

HAND IN HAND INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS

January, 2011

We pray for a joy-filled year for children who wait for families!

COUNTRY UPDATES

China – The China Center of Adoption Affairs has most recently matched families with log-in dates of May 29, 2006. *If your dossier is logged in for a regular match and you are getting discouraged with the wait, please know that you can consider the match of a special needs child without removing your dossier from your “place in line” at CCAA. If you know you want to do this, please contact Vickie Truelove at hihiadopt@frontier.com and submit an updated Type of Child form so that our staff in China can know which child may be a possibility for you.*

China/Special Needs – We can now assist families with adoption of children with special needs from China in two ways, including being matched from the Shared List or being matched to a child who has been designated “Special Focus” because he or she has waited over a month to be matched.

China – Two children - It is now possible to adopt two children from China at once or successively in the same year if at least one of them is a Special Focus child. In most cases the same dossier can be used (with a few additions) so the costs can be reduced for the second case.

Haiti – One year after the devastating earthquake in Haiti, the country still struggles with daily living, as food supplies, clean water, basic medical care, and shelter are all extremely limited. Hand In Hand continues to collect cash donations for relief, and the money is transferred to the director of the orphanage so they might purchase the basic things they most need for the children. Our adoption program from Haiti is open, and there are several children in need of forever families. However, the process is slow due to government limitations, and adoptive families must be patient with the process in Haiti. Timeframes are variable, and at times communication from Haiti is limited. But the director there and Hand In Hand remain committed to finding homes and families for the children of Haiti.

Philippines – The Philippines has issued a temporary moratorium on applications from families wanting young, healthy children. Their goal is to place children with the already approved applicants before opening their doors for more applications. (The moratorium does not apply to children over 9 years old or those with special needs.)

Philippines Special Home Find - There are many Filipino children who are older or who have special needs or who are a part of a sibling group who need families. They are listed on a Special Home Find list and families can review the list and apply to adopt a child they think could fit well into their family. Contact the Indiana office if you want the list emailed to you.

Philippines Summer Host Program – If you are interested in hosting a Philippine child during the 2011 Summer Hosting Program with the intent to adopt the child if the hosting period goes well, please notify us right away. We will need to meet a minimum number of host families in each geographic area in order for the program to take place there. Families will need their home studies done before the children arrive. We will receive case studies on potential children early in 2011, so now is the time to start on a home study process!

Russia – Families are needed for children between 18 months old and ten years old. We are also excited about a special program we have in Russia where we can assist in the placement of children with Down Syndrome. If this interests you, please contact us for more information.

***Ice Skating with Grandfather Frost -
Come celebrate the New Year with Grandfather Frost, the Snow Maiden,
and other adoptive families!***

When: Sunday, January 9, 2011, 1:00 to 3:00 PM

Where: The Ice Rink at One Boulder Plaza, Boulder, CO

What: A get-together for families who have adopted from Eastern Europe, sponsored by FRUA. Learn more at www.orgsites.com/co/fruacolorado or RSVP to lkwil@q.com or 303-779-1404. This is a small, pretty city ice rink. Skaters pay for their own skating & skate rental. All ages are welcome. Teens might visit nearby Dushanbe Teahouse. Coffee, hot chocolate, cookies will be provided. A visit with Grandfather Frost and the Snow Maiden will occur at 2:00 in the FRUA room, with special treats & photo opportunity. There is a small play area in the FRUA room for little ones. Boulder's Pearl Street pedestrian mall is just a block away. Make a day of it! Join us after the event for a walk to the Dushanbe Teahouse (aka the "Russian Teahouse"). Have tea or just take a look around. It's gorgeous inside and just 1/2 block from the rink. See <http://www.boulderteahouse.com>

ALL TRIATHLETES AND THOSE WHO WANT TO TRI!!!

Is leading a healthy lifestyle or participating in a multisport event one of your New Year's resolutions? Do you live in Colorado or have you always wanted to visit? Are you already a triathlete looking for some great races that will benefit an awesome cause? If so, please consider participating in any (or all) three Tri For Your Cause events this year. You designate which organization you would like to "tri for". A portion of your entry fee as well as your fundraising dollars goes toward the cause of your choice. Hand In Hand is among the organizations listed. We would be honored to have you racing on our behalf. What a wonderful way to live out your New Year's resolution or to just have fun...Tri'ing for children around the world! For more information please visit: www.yourcausesports.org/events/

CHILDREN SHARE THEIR TALENTS

The entertainment for the 2010 Indiana Hand In Hand Holiday Party was a talent show. We wish to thank and congratulate all the children who shared their talents! Reprinted here is a poem written and shared by Dawn G., a 14-year-old Philippine adoptee.

