

*Tri-Adoption Copy will be sent for your files. (each issue)  
Please send me a copy of what is available from your library to help me with this publication. I would like to become a member at once.*

TENNESSEE'S TRUTH MESSENGER

December 1, 1984

Kickoff Edition

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*Debbie Norton  
Editor*

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to a new day in Tennessee!!! This newsletter is being sent to you because of your past or present interest in the Adoption Movement in Tennessee. There are, as you know, several search and support groups in Tennessee. They are all working very hard in their respective areas for changes in attitude and legislation in Tennessee. We are taking this step to unite our efforts. We hope to use this newsletter to keep you informed as to what is taking place on at state-wide basis.

Each group has agreed to send in news from their area of the state to be reported quarterly. This will include meeting times, special projects, reunion news, etc. We will also have a special section for legislative news. This will include pending legislation both locally and nationally. We can not bring about change without total unity. We can not be united if we do not have some way of getting the message to everyone who wants change in Tennessee.

If you wish to continue to receive the Tennessee Truth Messenger please fill out the form below and return it by February 10, 1985. This will assure you of being on the permanent mailing list through December of 1985. This issue was printed and mailed to you with the donations made by the support groups of Tennessee. However, the future of this publication will depend on you. If you wish to help us keep this publication, please send a donation along with your mailing form. Your support is needed to pay for postage, printing and subscription to national publications to keep you informed. Your donation is not required to receive the Tennessee Truth Messenger but donations in support of our efforts will be greatly appreciated and accepted.

Debbie Norton - Memphis  
Editor

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Triad Position: Adoptee \_\_\_ Birthparent \_\_\_ Adoptive Parent \_\_\_ Sibling \_\_\_  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I do wish to continue to receive the Tennessee Truth Messenger and I enclose my donation of \_\_\_\_\_.

Yes, I do wish to continue to receive the Tennessee Truth Messenger but am unable to send a donation at this time. \_\_\_\_\_

No, I do not wish to continue to receive the Tennessee Truth Messenger. \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO: TENNESSEE'S TRUTH MESSENGER - C/O DEBBIE NORTON - 1705 OZAN ST.  
MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE - 38108

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"Not to know what happened before we were born is to remain perpetually a child; for what is the worth of a human life unless it is woven into the lives of our ancestors in the record of history?"

Cicero

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THE OPEN ARMS QUARTERLY

Because of our limited printing space, we will not be able to run search ads. We would strongly suggest that you place your search ads in "The Open Arms Quarterly". This is a national publication and all the search groups in Tennessee have members that subscribe to this publication. Ads are arranged by name or by birthdate. You may write to "The Open Arms Quarterly" - P.O. Box 1522 - North Platte, NE - 69103. You may also call 308-532-6928 (24 Hours) to start your subscription. Subscriptions are \$10.00 per year. They will send you the first issue FREE if you wish to look it over before starting your subscription or placing your search ad. We always keep an eye out for new ads as they appear. We support this publication as the place to put your search ads for national attention.

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THE INTERNATIONAL SOUNDEX REUNION REGISTRY

The "International Soundex Reunion Registry" (ISRR) is a national registry for adoptees, birthparents, siblings, etc. This is a FREE service and you may receive your registry forms by sending your request for an ISRR form along with a self addressed envelope to: ISRR - P.O. Box 2312 - Carson City, NV. - 89702. They will send you an explanation of how the Soundex Registry works and will tell you how to use the service. This will be valuable to your search effort. We recommend that all searchers in Tennessee use this registry. Registries do work, but only if we all use the same one. You may wish to put your birth family information on several registries, this is fine, but remember to include the ISRR. Use the registry. It works!!!

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REUNION NEWS

Betty Moore has found her birth mother after a 31 year search!!! Betty is 58 years old and was able to accomplish this with help from Donna Creswell. Donna and Betty are both members of ROOTS in Knoxville. I guess a quote from a newspaper story on Betty's reunion tells it all. "I reached down to hug her and she hugged me back," Betty said. How wonderful after so many years. Congratulations Betty!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

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Nancy Neves of Cleveland, Tennessee actively searched for nearly a decade. She was too late in locating her birthmother for she had died two years previously. Such an event is always painful but the sense of loss is lessened by the peaceful feeling attained in just knowing the truth of your past. She has found love and understanding through maternal relatives, forming a strong foundation from which their relationship can grow. We wish Nancy and the new additions to her life a happy and fulfilling future.

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"I have found after nine years of searching!" That is what Linda Chruscial of Athens, Tennessee is saying upon completing the search for her birthmother. Linda was born in Memphis in 1948 and is presently planning a return trip. This time for a reunion with the mother she has never seen. Hope and persistence is the key to the door sealing adoption records. Linda persisted until she found the correct key, thus unlocking the door to the truth.

