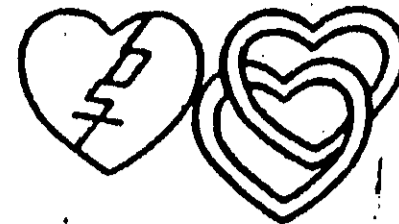


NORTH  
EAST  
OHIO

# NEWSLETTER



## LOST AND FOUND

ADOPTIVE TRIANGLE - SUPPORT & SEARCH GROUP

April-1983.

Vol. 1 No.2

"that the lost may be found"

P.O. Box 1033

(216) 864-7817

Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44223

923-0340

### REPORT ON APRIL MTG. & COMMENTS

Thank you one and all for making our April meeting a success. There were approximately 35 people on hand to hear Mary Shapiro give an over-view of Probate Court; and particularly as it relates to adoption. Although much of the information was not directly related to our concerns, we value the opportunity to acquaint those significant others in the community with our organization, purpose, and goals. Mary shared willingly, and openly her particular efforts to make independent adoptions in Summit County a highly caring and professional endeavor. Mary acts as an advocate for the birthmothers, encouraging them to consider carefully their decision to relenquish their children. In this way she avoids applying pressure on a birthparent, by reviewing with them any possibility of their keeping their children. We look forward to Mary addressing our group again in the future, however we will focus on a topic that solely relates to the closed policy re-identifying information that the court now is unwilling, by law, to make available.

The highpoint of our meeting was hearing from Diane, as she shared her recent reunion with her birthmother, and some members of her birth family. We were so happy that the reunion was successful; and thank Diane for being in attendance so that she could share with everyone her reunion experience.

Genie Light from Cleveland closed our meeting singing her own compositions and accompanying herself on guitar. What a treat! The songs were moving some of us to tears with the lyrics sung so beautifully about a birthmother's longing for a lost child. Genie quickly brought our spirits up with an upbeat Blues selection. Lost & Found Members present want to thank Genie for coming out for our meeting, (Genie lives in Cleveland), and sharing her heart, and music. Also we are happy about Genie's recent phone call reunion with her 18 year old daughter who lives in California.

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### MAY MTG TO FEATURE NANCY CLEMENS OF CATHOLIC CHARITIES

We invite all of our members to make a special effort to attend our May meeting, when Nancy Clemens will speak to us regarding her work at Catholic Service League. This agency handled many of our adoptions, therefore we have much interest in learning from Nancy past and present policy regarding their handling of adoptions, searching birthparents and adoptees, as well as Nancy answering questions from the floor. See you soon.

Date: May 5, 1983

Time: 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Place: Tallmadge Library, 32 South Ave. (near the circle)

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### HOUSE BILL 84

On April 13, Carol, Nancy, Jean and Maria went to Columbus to the State House to join Paula Burdette (Reunite) and other interested parties to sit in on the latest hearing of House Bill 84. We had been unsuccessful in obtaining a copy of the Bill in advance, therefore we were unprepared to speak knowledgeably before the Civil and Commercial committee. However, we still took advantage of the opportunity to speak out for adoptees rights and Carol spoke on behalf of Lost & Found, explaining our work of those involved in the adoptive-triad

and the search aspect of our group. Jean Batis woke up the representatives who were growing weary of hearing testimony on this bill and previous bills, by boldly declaring that past secrecy maneuvers, and the sealed record policy would only encourage more illegal activity, and give rise to unsavory persons who would get hold of the information and use it to their own advantage. Because there were so many witnesses, the committee was unable to vote on the bill that day. This was seen as a victory in THAT it means probably two or more weeks before the bill will come up for voting again. During the next two weeks the final bill will be worked out, and we feel for the best. The following three areas of concern will be included: 1. Specific time of response for the Court or agency to respond to an adoptee's inquiry into their records, 2. Keeping records prior to 1964 open, as well as opening those inadvertently closed prior to 1964, and 3. Providing siblings with assistance in obtaining identifying information.

