "It's been very fulfilling to watch Jason grow. Initially Jason was a pleaser; 'fake it until you make it.' He tried to do and be whatever he thought people wanted. In the last 6 months, Jason started being honest with himself and began to find out who JASON really is. He finally started "working his therapy" by addressing issues

regarding his biological family and letting go of his anger. We think Jason feels grounded now with the adoption. He has made his own friends that are real friends and not just acquaintances. He has his own saving and checking accounts with a debit card, is learning how to budget, and is saving for a car. More importantly Jason gave his life to Christ and is a devoted youth group attendee. For a long time, he slid through life literally day to day not really caring about anything but video games and movies. Now, we challenge him to work hard, to THINK, and he does."

When asked how the adoption experience changed their lives, Norberto and Gretchen stated that "we have been humbled by our own weaknesses as humans and parents seeing firsthand what we can handle. We feel empowered by what we have learned in the past three years. We are also more understanding when we see/hear of children and parents struggling at school and home. We wish we could raise a paddle that says, "I understand and see you. You're not alone!"

At 15, Jason is enjoying life! Not only is he doing well academically, he has been active in his school's



track program having participated in the 100 meter dash, 200 meter dash, 4 x 100 meter dash, and 4 x 400 meter dash. Jason says, "Our team made it to Sectionals this year and beat our personal time in the 4 x 400 meter dash!" He is looking forward to being on the freshman football team when he enters high school this fall. When talking about his church youth group, he said



"They (the kids) are really cool; everybody accepted me even though I was new. I have an interesting bunch of cool friends." Jason is able to maintain a relationship with his younger biological sister,

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Something new at ECFA this year! We'd love to see you at our Top Golf summer outing in Naperville. Invite friends, family, and others for an evening of food, fun, and Topgolf Play. Help us introduce ECFA and bring awareness to the many services we offer while learning how to become a part of our mission.

TOP GOLF!! GOLF FOR ALL OF US!

REGISTRATION RATES & DEADLINES:

EARLY BIRD RATE: Register by Fri 8/2: \$60 for 1 person, \$350 for 6 people (single bay), \$700 for 12 people (dual bay). Contact Odette directly if reserving a bay. Call 630-653-6400 or email odetten@evancfa.org.

REGULAR PRICING: Sat 8/3 - Fri 8/8: \$65 for 1 person, \$375 for 6 people (single bay), \$750 for 12 people (dual bay).

See you there!

WHEN: Thursday, August 8th; 5:45 to 9:30 pm

CHECK-IN OPENS: 5:30 pm

WHERE: 3211 Odyssey Court
Naperville, IL

GREAT END OF SUMMER FUN!

INVITE FAMILY & FRIENDS

DuPage
Foundation



Evangelical Child and Family Agency was one of 38 DuPage County not-for-profit organizations to receive a grant at the DuPage Foundation's Spring Grant Open House held on June 12th. The DuPage Foundation awarded more than \$520,000 to organizations working in the area of Health

and Human Services. The \$7,500 grant received by ECFA will help support the agency's counseling services to low income seniors and Spanish speaking individuals and families in our community.

"Community Needs is the Foundation's flagship grant program through which we support the great work of local organizations that are directly helping those in need," said Barb Szczpaniak, DuPage Foundation Vice President for Programs. As DuPage County's leader in connecting donors with causes they are passionate about, the Foundation engages individual donors to supplement the annual Community Needs budget. This cycle, their support helped boost grant awards by \$153,980.

REBUILDING IN PROGRESS!!!



It has been over a year since a devastating fire utterly destroyed our main office building at 1530 N. 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 operating 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. Architectural plans have 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 anticipate that the building will be ready for occupancy by summer's end.

2019 GOLF FUNDRAISER & COLLEGE INVITATIONAL

June 18th turned out to be a beautiful sunny day at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles for ECFA's Annual Golf outing. Fifty-two individuals participated and enjoyed a great round of golf that was made more fun as "mulligans" and "putting strings" were on sale to raise additional funds.

Everyone enjoyed appetizers at the awards ceremony that followed featuring ECFA updates, client stories, golf give-a-ways, and a wonderful selection of silent auction items. Generous donors provided prizes for our drawing that included grand prizes of a week stay at a vacation condo in Orlando, Florida; an overnight stay at Pheasant Run Resort; and 4 tickets to Zanies Comedy Club.

Team members Gary Larson, Bob Neyland, Wayne Frey, and Jim Johnson earned the Overall Best Team Score of 20 below par to win first place honors.

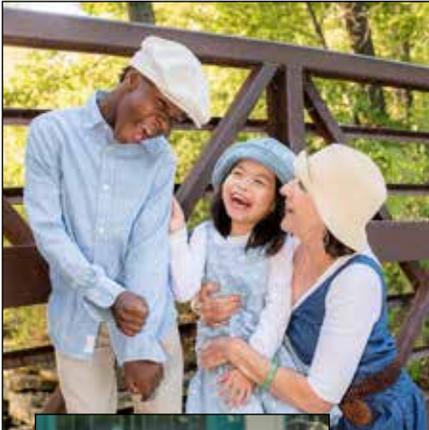
Teams from Wheaton College, Judson University, and North Central College also squared off in competition against one another. Wheaton team members President Dr. Philip Ryken, Paul Craig, Scott Brown, and Jack Ryken scored a 52 to win the "Dave Mitchell" College Invitational Trophy.