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CHATTANOOGA: Adult Adoptees and Birthparents in Search (AABS) - P.O. Box 3572 -  
Chattanooga, Tennessee - 37404

AABS is a search and support group that lends assistance to persons in the adoption triangle. Our members include adult adoptees, birthparents and supportive adoptive parents. Monthly meetings are on the 4th Thursday of every month. Meetings are held at Shoney's, downtown Chattanooga, in the Golden Gateway next to Zayre. All persons are welcomed to attend. Come to the meetings and share your experience. We will assist you in any way possible. Meeting your fellow searchers is an excellent way to keep in touch with what is going on in the movement. Join in our efforts as we strive to complete searches in an attempt to soften the edges of the adoption triangle.

Delores Farmer - Chattanooga - AABS

Knoxville: Rights of Origins - Tennesseans in Search (ROOTS) - P.O. Box will be given in the next issue. (New group in process of getting a P.O. Box)

We have 18 members and will soon have a post office box. We meet the third Sunday of every month at Helma's Restaurant on the Clinton Highway. Our meeting time is 4:00 p.m. We are running an ad in the newspaper in the morning and evening newspapers for the three days before the meeting. We are putting notices up all over town. Hope to have more news next month.

Susie Thompson - Knoxville - ROOTS

MEMPHIS: Tennessee's The Right to Know - P.O. Box 34334 - Memphis, Tennessee - 38134

Tennessee's The Right to Know will have its first meeting this quarter on December 10th at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held in the meeting room of the Bartlett Library. Come join us!!!! We hope to get some new faces to continue the work in Memphis. We need to start our letter writing in support of the proposed new law that is in the works. We will need all the support we can muster. Additional meeting times will be discussed at the meeting on December 10th.

Jalena Bowling -Memphis - Right to Know

NASHVILLE: Tennessee Adoptees in Search

Nashville is not having group meetings at this time. Hopefully they will be able to get started again soon. We will let you know in the future issues if they start having meetings again. We will need their support to make the push for new legislation work. I am sure we have their support.. Our 1st state-wide conference was held in Nashville this year and we hope to make it an annual event.

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SEARCH TIP

In some instances it may be possible that the court ordered a notice to be put in the local news prior to an adoption being finalized. This notice is called an Order of Publication. It was not always necessary, but in instances where the father was named on the birth certificate, but did not sign a surrender statement, the court could have ordered such an Order of Publication be posted. If so, it is very possible that a birth name and court date would have been used. Check several months prior to the time the adoption was finalized. Ask your County Clerk to show you one, or ask him to explain the process to you. This is Public Record and in most cases can be looked up on micro-film in the local library. REMEMBER, THIS IS NOT A NECESSARY STEP IN MOST ADOPTION CASES IN TENNESSEE, BUT IT IS WORTH CHECKING OUT!!!! GOOD LUCK!!!!!! CHECK THE COUNTY LEGAL NEWSPAPER ALSO.

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LEGISLATIVE NEWS

THE PERSON WHO MUST ACT IS YOU!!!

IF YOU KNEW THAT SENDING A FEW SHORT LETTERS WOULD ENABLE YOU TO MAKE CONTACT WITH YOUR BIRTH FAMILY WOULD YOU SEND THEM????????

We are trying to gain support for a bill providing the concept of "mutual consent" to be introduced in the next legislative session in Nashville. Your support is a Must. If we do not get the support needed we will lose another year in our search for the truth. A brief synopsis of this proposed bill is as follows:

The purpose of proposed changes to that portion of Tennessee's Adoption Statutes relating to sealed adoption records is threefold.

(1) To incorporate into the law the principle of "mutual consent". When an adult adoptee 18 years of age or older, genetic father, genetic mother, siblings of an adult adoptee, or the adoptive parent of an adoptee under the age of 18 years sends a request in writing to the Department of Human Services stating a desire to have contact with any or all of the above said persons, the Department of Human Services shall be required by law to initiate a search for the persons in question. They shall be allowed 6 months to complete the search and to contact said persons. The contacts will be made with the utmost discretion.

(2) Any persons involved in the adoption process may submit to the Department of Human Services a request for release of the Court of Jurisdiction from his or her sealed records. The name of that court shall be given upon request. This applies to the adoptee, genetic parent, adoptive parent or genetic sibling.

\*\*\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE IN YOUR LETTERS THAT THE CURRENT LAW IN THE STATE OF TENNESSEE\*\*\*\*\*

REQUIRES THAT ALL REQUESTS FOR OPEN RECORDS BE BROUGHT BEFORE THE COURT OF "ORIGINAL" JURISDICTION, HOWEVER THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES WILL NOT RELEASE THE NAME OF THAT COURT TO US. WE ARE BEING DENIED DUE PROCESS OF LAW UNDER THIS STATUTE, HOW ARE WE TO GO TO COURT IF THE NAME OF THAT COURT

\*\*\*\*\*IS BEING WITHHELD????????

