

# The AIM ARROW

ADOPTION IDENTITY MOVEMENT OF MICHIGAN, INC.

MARCH, 1977  
Vol. 7 Page 1

Hello everyone & they say no news is good news and this will definitely be our GOOD NEWS EDITION. Your patience in awaiting this newsletter will truly be rewarded. First off, I would like to welcome our new members aboard - they are Shirley Wagner, Peoria, IL; Carolyn Olsen, McLean, VA; Marilyn Ruebke, Flint; Diane Gebert, Adrian; Pamela Rhoades, Walnut Creek, CA; Tammy Lawson, Rochester; Mrs. E. Okkonen, Pontiac; Gayle Wolthuis, Wyoming; Christine Spurr, Mt. Clemens; Nancy Girard, E. Detroit; Barbara Myrand, Detroit; Geraldine Melville, Grand Rapids; Peter Bommarito, Sterling Hgts.; Peg Richer, Wyoming; Loretta Kollasch, Riverview; Gladys Osborne, Highland Park; Dee Crull, Detroit; Sandra Peck, Highland Park; Donna Richards, Monroe; Daniel Klatt, Detroit and Sharon Sprague, Redford. Inquiries have also been on the increase. I have answered 120 inquiries since our last newsletter in September, 1976 bringing the total to date since 1974 to over 400. Total membership now stands at 56. Not only are we starting to receive more inquiries from genetic fathers but the following agencies have also joined our mailing list - Children's Aid Society, Detroit; Child & Family Services, Saginaw; Methodist Childrens Home, Detroit; Wilma Toys, a case-worker for Kalamazoo County; Doris Beiser, a worker with the Saginaw Juvenile Court; Family & Children Services of Calhoun County and Child & Family Services of Muskegon.

## AIM MEETINGS

It is the nature of our organization that people come and people go but our progress has remained steady. At our monthly meetings here in Hazel Park we usually cover recent correspondence, committee reports then end up with a guest speaker and general discussion on each others searches, feelings involved and what we can do to forward the aims of our groups.

In reference to that last item, I am happy to report that our first chapter is forming for residents out Grand Rapids way. Gayle Wolthuis has been busy contacting the news media, local agencies, legislators and just about everyone and her enthusiasm has spurred local members and interested persons in that area to form a local chapter. They will need lots of help to get this effort rolling so please contact them and offer your assistance. Gayle and Jack DeJonge are heading up this effort but since Gayle is in the process of moving, I will just print Jacks address for now - we will print Gayle's once she gets settled. JACK DE JONGE, 505 CARRIE STREET, S.E., SUITE 314, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503 (616-456-8375) Their meetings are being held the FIRST WEDNESDAY OF THE MONTH AT THE KENTWOOD LIBRARY AT 8:00P.M.

To assist this type of effort in other areas of the state, we will soon be mailing a geographic listing out to all those who have inquired since 1974. Those persons who are interested in starting a local chapter should write the main Post Office Box 205 in Hazel Park, Michigan 48030 and we will send you the information needed to get started. In the meantime, the following area contacts will be helping disseminate information about current happenings, search assistance, etc.:

Martha Gault, Detroit Area  
(313-858-7186) days

Christine Spurr, East Area (Mt. Clemens)  
(313-791-4277) days

Pete Kostl, Lansing Area  
(517-393-1457) evenings

Phyllis McFarland, Ann Arbor  
(313-769-3391) days

Joyce Fensom, Flint Area  
(313-742-8243) days

WORKSHOP

Our first workshop was held in my home on February 26, 1977 for the purpose of preparing the index cards used in our Reunion File. We completed about 2/3 of the group and they just require final checking before being filed. Our next workshop effort is a trip to the Detroit Main Library on March 12, 1977 at 12:00 noon to visit the Genealogical Burton Collection and meet with Professor Powell, a specialist on Michigan records. We will also sit in on the monthly meeting of the Detroit Genealogical Society. It is hoped we can interest some of their members in becoming research assistants for our group. Check your city directories for chapters of local societies or ask at your library and make your presence known - I'm sure they will be glad to refer you to helpful sources.

