

True to Life

An Evangelical Child & Family Agency Publication

SUMMER 2017

Rejoice Always!

On Friday, October 6, 2017, you are invited to rejoice in a night of laughter, reality, inspiration, and more as we celebrate the 33rd Annual ECFA Banquet and Silent Auction at the Country Springs, in Pewaukee.

In the past 12 months many significant changes have taken place in Wisconsin, the nation, and the world. Our attitudes can be influenced ever so subtly depending upon where our focus lies, even in ministry. Negativity can quickly distort truth if we are not vigilant to guard our mind and heart.

However, there is a remedy that God has clearly provided in His Word from 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18: "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." This theme will be highlighted as we host returning comedian/speaker Mike Williams and a most engaging emcee who is loved and respected by many in the adoption field.

This year, Wendy Gebauer will emcee. She is a local paralegal with the law firm of Grady, Hayes & Neary LLC. In her position she has partnered with Attorney Stephen Hayes for 41 years along with Attorney Elizabeth Neary working in the children's law field creating over 4,000 families! Her work focuses in the areas of independent, agency and interstate adoptions, surrogacy, stepparent adoption, guardianship, foster care, and paternity. Her career has concentrated on serving birth mothers, adoptive parents and licensed child welfare agencies. She has been a very dear friend of ECFA for over three decades.



She has served as co-chair for the national paralegal conferences of the Academy of Adoption and Assisted Reproduction Attorneys and acted as assistant editor for their newsletter. She has participated in numerous fundraising events including the Gift of Adoption Fund and

Stars and Stripes Honor Flight. She received an Unsung Hero Award presented by the Wisconsin Law Journal in 2006 and the Angel in Adoption Award in 2014 from the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute.

Wendy and her husband Randy have been married for 36 years. She is an active member in the women's ministry program at Hales Corners Lutheran Church. They enjoy spending time at their cottage on Long Lake.

Our guest speaker and zany comedian, Mike Williams, returns by popular vote from the ECFA Family. He is both a nationally known speaker and writer who has a passion for life. He is heard daily on the Sirius XM's Laugh USA. He has recorded 17 comedy projects and written eight books including *Men Moved To Mars When Women Started Killing The Ones On Venus* and *Love Is NOT A Three-Letter Word* (A new look at Abstinence for young people).

His own personal adoption story and the rescue and subsequent adoption of his son touched everyone's hearts and funny bone last year. He encouraged everyone to invite him back again this year so he could finish all his stories that he promises will move you to tears of joy. Each of Mike's presentations are given in a very positive humorous direction that will leave every listener feeling encouraged and empowered to make a difference. He came to popularity as a pro-life speaker after Focus on the Family brought his personal story to a national spotlight. Mike will have you rolling on the floor with laughter, while simultaneously building your reverence for the work of local life-saving organizations.



A silent auction for savvy shoppers will precede the evening program beginning at 5:30 pm. Music, testimonies, and other surprises will complete the evening at the Country Springs in Pewaukee in the Grand Salon. A formal invitation with dinner choices will be mailed soon in a separate mailing. The dinner is complimentary however, seating is limited to 340 and an RSVP is required. Please call Sue or Linda at 262-789-1881 to RSVP or, if you have any questions.

Goodbye from my Heart

In mid-March

On the day of Wisconsin's last snowfall, I began experiencing some left-side chest pain. As it became worse and up my neck and jaw, I left my desk and drove to the hospital.

Three things were happening simultaneously that resulted in "a perfect storm." Some deep soul-searching followed the next day with the realization that my love for the ministry of ECFA was at the point of being an idol in my life. Acknowledging this truth was the first step in a series of decisions. After sharing with my husband (and best friend Mike) who is always supportive and encouraging, I knew what God desired for our future. Valuable input from my precious children was also appreciated. Next, I spoke with our Executive Director, Ken, and mutually decided on a reasonable timetable for my departure and restructured job description for my successor. God already had that piece taken care of too.

So with a grieving heart, I am publically sharing with all of the ECFA family that this is my final newsletter to communicate with each of you. I will still orchestrate this year's 33rd Annual Fall Banquet and Silent Auction and complete training of a seasoned ECFA employee who is moving to Wisconsin in September for a newly created position.

My final day will be October 31, 2017. It is no secret that my heart and passion has been people's hearts and lives. Birth moms and dads experiencing unplanned pregnancies and those who are abortion-minded have always been my favorite part of this position. I will carry



the memories of each person and situation in my heart forever. Many have stayed in contact. Often I rejoice or weep with them depending on the stories that are shared. I have enjoyed working with so many adoptive families as well and have remained in touch as friends for more than two decades watching their babies grow to become children, teens, and even young adults.

