

Summer 2018



# TRUE TO LIFE

*A publication of Evangelical Child & Family Agency*

## ECFA ABLAZE!

Over the Memorial Day weekend a devastating fire broke out at ECFA's office building in Wheaton. The fire inspectors determined that it was caused by an electrical failure in the wiring above the ceiling of the children's playroom. The building was engulfed in flames and severely damaged by fire, smoke, and water. At the very least, it will need to be completely gutted and restored, which is expected to take several months to a year. We are most thankful that no one was injured in the fire.



ECFA's staff has been temporarily relocated to two different offices; one at 213 W. Wesley Street, Wheaton, and the other at 4614 Main Street, Lisle, Illinois. The agency's insurance carrier is expected to cover some of the costs to restore the building and replace items lost in the fire. However, an undetermined amount of expense will be the responsibility of ECFA.



The apostle Paul says in Romans 8:28, "And we know in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose" (NIV). With God's help, ECFA's services are continuing through these very challenging times.

Our staff members are adjusting well to their new working situation and we have been fortunate to receive many donated items that have helped us carry on our work.



We are especially grateful for Glenn Kosirog who is providing us space in his building in downtown Wheaton. We are also very thankful for Bob Cook and Rich Vogt from RESOURCE Communications, Inc., who have been assisting us with space in their office building in Lisle.



**Those interested in supporting the agency financially are invited to do so by sending donations to our mailing address at ECFA, 1530 N. Main Street, Wheaton, IL, 60187, or by visiting the Giving page on our website: [www.evanca.org/giving.html](http://www.evanca.org/giving.html)**

# 35 YEARS EARLIER, AND THEN, THE REST OF THE STORY...

This Love Story begins with a background narrative from Julie, Jenny's sister. "I remember when my sister Jenny told me she was pregnant. It was 1983, and I was sitting in a car with my husband. Jen was outside chatting with us through the driver's side window. She was 16 then, and I was 25. She announced her news casually with a bit of trepidation. I remember feeling an overwhelming sense of sadness about the situation. I knew what she was facing was going to be extremely difficult. She and her boyfriend, Gary, were still so young."

"We come from a family of 13 kids, and Jenny still lived at home with our parents and 6 of our siblings. Bringing another child into the home was out of the question. Jenny never really considered having an abortion, and Gary was very much against it too. They had hoped that they could somehow keep this baby. Gary even went out and bought a rocking horse for the unborn child. Later Jenny told me, 'We weren't thinking like adults, because we weren't adults.'"

"Jenny and I worked at Millie's, a local restaurant, during Jenny's pregnancy. I was a waitress, and she was a cook. I would see her in that kitchen maneuvering around with her very swollen belly and lifting big pots, and would see the looks she got from others. I knew she had to endure the stares and whispers from classmates at her high school too. My heart broke for her, but I also admired her strength and courage. She worked hard, stayed in school, and carried that baby to full term. When she was about 7 months pregnant she started considering the idea of adoption. Our older sister got her in touch with Evangelical Child and Family Agency for counseling. Jenny decided that the best she could do for her child would be to place the baby with an adoptive family who could provide for all of the child's needs."

"On May 7, 1984 at 5:01am, Jenny gave birth to a baby girl. She named her Sarah Lynn. She had a normal delivery but was not prepared for how painful the labor pains were. Our mom was there by her side for everything. Sarah was a beautiful baby. I went to

see her at the hospital and even got to hold her for a minute. I could tell Jenny was hurting inside, but she put on a brave face. When I left, I cried thinking that I would probably never see this precious niece again. I could only imagine the sadness and pain Jenny and my mom were feeling. I sat in my car and said a silent prayer for Sarah, that she would have a good life. Driving home, the song *Sara* by Jefferson Starship came on the radio. Some of the lyrics are, 'Sara, Sara, no time is a good time for goodbye'. To this day I still tear up whenever I hear that song. Jenny sobbed the day she had to leave the hospital without Sarah. My mom cried with her and told her, 'If it's any consolation, I think you're doing the right thing.'"



Lindsay's baby pictures -1984

Some blessings occurred after Jenny returned home from the hospital. Our dad cried and told her, 'I'm so sorry about everything; could we start over?' Our mom was really devastated over losing her granddaughter. She admitted to me that she used to have a bad attitude towards people that placed their babies for adoption, but now she saw a whole different side of it; how difficult it was and what a selfless thing it was to do. After that, my mom called every May 7th to remind us that it was Sarah's birthday, and to say a prayer for her. My husband and I weren't able to have children, so in 1988 we adopted a baby girl, and in 1991 we adopted a baby boy. We love them as our own and so does our family. It was wonderful to be on the other side of an adoption story."