REPORT FROM MDSS

Mr. Richard Hoekstra, our helpful and supportive contact with the Michigan Department of Social Services in Lansing advises that the findings of the Open Records Committee Meetings held last summer have been compiled and presented to his superiors for review and approval. Some of the recommendations include active input into the files by all parties concerned following an adoption and the establishment of a Central Registry. We have been promised a copy of that paper once it is approved and released to the various state adoption agencies. I would like to take this time to thank Mr. Hoekstra and his staff for their help and support in our endeavors.

OTHER MEETINGS

A request to attend a meeting of the Adoption Clearance Committee in May has been received and accepted. This group is comprised of private agency workers and probate court workers who meet periodically to share experiences and problems as well as new ideas in their field of service. Since they are receiving an increasing number of requests from adoptees who are seeking to learn their identities, they would like to discuss some possible new directions with us in this regard. You may wish to check for a similar group in your area. After all, educating the public is one of our goals and by meeting with the workers involved in the adoption process, we will help accomplish this goal. Some of our members have just made the effort to visit their local agencies and spread the word and the outcomes have been beneficial to both parties thus far. As we go to press, a request was just received to meet with representatives of the Luthern Childrens Home and Wayne State University School of Social Work, also in May. We are truly looking forward to an informative session with both of these groups.

LIAISON GROUPS

A recent request was sent to our sister groups for assistance in developing our search workshop. I would like to thank the Southern California Chapter of ALMA, MaryAnne Cohen in New Jersey and The Family Tree in Texas for their replys. This information is being compiled and, hopefully, will result in a Michigan Search Handbook this summer. \*  
\*

From The Family Tree newsletter, Hotline - President Carter has indicated he is interested in the problems of the people and has designated a special address for us to write him about our concerns. So, let's give him a chance to do something by letting him know what is on our minds and in our hearts. WRITE TO "PEOPLE" P.O. BOX 2600, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Adoptees in Search in Colorado have been very active in the legislative area and with local area meetings. They recently provided us with some information concerning this objective which has been reproduced on the last page of our newsletter. Thank you AIS for your help.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

HOSPITAL & DOCTOR RECORDS: Medical records of mother and/or child.

JUVENILE COURT: Adoption decree & relinquishment papers.

BUREAU OF VITAL STATISTICS: Birth and death certificates.

LIBRARY: City directories - Names, addresses, spouse's name, employment,  
Newspaper microfilm - Births, deaths, marriages, divorces.  
Household directories - Names of owners and/or renters.

TAX ASSESSOR: Name & dates of property owners.

ELECTION COMMISSION: Personal information - Name, address, discription, & signature.

CITY CLERK & RECORDER: Marriages and divorces.

COUNTY COURT RECORDER: Change of names, property settlements, divorces, adoption  
of non-juveniles.

SCHOOL RECORDS: Student information.

UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES: Student information.

CHURCHES: Marriages, deaths, baptisms.

DRIVER LICENCES: Personal information.

CENSUS RECORDS: Personal information.

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS: Fraternity, Sorority, Elks, Moose, Boy Scouts, American  
Legion, Hobby Clubs.

COMPANY EMPLOYMENT RECORDS: Railroads, etc.

LABOR UNIONS: Place of employment, etc.

F.B.I. & LOCAL POLICE: Military records, criminal records, security checks.  
(Hard to get, usually need inside friend).

SOCIAL SECURITY: Must have full name and SS# or birth date.

NEIGHBORS: Sometimes they know everything.

TELEPHONE BOOK: Especially helpful if looking for uncommon name.

WANT ADS: Run ad in personel or missing persons column.

TRY EVERY SOURCE, ALWAYS GET COPIES OF ANYTHING & EVERYTHING, IF POSSIBLE. (This  
gives you cross references, also verifies unconfirmed information).