The staff (my other family), both current and past from Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Florida I have worked with all these years have been rich relationships that I treasure and appreciate. The hundreds of volunteers, though often unsung, which include the Wisconsin Advisory Council and Illinois Board led by Chairmen Jim Valentine and Dave Brown, constantly sacrifice their time and are all my heroes.

The colleagues and vendors that we partner and are connected with make the day-to-day interactions always a pleasure and joy to "do business." The churches, Pastors, and church contacts that are so supportive are always cheering and referring our way. The donors reside all across the United States and often continue to support ECFA despite cross country or in state moves. Our youngest donors have placed their coins in the Baby Bottle Boomerang projects and our oldest donors have thoughtfully included us in their wills to continue giving beyond their lives on earth. Finally, I lovingly acknowledge all those hardy pray-ers who have diligently prayed from their chairs, beds, desks, steps, wheelchairs, and even on their knees as intercessors for this beloved ministry.

Through tears I conclude my heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you! This has been an exciting season I've been able to be a part of succeeding three wonderful directors who diligently paved the way: Founders Dick & Arlene Faulkner, Ralph Story, and Julie Zahn. It has been an honor and unbelievable privilege to provide a heart of mercy and a listening ear to whoever Jesus placed in my path during this time. My life scripture verse from Matthew 28:20 is: "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end." I know this verse will continue to sustain me through whatever the next season will bring. ~ ♥ Linda

WI Advisory Council Serving Selflessly Since 1984

The Wisconsin Advisory Council, chaired by the excellent leadership of Jim Valentine, is comprised of men and women who meet for an evening every other month. They review the financial picture and health of the agency and make certain there remains an adherence to the Wisconsin Vision and Mission. Each member serves a minimum three year term which can be renewed pending a unanimous Council approval. The Council makes recommendations to the ECFA Illinois Board and also provides support and encouragement to the agency director. Since January, multiple changes have taken place. Dianne Marek, the longest serving member since the very beginning, stepped down to contend with family health needs. Carl Budd, who served on both New Berlin and the Rock County Councils for years, let everyone know the March meeting was his last. He shared because he has so many nights away from home traveling for his work, the few nights he has free he wants to spend with his precious wife, Kris. Both Carl and Dianne are deeply missed by all on the Council. Their input was valuable and appreciated.



Becca, Carl, & Becky

At the January meeting, Becca Bogdanovich, a familiar face at ECFA events, but new to the Council, was warmly welcomed. She grew up at ECFA through the active involvement of her whole family in the Bike & Hike. As a

young graphic designer, Becca submitted t-shirt designs in the past with two of them being selected for front screens. Currently, Becca is the Art Director for MorganMyers, a strategic communications firm that builds, protects and promotes great brands that help feed the world. Recently she became engaged to Sean Schwartz. Becca has done a fine job of introducing him to ECFA the past couple of years through banquet and Brewer Buddy invitations. In the past, Becca's mom, Cathy, had served well on the Council for six years. This is our first two generation family combination which is exactly what ECFA is all about.

At the March meeting, Becky Prusak was welcomed with open arms. Becky was introduced to ECFA a number of years ago through her church, Woodridge. Becky had been involved in their first church-wide rummage sale benefitting missionaries in Romania. Everyone donated their best, yet many items in great condition remained. All remnants needed to be given away before the weekend church services began. Anita Julius had suggested Almost Anything ahead of time as one of the resources for the leftovers. Becky packed up many boxes and then transported them along with six vans and trucks. After that she became interested in knowing more about the ministry.

Becky's mom Wanda spearheaded an ECFA Baby Bottle Boomerang Project at Woodridge as well as launching the Treasures of the Heart tote bag project for our PSS homeless clients. This is a dynamic team so when Wanda is involved, so is Becky; but she wanted to do more. Since Becky works full-time as a Tax Manager for Harley Davidson, serving on the Council in the evenings seems like it will be a perfect fit.

Our third addition, Jerry Schmitz, has been active in overseeing ECFA building maintenance projects at the office and resale shops. His first Council meeting was in May and almost everyone "saw that guy before." He is also no stranger to formal meetings and Robert's Rules of Order. He wasn't hesitant about jumping in to second a motion minutes after the meeting began which brought immediate smiles knowing there was no learning curve. Jerry is Linda's second cousin which was noted to all when he was being considered for the position in January. The family affiliation is precisely why Jerry and wife Micki became so involved with ECFA. They have volunteered as Crossing Guards at Bike & Hike events for many years. They have helped children on bicycles who separated from their parents on the Drumlin Trail on quite a few occasions. The past two years they have had to endure some pretty dicey weather on their post.