Proceeds from the golf outing go toward supporting ECFA's life affirming services. The agency provides comprehensive support to expectant parents facing unplanned pregnancies; domestic and international adoption services; counseling to children, adults, and families; and intact family services to troubled parents and vulnerable children.

We want to thank everyone who came and those who supported ECFA through their financial donations. We hope to see you next year on June 16, 2020 at Pheasant Run!



Love Knows No Bounds



As a child growing up, God prepared Leitha's heart to one day reach across the continents to adopt John Paul from Haiti and Bliss Grayce from China. Their stories are as different as their cultures, but it was clear to Leitha that God had His hand in preparing her and them for "such a time as this"!

John Paul and Bliss Grayce both experience the challenges of everyday life with a diagnosis of cerebral palsy. Neither of them let that disability rule their lives. Their mom, Leitha, encourages them daily with the words, "You can do it", and they do! Their smiles and love for each other and Leitha "says it all"! I encourage you to pray for this family and for God to touch other families to consider adopting a child who needs the love, security, and patience of a loving, Christian home.

~ Barb Hellmer, Adoption Program Supervisor



Adoption Questions?

The process of adoption can seem daunting. Where do you even begin? We are here to answer all your questions.

Please contact Barb Hellmer at 630-653-6400 or email barbh@evanfca.org if you are considering adoption.



ONCE AGAIN - THANKS KIWANIS!

After many years of dedication, Kathy Loveland continues to serve in the Wheaton Kiwanis Club. On April 24th, she visited ECFA at our temporary facility in Lisle to present us with a check for \$400 to help support our services to vulnerable children and families in our community. We are thankful for those involved in the Kiwanis Club and for their love of kids with special needs. We are so grateful to partner with this wonderful organization!

Jason's Story....

but he is also thankful for his two new sisters, Kathryn (age 11) and Gwendolyn (age 8). Kathryn says, "He's fun on the trampoline, and he's a fast runner!" Gwendolyn reports, "He's fun to play with and jump on and really fun to sneak up on!" For family night Jason says, "We like to laugh and have fun and watch a special movie."

Norberto and Gretchen gave helpful hints for families considering adoption of older children: "get plugged in immediately to the

online Facebook foster groups. We have learned so much from others. Don't believe the hype that the older children have all the problems. The older children, like Jason, can sit and talk to you, hear your logic, and when feeling safe, can share/express what they are feeling. When you have a breakthrough with an older child, it is amazing. When you have that group hug, and he/she can't stop crying (finally letting it all out), there's not much in our lives that can top that!"



About the Children

According to the most recent federal data, there are currently more than 400,000 children in foster care in the United States. They range in age from infants to 21 years old (in some states). The average age of a child in foster care is more than 8 years old, and there are slightly more boys than girls.

All children in foster care have been exposed to some form of trauma. The very act of being put in foster care is traumatic for children, because it means the loss of their birth family, friends, schoolmates, teachers, and everything that is familiar.

But many children in foster care have experienced more than one form of trauma or repeated trauma, the lasting effects of which should be acknowledged and understood by families considering to adopt a child from foster care. If God is calling you into this ministry, He will provide the strength and endurance to enable you to provide the safe and secure home that child needs.

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' Matthew 25:40 NIV

Is It Time to Make Your Will?

Don't delay this critical matter. Call Rita at 630-653-6400 to request our workbook *Preparing a Christian Will*. It will guide you through the process of gathering the information that is needed by your attorney to draft your personal document. There is no charge or obligation. For information on Planned Giving and Estate Planning, see our website: http://www.evanca.org/opportunities/planned_giving.html

LOVE IN ACTION 2019

“Declaring God’s Praises” – taken from I Peter 2:9 – was the theme of ECFA’s Love in Action Dinner held at the Double Tree Hotel in Lisle on May 10th. The event commemorated the agency’s 69th Anniversary of caring for children, expectant mothers, and families in the metropolitan Chicago area.

WMBI Radio personality Roy Patterson was on hand to serve as the evening’s emcee. Two hundred and ninety guests were in attendance and heard Megan’s touching testimony of how she was helped by ECFA’s Pregnancy Support Services. ECFA’s new adoption video debuted and the audience also heard from Director of Professional Services, Wendy Payne, about the growth of the agency’s Intact Family Services Program.

Song writer and vocalist Aaron Shust provided the evening’s musical program. He is well known for such favorite worship songs as “My Savior My God”, “Ever Be”, “Cornerstone”, and many others.

Please plan to join us for ECFA’s 70th Anniversary Celebration at Abbington Banquets in Glen Ellyn on May 8, 2020. Abby Johnson, former Director of Planned Parenthood, whose story is chronicled in the book and major motion picture release, “Unplanned”, will be our featured guest speaker.



