

ELMIRA CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

CHALLENGE



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ECA Offers a Helping Hand

By Michael Tryon '12

On Monday, members of ECA's National and National Jr. Honor Societies went to Wellsburg to help people who had been affected by the flood. Everyone who went really enjoyed helping to bring some sort of restoration to those who lost many of their possessions.

The week before the flooding occurred in Wellsburg it had been raining non-stop and the local water ways which run through town, had already gone over its banks. Following that, we had a tropical storm which made the river run higher, went through the town and damaged many houses and businesses.

At my house, on top of Jerusalem Hill, we were not affected by the water. However we did experience a few power outages at the time of the flooding in Wellsburg. Having the power out for me is probably one of my biggest pet peeves and throughout this time I was one unhappy camper. Some inconveniences you can experience during a power outage would be: no lights, no water, no A/C or heating, no laundry being washed and more importantly for me: no computer, no television and no Xbox. In reality, others lost more than just their power, they lost refrigerators, ovens, microwaves, washers and dryers. There was also water damage to people's houses and many lost precious items like family photos and videos which can never be replaced.

That day, all of the members of the Junior and National Honor Societies



NHS Students Filling Relief Bags

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Alumni Spotlight:



Ronald Tryon ('87)

By Rev. David Cook

Family has always been important for Ron Tryon ('87). The most rewarding experience for him since graduating from ECA has been “getting married and having kids.” Ron and his wife Stephanie have been married since 1991 and are raising three children (Michael, Laura, and Joshua). Ron’s love for family and sports shows itself in his love for coaching. He has coached his children’s Little League teams for 13 years and has been



Ronald Tryon

very active in coaching basketball as well. Coaching is so important to him that when the current economy demanded a career move he chose a third shift job just so he could continue coaching and be involved with his children.

Ron attended ECA from eighth grade to his senior year. His greatest experiences at the school centered around basketball. Ron said, “[I played] with a group of guys I grew up with at school [and we had] three teachers who mentored us – Gary Andrews, Ray Rose and Jimmy LaPrade.” He remembers times he and his brother would visit Jimmy and Jaynie LaPrade’s house next the church and the friendly reception they would always receive (Ron only lived a couple blocks away). At times Gary (who was also a farmer) would hire them to pull rocks out of his field.

“ECA provided my foundation,” Ron said, “I know that is a bland answer but it was where I was shaped academically and spiritually.” While at ECA Ron enjoyed the business courses (typing and accounting) the most. After graduating from ECA he went on to Corning Community College for two years. After that he attended Elmira College for two years to major in Accounting and receive his Bachelor of Science degree. Since that time Ron has held positions in two companies. He was a Credit Manager for the Star-Gazette and a Financial Analyst for Schweitzer Aircraft. Because of the current economic situation Ron is currently working on the production end of Schweitzer Aircraft as a Tool Crib Supervisor.

Besides raising a family, coaching Little League, and a pursuing a demanding career, Ron has also given himself to church work for more than two decades. He worked in the 4 and 5 year-old department at Elmira Christian Center for 24 years and has served faithfully on the board of the church (and therefore the ECA school board) for 7 years.

Ron has been a profile in faithfulness and we at ECA are proud to call him one of our own.

The End is Near! [Year-End Giving]

We are not talking about the end of the world – although that is getting closer for sure. This “end” is something much more benign - the end of the year. By the time you get this, 2011 will only be about 50 days away from extinction. So will be your opportunity to give to ECA and receive a tax deduction for the year.

Elmira Christian Academy is a 501c (3) organization and is able to issue receipts for those contributions that you can use on your tax returns.

There are several areas where we could use some healthy offerings. Our gym heater needs to be replaced (it works most of the time – but when it doesn’t it is a problem!) We have been awarded a partial grant for this, but we still need more funds to do the work. Giving to the day-to-day maintenance of the school would also be a huge help (the tuition only covers about 55% of our expenses). Last but not least, we have made a commitment to increase our investment in our most precious resource of all– our teachers. We have started on a five-year journey to bring their pay to a fair and equitable level.

Please consider Elmira Christian Academy in your year-end giving. In doing so, you are not only helping Elmira Christian Academy, you are also helping yourself and being a good steward of the resources with which God has blessed you!

We need your help to fund our communications program!