Jerry and Micki have been happily married for over 51 years. He retired one and a half years ago from TMS Heating and Air-Conditioning, a company he owned and operated for 32 years. The company, named after his three sons, Tony, Mike, and Steve, was sold to his employee Todd last year since his sons chose other career paths. In addition to his three sons, he is the very proud grandpa of four grandchildren.



After 40 years of active service on the Hamilton School Board, Jerry decided it was time to step down and was honored for his four decades of service. He had also served as the Lisbon Town Chairman for many years. Since retiring, Jerry and Micki have been able to do some traveling, a regular exercise routine, yardwork, model train set up, and even tried golfing the past two months. His involvement at Northbrook Church, community men's Bible Studies, senior co-ed Bible Studies, and ECFA have kept him "out of trouble" and excited for each new day.

The Wisconsin Advisory Council with Sharon Fuller, Dean Iwinski, Rick Pezoldt, Phil Snyder, and Ken Withrow definitely continue to be an important part of the ministry for many decades to come.



Almost Anything * Reflections * Volunteers A-Y

Every quarter, one volunteer is chosen to honor in each newsletter. This time however, 167 individuals are highlighted in alphabetical order. Although many are deceased, all gave their time and talent to serve at one or two of our three resale shops in West Allis (Almost Anything 1 & 2) and Waukesha (Reflections on Broadway) between 1986 – 2017.

Each person has their own unique life story. Each could share their interesting memories of volunteering at the shops and perhaps the finds they were able to purchase on their shift. Without a doubt, the shops definitely could not have existed for over three decades without all of these volunteers who willingly shared their gift of time. The names of leadership and staff of the shops are in **bold type** since each of them were initially volunteers, too.

Claudette Ahlgren	Dennis Drinkwine
Jan Alexander	Julie Dunn
Christine Anderson	Jessica Dutton
Kayla Arenz	Lloyd & Lois Eckstrom
Terry Arenz	Cynthia Elgeti
Mary Balke	Eileen Figueroa
John & Helen Batson	Margaret Fischer
Becky Baumgart	Bonnie Fisher
Tony Bautista	Katie Frasl
LaVonne Bickler	Kathleen Friedmann
Barbara Blazek	Terry Frost
Mary Bonakoske	Janet Fullington
Carol Bores	Colleen Gapinski
Bill & Jeanne Bosch	Cheryl Graham
Greg Breitbach	Pam Gray
Joana Briggs	Bill Greguska
Shirley Bruemmer	Linda Griffin
Sue Carlson	Pat Guenther
Erin Cetnarowski	Karen Hagedorn
Kurt Christensen	Stephanie Hagedorn
Agnes Coffey	Gloria Hahn
Jodi Coon	Jessie Heywood
Susie Daigneau	Laverne Hughes
Rosalie Daniels	Samantha Husnik
Marian Demers	Pamela Jackson
Barbara Denton	Lois Jansen
Karen Dercole	Dawn Johnson
Teri Downing	John Johnson

Margaret Johnson	Cathy Romeis
Carol Johnston	Linda Ronkowski
Anita Julius	Gert Rosenau
Sandra Kaebisch	Karen Rueth
Sandra Karczewski	Bob, Jane & Ryan Runnels
Claudette Kearn	Kathy Runte
Wendy Kee	Wendy Rupnow
Karyl Kennedy	Martha Salgado
Joe Kerzich	Maria Sanchez
Cindy Kirby	Janet Schley
John Kirchner	Tonya Schuldt
Wally Kohnke	Andy & Steve Schulze
Laurie Kornowski	Marjorie Scroton
Dottie Kunz	Robert Senn
Tracy Larson	Linda Severson
Linda Lasch	Carol Sharrock
Mary Lepien	Bridget Sheehan
Maricela Lopez	Kay Shephard
Joan Liempeck	Sheila Siegel
Harrison Lucas	Phyllis Siegmann
Nicholas Lucas	Beatriz Silva
Carol Lusic	Sandy Smith
Corinne Manke	Judith Stilley
*Dianne Marek ~ Founder	Jill Szalacinski
Angela Marks	Cheryl Szopinski
Ada Martin	Tabernacle Baptist; Steve
Karen Mathison	& Linda Carlson + others
Shirley Maynard	Karen Talacko
Jamie McGhee	Kathryn Tausz
Colleen McGuire-Duewell	Andy & Helga Tebes
Eric Meyers	Tyrone & Karen Thoen
Tom & Mary Meyers	Nancy Thomas
Mary Miskowitch	Margaret Tills
Corey & Garrette Missiaen	Jean Tregellas
Cristel Moecker	Shirley Turner (Johnston)
Dorie Nielson	Donna Viers
Bill & Marge Nilson	Nicole Waite
Carol Nuoffer	Thomas Weislow
Janet Nunziato	Mary Westphal
Don & Millie Oberbrunner	Janet Wilke
Donna Olson	Bill & Jean Winger
Julie Olson	*Anita Wonder ~ Founder
Jan Orcholski	Janet Worm
Debbie Palmer	Dolores Wuttke
Nancy Patten	Carol Yule
Amber Perez	
Sharon Plummer	
Debbie Podd	
Judith Popa	
Anna Praamsma	May God's blessings
Diana Rathmann	be upon each of you for
Gerry Reidy	your gift of service to this
Ruth Ann Rogahn	ministry for LIFE!

