

Midwest Adoption Triad

P.O. Box 37262
Omaha, Nebraska 68137

MARCH

NEWSLETTER

1982

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

We are now meeting at the Swanson Library on 90th and Dodge St. on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. The next meetings are scheduled as follows:

March 23
April 27
May 25

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We are pleased to announce the following elected and appointed officers for the 1982 year:

PRESIDENT	Gary Dennis
CORRESPONDENCE SECRETARY	Jean Bernth
RECORDING SECRETARY	Mary Jo Burris
TREASURER	Nina Mackenzie
SEARCH COORDINATORS	Leslie Fox & Judy Vesely
LIBRARIAN	Renee Racine
LEGISLATIVE COORDINATOR	Gene Meyer
NEWSLETTER	Judy Vesely, Leslie Fox, Jean Bernth, Denise Pinales

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Thank you Nebraska Childrens Home and Child Savings Institute for coming to our December meeting. It is much easier to understand what the agencies go through in their searches when we all can sit down and discuss it. Since that meeting Nebraska Childrens Home has become HONORARY MEMBERS of our group. We feel this is a real step forward and invite other agencies to become members also.

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Have you registered with the International Soundex Reunion Registry yet? This is a free registry with over 10,000 people registered now. (About 2 adoptees for every birthparent.) You can obtain a form at the next meeting or write to Emma Vilardi, ISHR; P.O. Box 2312; Carson City, Nevada 89701. Please send a self-addressed stamped envelope.

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The American Medical Association will send you a doctor's last known address, age, dead or alive, etc. Write AMA Microfilm Dept., 535 North Dearborn Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60610 and expect a computer read-out in two months.

LB 992---Many people outstate still do not know that we do have a Law in Nebraska to help you search. We urge all adoptees and birth parents to send for the appropriate forms if you were born, adopted, or relinquished in Nebraska. Adoptees write for the REQUEST FOR ACCESS OF BIRTH INFORMATION and birth parents write for CONSENT BY BIOLOGICAL PARENTS FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION. These forms can be obtained from the Bureau of Vital Statistics, P.O. Box 95007, Lincoln, Nebr. 68509.

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Mary Norton, a student at Arizona State University, is doing a thesis on adoption, focusing on birthmothers who gave their babies up for adoption. She would like to hear from these ladies and those adoptees who have searched and found and know of their mothers' stories. She is also interested in those natural fathers who are searching or have found. Those who respond may remain anonymous if they wish, but she needs to know the state where the baby was born, the county, the name of the home and the agency if private or state. Mary is an adoptee presently searching for her natural parents and a sibling. You can write her at 11021 N. 38th Pl., Phoenix, Az. 85028.

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The following is a letter written to Leslie Fox from Libby Hinds, an adoptee from Toledo, Ohio:

"Well, my search is complete! I called my birthmother on November 30th. Everything went excellently! She said that she's prayed that I would call her. She also said that she knew if anything of her was in me that I'd try to find her. Needless to say, I've been on cloud 9 ever since then. It's pretty weird--we are both photographers. Again, many thanks for all your help."

Congratulations Libby and I hope your letter gives encouragement to some of our procrastinators.

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Did you know that for just \$10.00 a year you can place an ad and receive a subscription to OPEN A.R.M.S. QUARTERLY? This is a valuable search magazine reaching across the entire United States. The A.A.C. has named it as their official search magazine. We are asking all our members to help support OPEN A.R.M.S. QUARTERLY by taking out a subscription. If you do not want to place an ad, the cost is only \$6.00 a year. Send your check today to OPEN A.R.M.S., P.O. Box 1522, North Platte, Nebraska 69101.

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Were you adopted, or did you relinquish a child in Dade Co. Florida? New system to petition court for information (no charge) now set up. For more information, contact Diane Robie, 9320 SW 170th St., Miami, Florida 33157.

We want to thank Penny Winfield for attending our February meeting and explaining LB 714 in depth. Penny is from the Nebraska Foster and Adoptive Parent Association and has put in many hours trying to get this law passed. It would get many children out of the Foster Care maze and into permanent homes. Senator DeCamp has sponsored this Bill and our own Gene Meyers has spent many days in Lincoln helping where he can. Gene also arranged a meeting with Senator DeCamp and members of M.A.T. to add amendments to LB 992. Gene has stayed on top of all legislature in Lincoln for us this year and we really appreciate his commitment.

