

**Nightlight News**  
July 2012

## Upcoming Events

**Reunion Picnic. Saturday,**  
July 14, 10am -3pm. Los  
Vaqueros Park in Placentia, CA.

**Direct Links to articles in this issue:**

- \* [Raising a Child with Thalassemia](#)
- \* [Nightlight's New Birth-mother Counselor](#)
- \* [What is Special Baby Care?](#)
- \* [Nightlight's](#)

**ebay<sup>®</sup> -a-thon:**  
Aug 1st

## And a Child Will Lead the Way

by Ron Stoddart

On June 9<sup>th</sup>, Natalie Gomez celebrated her 8<sup>th</sup> birthday, and she had a party. But instead of gifts, Natalie asked her friends to make a donation to the orphans in the world through Orphan Galaxy.

Six years ago, Dan and Denise Gomez brought Natalie home from St. Petersburg, Russia – in fact they picked her up at her baby house on Father's Day; a gift that Dan will never forget. Now Na-

talie has a little sister, Mia, also adopted from Russia. Unlike most children, Natalie is very much aware of the fate of the millions of children in the world without a family. She has learned that having a family is a very special blessing, and one we shouldn't take for granted. So, on her birthday she decided that she would try to help those children who are still waiting for their dream to come through. Six of her girlfriends (and her

2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher) celebrated with Natalie and donated \$97.35 (including her own chore savings) to Orphan Galaxy. Natalie is a STAR in more ways than one. When asked what she thought would be good to buy for the children, she said that underwear would be nice.

There are certain phrases that you just know are from the Bible. "And a child shall lead the way" is one of them. I remembered it as a great example of how we had to have faith like a child – free of all of the "wisdom" we think we have, and able to just believe. Isaiah 11:6 reads "And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child will lead them." In a world where these natural adversaries can get along, we thank Natalie for being a great example for us.



*Natalie, age 8, received donations for Nightlight's Orphan Galaxy instead of birthday gifts this year. Make a donation to Natalie's Constellation or [start your own Constellation today](#).*

## A Snowflakes Miracle

by Kelly Poffenberger

When I was first asked to write an adoption story about embryo adoption, one name came to mind immediately. God is urging me to share this story; maybe to reach out to you, maybe to touch someone else...

Charles and Pauline came to us to adopt embryos, just as many other couples do. They were older and very anxious to have a child. But one thing stood out with them—they were open to any embryos, as long as it was a good match

with the family—that meant any waiting embryos. The first genetic family we sent to them, one of the genetic parents had tested positive for Hepatitis B. They said yes to the family and were agreeable ... *Continued on page 2*

## Continued from cover: A Snowflakes Miracle

to having the series of Hepatitis B shots done so that Pauline could carry the embryos! Unfortunately, their clinic was not so willing. So, we looked again. This time we contacted Charles and Pauline and asked if they would be willing to adopt a single embryo, after all, it only takes one. They were very willing, but again, their clinic wanted them to have at least two, so they did the almost unheard of: they adopted two single embryos from two different families. All of the families were thrilled with this option!

For us, it was an amazing step of faith!!! They thawed both embryos. . .one did not survive and the other did and it was transferred. They now have a beautiful, baby girl. What an amazing story of faith, perseverance, hope and joy. What a wonderful example of how it does just take one, one is all they had and one baby is what they now have. Although losing the other embryo saddens everyone, at least this little one was given a chance at life!

Pauline's story, in their own words:

My wife Pauline and I started our family late in life. Pauline was already 38 when we had our first child, a daughter who was conceived naturally.

