

the mediator

305 S. 4rd. (G.N.C.)
Renton, Wash. 98055
Vol. 2 No. # 1

Jan./Feb. '78

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(206) 845-0522
Editor: Dottie Hall

A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION to make and keep is a promise to yourself to attend more of W.A.R.M.'s meetings! We meet at 4130 University Way, (Lutheran Student Center Bldg.), on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday's of each month at 7:00 P.M.

YAKIMA CHAPTER: Meets the 2nd and 4th Wednesday's of the month at 7:00 P.M. Please contact Jo Bouchard at 248-5839 for the meeting place. Their mailing address is P.O. BOX #252, Yakima, Wash. 98901.

BREMERTON CHAPTER: Meets on the 2nd and 4th Monday's of each month at 7:00 P.M. They are meeting at the Olympic Jr. College and please note the change of room number - Room H 105. Call Rose Kline for more details at 692-6023, after 6:00 P.M. ONLY.

VERY SPECIAL GUESTS attended our Dec. 7th meeting. The Honorable Norman B. Ackley, Judge of Superior Court, King County was present; along with his charming wife, Maria and their little daughter, Sarah.

Judge Ackley spoke on the subject of the sealed record doctrine and expressed hope that in the near future, all of the Courts across the nation will recognize this great need and open all records to court appointed Intermediary's.

Mrs. Alice Thomas, Administrator and Case Work Supervisor, Family Court and Mrs. Jean Norman, Case Worker of the Family Court, (King County), were also present.

It was an enjoyable meeting and we feel very honored that these people took time from their busy schedules to visit with us.

There were over 60 people in attendance and many of those who have been reunited with their families were there and told of their search, the reunions and the emotions they experienced.

REFERENCE LIBRARY: The office is building up a reference library to assist with our researching. Just recently we received five 'phone directories: Manhattan; Aberdeen-Hoquiam; Chicago; Detroit; and Greater Dallas. (All of the currant year - 1977-'78). We are grateful for these donations but what is really needed are old directories, in fact, the older the better! Have you got an old directory - any area - that you would like to give us? It would be a good idea to contact us first to avoid duplication. Thank you.

We have other reference material that may prove valuable to you with your search. Call our office - we may have an item or two that would help you. We also have a national zip code book.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS: We've invited other groups such as ours to share ideas and swap newsletters. To date, the response hasn't been too good but we're hoping that part of the delay was due to the holidays.

One group that responded is C.U.B. (Concerned United Birthparents, Inc.), P.O. BOX # 573, Milford, Maine 01757. CUB is a non-profit organization composed of birthparents who have relinquished children for adoption, but membership is available to anyone. Interested? Write to the above address for further information.

THANK YOU, SOPHIE: We are sorry that we're losing Sophie, a great Secretary and enthusiastic member. She has done so much for W.A.R.M. and we're truly going to miss her. Thank you, Sophie - you a great gal!

KAYE: Kaye has graciously accepted the duties as Correspondence Secretary. Thank you, Kaye for allowing us to "volunteer" your services!

NOTARY NEEDED? If you're in need to have any papers notarized, bring them to the meeting and Wally will notarize them for you, free of charge.

And for the married couples, have Wally make up a Community Property Agreement. Even if you have a will, a Community Property Agreement will, (in most cases), save you the cost of a probate. Contact Wally for further information:

REFLECTIONS OF THE PAST YEAR: Although our organization was first started in Aug. of '76, it didn't get "off the ground" until Feb. '77, after an article appeared in one of our local newspapers. Since then, we've seen many changes. Changes that were created out of necessity to cope with the surge of growth, and to be more efficient in assisting all of the members.

The most noticeable change was our name from Birth Right of Washington to Washington Adoptee's Rights Movement.

Acquiring an office meant having all of our files in one location; to co-ordinate the "inner workings" of a growing organization and establishing a research file center plus co-ordinating a cross-date file.

But our greatest accomplishment to date has been in gaining the interest and support of the Superior Courts of King, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties and the various agencies.

LOOKING AHEAD: We feel quite confident that as W.A.R.M. grows, its methods of operation will be accepted and respected by even more agencies and Courts throughout the nation.