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The Adoption Searchbook: Techniques for Tracing People is a new search book that could be one of your best investments this year. The cost is only \$12.00 and can be obtained thru:

Tri-Adoption Library
7571 Westminster Ave.
Westminster, California 92683

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Just A Reminder - - - many of you have checked books out of our Library and have never brought them back. Please return them as soon as you can and give other people a chance to read them. Also, if you are not a paid-up member, please do not check the books out. Dues are \$12.00 for the first year and \$6.00 for every year after. We run on a very tight budget so please send in your check today.

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Recently Gene Meyers did a panel discussion at Child Savings Institute and Dennis Dethlefs did one at Nebraska Childrens Home.. These panels are comprised of one adult adoptee, one birth mother and one adoptive parent. They are put on for the benefit of prospective adoptive parents. Each one tells their story and it is very educational for all who participate.

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For people searching in Iowa the following names or groups may be of assistance:

Ruth Cernick
1408 Buresh Ave.
Iowa City, Iowa 52240
319-351-1966

Orphan Voyage
Box 21
Cedar, Iowa 52543
515-673-8912

Mary Beth Janssen
Rt. #1
Rockwell City, Iowa 50469
515-822-3261

Marianne Lippold
1105 Fremont
Des Moines, Iowa 50315

REUNION NEWS

MARILYN SCPICH and her twin sister found their Birth Mother in February. They had a successful reunion and are now trying to locate a brother and sister. The initial contact was made by Gene Meyer.

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GENE MEYER had a successful reunion with his Birth Mother, Lueda Hall, in November. Gene and his wife invited Lueda for Thanksgiving dinner and life stories were shared. Contact with Uncles, Aunts, and a Great Aunt have also been made. Gene plans to meet an Uncle in Kansas City in the near future. Gene was adopted from St. Anthony's Orphanage in Sioux City, Iowa. He also has obtained much needed medical information for his daughter.

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RENEE RACINE while searching for her Birth Mother found a halfsister also searching for the same Mother. Renee and Lynn were both given up for adoption at birth. Lynn is six years younger and is from Minnesota. Their Birth Mother rejected them at first but later consented to a meeting. The two sisters are making up for lost time in their relationship and have also each found their Birth Fathers.

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LESLIE FOX had a successful reunion with her Birth Father and is now in the process of tracking down her Indian Heritage. She recently went to the National Archives in Kansas City in the hopes of getting more information. You may share this experience with her by calling 402-895-1454.

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JEAN BERNTH is still trying to track her Birth Father down. Her Birth Mother is deceased but she's on her way to California this month to meet her half brother.

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BOB HAWKINS has located his Birth Mother this week. He's fairly new in the group and he and his wife did a really fast search with only a city and first name to go on. We're hoping for a full report for our next newsletter.

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We need more items for future newsletters. Please send all newspaper clippings and reunion reports to Judy Vesely, 14018 Adams Circle, Omaha, Nebraska 68137 or call 402-895-1376.

Information for the American Adoption Congress 1982 National Conference is finally here. The Conference runs from June 3 - 6 at the Gunter Hotel, 205 E. Houston, San Antonio, Texas 78205. The theme for this year's Conference is PROGRESS IS: THE ADOPTION TRIAD UNITED. The 1982 conference begins at noon on Thursday, June 3, with a luncheon and opening session, and will include 30 workshops as well as general sessions. A Texas style banquet will be held on June 5. This event is hosted by Lutheran Social Service of Texas.

Costs are as follows:

PLAN I - Attending complete Conference - AAC Member \$75 Nonmember \$95

PLAN II - Thursday, June 3, 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. only. Includes lunch. AAC Member \$35 Nonmember \$45

PLAN III - Friday, June 4, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. only. AAC Member \$35 Nonmember \$45

PLAN IV - Saturday, June 5, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. only. AAC Member \$35 Nonmember \$45

PLAN V - Banquet only, Saturday, June 5, 7:00 p.m. AAC Member \$25 Nonmember \$35

If you are planning to stay at the Gunter Hotel, a registration form must be received by the Hotel by March 31, 1982. A one night deposit is required in advance. Hotel costs are Single - \$50, Double - \$60. There will be no child care facilities available this year. For registration forms contact Judy Vesely or Leslie Fox.

Some of speakers are Lee Campbell, Pres. of CUB; Betty Jean Lifton, author of "Twice Born" & "Lost and Found"; Linda Cannon Burgess, author of "The Art of Adoption"; Mary Jo Killera, Pres. of the Triadoption Library; Margaret Gilling, Adoption Supervisor Catholic Charities of Green Bay, Wisconsin; Tom Allington, Pres. of Kansas City Adult Adoptees Organization; Penny Partridge, Pres. of American Adoption Congress. Quite a line up!!!