Christmas In July 2017

Our adoptive family who were featured in the Christmas in July story this year stopped by the New Berlin office to show little Joshua the pretty decorated tree.

Kara and Justin were happily surprised at the number of ornaments placed on the tree that represent the many individuals, couples, and families who support the



ministry of ECFA. We are grateful that this special campaign mid-year has once again been so well-received. Thank you to all the donors of the 63 ornaments that have already totaled \$4,573. This sweet family winked as they left stating they may be coming back very soon for perhaps the opportunity for Joshua to become a big brother someday. We will have to stay tuned.



Welcome Home Dorinne

Beginning at the end of August, a familiar face of the ECFA family will begin her full-time position as an adoption social worker in the New Berlin office. Dorinne Geldon is a seasoned home study worker who has worked with hundreds of families since she began as a contract worker in 1990. Through the years, she has effectively juggled family, homeschooling, church, ministry, and community responsibilities along with her extensive ECFA home studies in order to license pre-adoptive couples and families.

Dorinne's winsome personality exudes a warmth and genuine care for each of the families she has served. She shared when being interviewed what a "privilege it is to be able to pray with and also for my families during their entire process of adoption. I have a heart for God and my adoptive families. It is my passion." Many families who worked with her for their first adoption request her for subsequent adoptions.

She and her husband, Mike, have been married for 39 years and have four adult sons. Three sons are married which has allowed her the opportunity to also have daughters. In the past few years, she has also had the opportunity to experience the joy of being a grandparent of two granddaughters and one grandson.

Her plate has been very full for many years and the decision to work full-time meant saying goodbye to many other connections and areas of her life. She has always enjoyed working with children, regardless of age. She has directed many children's musicals in the past. On the opposite spectrum of life, she and two other women have been part of a singing ministry to those in hospice care or nursing homes. Serenading women or men before they leave this world and into eternity with Christ has been so rewarding, Dorinne shares. That ministry began with her own mother when her health declined. At different times when each needed care, Dorinne was a caretaker for both of them. Dorinne and her family currently live in the home her parents built in 1968 where she has lived the majority of her life.

When her sons became of school age, Dorinne homeschooled them and desired some sports programs for them to participate in. Since there were none available, Dorinne courageously began the first state homeschool program now called SWCHA (Southeastern Wisconsin Christian Homeschool Athletics) Saints. This organization has grown exponentially to become the strong presence it is today, serving young people all over Wisconsin. Tournaments take place locally and also nationally with the Saint's teams being competitive contenders in a number of sports categories. Dorinne also mentored and spearheaded the start of other homeschool sports organizations throughout the state.

Other ventures for Dorinne have included: being on the staff of Campus Way ministries to youth for years and Operation Christmas Child involvement with Waukesha County church youth groups she led at the Minnesota facility. They prepared thousands of the shoeboxes for final distribution around the world.

That's a little glimpse into the unique life of our newest addition. Whether Dorinne is working on a domestic in-state, interstate, or an international adoption case, she always has that contagious smile. Please welcome her anytime after September 1st when you are in the area.



THE 31st BIKE & HIKE

Rainy Day Fun(draiser) Results

The skies were overcast on May 20, 2017, with rain predicted for 11:00 am. Nevertheless, 90 participants arrived with sunny dispositions despite the bleak forecast in the 31st annual Bike & Hike. New Bike & Hike participants totaled 16 and were eligible for the \$100 drawing (if they were present). An overjoyed Marilyn Vandekieft was the winner even though she almost left to warm up in her car. She was definitely glad she stayed.



The attractive Choose Life license t-shirts were noticeable along the Glacial Drumlin Trail. Our friendly volunteer crossing guards were able to answer questions from many curious who inquired about them.

A last minute change in the Cruz Family musicians plan resulted in the inspirational worship team of vocalists Allie and David, accompanied by the acoustic guitar strums of Angel Cruz.