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(3) To amend Section 36-140 (Reuniting Siblings After Adoption) to eliminate the vagueness of the term "preadoptive relationship"; to include the right of the non-adoptive sibling who has been separated from another sibling by adoption, to full coverage under this section; and to include the release of identifying information concerning a sibling who is found to be deceased to a sibling requesting such information.

If each of you receiving this will write only a few short letters or postcards, the impact could be staggering. A few words in support of this will be sufficient and if possible urge friends and relatives to write also. When writing refer to the three underlined sections above as being necessary in the passage of the bill and include your name and mailing address.

Contact the senator and representative from your district as they will be the ones voting on the bill when it reaches the floor after being reviewed by the General Welfare Committee. Their names and addresses can be obtained from your local library or the election commission office at your county courthouse. Please contact the ones who serve your county. The opposition will work hard to see this bill fail; we must work harder to see that it passes!! The next legislative session begins in January and your elected officials need to be made aware of your stand on this issue immediately.

More than thirty years have passed since our records were sealed. If we do not take this advantage to have a voice in opening them, if only partially, thirty more years may pass before it will come again. Then it could be too late for many of us. If we lose this battle because of your silence or apathy we have only ourselves to blame.

PLEASE WRITE IN SUPPORT OF THIS. IF YOU DO NOT WRITE, WE HAVE NO HOPE

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Senate: Douglas Henry, Jr.  
200 Capitol Blve. Bldg.  
Nashville, Tn. 37214

Anna Belle Clement O'Brien  
Rt. 15 Box 716, Lake Tansi  
Crossville, Tn. 38555

John N. Ford  
12 South Parkway  
Memphis, Tennessee 38109

Ernest Crouch  
111 Rivermond Dr.  
McMinnville, Tn 37110

Ben Longley  
P.O. Box 211  
Cleveland, Tn. 37311

House: Paul M. Starnes  
4004 Patton Dr.  
Chattanooga, Tn. 37412

Dan Byrd  
4595 Oak Road  
Arlington, Tn. 38002

Joe W. Bell  
Rt. 3 Box 158  
Lebanon, Tn 37075

Lois M. Debarry  
680 Alida Ave.  
Memphis, Tn. 38106

THESE PERSONS WERE AFFILIATED WITH THE GENERAL WELFARE COMMITTEES OR HAVE EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN PASSAGE OF THE PROPOSED LEGISLATION.

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THE LEGACY OF AN ADOPTED CHILD

Once there were two women  
Who never knew each other.  
One you do not remember,  
The other you call Mother.

One gave you emotions,  
The other calmed your fears.  
One saw your first sweet smile,  
The other dried your tears.

Two different lives  
Shaped to make yours one;  
One became your guiding star,  
The other became your sun.

One gave you up;  
It was all that she could do.  
The other prayed for a child,  
And God led her streight to you.

The first gave you Life,  
The second taught you to live in it.  
The first gave you a need for love,  
The second was there to give it.

And now you ask me through your tears,  
The age-old questions through the years;  
Heredity or environment...Which are you  
the product of?

One gave you a nationality,  
The other gave you a name  
One gave you the seed of talent,  
The other gave you an aim.

Neither, my darling, neither;  
Just two differents kinds of love.

Author unknown

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THANK YOU

Thank You!!!!!!! to all the support groups in Tennessee who gave your financial support. to get this newsletter started. Without you it could not be possible. This is your newsletter. We would like to invite all of you to share in the input. If there is anything that you would like to share, please do so. We will strive to serve the State of Tennessee and not just one area of the state. Your input is important to us. The deadline for the next issue will be Feb. 10. 1984.

The Editor- Debbie Norton \_ Memphis

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# BIRTHPARENTS ADOPTIVES

"We Reunite Families"

## ADOPTIVE PARENTS

### Tracers Ltd.

Adoption Genealogy Specialists

# MONTHLY SEARCH & SUPPORT GROUP

#### Location

The First Presbyterian Church of Deerfield  
824 Waukegan Road Deerfield, Illinois

MEETING DATES LISTED BELOW  
FOR 1985

#### when

February 5th: March 5th, April 2nd, May 7th,  
June 4th, July 2nd, August 6th, September 3rd,  
October 1st, November 5th, & December 3rd

#### time

Registration starts at 6:30 p.m.  
Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m.  
Annual Membership dues \$50.00  
Guests may attend for \$5.00 each

For More Information call  
(312) 546-3417