



Chronicle-Tribune

Your connection to Grant County, Indiana

News

Family Service lunch looks back on 90 years IWU to help agency plan for future, too

[Print Page](#)

By AJ Colley

ajcolley@chronicle-tribune.com

Published: Friday, August 28, 2009 1:10 AM EDT

Family Service Society, Inc. reflected Thursday on the organization's past 90 years of service in Grant County.

The agency hosted its annual luncheon Wednesday afternoon, inviting people who played a role in the history and development of Family Service and people and organizations who currently support it.

Former executive director Brian Warner, who was honored with a Family Focus award, said the agency serves a needy and vulnerable population. He served as executive director from 1972 to 1986.

"To me, it's a thrill to have been a part of it and to see the agency grow and develop," he said.

Warner said working with Family Service was a highlight of his life, and he expects the organization will always be around.

Charlotte May, a former Family Service worker, was also honored with a Family Focus award. She said she began working there in 1943, left for several years, came back in 1958 and stayed with the organization until the 1980s. She worked in several different roles during her years there, and said she sees Family Service being around another 90 years.

"I think we're going to need it," she said.

Jerry Pattengale, author and Indiana Wesleyan University's assistant vice president for academic support, was the luncheon's primary speaker. He shared family stories, reflecting on his childhood in a poor family and how he adjusted to Marion upon moving here.

"I really didn't know I was poor," Pattengale said, adding he realized it one day when he heard kids laughing and overheard them say, "They actually live over there."

Pattengale read a foreword of one of his books, in which he talks about Marion Mayor Wayne Seybold growing up in a Marion trailer park and growing up to inspire and lead the community.

Seybold said he could relate to Pattengale's stories. He also called Family Service a jewel in the community.

"They're the ones who deal with things we don't even want to think about when we go to bed at night," he said.

Connie Rose, Family Service executive director, said it's humbling to know the agency has been a viable part of the community for so long.

Rose said as the organization celebrates 90 years, it's also looking toward the future. A key to moving forward is continuing to listen to community needs, she said.



Dr. Jerry Pattengale tells a story from his school days as he speaks during the Family Service Society Circle of Friends fundraiser luncheon Thursday at Indiana Wesleyan University. Jeff Morehead / jmorehead@chronicle-tribune.com

Larry Lindsay, IWU's chief of staff for the president, will help Family Service in coming months develop a plan for how to continue in the community.

"As we begin 2010, we will have our plan moving forward for the next three years," Rose said.

Rose pointed to two primary initiatives Family Service will pursue — early childhood development and ensuring counseling reaches the home, office and community.

Copyright © 2009 - Chronicle-Tribune

[x] Close Window