Some of the workshops are: Coming Out of the Closet; The Search - Dealing with Acceptance or Rejection; The Four Myths in Adoption; Sibling Relationships; Open Records - Why The Threat?; Search Aftermath and Adjustment; Adoptive Parents - Their Responsibility; Agency Responsibility in Adoption; The Legal Issues in Searching; Birthmothers - Living with the Decision; and of course many many more.

Our President, Gary Dennis, has been asked to speak on "Organizing a Triad Group". At last check airfare from Omaha to San Antonio was \$240.00 round trip. If anyone is interested in forming a car pool to go down, contact Gary Dennis at (712) 328-8311 in Council Bluffs, Iowa.

We're AAC . . . Won't You Join Us?

What is the AAC?

- A coalition of individuals and groups across North America who care about making adoption more open.
- An acknowledgement of the many people who, on their own or in groups, are working toward this goal in a variety of ways.
- A means of educating ourselves about this and a channel through which we can educate the rest of the adoption community and the general public.
- An opportunity for groups, large and small, to learn from each other, and for individuals, whether in a group or not, to connect up with the larger network.

How can you join AAC?

- Groups can become Affiliate Organizations (\$25) or Sustaining Affiliate Organizations (\$100). This does not make their own members Individual Members of the AAC.
- Individuals can become Individual Members (\$10), Sustaining Individual Members (\$20), or Life Individual Members (\$150).
- Checks should be made out to "American Adoption congress" and mailed with the form below to:

AAC
c/o Heidi Taylor, Treasurer
573 Hollyburne Lane
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

Members will receive the *Open A.R.M.S.* quarterly and will be informed of AAC activity within their regions.

An Annual Meeting will be held June 3-6, 1982, in San Antonio, TX. It is being hosted by Lutheran Social Service, an agency which supports open records and open adoption. There will be workshops covering issues for individuals, issues for groups and issues for the adoption reform movement as a whole; and it will draw attention to support from all sides for openness in adoption (in a state where there is considerable backlash against our movement).

"Open Minds/Open Records"

Name of Person or Group

Address

Type of Membership Indiv. (\$10) Sustaining Indiv.

Life Indiv. (\$150) Affiliate Org. (\$25)

Sustaining Org. (\$100)

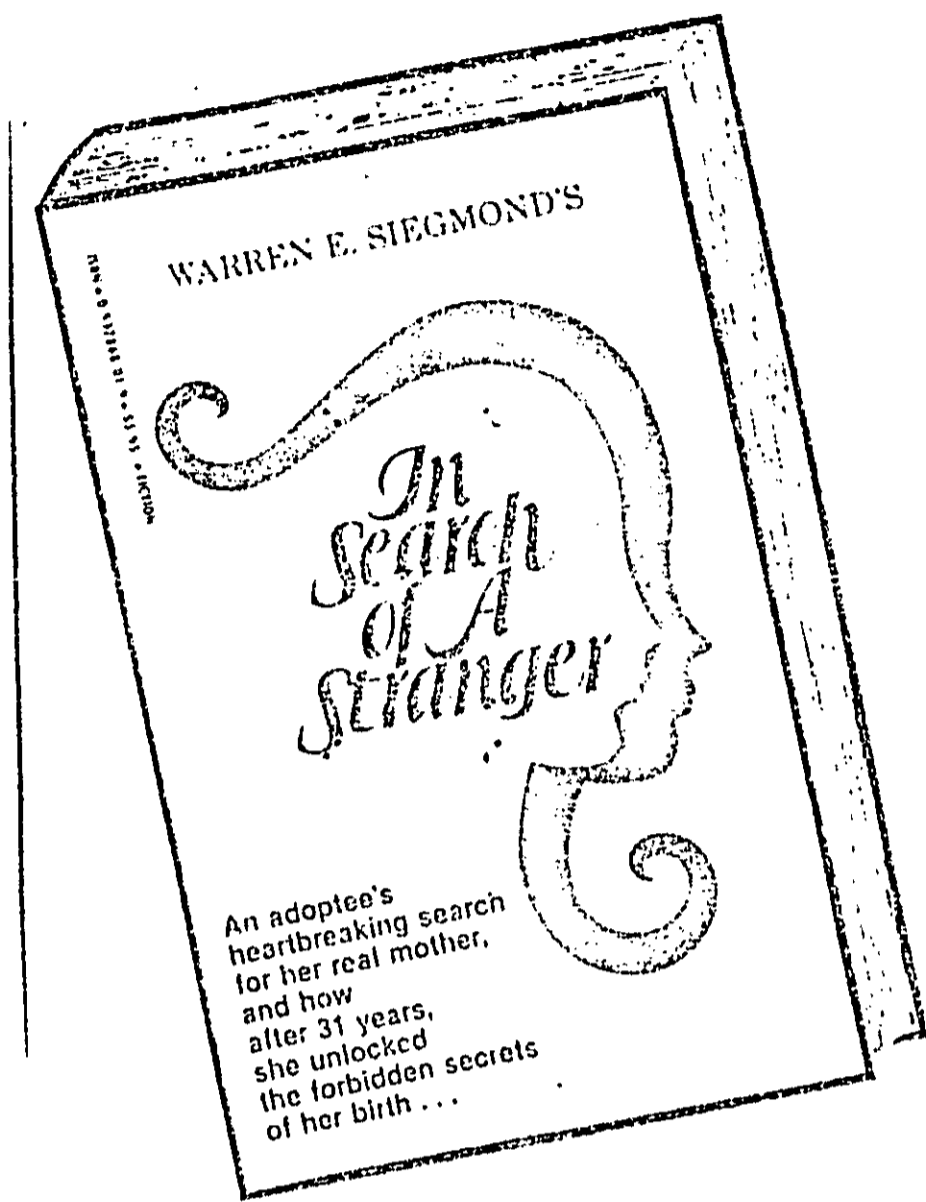
Optional: If an individual check all categories that apply