STRIDE FOR LIFE 5K & 10K

ALSO

10 MILE Bike Ride

Half Mile Kids Fun Run

Toddler Trot

Saturday, September 14th

Danada Forest Preserve District HQ



Our annual 5k for Kids is now “Stride for Life.” Join us on Saturday, September 14, 2019 at the Danada Forest Preserve District HQ Exercise Track, 3S580 South Naperville Road in Wheaton. Registration starts at 7:00 am. Bikers will take off at 7:45 am. This year, we have added a 10K which will start at 8:00 am. 5K Run/Walk will follow at 8:15 am, Toddler Trot at 9:15 am, and the Half Mile Kids Fun Run will immediately follow the Toddler Trot. Medals will be awarded to the top 3 male and female 5K and 10K winners. The top 3 Kids Fun Run winners (mixed boys and girls) will also receive medals. All toddlers will receive a medal as well. Registration is \$35 for Bikers, 10K runners, and 5K runner/walkers. The rate will be \$45 on the day of event. Half Mile Kids Fun run is \$15. Toddlers are free to join!

Our goal is to raise \$15,000 for children and families in need. If you are unable to attend you may still donate to our life affirming programs. All monies given are tax deductible and will be receipted. Please register online at <http://active.com> – Key word: ECFA. For questions please call Odette at 630-653-6400 ext. 7214 or email odetten@evanfca.org.

Bring your family and friends for this fun-filled day in September!

Julie Twohill completed two graduate level intern placements at ECFA; one in the Intact Family Services Program and the other in Pregnancy Support Services, before graduating this spring with a Master's Degree in Social Work from Aurora University. Recently, she joined staff as a full time pregnancy counselor. In addition to her love and dedication to serving pregnant moms, Julie enjoys leading in worship music at monthly ECFA staff meetings. We are so glad to have Julie on staff!



*Welcome
Back
Julie!!*

Hazel Or grew up in an Evangelical Christian orphanage in China. She earned a B.A. in Psychology from Azusa Pacific University before becoming the Director of Ministry at the International Church of Hong Kong. She went on to earn a Master's Degree in Divinity from Trinity International Divinity School and a M.A. in Clinical Psychology from Wheaton College. For several years she worked as the Director of Family Ministry at the Chinese Christian Union Church in Chicago. On May 24th, Hazel joined ECFA as a case manager in our Intact Family Services Program.



*Hello
Hazel!!*



ECFA Foundation, Inc. was formed to promote and support the mission of Evangelical Child & Family Agency. The Foundation assists the Agency in offering compassionate Christ-centered services to children, families and individuals, now and in the future.

The Foundation was initiated by 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 seed money for the Foundation in 1995. Led by its own Board of Directors, the Foundation's long term goal is to support the Agency's life affirming work.

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

You may choose to make 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 ECFA Foundation, Inc., please contact Rita Butler at 630/653-6400 for an informational brochure.

Memorials and Tributes In Loving Memory

Joyce Boersma

*From: Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Arentsen
Ms. Carol Armistead
Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Baytala
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Brauer
Ms. Judy Colangelo
Bill, Meg & Ryan Darcy
Mr. Kent Dorl
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Dorl
Mr. & Mrs. Matt Kammerer
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Kokaisl
Macy's ~ co-workers of Nancy Triezenberg
Mr. & Mrs. Gary Marfise
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Morgan
The Rosales Family
Ms. Nancy Stumbaugh
Mrs. Margaret Tenhoor
Mrs. & Mrs. Robert Tenhoor
Mr. & Mrs. Douglas Terpstra
Mr. & Mrs. Keith Tiggelaar
Ms. Florence Triezenberg
Mrs. Patricia Van Swol
Mr. & Mrs. John Vernan*

Evelyn Boonstra

From: Mr. and Mrs. Charles Slager

Bonnie Fisher

From: Mr. Gregory Fisher

Eleanor Hill

From: Mr. & Mrs. Edmund Covarrubias

Patricia J. Honig

*From: Ms. Patricia Gay
Ms. Sandra Griffin*

Conrad Marvin Lang

From: Mr. & Mrs. Robert Stotz

Irene Highfield Levander

From: Mr. John Levander

Betsy Lieske

From: Mr. John Lieske

Tom Long

From: Rev. & Mrs. Wendell Karsen

Bonnie Haaning Oliver

From: Ms. Joyce Bunce

Bill and Betty Thompson

*ELWA Missionaries
From: Mrs. Eleanor Weiberg-Fisher*

Elsie Weeks

*From: Mr. & Mrs. Paul Hadley
Mr. & Mrs. Melvin Olberg*

In Honor of

Sara Sullivan

From: Mr. & Mrs. Dirk Deckinga

Dinner & Benefit Auction ~ November 8, 2019

Save the date for the best tasting hot cider, an elegant dinner, relaxing music, fun items to bid on, meeting new people, and so much more at our annual Benefit Auction! Join us on Friday, November 8, 2019 at the lovely Abbington Distinctive Banquets in Glen Ellyn. Doors open and Silent Auction starts at 5:30 pm.

Visit our website www.evanca.org for more details and a link to our Amazon Wish List if you are interested in contributing items.

Contact Odette at 630-653-6400 or via email odetten@evanca.org.

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