Together they shared melodious hymns, modern worship music, and joyful verses which were truly appreciated by all staying dry under the shelter area.



True to the forecast, the clouds burst forth with rain at 11:02 a.m. Many were able to avoid the downpour but many did not. The delicious Cousins Subs and homemade cookies were gobbled up by those returning

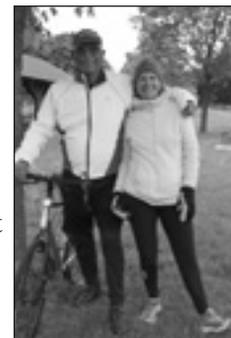


trail walkers and riders. The popped, piping hot popcorn kernels kept a few hands warm, too. Doug Kowalski did double duty as the popper and bike repair specialist.

We could not have had the event this year without many dedicated individuals, families, and businesses. This year \$28,660 was raised which included the generous \$10,000 match from an anonymous couple.

The 2017 **top three winners** and their prizes are:

*1 Pastor Fred Smith ~ \$4,385 from 40 sponsors (same # of sponsors as last year). He selected the Waukesha State Bank Brewer's Box Seat Ticket Package, valued at \$300 which he chose to share with family members since he was out of town when the Brewer's played.



*2 Kathy Misany ~ \$2,707 from 66 sponsors. She selected the Country Springs Hotel Waterpark & Conference Center deluxe overnight stay with 4 waterpark passes valued at \$150 to share with her family members.

*3 Jerold Dalton ~ \$1,875 from 10 sponsors. He selected the \$200 from an anonymous donor couple.

Each of these top three fundraisers devote hours of their time unselfishly raising funds for the ministry and programs of ECFA. This year, Linda Carlson had the most sponsors with 39 (excluding our top three). She won a 4-pack of Country Springs waterpark passes.

Six of the fundraisers raised over \$300, earning themselves a 2 Foot Cousins Party Sub certificate (although two additional fundraisers qualified).

Thank you and God's blessings to the following:

Almost Anything – Sponsorship

Anonymous Couple – \$10,000 Match

Anonymous Couple – \$200 Cash - Major Prize

Anonymous – \$100 New Participant Prize

Kelly Baierl – Door Prize Donations (6)

Bike & Hike Committee – Co-chaired by: Brian & Nancy Farrell, Ron & Jan Baer, & Linda Oberbrunner, with Office Secretary: Sue Carlson

Country Springs Hotel Waterpark & Conference Center Jill & Nancy – overnight stay with 4 waterpark passes plus one additional foursome and two pairs of two waterpark passes which were used for the August 2nd Brewer Buddy Family night drawings.

Cousins Subs/Valentine Family – delicious Cousins Subs lunch and fixings, t-shirts and fundraiser prize certificates



Culver's Restaurant on Sunset Drive – 20 scoopic tokens & a Scoopic character stuffed toy

Day of Event Volunteers (not listed in other categories)
 Gloria Anderson, Cathy & Mike Bogdanovich, Charlene Duranceau, Tim Farrell, Catherine & Kevin Faulls, Kevin Glynn, Wally & Anita Julius, Doug Kowalski, Dick Merten, Mike Oberbrunner, Dawn & Haley Salvesson, Jerry & Micki Schmitz, Joyce Storer, Sophia Valentine & Friend Alondra, and Barb Wickland

Dennis Drinkwine – photographer, capturing many smiles & faces

The Farrell Family – free-standing popcorn machine & supplies

Focus on the Family – prize drawing books, magazines, and DVD

Nick Foulks – event sponsorship

Mary Go – four \$25 gift cards for door prizes

iNET Computers Inc. – event sponsorship

Pastor Troy Johnson – loaned speakers and mic system

Molly Llannas – kids' games, prizes, and face painting

Kathy Martin – ongoing website updates

Ernie & Paula Niemann – Thrivent sponsorship \$250 & 25 Live Generously t-shirts



Beth Ramsey – creative graphic artist of brochures, prayer reminders & t-shirts

Spring Creek Church Cookie Bakers (Three) – 24 dozen delicious goodies all in treat bags organized and transported by Stacy Kageff

Water Doctors/Dr. Bob – seven cases of refreshing Kinetico water bottles

Waukesha State Bank – 4-pack Brewer's box seat tickets and generous tote bag prize \$300 value

Woodman's Grocery – \$25 gift card for apples, bananas, carrots & pretzels

Throughout the morning and noontime, attendees were quite happy it didn't snow and kept reminding each other how warm the 53 degrees felt in comparison to the previous temps and flurries of last year.