Adoptee Adoptive Parent Birthparent

Adoption Professional Other (specify)

Name of AAC Branch

IF A MOTHER CAN LOVE TWO CHILDREN . . . WHY CAN'T AN ADOPTEE LOVE TWO MOTHERS?



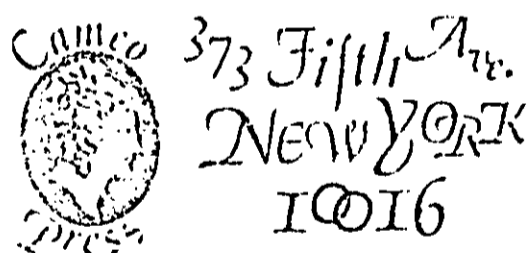
- Should adoptees go searching for their "real" parents?
- Why do people adopt? To love, or to be loved?
- Buying a black market baby — paying agency fees — the same thing?
- Adoption or abortion — the only two answers?
- The adoption triangle — what are the three points of view?
- America's 5 million adoptees: Who do you think you are?

It's ALL in: "In Search Of A Stranger."

only \$3.95 plus \$1.00 postage & handling

If you've been waiting for a special book to wonder about, talk about, even argue about. If you've been longing for a novel that will bring laughter to your lips, tears to your eyes, and a mountain of fresh hope and courage to your heart, then you must read, "In Search Of A Stranger" — a superbly moving story of a mother and daughter apart and how they came together.

THE BOOK IS \$3.95. THE EXPERIENCE IS PRICELESS!



373 Fifth Ave.
NEW YORK
10016

Enclosed is \$4.95 (includes postage and handling) for my autographed copy of "In Search Of A Stranger". Immediate delivery. Mail to Cameo Press, 373 Fifth Ave., Suite 1102, New York, N.Y. 10016.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

ADOPTEES AND BIRTH MOTHERS

in search: We can help you find the answers. We are a birth-mother and an adoptee who have FOUND. Write:

Search Seekers
P. O. Box 205
Whitestone, NY 11357

SONG OF THE SEARCH Written and sung by birth mother, Jo Anne Swanson. Amateur home recording on cassette. Lyric sheet included. Details: SASE to:

"SONG"
Box 121
L'Anse, MI 49946

(Exp. 12/81)

EXCHANGE INFORMATION with others

in your adoptive triangle with privacy

For info send SASE To

Right to Know
P.O. Box 1409
Grand Prairie, TX 750051
Tommye Smith Director

(Exp. 12/81)

I HELP CALIFORNIA ADOPTEES to find names I.S.C. Certified FEE. Write:

Search Consultant
1430 Henry Street
Berkeley, CA 94709 OR:
(415) 527-1243

(Exp. 12/81)

WISH TO ASSIST BIRTH PARENTS

in search of adult adoptees, born and adopted in the state of WISCONSIN. 33 out of 38 searches have been successful to date. Write to Adoption Consultant: Route 3 - Box 313, Mauston, WI 53948.