I would like to point out that although other Adoptee groups are fighting the Courts, the Sealed Record Doctrine and the Adoption Agencies, W.A.R.M. co-operates with all parties by using a neutral third party the Intermediary. This way, nobody gets "found" without his/her written consent.

CHIEF MEDIATOR: The Board decided to have one person in charge of all cases; to be responsible for giving the cases to our staff of Intermediaries and to keep track of how their searching project is coming along. The Board appointed Vi Sprague to fill this important position.

DEBBY: A big bouquet of thanks goes to Debby who has been helping in the office on Friday's for the last couple of months. We're going to miss her as she's going back to school full time.

MR. or MS. FRIDAY: WHERE ARE YOU? The office is in need of a "gal Friday", (or a "guy Friday"), to help with the necessary but routine work that must be done. Duties will be recording the daily mail in the log book, answering letters, filing and answering the phone. Typing skills are not completely necessary - if you can either print or write clearly. If you can devote one day a week to this worthwhile project, please contact me either at the office or at the meetings. Thank you.

END OF THE RAINBOW: The following members reached their "pot of gold" by being successful in locating their biological families.

Kaye R. of Seattle reached the end of her quest when she located her "long lost" sister, who also lives in Seattle. These girls were separated since childhood and they are amazed to learn they have so much in common. Kaye had located their Mom, (who lives in Colorado), last spring.

Sue Y. of Seattle just recently met her natural brother. Although Sue had brought her Mom to our Dec. 7th meeting, she failed to introduce her. Shame on you, Sue! Be sure to bring your Mom back to another meeting and let us all meet this lady.

Stan M. of Seattle has been reunited with his Father, who also lives here in Seattle.

Pam M. of Seattle has been reunited with her Mom, also of Seattle.

Sarah H. of Yakima has been reunited with her family.

Judy M. of Yakima located her Mom in Iowa.

Desiree' R. of Yakima located her Mom in California.

Suzanne W. of Yakima located her parents in California and two brothers in the Seattle area.

Kathy C. of Yakima has been reunited with her family.

Gregory W. from the Yakima Chapter has been successful with his search.

Congratulations to all of these happy people. This makes a grand total of 59 (to date), families who have been reunited. What a wonderful way to start the New Year!

If I've left some one's name out of this reunion list, I'm truly sorry but there's no way I can report on these very important successes unless I'm told about them!

AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL ADOPTIVE PARENTS:

Dear Mom and Dad,

We have changed diapers, warmed bottles, walked the floor in the wee small hours of the morning with a screaming ababy in our arms.

We have cared for this child in every way possible, because it became our child by way of adoption. And because we were assured that no one could ever get to the sealed records, we felt secure in our love for this child, and it for us.

Now comes the time that creates fear in our hearts, doubts in our minds and we punch the panic button - HARD! We ask ourselves, "Where have we failed?"

No one has "failed". Just because our adult adoptee wants to know - no, they NEED to know of their biological background; they NEED to know why their parents gave them up for adoption; they NEED to know of the circumstances of their birth and they should have every right to KNOW the answers to these vital questions. Their need to know is soul-consuming. The pressure on them is terrific and they will never be satisfied until they have the answers.

The very thought of the biological parents entering the picture again is seen as a threat to our very existence. This fear is a natural fear but it's not warranted - it's a product of our own imagination.

In the majority of cases where the adoptee is successful in locating his/her biological parents, a friendship is established but the adoptee will not turn his/her back on the adoptive parents. The fact is that when there has been a reunion, it seems to make the bond of love for the adoptive parents, stronger than ever. After all, the adoptive parents will always remain Mom and Dad - no one can take their place!

By giving your blessings, assurances, help and understanding your adoptee's need to know you will be re-paid many times with their love and gratitude. I know - I've been there. I'm an adoptive father.

The following letter is from one of our natural Mother's who had attended one of first meetings last Feb. It's a beautiful letter and she very graciously gave her permission for me to print it in our newsletter. Although it has been about a year ago that she wrote this, it's one of those kind of letters that has "no age" - it's appropriate anytime.

"I would like this to be an open letter to all the members of Birth Right.

"Last night I attended my first meeting of Birthright. It turned out to be a very dramatic evening for me. Unlike the others present who were seeking their natural parents and their own special identity, I was setting out in the opposite direction. I am a natural mother seeking to locate a son who was placed for adoption many years ago.