Each newsletter costs around \$500 each issue to print and mail, or approximately \$2,000 per year. To date, the costs have been covered by a couple of individuals and Elmira Christian Center and we need help through your donations to cover the costs. Please help by sending your gift today!

Stay Up To Date

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<http://www.elmirachristianacademy.com/>

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<http://www.facebook.com/schoolECA>

<http://www.facebook.com/ECAAlumni>

Follow us on Twitter: @schoolECA

E-mail us at: ecaalum@gmail.com

Look for and share this newsletter online at:

<http://www.elmirachristianacademy.com/alumni.pdf>

ECA SPORTS PROGRAM

Sports activities have always been a big part in the life of Elmira Christian Academy and they have been growing even more in the last 5 years.

In that time, under the guidance of Pastor Brian Harris (Pastor of ECC – 2006 – 2010) there were a number of changes made that enhanced the sports program in both its substance and visibility. First, the name of the ECA teams was changed from “ECA Challengers” to the “ECA Warriors”. A logo that reflected the change was designed for the school and adopted for the teams. There were also physical improvements in the gym. The gym was repainted in red, black and white, the bathrooms were redone, and banners were set up in the gym celebrating the basketball teams and their victories. Through the contacts of one of our school families we were also able to replace the solid backboards with clear acrylic backboards (leftovers from Elmira College – but they look great!).

A Booster Club has also been started to raise money for the sports program. So far it has accomplished that, and much more. It has promoted camaraderie, encouraged the teams, purchased uniforms, paid the referees, and has provided the funds to honor our seniors at the last home game of the season on “Senior Night.” It is also through the work of the Booster Club that we are able to have quality printed programs for each of the Basketball games.



New Backboard

One of the great “money-makers” is the concession stand. Serving all kinds of things from pizza to nachos and from chili to chicken soup, it has been a big addition to the basketball games on cold winter nights.

One of the changes has been the appointment of an Athletic Director for the school. Nina Horton (who was also a teacher and librarian at ECA at the time) was our “pioneer” in this position. She took on the responsibility of scheduling games, securing a field for the soccer team, scheduling referees, and finding coaches for the various teams. She also, with several parents from the school, started the Booster Club. Nina left the school last year and now Chris Hooks is serving as Athletic Director. Chris graduated from the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford in 2010 with a BS in Health and Physical Education. He is serving in the Athletic Director position as a volunteer while substitute teaching in the Elmira School District and working at Best Buy.

We talked to Chris about the athletic program at ECA. Chris enjoys his work with the students. “I love seeing them get to do what they love and play the sports I liked when I was a kid,” he said. Between a lack of funds, resources and equipment it can be challenging work but Chris has a vision to see the athletic program become self-sustaining through volunteers (“not too difficult an issue at this time”), sponsors, and fundraisers.

At the time of this writing the Warrior’s soccer record for the year is 2-2-0 in Conference. The boys’ Varsity Basketball team was the league champions for the last 3 years. By the time you get this letter, soccer season will be just about over, but basketball season will soon be here! You can find our basketball schedule in this letter or on our website at elmirachristianacademy.com. Coming out for a Warriors game, with the food, the passion and the great people makes for a great evening. We will see you there!

Save the Date

ECA Christmas Program – Friday, December 16th at 7:00 PM in the Elmira Christian Center Sanctuary at 235 East Miller Street, Elmira, New York. Along with several choirs, the program features the play “The FEAR NOT Factor” (with a 32 voice 1st – 6th grade choir) which looks at the story of Jesus’ birth through the eyes of the angels. Admission is free. The senior class will be having a dessert sale after the program. Come out for a special night with the family!

Annual Alumni Basketball Game – It will soon be time for all former “Challenger” or “Warrior” players (male or female) to bring their best one more time to the ECA basketball court. It is their chance to reunite with their old teammates and renew friendships and memories. The Alumni team will play our current boys and girls “Warriors” varsity teams sometime during the last week of December. The exact date is not set yet, but it will be posted on our school website calendar as soon as it is decided.

ECA FAMILY ASSOCIATION

The ECA Family Association is the new name of the ECA Alumni Association. This decision was made at the October 13th alumni association conference call. The name change is to fit with our goal to bring together, alumni, former students, teachers, and former teachers. It is our hope that the name makes it clear that the group is open to all.

