

GETTING BACK TO *What's Good*

Written by Olivia Holmes · Photography by Kimberly Meadows

Lauri and David Goodwin are getting back to basics, asking their kids to set the iPhones aside and sit by the campfire, play cards, or go fishing.

Lauri, David, Trey, Cassie, and Grace are the Goodwin family. David is co-founder and Managing Partner of Advanced Technology Consulting (ATC), and together, he and Lauri manage a full household.

Trey, an extremely talented paintball player, is 18 and preparing for college. Cassie is 15, will be a sophomore in high school, and is a dedicated soccer player. Almost a black belt in karate and already an accomplished piano player, Grace, at 9 years old, is the youngest.

Like most families, their lives are often caught up in the everyday chaos. When they look for time to step back and connect, they bring friends and family together, retreating to simpler times and wholesome values.

On Sundays, the Goodwins take a timeout. It's a night where they can be together, share a home-cooked meal, and finally have a chance to listen to one another. Sunday is a rest from the race, time to catch their breath, time to reconnect.

"Everyone knows Sunday is family night so we know to not schedule anything," says Cassie. "We watch movies, game nights are popular, they taught us to play euchre."

One of the family's favorite memories is playing euchre by candlelight during Cincinnati's power outage in 2008. The temporary stop in all of the hustle and bustle gave them unexpected time together.

Outside of delicious family meals, Lauri's gift for cooking and entertaining has given them several other reasons to gather. They host two yearly parties, the Summer Soiree and the Winter Sauerkraut Meal.

For the Summer Soiree, the Goodwins invite guests into their beautiful backyard. For guests, it is a simple excuse to sit down, exchange news, and laugh with one another.

"All you have to do is turn on the radio or the television to hear about negative things," David says. "Let's get together and have fun, let's share some good stories. Let's talk about how the kids are growing up and how fast we're getting old. We'll play some games in the backyard like cornhole or euchre or cards."

The Winter Sauerkraut Meal is held during the Christmas season. Thinking that people might want a break from the traditional holiday food, Lauri decided to invite friends over for a different kind of celebration.

"It started very small. I had a hankering for sauerkraut and there were 10 people there. Then this past year we had almost 40 people filling the kitchen and I made two big troughs of sausages, ribs, and sauerkraut along with homemade mashed potatoes and homemade desserts," says Lauri.

Leaving the Goodwins' parties, guests often comment on the warmth and comfort in their home. Lauri and David believe that the gatherings remind people of their past, of when their mom would cook, neighbors would gather, and everyone would slow down.

The Goodwins' gift of bringing people together extends into their tremendous volunteerism. Whether David is offering a sponsorship through his company or the family is giving their time, their involvement has touched the lives of many.

Each holiday season between Christmas and New Year's, the Goodwins volunteer at Matthew 25: Ministries. This is an organization that provides "nutritional food to the hungry, clean water to the thirsty, clothing to the naked, affordable shelter to the homeless, medical care to the ill, and humanitarian supplies to prisoners." When volunteering, the Goodwins often assemble packages of necessities that are then sent to those in need. From family and friends, to business connections, they have brought together nearly 40 volunteers for this yearly event.

In addition to Matthew 25: Ministries, the Goodwins also help numerous other organizations including CityLink, Wounded Warrior Project, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, and Susan G. Komen for the Cure. These are organizations that the family feels connected to through personal ties, respect, duty, or admiration.

Continuing the family's charitable spirit, ATC recently sponsored The Pure in Heart Conference, an event for young women and their mothers, grandmothers, or female mentors. The conference helps build connections and faith in these pivotal relationships. In Greater Cincinnati, ATC is also involved with Dress for Success, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, Shriners Hospital and a lengthy list of wonderful organizations.

In whatever way they are reaching out – in their family, with their friends, to those in need – the Goodwins try to connect people and work to remind friends and family of those things that are most important in our lives.

"It's all about falling back on our family, helping one another and then helping those who can't help themselves," David says. ❖