WHO AM I?

I wake up and look at myself in the mirror.
Who am I? I stare at myself and wonder how lucky I am.
I have a family that cares about me, because they adopted me in 1998.
Who am I? I have a good education and friends to talk to.
Sometimes I get myself into problems.
Who am I? A Person who chooses sides or works things out?
Someone who butts in or stays out of people's business?
Who am I? Struggling with schoolwork or a genius?
You help people with their work or who need help.
Who am I? Believe in God or not. Go to church, learn and praise about God. Who am I?
Someone who is a kind and gentle person or a person who is mad or sad?
I know who I am. I am a person who cares about her friends and family. Someone who believes in God, goes to church and to Bible study every Friday. Someone who's in a good family who loves us all. I am a kind and caring person.

MOVIE REVIEW – “Change of Plans” – Airing on FOX TV on January 8, 2011

This adoption-themed movie is being promoted by Moms for Family TV, (moms4familytv.com) whose mission is to promote efforts to impact the current television culture with positive family friendly options.

An AP review: Brooke White is branching into acting. The *American Idol* Season 7 finalist will star in *Change of Plans*, the next "[Family Movie Night](#)" movie, in January. Brooke plays a young woman who becomes legal guardian of four children after her best friend dies while serving in the Peace Corps. Three of those children were adopted from third-world countries, and Brooke's character and her husband (played by Joe Flanigan) must learn to parent an instant, multi-cultural family in America... Phylicia Rashad also stars in the movie, which will premiere Saturday, Jan. 8 (8 p.m. Eastern/7 p.m. Central) on Fox. *American Idol* judge Randy Jackson and NASCAR driver Jeff Burton make cameo appearances.

SPECIAL FOCUS CHILDREN

These are children from China who are waiting for families:

Child 12A is a four-year-old girl whose head, neck, back have patches of black skin and hair; fell symptom

Child 12B is an almost four-year old boy with esotropia of both eyes (crossed eyes) and postoperative hemangioma at the back of his neck

Child 12C is an almost two-year-old boy with postoperative cleft lip, cleft palate, and growth developmental delay

Child 10C is a six-year-old boy with funnel chest

Child 10D is a four-year-old boy with post-operative cleft lip and palate

Child 10E is a four-year-old boy with hand and feet deformities, some post-op, who can run and catch balls

Child 10F is a three-year-old boy with ichthyosis (scaly skin)

Child 10G is a pretty 11-year-old girl with post-operative cleft lip and palate

Child 10I is a handsome seven-year-old boy who is a carrier for Hepatitis B but otherwise healthy

We have photos and case studies on each child. Contact us at hihiadopt@frontier.com to see more about one of these children. We have three months to try to find each child a family. Once a family identifies a child they would like to adopt, they have six months to submit a dossier if one is not already in China. A family may be working on two adoptions in China at the same time, if at least one of them includes a Special Focus child.

PHILIPPINE SPECIAL HOME FIND

Families willing to consider older children or siblings or children with special needs may do so from the Philippines through a process called “Special Home Find.” **We have photos and information on dozens of children.** Families do not have to already have an application in to Hand In Hand or the Philippines. If you are interested in seeing information on children on the list, contact indiana@hihiadopt.org.

HAITI TRAVEL WARNING

On December 9, 2010 the US Department of State updated a Travel Warning for Haiti. We are reprinting portions of it which address US citizens who desire to assist in earthquake recovery efforts.