Anyone interested in helping with the ECA Family Association should contact us at ecalum@gmail.com. Some of our specific needs are era captains to help us find alumni and students in the five years before and after their graduation date and encourage attendance and participation in ECA Family Association events, someone with computer experience that can help with website updates and other needs, and a lawyer to help us with organizational setup issues.

We would like to express our appreciation and heartfelt thanks to Todd and Bo Hartman, owners of Second Edition Bookstore, who design and layout this newsletter each issue at no cost to us. Many thanks!

ECA Offers a Helping Hand

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gathered in ECC's green van and headed off to Wellsburg. Our first assignment was to help a woman who attends Elmira Christian Center, and had lost almost everything from her basement and the first floor of her house. The previous day some of her friends came by and did most of the hard work such as moving the heavy items out of the house. The only thing we had to do when we got there was move her oven and refrigerator to the sidewalk where it would be picked up to go to the dump. After that, we went to the town hall to find more ways to help. When we arrived, we were able to prepare bags of cereal, canned goods and toiletries and load them. When we had taken all the bags out to the trucks, we hopped on the tailgates and rode with them up to another building where we prepared "care packages" which also included some blankets.

Once we loaded the biggest bags in the trucks, we split into two



Loading bags into truck for distribution



A Job Well Done!

groups. We hopped back on the tailgates and rode around town giving out the care packages to the flooded, hard hit areas.

I realized during this situation that my inconveniences were nothing compared to what happened to those in Wellsburg and we should always be thankful for what God has given us. Please continue to pray for the citizens of Wellsburg. Even now, weeks later, there is still much work to be done.

Volunteering

Dictionary.com defines a volunteer as being a person who performs a service willingly and without pay. This year, with a growing enrollment, demanding state mandates, a scarcity of funds, and a stretched staff, volunteers are more important than ever at ECA.

We currently have a program where we offer a tuition credit to families for volunteering a certain number of hours per year. This has helped the school and the school families as parents help with recess, cleaning and tutoring.

There is still a need for qualified volunteers to help with recesses, study halls, communication, school promotion, repairs (roof work, painting, plumbing, etc.) and substitute teaching. Any volunteers working in any work that necessitates

any contact with students will be required to have a background check. If you would like to help with any of these areas, please contact us – we will be happy to help you find a place!

Fundraisers

Gertrude Hawk Christmas Candy Sale

– This sale is your opportunity to order delicious candies for the Christmas season and help ECA at the same time. A great thing about this sale is that you can order them online (from October 25th until December 16th) and our school can benefit from it! You can even have free shipping for your online orders if you order before November 21st.

This is how you do it: Go to gertrudehawk.com and, in the "Shop Online" box, click the "Fundraising" link. In the next window click "Searching for a fund raising site?" and type in our school number (705143) in the drop down box. A window will come up showing all the students selling under our school name. Click on one of the students to enter into the catalog and make your purchase and have that purchase credited to our school account. If you do not know any of the students, click on the coordinator's name (Ron Tryon).

If you don't want to shop online, - just buy some candy from one of our students between October 25th and November 15th. You pay nothing for the shipping of these candies. Happy Shopping!

Race For Education – The race will be in late April or early May of 2012. We were able to raise more than \$11,000.00 last year and are reaching toward \$15,000.00 this year. You can help by sponsoring a child, sending a contribution and/or volunteering. We need help putting together packets, helping to fill out mailers, supervising the race and other things. Contact us if you are interested in helping!

2012 ECA Reunion Survey

Please take a minute to go to the link below and take a survey about what we should do for the 2012 ECA Reunion. Go to:

<http://www.elmirachristianacademy.com/> and click on the Alumni tab then select 2012 Reunion Survey or go to:

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CLB5QPC>

Thanks in advance for your participation!

Bonnie Bedzyk Rose

By Barb Conrad '88

The commitment to provide a quality Christian education has been one of the goals of Elmira Christian Academy since its founding, and Bonnie Bedzyk Rose was destined to become part of her father's vision for the school. Her father, the late Rev. John Bedzyk, the founder of Elmira Christian Center and Elmira Christian Academy, sent her to college so that she could teach at ECA. She graduated from Houghton College in 1975 with a major in math and a minor in art, and was immediately put to work at ECA teaching SAT prep.

