

WFAPA

Wisconsin Foster And Adoptive Parent Association



NATIONAL  
ADOPTION DAY

**November 20, 2021**

National Adoption Day is a collective effort to raise awareness of the more than 120,000 children waiting to be adopted from foster care in the United States. A coalition of national partners — the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute, Alliance for Children's Rights and Children's Action Network — founded National Adoption Day.

On November 18, 2000, the coalition and the Freddie Mac Foundation encouraged nine cities to open their courts on or around the Saturday before Thanksgiving to finalize and celebrate adoptions from foster care.

The first National Adoption Day was inspired by the innovative efforts of Michael Nash, a former presiding judge of Los Angeles County's Juvenile Court. He opened the court on Saturdays, engaged the volunteer efforts of court personnel and finalized adoptions to reduce the backlog of one of the busiest courts in the nation.

Due to COVID-19 protocols, many National Adoption Day events will be virtual or in a hybrid format. We are grateful to the many courts that are finding ways to celebrate despite these challenges. To find an event happening near you, please go to their website at [www.nationaladoptionday.org](http://www.nationaladoptionday.org).

Policymakers, practitioners and advocates have collaborated to plan these annual events in **400 cities across the United States**.

To date, the dreams of more than **75,000 children in foster care** have come true as part of National Adoption Day events.



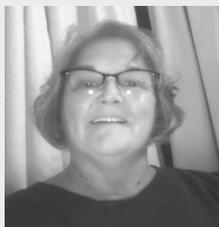


# 2022 SPRING CONFERENCE

**April 22 - 24, 2022**  
**Grand Lodge Hotel in Rothschild, WI**  
**Foster Parents ~ Get Your 12 Credits!**



Garrette & Katie Butler—Oxford, WI  
Ross & Noreen Cheesman— Pewaukee, WI  
Branden and Joanna Lewis—Waupaca, WI  
Danny & Roxanne Lewis—Antigo, WI  
Lena Damrau—Fond du Lac, WI



**President ~ Tina Christopherson**

During the General Membership Meeting on Saturday, Tina was re-elected as President.

Congratulations Tina!



**Treasurer ~ Sherry Benson**

During the General Membership Meeting on Saturday, Sherry was re-elected as Treasurer.

Congratulations Sherry!



Tammy Wood-Gar with Shannon Jarecki from the Woman's Community Inc.

## Life Begins Here

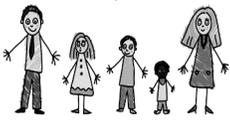
At our Fall Conference, we donated to The Woman's Community Inc., located in Wausau, WI.

The Women's Community Inc. helps victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault, or human trafficking. They provide confidential counseling and shelter, domestic abuse or sexual assault support groups, services for youth and children, sexual assault services and assistance with civil, parenting and criminal issues.

Your donation can do many things to help victims/survivors of domestic abuse/sexual

assault do many things to help victims/survivors of domestic abuse/sexual assault and their children. For example: A donation of \$25 provides resources for those attending our support groups. A gift of \$50 offsets the cost of feeding our shelter residents. Another \$75 supports the time needed to file an Order of Protection. A donation of \$100 provides interpreter services. And a week of shelter for a family can be provided for a donation of \$200. If you weren't able to make it to conference and you would like to make a donation, please go to [www.womenscommunity.org](http://www.womenscommunity.org).

ADOPTION



# ADOPTION QUILT

Adopting a child is such a powerful, emotional experience and like pregnancy and birth, no two adoption stories are the same. We are making another WFAPA Quilt and if you have adopted a child or you were an adopted child, we would like to hear from

Sherry will send you a quilt square-which you will design. Also, you will need to provide a short essay about what your adoption means to you. Please remember, no identifying information. You can reach Sherry Benson, WFAPA Treasurer and Social Worker Liaison, by emailing her at [misssherry@new.rr.com](mailto:misssherry@new.rr.com) or by texting or calling her at (715) 923-1124.

National  
adoption  
month



adoption.com



IT'S FAMILY.  
IT'S REGULAR AND  
CHALLENGING  
AND MESSY  
SOMETIMES,  
*and it's beautiful*



## FASPP (FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE SUPPORT AND PRESERVATION PROGRAM)

FASPP's mission is to meet the needs of foster and adoptive parents statewide through a network of peer driven support and information which will help to preserve foster and adoptive families.

**ARE YOU FEELING LOST? DO YOU NEED INFORMATION? ARE YOU UNDER AN INVESTIGATION?**

If so, FASPP may be able to help! Our FASPP and SAAN volunteers are highly trained to provide you with information and/or resources to guide you through various issues. FASPP and SAAN is made up of fellow foster or adoptive parents.



