



WARM

Washington Adoptees Rights Movement

MEDIATOR

MARCH 1983

REUNITED

ELLA H.

In November, we heard from Ella. She is corresponding with her daughter. She hopes to see her soon.

LORETTA B.

Loretta wants to tell everyone how happy she is to be with her son again. "Patience, that's all a person needs."

COLLEEN K.

Harriet Gumm, C.I., reports finding Colleen's birthmother. Colleen will meet her and her seven brothers and sisters. The birthmother said, "My prayers have been answered."

GERALD D.

Gerald was put together with his birthmother and one sister and three brothers. Harriet Gumm was the C.I.

KIM W.

An old member reports seeing her sister for the first time. They went on a cruise together. They got the V.I.P. treatment when the ship's personnel found out their story.

LEROY F.

Recently, LeRoy met his daughter. The day they saw each other was his grandson's first birthday. What a celebration.

ANN R.

C.I., Vivian Parsahl, advised that Ann met with her daughter in January. The reunion was great.

GAIL B.

Our former Mediator editor will visit with her birthmother and two sisters in March. Good trip, Gail.

DOLORIS C.

Carol Hepburn, C.I., put Dolores together with her daughter. Dolores sent along this poem:

CONTINUE YOUR SEARCH

In your search
for that certain someone
And you check out everyplace
you look for familiarity
for every passing face.

You pray, you hope, you dream,
you scheme.
And follow every clue.
The years go by, the past is gone, and your dreams are
getting blue.
You wonder if God has just forgotten you
then all your dreams come true
Your prayers are finally answered.
The phone rings, and it's YOU.

LOIS O.

Treina Stauffer, C.I., put Lois together with her birthmother. It was a frustrating experience for Lois. Her enthusiasm was a bit overwhelming at first for the birthmother. After 2½ months, Lois sent her flowers, a card, two poems, and a letter. The birthmother did call her and Lois was thankful she had given her the space she needed. Lois' husband found his family last year and found it difficult to be a part of his reunion and then to wait for months just for a phone call from her birthmother.

LINDA & WES S.

Long time WARM members were put together with their daughter last year. They are grandparents now and their daughter is residing with them.

PHILIP G.

After a long search, Phil was put together with his birthmother. She doesn't want her children to know about Phil so contact is made by her. Pam Queen, C.I.

YVONNE P.

This was a non-court case. Yvonne had her own information and worked together with her C.I., Pam Queen. Together they found Yvonne's sister and brother. Medical information was a necessity in this situation.

FUND RAISING

Late in 1982, WARM sent 508 letters to raise funds to keep our office operating. In doing so, we are able to serve adoptees, adoptive parents, and birthparents and other interested parties. The need is great but it takes money to pay for the rent, phones, and printing, among other things.

We would like to pay tribute to those who sent money. Those who gave permission for their names to be printed will be shown; those who didn't, we wish to also say a big WARM THANKS. During 1982 we didn't print those who sent donations. Please accept our WARM THANKS for those who steadfastly promote WARM and keep us floating during the slim times.

Britta Ehlers
Ann Ralls
Aileen Edwards
Sandra Morley
Anne Sheridan
Kay Quintana
Sue Wasankari

Nick Thoennes
K.M. Russel
Mary Marshall
Joan Rohrer
JoAnne Ecalbarger
Gayle Sneesby
Patrick Carey

THANK YOU

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Due to lack of space the last time the Mediator was printed, we were not able to offer this article from Charlotte Hood, President of WARM.

After returning from the AAC national conference, I'm always overwhelmed with the realization of what WARM has become. These thoughts are directed at you, the CI's of WARM.

When Betty Jean Lipton and I were giving a workshop at San Antonio about emotions in the search, I couldn't help but think about the emotions of the CI as he/she works a case. Much criticism has been aimed at the intermediary system. Some is well taken. As someone who did her own search I know the growth I experienced during that time. An intermediary had to make the call to my mother-- a requirement of all WARM members. I know if I was to choose a way, I would have chosen to use an intermediary to make that call. Critics say I needed to experience that moment but I felt I had that "growth experience" in making the call after my mother gave her okay, and I know the terrific (and I mean terrifying) experience I went through in walking up to her front door the first time.

Critics have said that an intermediary doesn't search with as much enthusiasm as they would if it were their own case. I can hear your response to that. I see you agonize over dead ends; I see the frustration of contradictory information and the joy of finding the "right one." I see your heart ache when the mother or father is deceased, or the rare cases when one of them refuses contact. I see the hope you express in your statements that "I have a feeling they'll come around." I hear of your "counseling service" to the adoptee, the birthparent and the adoptive parent--sometimes all of them at the same time. I see you as being the sounding board, the empathetic listener as the members of the triangle pour out their hearts to you--their fears, their questions, their reasons for surrender. I see this go on after all have been reunited. You give adoptive parents, birthparents and adoptees assurance and guidance during their adjustment period.

I see your frustration in not being able to reveal information along the way-- knowing it would be so meaningful to the searcher and knowing under your oath of confidentiality you cannot reveal information until a signed consent form is in your hands.

I know of the hours and hours you put in and the slim leads you follow; the emergency cases that take precedence when assistance from your fellow CI's breaks the case at astounding rates; some of these being a race against death. And I see the faces of all of you who have been a part of these searches, when the race has been won or lost.

I see the advisory board, there to counsel you as to the next step to take with a case that brings you to a mental health institution or a prison and the visits to the judge or to the agency for that "extra" request--all for the sake of someone else.

I hear the phone ringing off the hook day and night and your willingness to answer. I hear about your explanations to your families as to why dinner isn't ready and that you have yet another meeting to attend.