Bonnie wanted to be a missionary, and while she was waiting for those doors to open, she got involved with ECA. She loved teaching, and she loved math. She wanted to understand it well enough to explain it in a number of different ways. For those of us privileged to have had her as a teacher, her commitment to explain math so that we could understand it made her an exceptional teacher.

She taught at ECA from 1975 through the summer of 1987, when she moved out of the Elmira area. During her tenure at ECA, she taught math, art, 7th-grade literature, health, Bible, and living skills; at times she also did the bookkeeping for the school and church. Three of her six children (Breklyn, Jesse, and Truly) were born while she was a teacher at ECA, and her total maternity leave added up to what most people take for the birth of one child (six weeks)—now that is dedication!



Bonnie Rose (then)

when the teachers were not going to get paid due to lack of funds (and they didn't for a week or two), but God always came through...and the biggest miracle was that they were able to live on what they were paid.

Bonnie remembers her dad as being kind and loving to her, and waking up to him praying and crying for people and the city of Elmira. She didn't realize that men could be mean, never experienced him being mean. She described him as a humble man who put others' needs before his own. One of the things that she would like people to take away from Bro. John's story is that you do not have to inherit your parents' faults. Bonnie's grandfather was a wife-beating alcoholic before God delivered him, but none of her uncles or her dad followed in those footsteps.

Currently working as the accounting project manager at Parata Systems, Bonnie feels that God placed her there. She has been there for nine years and is considered the mother of Parata; the story of how God provided this opportunity for her is a true illustration of God as Jehovah-Jireh—our provider. As a newly divorced mother, she was teaching and doing bookkeeping at a Christian school and then as a bookkeeper at a bowling center, but it wasn't enough to make ends meet. After some careful figuring, she wrote down what she needed—and prayed. Her daughter Brek was babysitting for a neighbor, who asked her how her mom was doing. Brek told him that her mom had just decided to look for another job. The neighbor called Bonnie late that night and told her he needed her skills as a mother at his



Bonnie Rose (now)

company—he offered exactly the figure she had written down as a starting salary! God kept her while she waited the three months until the job was available, when she became the 14th employee at a company that was only a year old. Initially she was the office manager, bookkeeper, receptionist, administrative assistant and IT support, but now the company has 400 employees, and her job responsibilities have changed. In her free time, Bonnie enjoys making cards and jewelry.

She is very proud of her kids, who are now grown and successful in their own right. Breklyn is married and worked at Parata Systems with her mother until recently; she has just accepted a position at Duke Medical Services. Jesse and his wife are lawyers and live in New York City. Truly and her husband live in North Carolina with their two little boys and are expecting their third child. Anna lives in Israel and is teaching geometry at the Jerusalem School for Palestinians, an Assembly of God school. Dusty is a senior at North Carolina State University and Zach is still living at home while he attends community college.

In closing, Bonnie shared these inspiring words: "God was always faithful and He continues to be. When we are following Him, it's not always easy no matter where we are at, but He is always faithful." She looks forward to seeing how God will further lead ECA into the future.

Box Tops for Education

Do you want to help ECA? One of the ways you can help is to send in your Box Tops. Box tops are not only on cereal boxes. You can find them on all kinds of products (even Avery products like dividers, labels, and sticky notes!). You can find them, collect them and send them to ECA so we can cash them in at the end of the year to buy equipment for our elementary department. Just look for the logo on the package (see below). For more information on the Box tops for Education check out boxtops4education.com.

ECA ALUMNI & FRIENDS NEWS

Debi Karppala '76 has a Bachelor of Science degree in elementary education and a Masters of Education degree in special needs. She is a special needs teacher at Manarat School in Kuwait. She attends International Christian Fellowship of Kuwait. She sends the following news: "My life since graduating from ECA has been interesting! Too many years to share here! There have been ups and downs...but, most importantly, Christ didn't let me go...and faithfully loved me and brought me back to Him! I first found my way to Kuwait in 1998, spending five years here before taking some time off to go back to the USA.. During that time I was in Hawaii and



Debi Karppala ('76)



Kuwait City

Alaska. Encouraged by friends, I returned to Kuwait in 2007. It seems like I will be here for a long time... God has some purpose for me here! I spend my time at church, with friends, and traveling when possible. My favorite pastime is working on my photography. My home is shared with a white furball ... Vanilla, my cat! I'd love to attend an ECA event but always arrive back in Elmira too late. Someday, Insha'allah (as God wills), I will get to be there!"

