

# Restoration Village Newsletter

March 2014

Interestingly enough, this classic tradition of a true “hero” is not our present understanding at all. There is little social matrix to our present use of the word. A “hero” now is largely about being bold, muscular, rich, famous, talented, or “fantastic” by himself, and often for himself, whereas the classic hero is one who “goes the distance,” whatever that takes, and then has plenty left over for others. True heroism serves the common good, or it is not really heroism at all.

Richard Rohr, *Falling Upward: Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*

## A QUIET MAN WHO IS A HERO, and was a source of life and inspiration.

Forty-two years ago four men in a small print shop in the city of Covina, California with an inspirational thought, faith in a big God, a vision to reach out to people, and unwavering perseverance began to print Christian-themed greeting cards beginning with one Christmas card that year. The rest is history as the little printing project was to eventually become the world’s largest Christian greeting card company and like the Richard Rohr quote: “...goes the distance and serves the common good.”

If you have ever bought and sent a DaySpring Greeting Card then this small printing vision of 1971 has been a part of your life and allowed you to also share in the vision of ministry and blessing to another. In 1979, along with 30 of their California employees, DaySpring relocated to a thirty-acre plot alongside the serene Illinois River just south of Siloam Springs, Arkansas and began the journey that was to become the largest Christian card company and a major employer in Northwest

Arkansas. Their cards and accessories throughout the years have been an inspiration to others for birthdays, anniversaries, graduations, Christmas, friendship, etc.; in times of mourning and time of congratulations there is a card; and for an appropriate thank you or a word of encouragement many of us have found the right card to send a word of inspiration or just to say “I’m here with you in this time” and provide a meaningful moment into the receiver’s life.

It was unbeknownst to us when one of those men and his wife, Leola, came to Restoration Village on a Friday morning. On the way to spend the weekend at their lake house they drove to see the Village at the request of a long-time friend of the Village and to us personally who worked at a bank in Siloam Springs where he was a patron. The quiet and gentle couple, Mr. and Mrs. Don Leetch, one of the co-founders of DaySpring Cards, introduced themselves and asked us to explain the purpose of Restoration Village and what was it doing in Northwest Arkansas. They listened, asked probing questions, and wanted to know what led us to Arkansas and the purposes

[Restorationvillage.net](http://Restorationvillage.net)

## Village News

IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD, BUT IT TAKES AN ARMY TO RESCUE ONE, is a favorite saying of my wife, Beverly. It was used by her again in a newspaper story last month regarding the official opening and dedication of the Melba Shewmaker Southern Region National Child Protection Training Center at Northwest Arkansas Community College. Beverly told the reporter: "This outpouring today and over the past two years to get this center open is evidence of a very strong army ready to fight," Victor Veith, the Executive Director emeritus of the Gunderson National Child Protection Training Center said "He remembered early meetings with Dr. Becky Panietz, NWACC Board Trustees, and Engle telling him there was no money, no land, no building but there was a lot of heart, people who shared the dream and they believed the rest would come."

Just another step towards a future where all the children will have a voice and the end of child abuse can occur.



Victor Vieth (shown with the real scissors) helps the board and Melba Shewmaker cut the grand opening ribbon.

DURING THE RESEARCH OF THE STATUE, "IN GOD WE TRUST" BY SCULPTOR MARIO FERNANDEZ, I found one of his smaller works of art and thought "how beautiful" and wanted to share it with you the readers.



Restoration Village, 2215 Little Flock Drive, Rogers, AR 72756



IT IS THAT TIME AGAIN AND WE INVITE YOU TO PARTICIPATE!!! The 14th annual Glow Run 5k and 1-Mile Fun Walk will be held on April 18 in downtown Rogers, Arkansas. This annual event has become even more fun for the participants as it is a glow in the dark run, walk and Super Hero dash and the activities are wonderful. The Children's Advocacy Center of Benton County is the recipient of the proceeds and is crucial to their budget each year. For the t-shirt, the participants gift bag, and for the fun it is more than a bargain and serves over 650 children per year during a most difficult situation. To all Village readers we encourage you to join us in the army of those who are giving children their voice. You can get more information at <http://www.cacbentonco.com/events/cherishing-children-5k-glow-run-and-1-mile-fun-walk/>

**WHEN I SAW THE PICTURE OF BRAD SPENCER'S BRICK ART I SAW THAT IT REPRESENTED (TO ME) THE HIDDENNESS OF CHILDREN ON MAIN STREET AND OUR CONTINUED DESIRE TO GIVE CHILDREN A VOICE.** In February of this year the Belgian Parliament voted in a new law lifting age restrictions on euthanasia to minors. With parents permission and the "capacity of discernment" left to a psychiatrist and psychologist, it will be legal to let the child die with dignity. Here in America, physician aid in dying (PAD) or assisted suicide is legal in the states of Washington, Oregon, Montana, and Vermont. What you haven't heard about is that there are those writing that "after-birth abortions" should be legalized.