\*\*\*\*\*

A DOZEN ROSES TO:

- .....Those thoughtful people who take time to say "thanks and show encouragement to others at the end of a successful search.
- .....Those consistent, plodding patient searchers who defy both depression and wavering persistence.
- .....Those who stay and work with us AFTER THE SEARCH HAS PASSED.
- .....THOSE WHO HAVE SHOWN THE SPIRIT OF togetherness by doing actual legwork in support of another's search.
- .....Those demonstratively supportive of legislative change.
- .....Those who give of their time unselfishly.

A SINGLE ROSE TO:

- .....Those who remain considerate of search helpers throughout the search.
- .....Those who keep on track, listen to experienced advise, and then read to prepare for the big moment.
- .....Those who remember to include a SASE on mail requests.

A BUNCH OF WILTED DANDELIONS TO:

- .....Those who come on like gangbusters, asking and getting inordinate amounts of help, then either stop or hide from search at the first failure.
- .....Those who seek and are given extensive advice and search help (more often than not on prime time expensive long distance calls) and then show "gratitude" by neither joining or advising of search outcome.
- .....Those who express deep and devoted interest in making a search BUT will not commit themselves to the extent of becoming a local group member.

Idea from Orphan Voyage of Florida, Tampa Bay Chapter, Fall, 1981

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CONGRATULATIONS JIM for taking the big step and contacting your birthmother, we hope that it was both positive and rewarding. We look forward to giving you needed support in dealing with Reunion Aftermath. Also in learning from you whatever you may feel could be helpful to others!

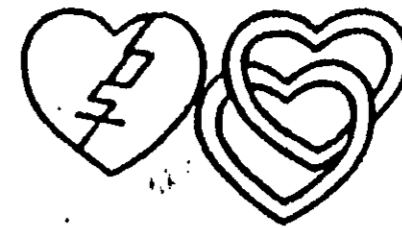
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AMERICAN ADOPTION CONGRESS: This is a repeat reminder that the AAC National Convention will be in Columbus May 19, 20, 21, and 22. Contact Carol for further information (923-0340), or your previous newsletter.

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## LOST AND FOUND

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June - 1983

Vol. 1 No. 3

"that the lost may be found"

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(216) 864-7817  
923-0340

### REPORT ON MAY - JUNE MEETINGS & COMMENTS

Nancy Clemens, adoption worker with the Akron Catholic Service League, met with our group for our May meeting. Nancy provided us with current information regarding her agency's policy on search and reunion, as well as current placement practices of children for adoption. More openness exists today, Nancy explained, and is recognized as being more positive for all members of the adoption triad. Nancy notes a change in counseling unwed mothers toward considering all options available as opposed to pressuring an unwed mother to give up her child. Someone remarked, "Where were you 20 years ago?" Also the mothers are encouraged to write personal letters to their child so that the child will, when appropriate, have first hand information from the birthparent. Searching birthparents or adoptees are met with understanding and given all non-identifying information available. Prospective adoptive parents are required to attend classes to become sensitized to the needs of their adopted children including their need to perhaps someday search. We are pleased with the positive approach that Nancy embraces, but it is not yet sufficient and will never be, until the agency provides complete identifying information upon request of an adult adoptee. Agencies hide behind the law yet fail to take any affirmative leadership to affect meaningful change. We urge Nancy to continue to become informed particularly regarding the issue of the sealed record as it relates to the needs of all involved. Furthermore, we urge her to act on that knowledge and lend her name to the movement; to influence legislatures, and within her own agency be bold wherever possible. Thank you Nancy for your willingness to share and learn.

Our June meeting was great! We returned from the A.C.C. conference in Columbus all charged up from meeting terrific people from over 35 states and two countries (Mexico & Canada). The degree of expertise there was stimulating and encouraging as we sat in on informative seminars hearing from the veterans of the movement regarding what they have learned and what they are currently doing in their home states and across the country. Informal discussions with authors of many of the books we have read were a favorite past-time, especially Sandy Musser. (I Would Have Searched Forever & What Kind of Love is This.) With so many people present from all over the country some of us practically went around the clock, soaking up as much knowledge as possible. The group as a whole was most impressive with a collective spirit of faith, strength, courage, and humor. If there was a consensus it was to unite and work for the end of the sealed record. In our June meeting we broke up into small discussion groups and dealt with some of the information brought back from the conference. The lively discussions gave those who did not attend the conference an opportunity to learn some of the information presented in Columbus, as well as giving those who did an opportunity to delve deeper into the material, as well as getting feedback from the group. This past year has been a real learning period for all of us, but we are just getting started - there's so much to learn and do.