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Women who gave up babies find support

By Gene Prigge

RICE LAKE, Wis. — Georgia Lindstrom says she knew the day she signed her baby away, she'd eventually search for him.

But on that day in 1963, there were few options for a 15-year old unwed mother.

The baby's father was serving a three-year prison term for statutory rape, even though he told Georgia he wanted to marry her. And Georgia herself was in reform school although she'd never before been in trouble with the law. Her crime was getting pregnant.

"It was my mother's way of getting revenge," she said, still bitter after nearly 20 years.

Last month, she met her son, Danny, for the first time since she gave him up as an infant. She learned his adopted parents had been told his mother was a first-year university student. "He grew up believing I thought my education was more important than him," she said.

That hurt, she said, but it was just one of many hurts Lindstrom and another Rice Lake woman are trying to deal with through a group called Concerned United Birthparents Inc. The organization's only other chapter in Wisconsin is in Milwaukee.

For the past three months, Lindstrom and Joan Arnette, who also placed a child for adoption and is adopted herself, have been seeking people in similar circumstances to explore mutual problems in resolving the trauma of giving up a child for adoption.

"The adoption agencies say 'go home and you'll forget all about it,' but you don't forget," said Arnette, who recently was reunited with her daughter, Cindy. "The pain and loss are with you for the rest of your life."

Arnette said the first Rice Lake meeting, held in April, drew a dozen people, most of them unwed mothers who had given up a child years before. "I think all of us must have cried sometime during that meeting," she said.

"We've been made by society to keep it a secret," she said. "But as society goes along, people tend to accept a lot more. Now it's easier to get help and adoption is a last resort. But I don't feel it's anything I'm ashamed of."

But others, she said, don't always feel that way. One woman called and was interested in the group, but the fear of her children discovering she had been an unwed mother apparently has kept her from attending the meetings.

Others, she said, might be hiding the existence of their firstborn for fear of hurting their husbands or because someone might know them. "There's a shadow over all of us," Arnette said.

The emotions accompanying an adoption are varied. Children often grow up feeling they were unwanted. Mothers not only have the stigma of being unwed, but also of having given up their children, even if it was under coercion.

And adoptive parents sometimes feel cheated because they have no biological children of their own, said

Arnette.

Although attendance at the monthly meetings has dropped off, Arnette and Lindstrom suspect there are hundreds of women in the region who've given up children and might have an interest in the organization. "But all we can do now is wait until they're ready to talk about it," Arnette said.

"At the meetings, we talk about problems and feelings, and we usually have a theme, but we'll go in whatever direction it goes," she said.

Arnette and Lindstrom also will help search for adopted children, but they stress that work is independent of the group. Both have found their own children through searches, and both say the feelings of all parties must be considered whenever a search is begun.

But closed adoption agency documents and court records make searches difficult, they said. "It's like saying 'you're a second-class citizen and aren't good enough to have the information,'" said Arnette.

"If they had open records now, I think you'd see more children placed for adoption because mothers don't want to lose their children to the system," she said.

Arnette said she began her search for Cindy after seeing a Phil Donahue television show about searches in April 1980, just before her daughter's 15th birthday. She contacted the adoption agency, which agreed to put her in touch with her daughter because the girl was having psychological problems.

They met three weeks later, and Cindy, who was living in Texas, stayed with Arnette for a time.

"We had a lot of problems, but Cindy came here with a lot of problems, said Arnette. "But she seemed like a close friend and someone I had known all by life."

"She says she's been put back together, so to speak, and it's made her appreciate her adopted family much more," said Arnette.

Lindstrom found her son through a Wisconsin woman who conducts searches. She contacted Danny's adopted parents first, who contacted the social services department in Barron County "to see what kind of person I was," she said.

In March, she wrote her son a letter, and in May, "He showed up on my doorstep with his adopted parents. He turned out better than I ever could have hoped for."

"There's an immediate elation," she said, "but a sadness because you realize all the years you missed."

Lindstrom and Arnette are married and have other children, and both say there are legal problems with searching for children under 18 years of age.

They also say adopted parents sometimes feel threatened by the return of a biological parent, despite the fact that many birth parents don't search for their children because of a fear of hurting the adopted parents.

"We aren't hovering around and waiting, but we do think about our own children," said Lindstrom. "We don't necessarily want to be a mother to our child, just a friend."

