

## UPDATES FROM ARKANSAS

### **POSITIVELY WAITING UPDATE**

We are thrilled to report that many of our California hosts have chosen to stay connected with us by video conference. It wouldn't be anywhere near as effective without the invaluable assistance of **Estela Nathan** who has been translating for us for more than a decade. Our ESL parents hear the *Positively Waiting* message with the same enthusiasm and passion as those listening to Karen and Jim Kropf.

As far as AR schools, churches and youth events, we are making excellent contacts — it helps that our new pastor is friends with our State Representative and the founders of a local teen mentor organization. As you might imagine, there was a certain hesitancy at first when they heard, "We are from California and we want to talk to your kids about sex!" But as people get to know us, and we get endorsements from our community, we have been assured that opportunities will open up. We are in the planning and promoting stage of our first parent education event. Updates will follow!



### **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Like you, we are preparing for uncertainty and belt-tightening as inflation hits everyone. Support for tiny non-profits like *Positively Waiting* drops way down when people are trying to make ends meet.

So this is a good time to restate our commitment: Jim and I will continue serving other people's kids in ANY community as long as we have support. We rely on parents, employers and other concerned adults to value what we do, and help us to persevere. All donations to *Positively Waiting* are tax deductible, and will be used to teach adolescents and their families the benefits of sexual self-control.

### **AR vs. CA COVID POLICIES**

As far as COVID restrictions go: Everyone is free to manage their own risk. Businesses are open, people are living pretty normally.

Employees are allowed to opt out of COVID-19 vaccine requirements as long as they test weekly or can prove they have natural immunity, so employers don't have to choose between losing good employees and breaking the law.

When the weather was hot and humid, people stayed inside and we had a COVID-case spike, but death rates were/are very low. Experts expect another spike when the really cold weather gets here, so both vaxxed and un-vaxxed are taking Vitamins A and D plus zinc. A majority of Arkansans are vaccinated, and those who aren't are following the recommendations for prophylactics.



## NEWS ABOUT JIM

Jim is building up his pool of patrons as a “Preferred Shopper.” These are the customers who have found his service exceptional, and want him to provide their experience whenever possible.

He is also playing the harmonica again! When California friends came through Conway, Jim was finally able to fulfill a seven-year-old request to play Louis Armstrong’s *“What A Wonderful World.”* Natalee was very touched — and said the recording was worth the wait!

We do miss our friends and family. Setting aside some time to connect and catch up with those we left behind makes the hole they left a little smaller. Zoom is annoying, but we are blessed to have it nonetheless!

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[justask@PositivelyWaiting.com](mailto:justask@PositivelyWaiting.com)  
**VIRTUAL MEETINGS ARE ALSO AN OPTION!**

## NEWS ABOUT KAREN

On a professional level, one thing stands out. About 10 years ago, I received a fully-formed vision of a mentoring youth center, which I referred to as “Project Andrew.” It seemed a perfect fit for an empty space in a center close to Kennedy High School. Sadly, the center’s owner rebuffed the project. Imagine my surprise when I was invited to tour a newly opened facility in downtown Conway, and walked in to find my “Project Andrew” vision exactly as I had seen it, right down to the decor and amenities! It’s not set up for the purpose I envisioned, but the *déjà vu* was so startling, that my heart immediately crowed, “Clearly I am where I’m supposed to be!” Needless to say, I’m on high-alert for any clues as to what this might mean for the future!

On a personal level, Jim and I have been given the go-ahead to produce a (small scale) Christmas program at our new church. It’s been several years since we were involved in a dramatic production of any kind, and truthfully we didn’t anticipate that anyone would let us do something like this for at least a year or two — but this response is one of the reasons we have fallen in love with Arkansas.