## SAAN (SURVIVING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT)

SAAN is a peer driven support network, the purpose of which is to minimize the trauma to foster and adoptive families while undergoing an allegation without compromising the integrity of that investigation. Foster parents welcome children into their homes knowing that they bring their histories and issues along with them. For this reason, foster and adoptive parents are at a higher risk of having an allegation made against them. Undergoing an investigation is a stressful and scary situation for anyone, and SAAN is here to provide information to support you throughout the investigation process.

**Please call or email the following people with questions in these areas:**

Norma, Chairperson (Advice on general/allegations) ~ Phone: (920) 922-9627

Melissa (Focuses on fostering younger children) ~ Phone: (608) 333-6650

Email: [lovedalemelissa@gmail.com](mailto:lovedalemelissa@gmail.com)

Tammy (Advice on general/foster) ~ Phone: (715) 497-3561 Email: [tmeesha1973@yahoo.com](mailto:tmeesha1973@yahoo.com)

Lauri Thorssen (Advice on general/adoption) ~ Phone: (715) 816-4152 Email: [lthorssen@gmail.com](mailto:lthorssen@gmail.com)



# WFAPA OFFICERS

President ~ Tina Christopherson, Email: [twfapa@new.rr.com](mailto:twfapa@new.rr.com), Phone: 715-938-6667

Vice President ~ Tammy Wood-Gar, Email: [tmeesha1973@yahoo.com](mailto:tmeesha1973@yahoo.com), Phone: 715-497-3561

Secretary ~ Michelle Ward, Email: [twowards@charter.net](mailto:twowards@charter.net), Phone: 920-922-3824

Treasurer ~ Sherry Benson, Email: [misssherry2@yahoo.com](mailto:misssherry2@yahoo.com), Phone: 715-923-1124



At every WFAPA conference, we draw several names from the Membership for free registration and lodging for our next conference. Congratulations to the following winners at our Spring Conference:

Branden Lewis Bruce Langley Lena Damrau Ross Cheesman

**For a chance to win, please attend our next conference and you could be the next lucky winner!**

## ON THE ROAD WITH TINA & TAMMY



Tammy and I have been on the road again speaking to people and spreading the WFAPA good word. We attended a festival in Eau Claire, WI in September and put up a booth. We are sure we spoke to at least one hundred people regarding Foster Care and Adoption. We spoke of who we are, our programs and what we do. We met great people.

In October we traveled to Illinois to a conference. We heard sixteen speakers between the two of us, met foster and adopted parents from Wisconsin, and other states. We had an eye-opening conversation with Raquel from Brazil who is in the States working on Foster Care for her country. As Tammy stated at the conference, children are adopted in 6 months. However, if you had "little John" age 2 in your home, you are never guaranteed to adopt him. He, is placed in a lottery, and when his number comes up, he is sent to a home for adoption.

In November we will be on the road to Wisconsin Dells to the Children Come First Conference, which is a huge event. We will have our booth set up and ready to talk about WFAPA!



Is there something in your area that WFAPA may attend? Would you like us to speak to someone in your county? Please forward your information to us and we will be there.

Tina - [twfapa@new.rr.com](mailto:twfapa@new.rr.com)

Tammy - [tmeesha1973@yahoo.com](mailto:tmeesha1973@yahoo.com)



# Mama Kasch's Kitchen Recipe

## Jalapeno Popper Soup

PREP TIME: 10 Minutes

COOK TIME: 10 Minutes

TOTAL TIME: 40 Minutes



### Ingredients:

~ 1 pound uncooked bacon, diced into small pieces ~ 4 to 6 fresh jalapeno peppers, diced and deseeded\*  
 ~ ½ cup all-purpose flour ~ ½ teaspoon garlic powder ~ 32 ounces carton chicken broth (or two 14 to 15-ounce cans; I use lower sodium versions) ~ 6 cups 2% or whole milk or half-and-half\*\* ~ 2 ½ pounds Yukon gold potatoes, peeled and diced into small 1/2-inch pieces (Russet potatoes may be substituted) ~ 8 ounces brick-style cream cheese, softened to room temp ~ 2 cups shredded cheddar cheese (mild to extra-sharp), set out to room temp ~ Kosher salt, to taste ~ Freshly ground black pepper, to taste ~ Cayenne pepper, optional and to taste ~ Additional finely-diced or sliced jalapenos, cooked bacon pieces, and shredded cheddar cheese for topping

