



#### 1984 AAC REGION IV CONFERENCE

Thanks to the efforts of Searchline's Pat Palmer and Ed Mulder and CUB's Kathy Sawyer the conference was a huge success in Irving, Texas. We recruited over 30 new members for our region and established a first for any region---Social workers from the Edna Gladney Agency "openly" attended our conference. We realize the "drawing card" was Barbara Landry, but we sincerely hope that the social workers in attendance were able to learn from all that was seen and heard.

A variety of old & new topics were discussed with the highlights being the general session on Open Adoption presented by LSST of San Antonio and the Banquet presentation by Dr. Thomas Bouchard. Dr. Bouchard's studies with "Twins Reared Apart" gave convincing evidence that heredity plays the most important role in shaping one's future. The medical community should stand up & take notice!

Kathy Silber and Pat Dorner, brought two sets of special individuals (adoptive parents with the birthparents of their adopted child) with them to tell us about their experiences with open adoption. Their ability to share proves to us that open adoption can and does work for all concerned. It is not shared parenting but a special kind of love.

We were very pleased with the turn out for the conference and are looking forward to seeing everyone again next year. The date and place has not been set at this time but we will notify everyone as soon as possible, so start saving your money now!

A special note: As we were leaving Irving after an exhausting three days our prayers were with Jo Ann Swanson who was anxiously awaiting a reunion with her birthdaughter. We have not heard at this printing how the reunion went but Jo Ann is such a special person we are sure all went well!

#### NATIONAL NEWS

FROM ROOTS & REUNIONS, L'Anse, MI: Although only the Transverse City agency is available for open adoptions in the Upper Peninsula, there are now five Wisconsin agencies available. Joining the Catholic Charities Of Green Bay which has been doing open adoption for ten years, are the Lutheran Social Services of Madison, Milwaukee, Green Bay and Eau Claire. Green Bay Catholic Charities does only open adoption. The Lutheran Services offer four options: 1) The traditional secretive., 2) Birthmother selects family from among pre-selected biographies., 3) Birth and adoptive parents agree to share pictures and letters, via the agency, at pre-arranged intervals., 4) In addition to 2) and 3), the two sets of parents meet face to face at the agency--although they do not exchange identities, as is the case at other agencies.

Roots & Reunions correspondent Jo Ann Swanson says: I have been hearing from prospective adoptive parents who are willing to explore Open Adoption, and they cannot understand what all the fuss is about. One would be adoptive mother said, "I think it's disgusting that a woman can kill her baby (abort-it) but she isn't allowed to choose adoptive parents for her child and form a relationship with them!" Jo Ann says "What could I say to her?"

Lutheran Social Services in San Antonio, Texas offers the option of Open Adoption as well as Methodist Mission Home in San Antonio. On the Louisiana scene, Catholic Social Services of Lafayette, La. is now offering Open Adoption. And of course, ATN, continues to make ourselves available to those opting to surrender to open adoption and prospective adoptive parents wishing to adopt through open adoption.

The following are seeking feedback from those who are the REAL professionals in the adoption triad. You can contribute truth and honesty to these studies. Please participate in one or more where you qualify and tell them Adoption Triad Network referred you.

Parents for Private Adoption, RFD, West Pawlett, VT 95761-- This group wants honest feedback from birthparents and adoptive parents who have been involved in private adoptions. They want to determine if private placements have advantages over agency placements.

Dr. Jerome Smith, The School of Social Work, P.O. Box 647, 102 W. New York St., Indianapolis, IN 46223-- A Purdue University researcher thinks searching is only a fad, with numbers overstated. Volunteer to participate in his project, faddists!

Trudy Helmlinger, LCSW, P.O. Box 803, Carmichael, CA 95608-- She is preparing a doctoral thesis about the impact of the adoptee's decision to search (or not to search) and its effect on the adoptee's sense of identity and relationship to the adoptive family. Write for her self-administered psychological test to take in your own home. All names and information will be kept confidential.