A family closeness naturally took place among everyone that was able to huddle under the shelter inside the tarps that Brian Farrell and helpers put up ahead of time just in case the weather forecasters were right. There was a festive atmosphere for sure as kids played carnival type games and won prizes with Dawn and Haley Salvesson's help.



Some had cute creations painted temporarily on their faces by our talented Molly Llannas who faithfully returns each year. Lots of camaraderie and joy was shared by all who look forward to a warmer, drier, even sunny Bike & Hike next year.

As always, the whole purpose of this event is to provide additional services for the moms, dads, children, babies, and the preborn in need in the days to come. And that was definitely accomplished through everyone involved!



Jerry & Judy Dalton ~ Together For Life

“God doesn’t sharpen a tool unless He intends to use it” was wisely stated during a delightful interview with ECFA Family Friends, Jerry & Judy Dalton. This lovely couple, sharpened by our LORD, have been involved in the ministry of ECFA, their family, and the community for many decades. The impact upon lives and generations is a hallmark of this couples’ strong 58 year marriage.



These two became acquainted with each other at the tender age of 16 when Jerry bought a used book from Judy for a class she had already taken. He came to her home and stood politely in the kitchen where Judy and her mom were involved together in a sewing project. Great first impressions were made by all during that

brief interaction. Only God knew the beautiful life these two young people would eventually share impacting hundreds and hundreds of souls.

After being married and desiring to start a family, the path of adoption became theirs. Their first daughter Naomi was welcomed through adoption. Then God brought daughters Sarah and Leah biologically a few years later. Jerry and Judy raised their girls surrounded by apple trees, a golf course, and gardens where they continue to live. Treehouse sleepovers and backyard Child Evangelism Fellowship vacation bible school days were fondly recalled. It was common for the family to host 30-40 kids underneath cathedral shaped weeping willows for classes.

Youngster Leah used to collect stray golf balls by the bucketful and sell them back to golfers “earning some pocket money.” Nowadays when the grandchildren visit, they become excited to pick apples, find golf balls, and walk along the property exploring many of the same things their mothers enjoyed 40+ years ago. To date, they have been blessed with 12 grandchildren.

Jerry worked hard outside the home as a master electrician, engineer, and meteorologist while Judy raised the girls and ministered to the spiritual needs of women through evangelism and discipling which began in 1967. That ministry, known as *Apples of Gold*, grew and grew. Her 50th year of teaching was celebrated this May. Generations of families came or wrote well-wishes for the gathering, appreciative of the many years she shared the WORD so faithfully. Class members still drive long distances to attend the thought-provoking weekly studies which continue to this day.

Since adoption was dear to the Dalton’s hearts, learning of ECFA through some of their friends drew them to become interested and involved. Since Jerry enjoyed bike riding and golf, he participated in many ECFA Golf Scramble’s and the annual Bike & Hike fundraisers. As an avid bike rider at age 78, he continues to garner sponsors and raise funds for the ministry. In fact, he has been one of the top three fundraisers for many years and has no plans to stop.



Daughter Leah & Dad Jerry

The Dalton’s joy and love for each other is evident. As a couple they begin their day in prayer and have included ECFA faithfully before the LORD for so many years. We pray that God will continue to use them mightily as together they portray a picture of Christ’s love and faithfulness to all they have known and served.

THE FINAL DAYS

On June 10th 2017, a historical ending occurred as Karen Thoen rung up the purchases of Irma Robinson. She was the final customer for the era of resale shop affiliation with



the ministry. In her early 80's, Irma was unaware that Almost Anything 2 would be closing forever. She was thrilled to pick up some clothing items "...for some old people she looks out for" at only \$1.00 per bag. She would have bought even more but she would be boarding the city bus and didn't want to be weighed



down too much. She enjoyed having her picture taken and couldn't wait to be in the newsletter. She shared her phone and contact info because she wanted a few copies to show her friends.

The store was pretty emptied by then due to the fantastic closing prices that were offered during the end of May and June. An able-bodied final team of volunteers was on hand to dismantle the well-built displays that needed to be taken down and pack the remaining items into boxes and bags for distribution.



Tyrone, Wally, Steve, Karen, Judith & Andy

The remaining items were given to many other local missions, churches, and ministries.



Executive Director, Ken Withrow drove up to thank Karen Thoen for her service and observe the final hour of this part of the ministry that was a blessing to the agency and also community, too.

The following week, an evening dinner for the Almost Anything staff and volunteers took place at Beloit Road Baptist Church. Karen made a tossed green salad and Linda made eight large pans of homemade lasagna, bought some delicious hot and buttery garlic bread from Capri's Restaurant across the street and ordered a beautiful goodbye cake to complete this special meal of closure.