### Instructions:

1. To a large Dutch oven, or similar sized pot, add the bacon, and cook over medium heat for about 6 to 8 minutes, or until browned; don't drain off any of the bacon fat.
2. Add the jalapenos, and cook for about 3 to 4 minutes, or until tender.
3. Evenly sprinkle the flour, garlic powder, and stir to coat evenly.
4. Tip - Do not skip this step, it's sort of like creating a roux, which is important later on so that your soup thickens properly.
5. Slowly add the broth, while whisking constantly.
6. Then add the milk or half-and-half, while whisking constantly.
7. Add the diced potatoes, bring to a boil over medium-high heat, and boil for about 10 minutes, or until the potatoes are fork-tender.
8. Turn off the heat, add the cream cheese, shredded cheese, and stir gently until melted and combined.
9. Taste the soup, and as desired add salt, pepper, and optionally cayenne pepper.
10. Optionally (but recommended), garnish the soup with additional jalapenos, bacon, and/or cheese before serving. Soup will keep airtight in the fridge for up to 1 week. Reheat gently on the stove or microwave, taking care not to overheat it, or heat it too quickly so the soup doesn't "break".

## the President's Message



Hello friends,

We are on our way to November, a month to give thanks. It is also National Adoption month. My sincere thank you to all that have adopted a child or children. Make a special family meal, make a special family night, do something out of the ordinary to mark your adoptions!

Our Fall Conference went well. We had a nice turn out even with Covid still hanging over us. We were also delighted to welcome nine new families to our membership! Tina, from K.A.T.S. (Keep Area Teens Safe) spoke of their program. She brought new insights for members. Barbara Clark, from NACAC captured everyone's attention with her trainings. Our own Norma Schoenberg and Sherry Benson, refreshed members with information on our Surviving Allegations of Abuse and Neglect program (SAAN) and our Foster and Adoptive Support and Preservation Program (FASPP). Our Halloween costumes were great to see. We appreciate all that joined in to have fun and try something new. Thank you, Barbara Clark, for your calmness, and laughter, as the Grinch popped in and tried to steal your show. Who knows, the Easter Bunny may appear at our Spring Conference!

If you need us for anything, please contact one of the board members. We are here for you always. Thank you to my board, as I could not do this job without you all. Please, everyone stay safe and healthy!

It will be my special time of year in the following months, NOT the weather, but Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. From my heart, I want to wish you all Happy Holidays!

Warm heart, warm smile,

*Tina*



# A Big Round Of Applause & Thank You To Our Guest Speakers at Our Fall Conference

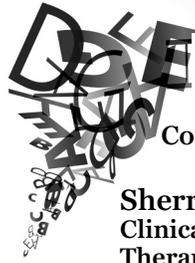


**Tina**  
KATS Program

**Sherry Benson**  
SAAN & FASPP  
Discussion

**Norma Schoenberg**  
SAAN & FASPP  
Discussion

**Barbara Clark**  
NACAC



## Alphabet Shuffle, LLC

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805 1st Street, Menominee, MI 49858

Phone: 906-424-4476 Text: 715-330-2291

Fax: 906-424-4480 Email: [misssherry2@yahoo.com](mailto:misssherry2@yahoo.com)

[www.alphabetshuffle.com](http://www.alphabetshuffle.com)



## Family Works

TREATMENT FOSTER CARE

5604 Medical Circle, Madison, WI 53719

(800) 660-9204

[www.family-works.com](http://www.family-works.com)

*Family Works Programs, Inc. is a community of people throughout Wisconsin dedicated to helping children with complex needs. Our treatment families are compassionate and committed to creating a healthy home for children who present significant challenges.*

# Holidays In Foster Care

*The holidays are special for many families, but Heather and Megan note that there are unique challenges facing foster households this time of year...*

## Heather

While the holidays are typically an exciting time for kids, they can be a very difficult time for some foster children, and the result can be problems with behaviors. I have the following words of advice for foster parents as they face the holidays:

1. Remember you are merging two families' holiday traditions, and it is important to find out from the foster children or their biological parents what their holiday traditions are and see if you can incorporate them into your traditions.
2. Some kids have never experienced the holidays so have no idea what to expect. Letting them know your traditions can be helpful – especially for kids who struggle with change in routines.
3. Have realistic expectations; most people's holidays are not like a Hallmark Movie!
4. Be ready to change your traditions and to help your family cope with any problematic holiday behaviors.
5. Kids may miss their biological families during the holidays and struggle with having the holidays without their parents.
6. If your holiday experience is much different than theirs with their family, the kids may not understand why you are doing such nice things for them when their own families were unable to do so.