“The Department of State warns U.S. citizens of the risks of traveling to Haiti and recommends against non-essential travel...(due to) continued high crime, the cholera outbreak, frequent disturbances in Port-au-Prince and in provincial cities, and limited police protection and access to medical care...The January 12, 2010 earthquake significantly damaged key infrastructure and greatly reduced the capacity of Haiti’s medical facilities. Inadequate public sanitation also

poses serious health risks... U.S. citizens wishing to assist in Haiti relief efforts should be aware that – in addition to facing safety and health risks, and despite good intentions - their travel to Haiti will increase the burden on a system already struggling to support those in need. NGOs report that their capacity to absorb additional volunteers is limited. Cash donations are the most effective way to help the relief effort in Haiti. Cash allows established organizations to purchase the exact type and quantity of items needed to help those affected by the earthquake and the cholera outbreak without having to pay the high costs associated with transporting physical donations to Haiti. Financial contributions can be transferred quickly and reduce the challenges posed by limited staff, equipment, and space. Cash donations also support Haiti's local economy and ensure that culturally and environmentally appropriate assistance is rendered. The following website has information on how to assist in the Haiti earthquake relief effort: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/HaitiEarthquake> U.S. citizens who intend to work for an organization involved in relief efforts in Haiti should be aware that living conditions are difficult, and the availability of food supplies, clean drinking water, and adequate shelter in Haiti is often extremely limited. U.S. citizens seeking work with a relief organization should confirm before traveling to Haiti that the organization has the capability to provide food, water, transportation, and shelter for its paid and volunteer workers, including during extended periods of time. All relief organizations should have a security plan in place to protect and evacuate their personnel. The U.S. Embassy does not have the capacity or infrastructure to evacuate U.S. citizens and relies on the Haitian National Police to provide assistance to U.S. citizens... “ **To read the warning in its entirety, go to www.travel.state.gov .**

IN HIS OWN WORDS...ONE CHILD'S OBSERVATION (as shared by his mom)

Hello Vickie! I just had to tell you the cutest thing Daniel said to me the other day. We were watching G-Force, a Disney movie, and there are two hamsters in a cage at the pet store. The one hamster says to the other that he wants to get adopted, or can't wait to get adopted. Not sure the exact words. Anyway, Daniel looked at me all excited and said, “**Mom he is adopted just like me!**” He said it like he was excited about it too. It was too cute! I have been telling him this since he came home. I don't think he really knows what adopted means but he does know he is adopted and that he came from Russia. It's pretty cool. Thank you for that advice you gave us before we brought him home. It really does work! Thanks again for everything you have done for us. *Sheila*

ADOPTING FROM CHINA

HEART OF THE MATTER SEMINARS is offering a new course specific to families adopting from China. Some sample content: Your child's birth date might have been assigned arbitrarily, instead of recorded factually. There are exceptions to and unintended consequences of China's One Child Policy. Some of the common medical issues observed in children adopted from China. The difference between Chinese culture and the many levels of sub-cultures your child may have experienced.

Visit www.heartofthematterseminars.com for more information.

ARRIVALS

In no particular time order, here are some Hand In Hand arrivals to announce. We congratulate these families! We also hope this serves to encourage those families who are still waiting and thinking, "Will it ever happen for me?!"

Child's New Name	Age at Arrival	Country Coming From	State Living In
Joshua L.	4 ½	Philippines	FL
Noelle S.	13 ½	Philippines	FL
James M.	1	Philippines	IN
Ella H.	3	Philippines	IN
Alexandria D.	1	China	AZ
Jennifer S.	16	Philippines	OH
Lia P.	1 ½	China	OK
Schwen R.	5	China	OH
Kate C.	13	China	MO
Samuel D.	3	China	IN
Sarah L.	5	China	FL
Jacob E.	1	Philippines	IN
Serra L.	1	China	AZ
Anna L.	1	China	AZ
Jerald R.	1	RP	CO
Tatum W.	2 ½	Haiti	CO
Thurstan W.	1 ½	Haiti	CO
Jacob W.	1 ½	Russia	CO
Mia W.	2	China	CO
Naomi W.	9	RP	CO
Faith P.	2	China	MN
Rhona S.	4	Philippines	MN
Madina O.	2	Russia	MN
Shauna B.	3 ½	China	MN

MOTHERLAND TOUR TO THE PHILIPPINES

Any adoptees, families, grandparents, who would like to take a trip of a lifetime to the country of their birth or child's birth, we'd love to have you contact marylee@hihiadopt.org and express your desire. The last few years have seen a few travelers, but not enough for a large enough group to keep the costs low. We are starting now to take names and make reservations early for anyone that would like to participate in this fun, exciting, heart touching trip. Reservations will close as of April 1, 2011, so be sure to let MaryLee know soon if you have any interest!