The philosophers who wrote the article for the *Journal of Medical Ethics*, Alberto Giubilini and Francesca Minerva state that "...we claim that killing a newborn child could be ethically permissible in all circumstances where abortion would be." Some of their arguments to legalize the killing of a baby include: "an infant is equivalent to a fetus, that is, neither can be considered a person in a morally relevant sense"; "there is no actual nor a future person who can be harmed"; "the burden on the woman outweighs the value of a child"; "the value of life depends on choice"; "a serious defect is grounds for termination" and other reasoning. Just talk, just philosopher's ideas, but so was all the talk about adult euthanasia for years and now it is becoming legal. It is not talk; it is the next stage in the slippery slope of declaring the non-value of children.

We have been laboring for years to give children a voice and to believe their stories of abuse, neglect, and incest. Sex trafficking is being exposed and children are being rescued. Adults are speaking out about the childhood experiences and the trauma in their adult life as a result of their childhood experiences. The scandals within churches and organizations have made headlines this past decade. And just as we begin to think that we have turned the corner to protecting children and giving victims a voice, there arises a new challenge that it is morally acceptable to kill a child who has been born. The war to protect children dates back to Cain and Abel, may there be younger people than me who take up the challenge of these people who wish to rid the world of – people!



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for serving women and children who were in a crisis time of their life. After several hours they thanked us for the hospitality and then told us they were going on to their lake home. His last words to us that day were something to the effect that "...everything is going to be all right and that we would hear from them."

In those early years of Restoration Village they played a significant role in the establishment of the Village, served as an encourager, and opened the doors to the warehouse at Christmas time for us to load our old station wagon with gift items for all the residents. One year DaySpring gave us Christmas cards to send to all of those on our mail list and because we were on a shoe string budget – they paid the postage. The company invited us to their employee Christmas parties. I don't have the freedom to share it all, but their belief that God was up to something on this piece of property called Restoration Village insured us, strangers to them at the time, that it was to come about. It was from their home one rainy, cold day in January, that I left, drove (significantly over the speed limit) to arrive in Little Rock at the State Capitol, 15 minutes before closing time, parked in the Speaker of the House space, ran down a hall to the Secretary of State Office, and turned in the paper work to become an official non-profit Corporation in the State of Arkansas.

Beverly used their lake home one long week (and was trapped there as a result of an ice storm) to write and configure the "Restoring the Wounded Soul" workbook that has been used by women's groups from North Carolina to China and still is a source of healing to many survivors of childhood sexual abuse. The Village continued to expand with a maternity home (1996-2000); a Children's Advocacy Center in 2000; and indirectly to advocate and be a minor role in the second National Child Protection Training Center in the world here in Northwest Arkansas.

Donald G. Leetch died on February 19<sup>th</sup> and as the obituary so triumphantly stated: "...and joyfully slipped into the arms of Jesus." To his wife of 61 years Leola, his three children, their mates, and the 10 grandchildren, we on behalf of the multitudes of women and children who have passed through the portals of Restoration Village, to those yet to become residents, and to the thousands of young children that the Advocacy Center is serving and giving a voice to speak out against their abuse, we are eternally grateful for your husband, father and grandfather. His gentle mannerisms, his love of the Lord, his visionary leadership, and his kindness and compassionate giving continues to make a difference in this world.

At this particular moment in history we mourn with the family. We rejoice for the memories and acknowledge his role in bringing blessings upon so many people, not only locally, but around the world. Here on earth Donald G. Leetch answered the heroic question by using his life to make a difference for the common good and went the distance as a source of life and wisdom for others.

It is not hard at the writing of this memorial to see in my mind he and Leola walking back to their car down the Village driveway, getting into their automobile and waving. This time I want to say "everything is going to be all right and we will see each other again."



One of the gifts that the Leetch's gave the Village was an Eagle statue by Sculptor and artist Mario F. Fernandez. Mr. Fernandez was arrested and imprisoned in Havana, Cuba at the age of 16 for political dissent. He came to America in 1965 and has many awards and accomplishments.



Executive Directors: David and Beverly Engle

Board of Directors: Bonnie Atchison; Derek Bengtson; Melinda Brown; Dave Cooper; Yvonne Cooper; Steve Culpepper; Robert Ryan; Rev. Jeff Simpson; Sharon Schrantz; Natalie Tibbs; Marque Babyar

Board Emeritus: Bill Gillingham, PhD (ret.); Tom Hatley, ThD; Richard Knight, MD;