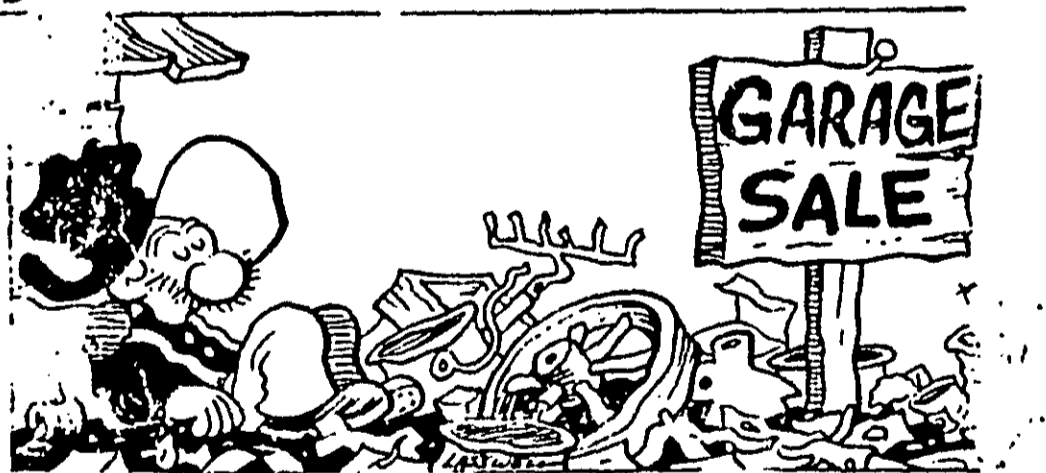
QUOTE

"The time has come to deal with reality in adoption. Only in freedom from secrecy can adoptees truly respect and love their adoptive parents without fear or a guilty gratitude not normally offered to parents."

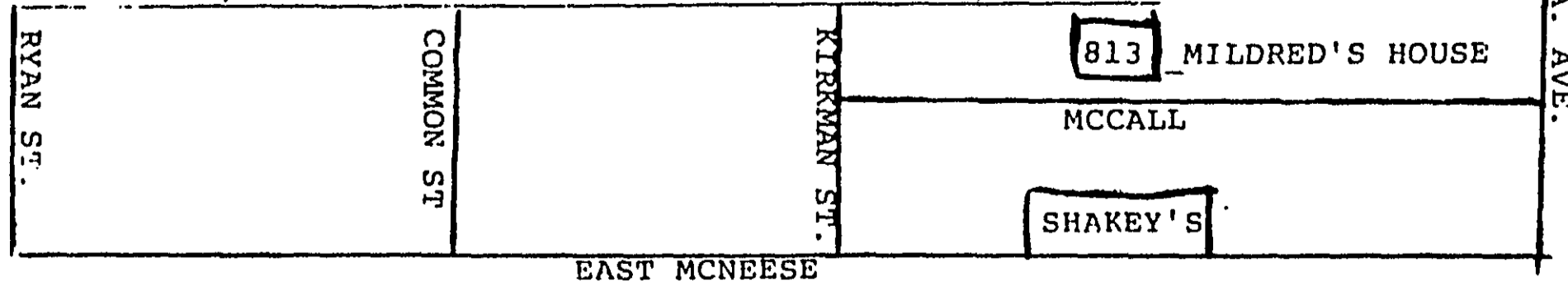
Clare Marcus, Author of "Who Is My Mother"

# News from Lake Charles and Lafayette

LAKE CHARLES NEWS



The Lake Charles Chapter of ATN is having a Garage Sale Friday & Saturday October 5 & 6. If you have any items you wish to bring, have them at Mildred Kral's house, Thursday, October 4 and please no earlier. Anyone wishing to help be at Mildred's house at 8'oclock Friday morning. Her address is 813 McCall, 1 block off E. McNeese behind Shakey's Pizza.



## LAKE CHARLES NEWS CONT'D

Anyone having readers digest which you are not using please get them to Ethelyn or Beverly so we can get on the ball with our project.

DAVID, BECKY & CHRISTOPHER AND BIRTHMOTHER JENNY HAD A WONDERFUL WEEKEND TOGETHER. Becky said, " I had been wanting to see Jenny again but I was afraid to call fearing it might upset her. All this time she had been wanting to do the same. Johnny was the one that told us to call. So I finally called her and it just so happened that she was on vacation that week so I invited her to come and spend a couple of days in Lake Charles. We brought her to the camp and then she came Friday and met us at our house. She stayed till late Saturday night. When she came she brought gifts for Christopher from her and her mother. Christopher went right to her like he had known her all of his life. They really got along well. It went so good that we invited her to come back next vacation and told her we would also go visit her. We have all become good friends. We brought Jenny to the ATN meeting and she had everyone in tears as she told of how much it meant to her to see that Christopher was well taken care of and how she would never try to take him away from Becky and David." Becky said she never had that fear.

## LAFAYETTE NEWS

### REUNIONS--AREN'T THEY GREAT

Larry K. embarked upon a serious search for his birth family about a month ago. With support and search assistance tips from the Lafayette and Lake Charles chapters, he completed his search last week. He found his birthmother deceased, but has located brothers and an aunt.