ONE FAMILY'S EXPERIENCE LEADS TO A REMEMBRANCE IN THEIR WILL

In July 2009 my husband, Kent and I were finally able to travel to Russia to bring home our 20-month old son, Jackson, after a long 7-month wait. This would be our second trip to Russia and our most exciting. A year has gone by so quickly and Jackson has settled into his new family life very well and Kent and I are beaming with joy to be his parents. Our journey started in March 2007... Finally at the end of December 2008, we traveled to Russia for the initial visit. During the wait, we gathered a suitcase full of donations to take to the orphanage for the children. Items like soap,

blankets, children's clothing, crayons, etc. This trip took 4 days (with 5-6 hours of sleep and little to eat except for the snacks I had packed). The site of the orphanage was what I had prepared myself for. It was a very large old building. Driving up to the entrance, I tried to imagine what the inside was like. I couldn't imagine it being full of children waiting for forever families. We came prepared to video tape our 45-minute visit with Jackson and take as many photos of him as we could. We brought some toys and a small photo album to show him. He seemed to be entertained as much as a 14-month old could be with strangers. We returned home and informed the Hand In Hand office we wanted to be his parents. We watched the 45-minute video nearly every day while we prayed for a quick return...

In 2007, the **Adoption Assistance Fund**, an endowment fund, was established at the Noble County Community Foundation to provide financial assistance toward the cost of adoption for qualified families that are determined to be in need of such assistance, according to criteria and a selection process that are fair and impartial and established by the Agency. I've remembered to include the **Adoption Assistance Fund** in my will through the Noble Legacy Society at the Noble County Community Foundation. The Adoption Assistance Fund accepts tax-deductible contributions which can be made payable to Noble County Community Foundation and mailed to 1599 Lincolnway South, Ligonier IN 46767.

UPCOMING HAND IN HAND EVENTS IN INDIANA

Free Orientation on International Adoption – Wednesday, January 12, 2011 – 7 PM at Hand In Hand office in Albion

Hand In Hand Adoptive Parents Training Classes: Day 2 – Saturday, January 22, 2011, Day 3 – Saturday, February 19, 2011, Day 4 – Saturday, March 19, 2011, Class for Repeat Families – Saturday, April 16, 2011. All classes are at the Hand In Hand office and are from 8:30 AM to 4 PM. Contact us if you are unsure of which classes you still need to attend.

PLEASE DON'T LIMIT CHARITABLE GIVING TO THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

As a non-profit agency, we are the voice for homeless and abandoned children of the world. These children have year-round needs. If you are not able to provide an adoptive home for another waiting child, consider a donation that will assist another family to do so, or that will assist in a project for children who wait. Send your tax deductible donations to Hand In Hand, c/o MaryLee Lane, Founder and Director, 9520 S.W. 9th Terrace, Ocala, FL 34476. Blessings, peace and thanks to all of you for your generous help. You will be blessed as you have blessed others!

YOU CAN BENEFIT BY REFERRING A FAMILY TO HAND IN HAND

If you are already a Hand In Hand family (past or present) and you refer a family to Hand In Hand and they submit an application any time after May 1, 2010 and indicate on it that you referred them, Hand In Hand will give you a \$200 credit toward your next Hand In Hand payment for either your current adoption process or your next adoption with Hand In Hand.

HAND IN HAND ON FACEBOOK

Search for Hand In Hand International Adoptions or visit the following link:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Hand-In-Hand-International-Adoptions/126410800748612> Please "like" our page and suggest it to your Facebook friends so that we can spread the word out about the many waiting children.

HAND IN HAND IS A HAGUE-ACCREDITED ADOPTION AGENCY

Since February 29, 2008 Hand In Hand has had full accreditation by the US Department of State to perform adoptions under the Hague Convention. This means we are able to assist families with adoptions from any other country that is a party to the Hague Convention. The purpose of the Hague Convention is to safeguard the rights of children being adopted as well as the rights of the adoptive parents. Being accredited means we have met such standards as education of adoptive parents, professional qualifications and training of staff, ethical practices, maintenance of records, services after an adoption, etc.