Kurt Christensen prayed very sensitively for all the changes brought by the closure which so many appreciated. Dennis Drinkwine videotaped mini-interviews of each person that will all be captured on a DVD he is currently editing for distribution to everyone. There was no official program since the consensus was for everyone to have an opportunity to say goodbye to each other. Names and contact info were shared and many people were already planning future get-togethers on their own. Everyone that attended placed their name on a heart. These were taken back to the office the following day so that they could be placed in the prayer cookie jar where staff has had the opportunity to pray for each person. In a way it was a surreal ending since many parts of life are just harder to really end.



I Can See Clearly Now...

After the closure of Almost Anything 2, the windows of the shop were noticeably dirty inside and outside. Since our landlords Mark and Greg Licht had a prospective tenant that would be viewing the premises in a few days, the decision to hire professionals as a thank you to them was made. Looking for an affordable vendor that could make this happen within three days became a challenge. Our former semi-annual window washers had a disconnected phone number so the search began. Many companies do not enjoy doing one time jobs since a lot of businesses are contracted out for weekly work. Of course God knew the perfect solution.



After going online and checking New Berlin area providers, a vendor's name popped up. Paula, a very kind and pleasant woman, took the information and was surprised that we, as a non-profit ministry, wanted to do this gesture for our landlords even though we were leaving. She said she would speak to her boss and Reid, the Operations Manager, too. They lowered their price twice and scheduled an early morning time to make this blessing happen for us.

Their work was exceptional as they automatically cleaned all the sills and surrounding areas. They were quick, thorough, polite, and left no streaks at all. The sun clearly streamed through every window brightening each corner in the huge empty space. The two hard workers, Jorge and Josè were given a McDonald's gift card that they totally did not expect. Simultaneously they smiled and exclaimed, "Lunch!"

Their boss was immediately contacted to thank them for the extra effort that took place to make this happen. Reid Rivas, Operations Manager was delighted to know what a difference they had made for us and was happy to know they would be pictured in our summer newsletter, too. He said to let our readers know, "Please keep us in mind for any future services. We also do pressure washing, parking lot sweeping and of course window cleaning." We at ECFA are forever grateful and highly recommend the customer pleasing Window Brothers at 262-785-9900

An ABC Adoption

In 2013, an aggressive campaign to reach every 8th & 9th grade student in the counties of Greater Milwaukee and Waukesha was launched by our PSS Program. The message of abstinence and marriage between a man and a woman was presented in glossy flip magazines designed with appealing graphics and text.

The initial order of 38,423 had dwindled through various ways of distribution to around 24,000. PSS staffing changes and public school limitations prohibited any further large scale sharing until the end of May 2017.

A Choose Life Bike & Hike t-shirt was promised to Dan Miller, Executive Director of Pro Life Wisconsin. Their group, along with Julaine Appling, has been instrumental the past 10 years in getting Wisconsin legislators to adopt the license plates for vehicles beginning this October. As Linda went to drop off his shirt after the Bike & Hike, the thought occurred to bring some samples of the abstinence magazines and offer to share them at no cost since this is part of their mission also.

Little did she know that they were about to place a large order to purchase these same magazines since they distribute them in large quantities where they are snapped up by young people desiring to take a stand for life and abstinence too.

They were thrilled to receive the many boxes that have been carefully kept in a Cousins Subs storage area. Thanks to Jeff Daane from Cousins for transporting them to a thankful Pro Life Wisconsin staff. Dan stated, "Pro-Life Wisconsin will offer these booklets to abortion-oriented men and women at abortion and referral sites all across the state through our state-wide sidewalk counseling ministry."

We at ECFA are beyond delighted that Pro Life Wisconsin has adopted the magazines and will continue to find eager recipients who may find out the ABC (A Better Choice) for themselves.



From L to R: Nina Smrecek, Dan Miller, & Matt Von Rueden



Tabernacle Baptist Church Opening Their Door for a Very Long Time

Not many churches celebrate a centennial (100th) celebration, and Tabernacle Baptist Church of West Allis has already exceeded that milestone. This year they celebrated their sesquicentennial (150th) anniversary of operation. Previously, Tabernacle Baptist was known by other names and relocated from Milwaukee. They have been at their current location on 115th and National Avenue for 50 years this year.

Pastor Steve Carlson and his wife, Linda, have served at Tabernacle for the past 10 years. This couple along with two men and five women from their church faithfully volunteered at both Almost Anything Resale Shops one Saturday every month for a number of years. They assisted Karen Thoen, the Supervisor, with seasonal changeovers, major cleaning, and outside projects that she assigned them. Karen said how much she, “looked forward to the Saturdays they would come because they all worked so hard, never complained, and were very fun to be around.” The jovial bantering between them generated chuckles and smiles from customers and the other volunteers, too.