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### JULY MEETING DAY CHANGED

We were forced to change our meeting day from the first Thursday of the month to the first Wednesday of the month. Please adjust your calendars. Thank you.

Date: July 6, 1983  
Time: 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.  
Place: Tallmadge Library, 32 South Ave.  
(Near the Circle)

AN ADOPTEE'S ACCOUNT OF HER SEARCH

The letter that was shared with you during our June meeting was so valuable that it is included in this issue so that you can read again about the special problem of an adoptee who searches only to find they are too late - the birthmother, in this case, had died many years earlier. This underscores the reality that time is not always on the side of a reunion that is delayed until a "better time". Also in order to better serve those who come for support to Lost and Found we need to listen to what one experiences in this grievous situation:

This was written by a woman we'll call Betty who following receiving information from Carol Wolff that her birthmother was dead, and had died in 1957:

"Dear Maria, You asked me on the phone to write a brief description of the night I found out about my birthmother's death. First, I want to say that when I decided to search I wanted to mainly find my mother, I didn't consider my father or brothers and sisters too much. I know you reminded me on numerous occasions that my birthmother might be dead, but I knew that she was around 58 years old. I didn't want to face the fact.

On the night of April 28, 1983, I received a call from you, I was unable to talk at that time so I called back within half an hour. At that time, Carol told me that you and she had found my birth family for me, although there was some bad news. You told me that my birthmother was deceased. She died on October 18, 1957, just 4 days before my 10th birthday. Carol went on to say that my birthfather acknowledged me and that I had one sister and two brothers. Also I had one brother dead. You and Carol had already talked to all of them and you told me that they were anxiously awaiting my call. I guess I promised you that I would immediately call them. I had intended on doing that.

I can't really explain what came over me after that. I had built up some hatred for my birthmother over the years and it was like I had to get rid of that before I could do anything else. I started praying for her to forgive me for the bad thoughts I had for her. Then the grief I felt for her death at such an early age was almost more than I could bear. I started crying for her so badly. I told her I was sorry for ever hating, although I don't think I ever hated her. I think that her giving me up was what I couldn't understand. I prayed and cried nearly all night. I think God heard my prayers and lifted a great deal from my heart. The next day I had the courage to call my sister and I have also talked to my birthfather and two brothers. Also I have a wonderful adoptive family that have helped me through this. It's nice to have people who care."

P.S. Betty has met with her father and two siblings for a very successful reunion.

\*\*\*\*\*

REUNION

As a result of another happy and successful reunion that we were fortunate enough to effect, we received the following poem. It was written by a friend of the birthmother for her and her daughter.

Dedicated to Bonnie and Christy with love. March 9, 1983

THE REUNION  
by Karen Vannoy

There was a lonely space in time  
that I could not erase.

A time of great uncertainty,  
a time I could not face.

But God, in His great Wisdom knew  
the place in time  
I would find you.

The fears and doubts have been erased.  
Nineteen years have been retraced.

How can I hope to e'er express  
the bond of love  
and tenderness?

And tho' as strangers we may seem  
It still is such  
a joyous dream!

I know the day will be so sweet  
when at last  
our eyes shall meet,

June, 1983

## THE REUNION cont'd.

A chapter  
of our lives  
complete...

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PICNIC

Lost & Found is planning a covered dish picnic the third weekend in July. Exact date and place to be determined at the July meeting. Everyone plan to come out for a fun-filled day of activity and food! (Oh, and family and friends.)