*continued on page 3*

## THE REST OF THE STORY *continued from page 2*

**NOW the Rest of the Story!** Jenny and Gary stayed together and eventually got married in 1989. In 1990, their first son, Matthew, was born. Jenny was flooded with memories of Sarah. She wondered, "Where is my little girl?" She prayed for her and her parents, hoping she had a good life. In 1993, Jenny and Gary had another son, Mark. After that, Jenny left a letter and some photos of her boys at Evangelical Child and Family Agency for Sarah, just in case she would see her again some day. Then in 1997, Jenny gave birth to another baby girl, Lauren. I got to witness this birth along with our mom. It was on May

7th. My mom and I looked at each other in disbelief when the doctor announced the precise time of birth, 5:01am. It was the exact time and day Sarah was born 13 years earlier! We knew it was a miracle from God, and Jenny knew it too. She just beamed holding on to this baby girl. Jenny and Gary had another son, Jake, in 2000. That same year ECFA contacted them saying they had a letter from Sarah. She was 16 years old now and living in Virginia with the wonderful parents that had adopted her and a young sister, who was also adopted. Her name was changed to Lindsay. The following is Lindsay's letter:

9.26.2000

Dear Jennifer and Gary,

You don't know how many times I've written this letter in my head and yet, I'm still not sure what to say. I guess I should start by telling you I have no negative feelings toward you. What you did was for my best interest. It must have been very hard, and I admire you for making the best choice. While you weren't physically part of my life, you've always been there in my heart. Not a day goes by that I don't think about you. Thank you so much for the pictures! I started crying when I saw them. That was the first time in 16 years that I'd ever seen anyone I'm actually related to. The pictures answered so many questions, but I still have millions more. Hopefully you'll be able to write me back and answer some of them! I don't know where to start. Everything from how long you were together before you became pregnant to when did you get married? Do your kids know about me? Speaking of your kids, they're beautiful! The first thing I noticed is that the oldest (Matt) and I looked identical when I was younger! I even had the gap in my 2 front teeth with the little piece of skin. Hopefully, this summer I'll be able to meet you and my brothers (and any other siblings). My parents said that they'd let me go and see you as long as it's alright with you.

As far as my family goes, they're wonderful. It's just me, mom, dad and Stephanie (she's 14), and my dog Buttons! I don't want to go into my life story just yet. I would like to make sure you want to meet me. I've sent you some fairly recent pictures. They'll give you an idea of what I look like. Please send me updated pictures of you, your family, etc. I'd also like to see pictures of you when you were my age. But write me back soon! And, tell me everything (i.e. job, likes/dislikes, religion, etc.). It would really mean so much to me. I've wanted to meet you my entire life. If it's alright with you, my boyfriend and I will probably see you this summer with my parents. My boyfriend's name is Zach, and we've been together 6 months. He's the redhead in the prom picture. Well, when (if) you write me back, feel free to ask me any questions. And, please tell your kids that "their sister says hi". Thank you so much! You mean so much to me!

Love Always,  
Lindsay

*continued on page 4*

# THE REST OF THE STORY *continued from page 3*

**Epilogue:** Jenny and Gary were over the moon and couldn't wait to meet the daughter they had placed for adoption so many years before. In the summer of 2001 when Sarah (now Lindsay) was 17 years old, she came to Illinois with her adoptive parents, Linda and Tom, and her younger sister, Stephanie. They came to Jenny's and Gary's home to meet. There was a lot of hugging and crying. Jenny couldn't stop looking at Lindsay who had grown up to be a beautiful and thoughtful young woman. Lindsay got to stay the weekend with them. Lauren instantly took to her older sister, and clung to her most of the time. Later we had a family reunion so that Lindsay could meet her grandmother (my mom) and her many aunts, uncles, and cousins. It was a joyful time! Since then, Lindsay has come out to visit her birth family many times. My mom, Jenny, Gary, and their kids attended Lindsay's wedding in Virginia in 2011. Lauren (her biological sister) was one of her bridesmaids. Lindsay now has two children of her own, Braden and Henry. My sister and her family continue to visit her when they can and vice versa. Who knew adoption could have such a happy ending? Only by the Grace of God!