After the Carlson's retired from teaching full-time, they felt God's plan and call for their lives was to enter full-time service in the ministry. As well as once educating youth as a physics teacher at Greendale High School in Greendale, Wisconsin, Pastor Steve has served as a worship leader, teacher, and elder in several area churches. After his 32-year career as an award-winning physics teacher, Pastor Steve retired to become the



associate pastor at East Troy Bible Church. At an ECFA Banquet in 2004, Pastor Steve did a touching live adoptive placement ceremony with all guests present for two little brothers who became available for adoption. A court hearing for termination of parental rights went through earlier in the day of the banquet making God's timing perfect for so that all present could be a part of such a private moment that the family was willing to share with the ECFA Family.

On June 1, 2007 Pastor Steve was called to be the pastor at Tabernacle Baptist Church. In addition to studying and proclaiming God's Word, he enjoys reading, canoeing and kayaking, hiking, cross-country skiing and traveling. The church children and VBS attendees know he is a fun pastor who takes a genuine interest in them.

Linda is retired from teaching biology, chemistry, and AP biology. She still teaches part-time for the Waukesha School district in its environmental education program. Linda enjoys playing the piano and organ and leading the church choir. She also enjoys teaching, biking, canoeing, hiking, cross-country skiing and traveling. She has been actively involved in the Bike and Hike events with friends for years always surpassing the majority of participants in garnering the most sponsors for her ride.



ECFA is honored to highlight Tabernacle Baptist Church and the active involvement and support of this church. The serving hearts of their humble pastor and wife are an example for those that may follow the next 100 years.



With A Grateful Heart

There is a continual outpouring of blessings received by this ministry on a regular basis. As a result, there are many individuals to be grateful for in each quarterly newsletter. The scriptural premise for our gratefulness comes from

Psalm 9:1, "I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart; I will tell of the wonders." **Our thanks from grateful hearts:**

- ♥ Thank you to all the dedicated volunteers who efficiently assembled the following mailings:

Spring Newsletter

Ron & Jan Baer
Sally Boya
Helen Brownell
Annette Cernohous
Maureen & Raymond Christensen
Kathy Dow
Charlene Duranceau
Ruth Engelhardt
Mary Go
Jill Hait
Anita Julius
Beverly Kuntzsch
Karen Ridder
Nancy Roets
Laura Taylor
Mary Westphal
Margo Whitcomb
Carol Yule

Christmas in July Letter

Claudette Ahlgren
Nancy Farrell
Jill Hait
Beverly Kuntzsch
Wanda Prusak
Nancy Roets
Micki & Rachel Schmitz
Marni Stelter
Leah & Sophia Valentine
Margo Whitcomb
Judy Zwitter

- ♥ For the 74 Outfits & onesies; 15 sleepers; 12 pairs socks; 1 bib; 6 blankets; 4 baby creams; 6 packages of diapers; 2 pacifiers; 2 swaddlers; 2 thermometers; 3 washcloth & towel sets; and 11 packages of wipes and delivery from the Elizabeth Ministry of Holy Apostles Church, New Berlin.

- ♥ For the wonderful photos taken at our annual Bike & Hike and videos at our Almost Anything good bye party by Dennis Drinkwine.
- ♥ For the monetary gift to purchase a baby monitor for a Pregnancy Support Services client with newborn triplets from Patricia Duty.
- ♥ For the picnic table restoration & painting and Spring flower bed preparation by the Rogers Family: Destinee, Devin, and Lynn.
- ♥ For the time, talent, and hard work in caring for the flower gardens on our property that we have been enjoying this summer by Dick Merten.
- ♥ For the driveway blower upkeep by next door neighbor, Terry Courtois.
- ♥ For the baby diapers for our Fruits of Your Labor PSS client incentive program from Karen Doligalski.
- ♥ For the baby wipes, onesies, bibs, baby powder, diapers, baby bottles and Gerber's Lil' Crunchies from Lexi Babic for our PSS clients.
- ♥ For the baby wipes for our Fruits of Your Labor PSS client incentive program from Carol Honeyager.
- ♥ For the three cute little baby onesies from an anonymous donor for our PSS program.

Tributes

In honor of: My friend, Nancy Farrell's birthday
From: Carol Honeyager

Celebrating the lives of: Our Grandkids Keegan, Izzy, Addison, Hannah, Josiah, & Jordan
From: Mike & Linda Oberbrunner

In thanksgiving for my adopted son, William's birthmother and my daughter, Jennifer's birthmother
From: Patty Waldoch