\*\*\*\*\*

SPECIAL APPRECIATION

Special appreciation for Carol our main source of direction, and search expertise. Carol, who is not a member of the triad has come to understand the needs and feelings of all involved through her compassionate ability to show concern for the needs of others. (Are you sure you aren't one of us, Carol?) (smile)

A simple note of gratitude on behalf of Carol, who wishes to extend a few words of appreciation to the faithful members who have helped make our group one of the most productive ones around. It's not easy getting started.

\*\*\*\*\*

ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS; GETTING TO THEIR SOURCE

It seems fitting, if not too boring, to consider the top 9 most frequently heard problems from organizations both large and small:

1. "OUR ONLY PROBLEM IS MONEY."  
However, it may be a surface manifestation of a variety of ills; lack of clarity about the organization's direction, a failure to reassess purposes and goals in light of changing realities, avoidance of confronting whether the organizations program is relevant, clear vision and feasible program ideas but lack of coherent strategy for realizing them, plans that are unrealistic in light of the organizations resources, and capabilities.
2. NOT ENOUGH PARTICIPATION.  
What is often seen as a demand for more power in an organization is actually a desire for a greater sense of contribution and a need for feedback, and affirmation. People want to feel that they make a difference. It is a foolish captain who does not realize that the questioning, suggestions, and perspectives of the total group are indispensable to his or her effective decision-making. A director has to be willing to share ownership and the group has to have a willingness to give up being "taken care of".
3. WHAT ARE WE ALL ABOUT?  
What are our real needs and issues - let's keep the central needs of our organization before us.
4. WE'RE BURNED OUT.  
Check out whether or not we are in any of the syndromes mentioned above. Lack of attention by the groups leadership to the care and nurturing of the group as a whole. Sometimes all that is needed is more feedback and recognition, a better sense of one's commitment, and that efforts are known and appreciated.
5. WE NEED A RETREAT!  
How about a July picnic, folks! One of the healthiest things that we can discover is that we can have internal differences and successfully deal with them. Informal get-togethers help us to see one another as humans as persons.
6. ALL WE NEED IS A BETTER SYSTEM.  
This is an attitude searching for easy answers to organizational problems. Let's not concentrate on finding the right approach all the time, rather focus on establishing solid relationships, open communication and clear lines of authority and responsibility.
7. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO MANAGE  
Sound leadership depends principally on building good collaborative relationships with people and having roles, responsibilities, lines of communication, and purposes clear.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS cont'd

8. **OUR GROUP NEVER DOES ANYTHING.**  
As a group we need to recognize that the members need to be provided with suggestions and guidance about what they might be able to do and how to go about it.
9. **OUR GROUP DOES TOO MUCH.**  
The opposite complaint - the group viewed as meddlesome, mistrustful, and domineering. A group that expects too much, and is never satisfied, and injects oneself too deeply into the day to day affairs of the organization.

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A.A.C. CONFERENCE - BETTY J. LIFTON

B. J. Lifton, adoptee author of LOST & FOUND, and BORN TWICE gave an informal presentation of some thoughts that she had been considering. Here they are for your consideration:

1. Adoptee: When they have children experiences one's own rejection at birth.
2. Confusion on what is mother love.
3. Adoptee and adoptive parent share insecurity - will you be as good a parent as birthparent.
4. Adoptee never has felt authentic i.e. legitimate.
5. Adoptee on becoming a parent - trouble asserting authority.
6. Adoptive parent - doesn't have inner strength of Blood relatedness.
7. Adoptee - impotent as a child - sent away - where the fates take one.
8. Adoptee has never felt comfortable asserting her real needs - you learn not to confront adoptive parents and other folks in authority - this could be repeated in your parenting with your child.
9. Adoptive Family VS Birth Family Tree - Adoptees identify with adoptive family tree. The adoptive family is out in the light - establishment - while birth family is tainted.
10. Adoptive parents possessive and in control.

\*\*\*\*\*

\* \* \* BULLETIN JUST IN \* \* \*

July Picnic to take place at Sand Run Metropolitan Park, on Saturday, July 23 at 12:00 p.m. Take the first entrance off Portage Path. Bring table service; covered dish for 6 - 8 people; meat; charcoal; beverage (no alcohol).

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**LOST & FOUND**  
North East  
P. O. Box  
Cuyahoga Falls

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