We hoped for a second child, but after a few years passed with no luck, we sought fertility treatment. Unfortunately, Pauline's fertility had declined significantly over those few years, and we were told that the probability of us having a second child of our own even

The following is Charles and

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**“We were advised to try IVF with donor eggs, but we rejected that option because of our Catholic faith and our belief that life begins at conception.”**

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### *“they did the almost unheard of...”*

with treatment was very low. We were advised to try IVF with donor eggs, but we rejected that option because of our Catholic faith and our belief that life begins at conception. So, we just prayed and hoped for a miracle, since there was still some remote possibility that we might conceive naturally. More time went by without any results, and eventually we started to

look into adoption. Our research led us to Nightlight and the Snowflakes program. We had never heard of embryo adoption, and we were fascinated with the idea that we could expand our family while at the same time bringing into the world a living being in need of a loving home.

After a few conversations

with Snowflakes, we began the application process. By the time we completed the home study and all of the paperwork (which took some time), Pauline was already over 45, and we worried a little about this, since we knew that many families donating embryos specify a preference for families where the mother is under 45. Snowflakes suggested that we

might get matched more quickly if we would be open to donor families with a single embryo. We agreed to this, and within a few months, we had completed all the arrangements to simultaneously adopt two embryos from two different families.

Unfortunately, one of the embryos did not survive the thawing process, but the other did, and nine months later Pauline gave birth to a beautiful and healthy baby girl, who

### *“...it worked for us!!!”*

is now almost three months old. We had been told that the odds of success with one embryo to transfer were relatively low, and we worried about that too, but it worked for us!!

We feel incredibly blessed and grateful to Snowflakes for helping to make this miracle happen.



Their precious daughter, Carolina.

## Sarah's Sweet Success

by Victory Allan

At Nightlight we always glow in the success of our families and children but sometimes we also need to glow in the success of our wonderful staff. Sarah McColister is our newest staff member in the California office.

Sarah first arrived at Nightlight in 2000 as our receptionist. She remained with Nightlight for the next seven years. During that time she proved her self to be invaluable first as a receptionist and then as an administrative assistant.

When Sarah moved from the receptionist position, that began the 'McColister Sisters Era.' Sarah recommended Nightlight hire her sister, Julia, as the receptionist and

Julia worked for Nightlight for several years until she moved to South Dakota.

In addition to working full time during those years Sarah was also a student. She completed a bachelor's degree and most of her master's degree in social work while working full time. When she left our agency in 2007 she completed her master's degree in social work and found employment working with disabled adults.

Even though Sarah was no longer employed by Nightlight her heart never left Nightlight. Her master's thesis was written about Nightlight and our birthmother program.

This past April, through Facebook, Sarah learned Nightlight was looking for a birthmother counselor. She knew this was the right position for her as the grant she had worked under was not being renewed.

Everyone here at Nightlight knew Sarah was the right person to be the birthmother counselor. Sarah has been back in the Nightlight office for about two months and it is as if she never left. She came into the office and the next day met with a new birthmother who, under Sarah's guidance, has placed her baby with a loving couple.

WELCOME BACK,  
SARAH!



## Special Baby Care

by Victory Allan

There are many aspects needed for a successful adoption. One that doesn't get a lot of attention is our domestic Special Baby Care. This is a special service offered to our birthmothers who for a variety of reasons might need a safe place for their baby while they are considering or making an adoption plan for the baby.

Nightlight usually has just one special baby care home but recently has been blessed to now have three special baby care homes. They are all clients of Nightlight who have completed their adoptions and have volunteered their services to Nightlight.

In addition to an adoption license, Nightlight's Califor-

nia office also holds a foster care license and we are able to license these homes as foster homes to do our Special Baby Care.

These families all do many things above and beyond the call of duty.

They have cared for abused babies and ill babies. They minister to the birthmother, they go the to hospital and meet with the neonatal nursing staff to learn about the baby. They attend doctor's appointments and often receive compliments from the pediatrician about the excellent care the baby is receiving. They get ready for a baby with a moment's notice. They go to the store at midnight. They lovingly care for

the babies and get attached but then rejoice with the happy new adoptive parents. In addition to all they do with the babies they keep their first aid/CPR and TB tests current!!

Who are these wonderful families?