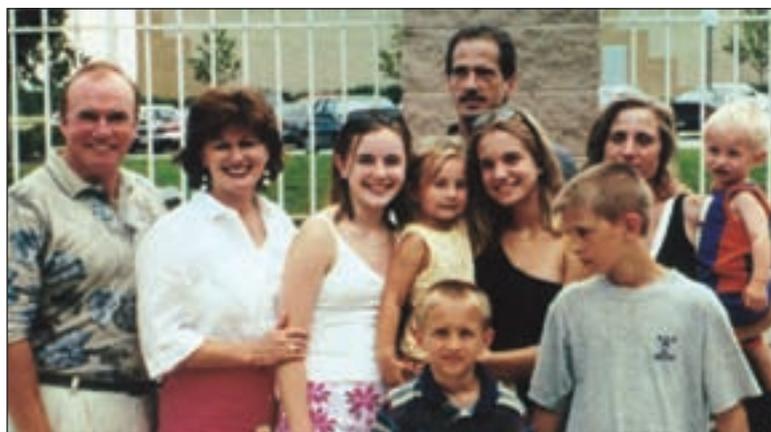
For information about adoption, call Barbara Hellmer at 630-653-6400, ext. 7243 or send an email to [mail@evanfca.org](mailto:mail@evanfca.org)



Lindsay's biological family in 2001:  
Gary, Lauren, Lindsay, Jenny, and Jake  
Matt and Mark



Lindsay on her wedding day  
in 2011 with her biological sister,  
Lauren, as a bridesmaid



Lindsay with both of her families in 2001:  
Her adoptive family - Tom, Linda, and Stephanie - on the far left

>> Save the Date!! <<

## 5K 4 Kids – August 11, 2018

We joyfully anticipate our annual ECFA's 5K 4 Kids event! It will be held on Saturday, August 11, 2018 at the Danada Forest Preserve District HQ Exercise Track, 3S580 South Naperville Road in Wheaton. Registration opens at 8:00 am. Bike riders will leave at 8:30 am and will follow a beautiful 10 mile trail through the forest preserve. The 5K Run/Walk will begin at 8:45 am. This is a USATF Certified Course, and Race Time will be on hand to officially time our runners. The ½ Mile Fun Run for Kids will start at approximately 9:45 am, followed by the Toddler Trot at 10:00 am. All prizes will be awarded at 10:15 am.

The participation fee is \$30 (\$40 race day) for the 5KRun/Walk or 10 Mile Bike Ride; \$20 (\$25 race day) for the ½ mile Kids Fun Run and Toddler Trot along with fun activities for the kids. All monies given are tax deductible and will be receipted. Our goal is to raise \$15,000 for ECFA's Pregnancy Support Services. If 150 people raise at least \$100, we could easily exceed our goal! If you are unable to attend you may still donate to this life changing program.

**Please register online at <http://active.com> – Key word: ECFA.**

**For questions please call Odette at 630-653-6400 ext. 7214 or email [odetten@evancfa.org](mailto:odetten@evancfa.org).**



## DINNER & BENEFIT AUCTION – NOVEMBER 2, 2018

At the Abbington - Route 53 & Butterfield Road, Glen Ellyn

Looking forward to sipping the best tasting hot cider, wondering how much the cinnamon rolls will go for, what will be the highest bids, and all the fun of the annual ECFA Benefit Auction? Did you miss last year? We encourage you to come and join us this year for a fun evening of interesting conversation, relaxing music, delicious food, enjoyable shopping, and spirited bidding. Contact Odette at [odetten@evancfa.org](mailto:odetten@evancfa.org) or call 630-653-6400 ext. 7214 for further information.



# ECFA GOLF SCRAMBLE & COLLEGE INVITATIONAL

Forty-seven individuals participated and enjoyed a great round of golf, delicious food, and a “shotgun start” at St. Andrews Golf and Country Club in West Chicago on June 19th at ECFA’s Annual Golf Scramble. The awards ceremony that followed featured ECFA updates, stories, and golf give-a-ways.

Pastor Jayson York, of Water’s Edge Bible Church, challenged golfers to “Beat the Pastor” hitting the ball closest to the pin on hole #6. For \$5 each, a golfer could take a swing and earn the chance to win a flat screen TV donated by the church. An additional \$282 was raised for our Pregnancy Support Services (PSS) program and Anthony Fiorello took home the TV.



Pastor Jayson York

Generous donors provided grand prizes of a week stay at a vacation condo in Orlando, Florida; 4 Chicago Bears pre-season tickets; and an overnight stay at the Sheraton Hotel. Dan and Beth Ciszek of Personal Touch Realty donated golf balls and tees, a men’s Taylormade driver, a women’s Tommy Armour driver, an Odyssey putter, and a set of Taylormade golf irons. Teams from Wheaton College, Trinity International University, Judson University, and Moody Bible Institute also squared off in competition

against one another. Wheaton team members Paul Craig, Jon Panner, Jesse Scott, and Taylor Graham scored a 67 to win the “Dave Mitchell” College Invitational Trophy.