When I adopted my two sons, the holidays were the hardest time for us. The holiday behavior issues would start when the Halloween decorations went up in the stores and not end until New Year's. We had Christmas times when my oldest would throw the Christmas tree down to the floor multiple times a day. My youngest would have behavioral issues at home, school and daycare. They were never able to tell me their trauma associated with the holidays.

I learned that my family traditions had to be pushed to the side, and I needed to do what they were comfortable with so they could feel safe. So on our holidays the kids (they are 20 and 19) get money in December to purchase what they want, and Christmas Day is treated as any other day that we might all be home.

Once I started “celebrating” in a way they felt comfortable the behaviors decreased dramatically. It was very challenging to put aside my own vision for the holidays and my experiences as a child of a wonderful holiday season that I wanted to share with my children, but I needed to do what was best for them, not what was best for me.

## Megan

The rush of the holidays is here. It's been here, really. Starting as early as September with Halloween candy and decorations already in stores. It's energizing and exciting! It's full of traditions and family memories. It's busy and packed full of things to do, places to be, and food to eat.

As you might imagine, however, holidays in foster care are often times quite the opposite of what you see on TV or in magazine ads. For my family, we have experienced three holiday seasons with children in our care. Since we foster infants and toddlers, we do not necessarily see the trauma that is so common in older children around the holidays. Instead, we see the pain it causes the biological family to not be with their child on such special days. For us, we have walked the difficult line of feeling excited about celebrating our traditional holiday activities and being mindful of how lonely and depressing the holidays are for some people.

During the visits leading up to the holiday of the month (Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas/New Year's), I have made sure to include the biological family in what we have been up to in a variety of ways. I have used a notebook to write down what we've been doing, I have sent pictures of each big event via text, or I've printed photos to give to the family at the visit. We've allowed visits to be more flexible in order to fit in a visit to the mall so Santa photos could be taken, or arranged to drop off the child on Thanksgiving Day for their overnight to fall on the actual holiday.

We've even met an additional day that week to get in gift exchanges closer to Christmas Day. My family has also always given a gift to the biological family from their child on the big gift-giving occasions- nothing big or expensive, but something to show we appreciate them and are still supporting their reunification.

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Typically it's a framed photo of their child that they can display in their home or a handmade craft if the child is old enough. I have found that even though the biological family is sad to be missing out on these traditions, they also would rather know what's going on or get something a little extra than nothing at all. The more I have communicated with the biological family, the more relieved they have been to see he/she is happy and safe. I want to assure you, though, that not every communication or "olive branch" I have extended has been received with hugs and words of appreciation. It is exhausting to rearrange your packed calendar for these "extras" – and equally as frustrating when that effort goes unnoticed. But for the child and the biological parent, it really is important.



I always try to put myself in the biological parent's shoes. I try to remember that despite their flaws or past mistakes, they are still a parent. And a parent's love runs deep. The holidays can be a time when they realize just how bad things are or just how much they have messed up, and can make their flaws that much harder to deal with. It is not my job as a foster parent to fix the biological parent or judge their past, but it is my job to support them by being mindful of them and caring for their beautiful children as best as I know how, even if it's just for a short time. So, with that mindset, it is my job to manage the holidays with sensitivity and flexibility.

Article taken from the website [www.fostercare.com/holidays-in-foster-care/](http://www.fostercare.com/holidays-in-foster-care/) and was written by Foster Talk.

# BECOMING A WFAPA MEMBER IS AS EASY AS 1 2 3!

Considering joining or renewing your membership with WFAPA? WFAPA continues to play a role in influencing public policy and advocating on behalf of Foster and Adoptive children and parents in Wisconsin. WFAPA's Leadership has helped to educate policymakers and engage Foster and Adoptive Parents in the debate on issues that affect the Foster and Adoptive System.

**As a member, you:**

- ~ Receive four newsletters in the mail each year.
- ~ Who to call when an allegation arises.
- ~ Scholarship information.
- ~ Opportunities to become involved in projects to help foster children.
- ~ Get first hand information of what's happening at the State level.
- ~ Peer Support.
- ~ Reduced rate for conferences.



**JOIN TODAY!**  
**\$10.00 per family.**



## WFAPA Membership Form

For Family memberships, return this form along with \$10.00 to:  
Michelle & Larry Ward \* W7018 Discovery Dr. \* Fond du Lac, WI 54937 Email: [twowards@charter.net](mailto:twowards@charter.net)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Your Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Would you be willing to help out with WFAPA?  yes  no

County, State or Agency Name (that licenses you) \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Donation:  \$5  \$10  \$25  \$50  Other \_\_\_\_\_

GO GREEN!  I'd like to "go green" and paperless by receiving my newsletter online only.

**You can also join by going online to our website, [www.wfapa.org](http://www.wfapa.org).**