Because I was the exception to the rule last night, I now find a desire to talk to all of you.

During the meeting I observed many positive signs: commitment, enthusiasm, excitement and all the necessary attitudes it must take to start an adventure such as you have all begun. But I also sensed that something was amiss. I sensed that along with the commitment and enthusiasm there was much, too much, skepticism and fear of rejection. I heard these questions phrased in different ways last night: "Why did it happen?" and "How will I be received?"

Along with the other motives of those present at the meeting, these particular questions echo in my head today and cause me to write this letter. As we all know, each case of adoption was unique and I cannot dare to speak for all natural parents. Some of you will find unhappiness at the end of your search. But I believe that many of you, I hope the majority of you, will find receptive arms - perhaps indeed, you will give great joy to someone who has waited many years to hear your voice.

As a natural parent, I have forfeited all rights to know my son - but you as adopted children are just now asserting your rights and the momentum has to come from you. It is you who will change the laws and the social customs surrounding adoption.

Let me find some words that will erase your skepticism and give you assurance. Let me, for a moment, represent your natural mother. If my son were among you now, this is what I would say to him:

Why did I sign that one paper that sent you away from me? Because I loved you. Because I wanted you to smile and not cry. I wanted you to be warm and not cold. I wanted you to be proud and not know shame. I wanted you to have a chance for a good and decent life. I loved you and I was given to believe at the time that I could not give you these things, myself. My life was at its darkest then and I wanted you to have light.

Do I want to see you? YES, YES and YES, AGAIN! I have needed you so. The pain that was in the beginning has settled into a calm acceptance but you never truly left me. I celebrated every one of your birthdays in my heart. Somehow, after you were gone, I found a new life and I now have four beautiful children, (sisters for you to meet). They have given me great joy. They never took your place; instead, through them I loved you. When I touch them, I touch you.

I have an image in my mind of your face. You are smiling. I believe that - all that pain - it had to mean something.

Yes, I want to know you. To hear your voice and know that you are well. I am waiting. PLEASE, PLEASE, HURRY. FIND ME!"

And a letter from an adoptee who has two brothers that she is seeking: "I went to Skagit County where my two brothers were adopted to see about getting their records opened. The Judge was very nice and he made copies of the Intermediary's oath, etc.

Then he said and I quote; "You can go back and tell your group of people that this is one Judge that will never open the records for any Adoptee or Natural Parent." unquote.

Later, he said that he may or rather might reconsider different circumstances, etc.

He also told me my case was very unusual and made it sound like he was going to open my brother's records, but he didn't".

How Come-----

In Oregon, the birth and death records are confidential and yet, marriage records are public records?

It seems to me that the State doesn't want it to be known that you've come or you've gone but they could care less who know's when you've been had!!!!

From all of us to all of you, we wish you a Happy and Successful New Year!

M E D I A T O R

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OFFICE: GOOD NEIGHBOR CENTER, 305 SOUTH 43rd STREET, RENTON,
WA. 98055 TELEPHONE (206) 226-0210

NEW CONTACTS

DOTTIE H.....from Seattle found her natural
father's family in Puyallup, after
a 30 year search.....

CLIFFORD M.....from Renton, found his natural
mother in Seattle.

MARION H.....from Seattle found half brother
in California and several cousins
in Seattle.

CARLA L.....from Seattle found her natural
mother and sister in California
and half brother in Washington.

HELEN B.....from Utah, found her son in Utah.

ROBERT T.....found family in Spokane, Washington.

BARBARA M.....from Seattle, found her natural
mother in Seattle.

JANET S.....from Seattle, found her natural
mother in the East.

JANICE W.....from Seattle, found her natural
mother in Spokane.

VIRGINIA P.....from Seattle, found her natural
mother in Spokane.

WILLIAM Mc.....from Los Angeles, found his natural
mother and brother in Washington State.

JOHN H.....from Seattle, found his natural mother
in Washington State.

MARSHA N.....from Seattle, found her natural mother
in Washington State.

ANN D.....from Seattle, found her natural mother
in Washington State.

PAT V.....from Seattle, found her natural father,
grandmother, aunt and great grandmother.

DOROTHY I.....from Iowa found two full sisters, one
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Georgia.

GREGORY W.....from Seattle, found full sister in
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