Team members Mike Shogren, Matt Willis, Steve Krismailian, and Craig Rodriquez earned the overall best team score of 8 under par to win first place honors for the 5th year in a row.



Best Team Score: Steve Krismailian, Craig Rodriquez, Mike Shogren and Matt Willis

Proceeds from the golf outing go toward ECFA’s PSS Program. The agency provides comprehensive services to expectant parents facing unplanned pregnancies as a viable option to abortion. Social worker Allison Gale shared about her work with pregnancy clients at ECFA.

We want to thank everyone who joined us and those who supported through their financial donations. We hope to see you again next year on June 18, 2019.

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## THANKS KIWANIS!

Kathy Loveland has served in various capacities in the Wheaton Kiwanis Club over many years. On May 2nd she paid us a visit to present ECFA with a check for \$400.00 to support our services to children and families in the community. We are indeed grateful for everyone involved in Kiwanis and especially for their dedication to children with special needs. It is wonderful that organizations such as ECFA and Kiwanis can come together in service to others.



# LOVE-IN-ACTION DINNER

Celebrating God's Glorious Grace ~ taken from Zephaniah 3:17 ~ was the theme of ECFA's Love In Action dinner held at the Lisle/Naperville Hilton Hotel on May 4th. This event commemorated the agency's 68th Anniversary of caring for children, expectant mothers, and families in the metropolitan Chicago community.

ECFA adoptive dad, Christian Constante, served as the emcee at this year's event. Three hundred and thirty-six guests were in attendance and heard testimonies from one of our own pregnancy clients and an adoptive family.

Pregnancy Support Services Supervisor, Faith Allman, interviewed Kayla, a young woman she had been counseling over the past year. Kayla shared about her decision to surrender her life to the Lord. She grew into embracing and deeply loving her newborn daughter.

Kyla Farquhar and her adoptive mom, Nancy, along with Kyla's birth father, Ken, spoke about their experience with open adoption. Nancy shared about

how she and her husband, Dann, came to the decision of building their family through adoption.

Ken told about the circumstances surrounding his decision to surrender parental rights for Kyla's adoption into the Farquhar family. Kyla spoke about growing up as an adopted child and how God has been working in her life over the years. She has reconnected with her biological relatives while staying closely connected to her adoptive family. After graduating from college, Kyla began working as a case manager serving abused and neglected children in Chicago.

The highly acclaimed trio known as *Point of Grace* provided a special musical program. Shelley Breen, Leigh Cappillino, and Denise Jones have over 8 million recordings sold, 3 Grammy nominations, and multiple Dove awards. They delighted the audience with their soulful harmonies and inspirational lyrics.

We are grateful to all who attended our 68th Anniversary celebration and supported ECFA at this special event.



*Point of Grace*



Kyla Farquhar's biological father Ken, Kyla, and Kyla's adoptive mother Nancy Farquhar

# Memorials - In Loving Memory

## **Ed and Margie Bryant**

*From:*

*Marilyn Baldwin*

*Linda Gullo*

*Donna Kelly*

*Ed and Laura Kristan*

*Nicholas Lown*

*Gordon and Bea Schulenburg*

## **Evelyn Boonstra**

*From:*

*Chuck and Debbie Slager*

## **Jay Buikema**

*From:*

*William and Patricia Schaafsma*

## **Judie Elenbaas**

*From:*

*Bruce and Janis Cronin*

## **Pauline Franklin**

*From:*

*Mr. and Mrs. George Dearing*

## **Myron Meyer**

*From:*

*Ralph and Jessie Todd*

## **John Oldenburger**

*From:*

*Larry and Linda Dryfhout*

*Dave and Jennie Tietjen*

*Frank and Doreen Voss*

## **Carol Reneau**

*From:*

*Jeannie Byrne*

# Tributes - In Honor of

## **David Brown**

*From: Mr. and Mrs. Gerhardt Hanson, Jr.*

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## Is It Time to Make Your Will?

You need no longer 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.evancfa.org/opportunities/planned\\_giving.html](http://www.evancfa.org/opportunities/planned_giving.html)



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

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### ECFA *True to Life* – Summer 2018 – Third Quarter 2018 Vol. 46, No. 3

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