P.S. Anyone knowing of any source not mentioned above, please contact Tina Otway,  
Co-ordinator so that we can add to our list. It might be really important  
to someone in their search.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE WHEN WRITING TO YOUR  
SENATOR OR REPRESENTATIVES

1. We have a Constitutional "Right to Know," as provided for in the First and Fourteenth Amendments.
2. We are not seeking to replace the family relationship we have with the parents who raised us. We are seeking only for a more "complete" identity, for a fuller knowledge of ourselves. Is this wrong?
3. At the time the records were sealed, there was no representative for the adoptee (an infant or small child at that time). No thought was given, or studies made, as to the repercussions when the adoptee became an adult.
4. Sealed records force adults adopted as infants to search. If the records were open to inspection, many adoptees would be satisfied.
5. We are adults; yet we are governed by statutes under the Children's Code. We have to deal with the Juvenile Courts.
6. There are thousands of adoptees joining groups all around the country to search, and to push for legislative changes. Can they ALL be wrong?
7. Last year five other states had legislative action on this issue. This year we anticipate four more states beginning legislation.

POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN WRITING

Do not alienate anyone.  
Do not dwell on the emotional aspects.

You do not have to write a long letter. A few sentences or so would be fine. You don't have to cover all the points above; just be sure to include at least two or three reasons, as a letter with reasoning carries more weight than one which only asks the legislator to support open records. Letters need not be typed. A handwritten letter is fine. You may send the same letter to more than one legislator, but it is advisable not to send reprints. Write a separate letter for each, even though the message is the same. BUT PLEASE WRITE. They do tally the amount of letters received - and if Michigan opens up, just think what a precedent it will set.

If you do not know who your legislators are, just call your county election commission. They will be glad to tell you. Letters can be addressed to your senator or representative, State Capitol Building, Lansing, Michigan 48900.

Thank You For Your Support  
Adoption Identity Movement  
Of Michigan, Inc.

A REMINDER

MEMBERSHIP: Open to adult adoptees, natural parents, adoptive parents, family members and interested professionals.

DUES: \$10 year active  
\$3 year - newsletter only (issued as input warrants)  
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO ADOPTION IDENTITY MOVEMENT OF MICHIGAN, INC. AND MAIL TO P.O. BOX 205, HAZEL PARK, MICHIGAN 48030.

MEETINGS: General Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the month at Threshold Community Center, 723 Woodward Heights, Hazel Park from 7:30PM to 10:00PM.

WORKSHOPS: Held as interest and time permits - will be announced.

MEET YOUR CO-ORDINATOR

As mentioned earlier, people in our group come and go. Since founding AIM in 1974, I've met a lot of wonderful people who have helped along the way. In running this group, I've worked at developing the membership, newsletters, running the meetings, handling publicity, speaking at conferences, compiling research information, running workshops and all of the clerical work that goes into achieving the above. I work full time (in a clerical position) and run a household including three teenagers so that explains why you sometimes have to wait a while for a reply to your letters. In addition, I am a member of the Michigan Civil Air Patrol and Board Member for Area Services Association, our local social service agency serving south Oakland County. Hopefully, when I get my pilots license within the next year I will be able to do a little visiting. I look forward to personally meeting many of you who have written. When not busy with any of the above, I also enjoy traveling, sewing, stock car racing, reading, and giving parties. Next fall I would like to return to college (night school) and continue working on obtaining my degree. Therefore, it is time that responsibilities be passed on to others. Those of you who have a strong interest in the group should start contacting me now so we can make some future plans. There is a lot of work to be completed and development to be formalized. I also want you to know that being a part of the creation of a whole new thing in the adoption field has been a growing and learning experience for me. In the meantime though, it all comes down to people helping people and taking the time to understand and that's what I'm going to keep working for - with your help - all will be accomplished in time.

Regards to all of you,

*Ann Otway*

Co-ordinator  
AIM of Michigan, Inc.















































