Wendy (Morse) Conklin '77 completed three years of Bible school and two years of vocational training at BOCES in computer classes. She is currently a homemaker who lives in Elmira, NY, and attends Elmira Christian Center.

Tammy (Barnes) Eggers '83 lives in Waverly, NY, and attends Elmira Christian Center. She went back to school at Elmira Business Institute for Medical Coding and Reimbursement Specialist and will graduate in October, 2011.

Lisa (Congdon) Epp '87 and her husband James have been married 20 years and live in Pine City, NY, with their five children. Their children are Rachel (14), Stephen (12), Daniel (10), Nathan (8), and Elisabeth (6). Lisa graduated from Roberts Wesleyan College with a B.S.N. and is a homemaker/RN. She works for Guthrie, but she is mostly busy at home and homeschooling her children. The Epp family attends Grace Community Church in Corning, NY.

Barbara Conrad '88 completed a Bachelor's of Science degree in accounting at Roberts Wesleyan College in 1992 and has been employed in the accounting field since that time. For the last nine years, she has been employed as the business manager of Stewart Howe Alumni Service of NY, LLC, located in Lansing, NY. She lives in Elmira Heights, NY, and worships at Elmira Christian Center. She is actively involved in the fight against cancer through the American Cancer Society's Relay For Life and is also working with others to get the ECA Family Association going. If you are interested in helping with the ECA Family Association, please contact her directly at bconrad@stny.rr.com.

Scott Congdon '89 married Becky Dech on July 9, 2011. The happy couple honeymooned in Alaska. Becky is from Allentown, PA, and is a special education teacher. Scott is trained as a journeyman tool and die maker and is employed as a supervisor at Courser, Inc., in Elmira, NY. They live in Gillett, PA, and attend Victory Church in Troy, PA.



Scott & Becky Congdon

Michelle (Conrad) Atlas '94 married Jonathan Atlas on July 24, 2010, and lives in New Market, NH. She graduated from Finger Lakes School of Massage in June of 2008. She is a licensed massage therapist who is nationally accredited and licensed in both New York and New Hampshire. She currently works for Optima Day Spa.



Jonathan and Michelle (Conrad) Atlas

Ryan C. Andrews '05 graduated from Binghamton University with a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering and currently works for Corning, Inc. Ryan lives in Gillett, PA, and attends Elmira Christian Center.

Rebekah (Douglass) Schiavone '06 graduated summa cum laude from Elmira College in June, 2010, with a Bachelor's degree in childhood education and English literature.



James & Rebekah (Douglass) Schiavone

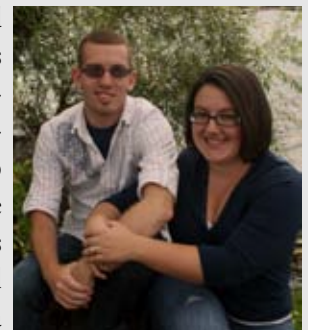
On July 24, 2010, she married James Schiavone and then moved to Williamsport, PA, for her husband's college career. She is currently working as a preschool coordinator for a Lutheran church preschool and waitressing nights and weekends. The couple attends Good News Bible Church.

Beth J. Andrews '07 has made a two-year commitment to serve in Youth With A Mission, Jeffrey's Bay, South Africa, until January of 2012.

Kendra Walsh '07 graduated from Keuka College in May with a Bachelor's in occupational science and is now working on her M.S. in occupational therapy. Her anticipated graduation date is May of 2012. She lives in Wellsburg, NY, and attends Bentley Creek Wesleyan Church.

Larry Fulmer '08 (Southside High School) married Ashley Kull in May and attends the Salvation Army in Scranton, PA. They are both very involved in the ministry there and plan on attending the school for officer training to become Salvation Army Officers (Pastors). When they complete the school, they will both be ordained ministers and have degrees in business. They are currently living in Wilkes-Barre, PA, and continue to listen to God's voice while serving as youth directors at their church. Their goal for the youth is to raise up a generation of leaders.

Larry & Ashley Fulmer



Larry & Ashley Fulmer