Liz has just returned to Lafayette from visiting with her birthdaughter. She visited with the adoptive parents and was told that "their" daughter had wanted to know about Liz all her life. Liz shared pictures with the group at the September meeting.

Dean W. has just returned from a trip to Ohio and a joyful meeting with his birth family. His brothers and sisters had always known about Dean and were thrilled over their "new-found brother".

Pam O. came to us via a letter from Hawaii asking help in locating her birthfather. We were successful in doing so and the following is an excerpt from Pam's next letter to us.

" I have yet to thank you ever so much in locating our dad. You have made us the happiest girls in the world....I can make this short now because the rest of my story remains happy to sad. I contacted my dad on the 12th of July. I never got the pictures to him on time. I sent over ten pictures of all of us, especially me growing up and my children, and he was to receive them about July 21st. He was to come to Honolulu on August 1st and he was to be 50 years old on August 9. God rest his soul. He died on July 20, after we said good night on the phone. It was morning (in the States) when I called him and he said "I love you, Pam, forever." His family found him, sitting on the chair near the phone, no sign of struggle, just leaned forward as if sleeping. He had a massive heart attack. All I can say is thank you again for the time I had with him. Take care of yourself and God Bless you."

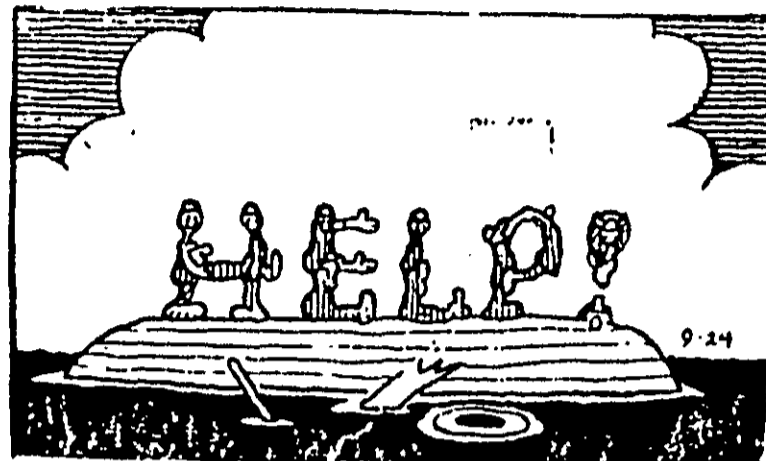
As reported in the news bulletin last month, Linda Remus, from Lansing, Michigan, contacted us and shortly thereafter located her birth family. She found her birthmother deceased, but was visited by her aunt and shared pictures of the entire family. Two weeks ago, Linda, flew to Louisiana and attended her birth familys annual reunion. Linda visited to Lafayette and expressed that her aunt had contributed so much to her emotionally and that she really had not grieved over finding her birthmother deceased. We explained to her that some adoptees experience a mourning period when the search is over and the birthmother is not there to share questions and answers. Linda returned to Lansing and wrote a letter to us, saying she would like to share some of her thoughts with anyone thinking about searching. Here is her Message:

LAFAYETTE NEWS CONT'D

"I had barely looked at the ceramic vase my mother had made that my loving aunt had given me. When I got home (from visiting with my birthfamily) I unpacked the vase, ran out to my garden and put small flowers in it and sat it on my table. Then....slowly....I looked at it sitting there stuffed with life and pretty things and I cried. I cried for a mother I had found three years too late, a woman I had never known, but who gave me life. I cried for the sad ruin of her life and how little joy she had known. I cried for the joy I could never give her. I had never mourned her death. I was told it could be just a matter of time. WHY HADN'T I STARTED SEARCHING SOONER .....HURRY ....."

NOTE:

For those searching in Canada or in Germany  
.....contact the Lafayette chapter.



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK:

I would like to take just a moment to remind everyone that our organization encounters the same economic problems that are common to all non-profit groups. Even though your dues may be up-to-date, an extra tax-deductible contribution would certainly be put to good use. Also if you know anyone in a business, it wouldn't hurt to ask them if they would like to make a small donation to our organization, and remind them it is tax-deductible. These extra contributions could be used to purchase additional library books and to help cover the increasing costs of administrative expenses. If you would like to make a donation or know of someone who does see one of your officers in your local chapter. Your gift or theirs will be greatly appreciated.

CONNIE T.

SHARING JUST COMES  
NATURALLY TO THOSE  
WHO REALLY CARE.



IF YOUR NEWSLETTER IS CHECKED HERE IN THIS BOX YOUR ANNUAL YEARLY DUES  
ARE DUE.  
DATE YOUR DUES NEED TO BE RENEWED

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