I see you as someone who has experienced a great reunion yourself, and I see you as having made contact and having your relationship stop there. I see you never having that reunion because you were too late-- they were gone--and see your joy at your children's find and your waiting for that son or daughter to turn 18 or waiting for him/her to change his/her mind months or years down the road.

I have seen you come and go and come again. Burn out is the word used. How can you keep at it year after year? There's no money to be made in your job-- you're asked to serve on committees or sit in a street fair booth or bake cookies or lead a meeting, appear on TV or speak before various groups. There is no award for your time and expense.

When I hear criticism of the intermediary system I bristle. It's not the perfect answer, but it is an answer. Do you know you have solved over 500 cases? Do you know only 5% have refused contact? Some of those have changed their minds after a few years. Do you know you are unique in the adoption movement? No other organization has proven itself to the courts and to the agencies with the magnitude WARM has. You have shown the people of Washington that you are responsible, hard working, sensitive individuals who voluntarily uphold the law and protect the privacy of others while meeting the needs of people restricted under the adoption laws. You make the system work. You protect the right of privacy by the way you approach a birthparent. You acknowledge the right to parent when you contact the adoptive parents of an adoptee still dependent on their family, and you uphold the right and need to "know" of the adoptee by being privileged to those sealed records.

You know what your rewards are, why you do it. It's what you see: the tears of joy, the change with growth, the hopeless look turned to relief, the look-alike siblings, the reunion you didn't have or hope to have, the ease into adulthood you see in your children, the tearful "thank you." You see the love you have given others reflected back to you. The all powerful gift of love spreads through this society by the work you do.

Think of the lives you've changed, the hearts of people--opening to new ideas casting out the fears and prejudices that once were there. It's slow work--it's frustrating to hit the wall of resistance over and over again, but the cracks start appearing with everyone you contact.

So my fellow CI's, as president of WARM I wish I could offer you the laurels you deserve--I can only say thank you--each of you is wearing the badge of courage, the purple heart, the cross of valor, the academy award. The gift of love is what you receive because what you send out is returned a thousand fold.

NEW BOOK

Perspectives on a Grafted Tree, compiled by Pat Johnston. A collection of poems by and for those who have been or may be touched by adoption. It's available for \$12.95 from Perspectives Press, 905 W. Wildwood Avenue, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 46807.

HELP: Editor needs access to North Seattle computer for zipcoding the MEDIATOR mailing list.

SPRING GENEALOGY SEMINAR MARCH, 1983

March 19th, from 8:30AM to 4:00PM, the S. King County branch of the Seattle Genealogy society will give its seminar at the Highline Community College. For pre-registration, contact Clarice Bryan, 1112 17th S.E., Auburn, WA 98002. For those who pre-register, the fee is \$8.00; registration at the door will be \$10.00. Clarice's phone number is 833-5430.

BOARD ELECTIONS

For the 1983-86 term, Ben Eide, Carol Fisher, Charlotte Hood, Marno Paddock, Vivian Parshall, and Wes Sims were elected. To fill two vacated Board positions, Ann Studyvin and Rosemary Pederson were elected to shorter terms. Vi Sprague and Sophie Elvert vacated their positions and we will miss their input.

NEW OFFICERS

For the 1983-84 term, WARM'S new officers are:

PRESIDENT: Charlotte Hood
V. PRES. : Dave Richardson
SEC'Y. : Roger Berg
TREAS. : Pam Queen

OFFICE

Vivian Parshall, our office volunteer for many years, has decided to take her leave and direct her energies in another direction. Her election to the Board will keep her in close contact with WARM. We wish to express our gratitude for the many years of service.

BUT.... that leaves the office without volunteer help. If anyone is interested, please contact Donna at the office, 747-5045.

WARM has acquired a phone answering device. Don't be afraid--speak up. Remember to listen for the BEEP. We don't want to miss your messages.

AAC

The AAC (American Adoption Congress) will hold its annual convention May 19-22, 1983, in Columbus, Ohio. WARM's Sophie Elvert is President this year and can be contacted for further information. 488-3266. 11012 N.E. 149th, Bothell, WA 98011.

SEATTLE GENERAL MEETINGS

March 2nd, the guest speaker will be Mike Saunders from the State Archives and March 16th, Sophie Elvert will talk about the American Adoption Congress.

OARA

Larry Bartlien from Oregon Adoptive Rights Association is looking for a Pen-Pal. Contact him through OARA, P.O. Box 1332, Beaverton, Oregon, 97075. He's interested in 'within the family' adoptees like himself; an only child.

ADOPTEE STUDY GROUP

Dave Richardson reports that the adoptee study group will no longer meet because of lack of interest. Any immediate needs can be referred to Dave.

JO H.

Jo wished to share with everyone that she is glad she didn't wait too long for reunion. She had been in contact with her birth mother just two and a half years and she recently died. Jo sends her wishes for continuing successes for WARM.

VICKI L.

The office matched Vicki with her son. Both had sought reunion through WARM.

RUTH D.

Marilyn Dean, C.I., located Ruth's birth mother.

DAN & DANYA C.

Both have met with the birth mother per Marilyn Dean, C.I.

GERALD E.

Another case completed by Marilyn. Gerald has met with his birth mother.

TERESA S.

Pam Queen, C.I., located Terry's birth mother. Earlier this year, they met and Terry went to see her new grandparents, cousins, aunts, and two half-sisters.

KATHY M.

Over Memorial Day holiday, Kathy was able to see her birth mother for the first time. She's planning another trip to see Kathy in August. Pam Queen was the intermediary.

DONATIONS

WARM greatly acknowledges donations from:

Ken Hoyt
Ken Plager
Ann Ralls

QUOTES

Resolve to be thyself and know that he who finds himself loses his misery.....Matthew Arnold

Facts are facts and will not disappear on account of your likes.....
Jawahariral Nehru