- Tait and Ameer Lihme who adopted their son, Ethan
- David and Denise Field who adopted David Jr. and daughter, Daisy
- Mike and Stephanie Nelson who have adopted internationally from Nightlight

Many thanks to you all!!!

“They lovingly care for the babies and get attached but then rejoice with the happy, new adoptive parents.”



## In His Image: Spotlight on Thalessemia

by Dale & Beth Pearson

**“Bella is one of only three children in our state with Thalessemia.”**



Bella has thalessemia and was adopted in April 2012.

We had no idea what Thalessemia was when we first received the call from Nightlight Christian Adoptions asking if we would consider adopting Long Luoyue. After talking with a doctor at the International Adoption Clinic in Birmingham, and consulting with our health insurance provider, we prayed. Our hearts were connected with our new daughter, Bella Catherine Long Luoyue Pearson, and we immediately began to pursue adopting her.

We continued to read and learn about Thalessemia as we prepared for Bella. For two healthy parents with a healthy teenager, the thought of regular blood transfusions was a bit daunting. However, we've had Bella home since April 7, 2012 and after having a few transfusions under our belt, we have now set aside all fears.

Initially diagnosed as beta-

Thalessemia major, we prepared for regular, life-sustaining transfusions. Today, her diagnosis has been changed to beta-Thalessemia intermediate which means her body does produce some good blood. Although she is still having regular transfusions at this point, those may decrease over time. Bella is one of only three children in our state with Thalessemia.

Thalessemia is certainly treatable and can be kept in check through blood transfusions. For us, transfusion days are simply a minor inconvenience in an otherwise normal and healthy child's life.

Bella is full of life. She giggles, plays, sings and dances incessantly. She loves life and no one would ever question if she is healthy by her appearance or energy level. Our friends in the adoption community are amazed that she is even considered a “special

needs” child when they first meet her. Our family is beyond blessed because we said “Yes!” to matching with Bella. We pray that through this focus and through Bella's story, more and more children with Thalessemia will be adopted into forever families.

*Nightlight's affiliate agency A Helping Hand Adoption Agency is launching a new initiative in our In His Image program. We will be featuring a particular special need every 3 months. We will be concentrating on education related to that special need and particularly trying to find homes for children who have that disorder. We will begin with “In His Image: Spotlight on Thalessemia.” In addition, families who have adopted a child with the featured need will be available to speak with interested families. Contact Lisa Prather with questions: [lisa@nightlight.org](mailto:lisa@nightlight.org)*

## Nightlight -a-thon

August 1<sup>st</sup>

All proceeds go to the summer tour

by Dan Nehrbass

Support our summer tour by cleaning out your closet! During the first week of August, our friends will have the opportunity to sell something on ebay, and have all proceeds donated to Nightlight's Summer tour! Here are the details:

1. On August 1<sup>st</sup>, list something for sale on ebay. If you don't know how to sell on ebay, you have two choices:
  - Mail or bring the item to our CA office in advance, and we will sell it for you.
  - Or email a picture and description to [info@nightlight.org](mailto:info@nightlight.org), and we will sell it for you.
2. As you set up your selling page, check the box “donate proceeds to charity” and select Nightlight Christian Adoptions.
3. You can also sell directly from our ebay store [by clicking here](#).
4. Visit Nightlight's ebay store, and see what everyone else is selling [by clicking here](#).
5. When the sale is over, ship your item to the buyer. The event ends Aug. 7<sup>th</sup>, and proceeds will go to Nightlight automatically!

Questions? Contact Dan Nehrbass: [daniel@nightlight.org](mailto:daniel@nightlight.org) or 714-693-5437

## Let Us Hear from You!

Do you have an article, book, suggestion, website, fundraising tip, or other resource or anecdote you'd like to share? Please email us, give us a call, or (dare I say) send a letter! Your story or suggestion may be just what someone else needs to hear. Please share with us!

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Nightlight Christian Adoptions provides adoption services as a permanent response for children without parents through child advocacy, parent education and lifelong support...because every child deserves a loving family.