

HAND IN HAND INTERNATIONAL ADOPTIONS

June, 2011

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A PICNIC!

Indiana - Saturday, June 18, 2011- 11:30 AM to 4 PM - Pownall Pavilion, Bixler Lake Park, Kendallville, Indiana - Please join us for an afternoon of fun at the lake. Bring one or more dishes to share, depending on the size of your family. Also bring your own table service. Coffee and punch will be provided. There is a \$2.00 entry fee into the park. Please bring your own lawn chairs or picnic blankets. Games will be provided for the children. The pavilion is near a swimming beach, so bring swimsuits, towels, and sand toys too.

Colorado - Our annual Colorado Hand In Hand International Adoption Picnic will be Saturday, June 11th! We will be picnicking in Fort Collins. Contact coloradohih@msn.com for more details.

WRITE A STORY ABOUT YOUR PHILIPPINE ADOPTION EXPERIENCE

Following is a request from the Philippine Intercountry Adoption Board:

The National Organizing Committee (NOC) of the 11th Global Consultation on Child Welfare Services is preparing for a Program Souvenir Book. The Book shall include articles on the experiences of adoptive families of their adoption of Filipino children indicating their adjustment and their handling of their new role as parents. In line with this, we wish to seek your help in soliciting articles not exceeding 500 words from your adoptive families. We will appreciate receiving the article/s with photos (in jpeg form) on or before June 30, 2011. Due to limited space in the Program Souvenir Book, the NOC has the right to select articles to be included in the Book from all the submitted articles. However, we also wish to seek your permission and that of the adoptive families to use the articles and photos (which were not included in the Program Souvenir Book) in ICAB's other adoption advocacy programs.

Please send your article and photo to indiana@hihiadopt.org and we will forward them.

COUNTRY UPDATES

China – The China Center of Adoption Affairs has most recently matched families with log-in dates of June 30, 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. (See the list of some waiting children in this newsletter.)

China and Single Applicants – As of March 15, 2011 it is now possible for single females to adopt a child through China's Special Focus program. The specific requirements the applicant has to meet can be found on the US State Department website at:

[http://adoption.state.gov/country_information/country_specific_alerts_notices.php?](http://adoption.state.gov/country_information/country_specific_alerts_notices.php?alert_notice_type=notices&alert_notice_file=china_1)

[alert_notice_type=notices&alert_notice_file=china_1](http://adoption.state.gov/country_information/country_specific_alerts_notices.php?alert_notice_type=notices&alert_notice_file=china_1) Persons interested in this option can contact any Hand In Hand office for information on which Special Focus children are currently waiting for families. Brief information on the children is also posted on Hand In Hand's Facebook page.

China – Two children - It is now possible for a married couple 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 - Adoptions are progressing in Haiti, and Hand In Hand is excited to have several families matched with children through this program. The adoption process in Haiti now requires that adoptive parents make two trips to Port-au-Prince in order to complete the adoption. After the dossier is approved by IBESR (the government department responsible for approving international adoptions), one or both adoptive parents must travel for one trip of four or five business days to appear in both lower and higher courts (these court hearings will take place in the same week). Then, one or both adoptive parents must travel again after immigration has been approved in order to bring the child home to the United States.

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. For those families waiting for a match, we have been advised that they are currently prioritizing families who were approved for adoption in the third quarter of 2008. (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. (See also the children listed in this newsletter.)

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.

YOUR KIDS ARE DOING GREAT THINGS

The following article features a child adopted through Hand In Hand. Though many people may look at him and think he has special needs, it is no surprise to the people who know him that he is willing to give his all to everything he tries!

Emphasizing abilities - Expo showcases new equipment, programs and opportunities, by Jeff Wiehe, Journal Gazette, Fort Wayne, Indiana

Danil Vorndran wanted to climb the rock wall. That the 12-year-old doesn't have a right arm and is missing most of his left didn't matter. He wanted up that rock wall inside Memorial Coliseum, and he wanted to get it done before his soccer game started. Mark Wellman knew there had to be a way to make it happen. "It's all about adaptation," said Wellman, an experienced mountain climber paralyzed below the waist nearly 30 years ago. "That's what I'm all about: adaptation." Wellman, whose injury did not keep him from scaling El Capitan in Yosemite Park twice, took a bar designed to help people without the use of their legs pull themselves up mountains with their arms. He attached it to a climbing rope and put the bar under Vorndran's shoes. Then he used gray tape to secure the bar to the kid's feet. Within a minute, with a wide and dimpled grin, Vorndran was pushing down on the bar with his legs, his body rising higher and higher up the wall, much to the delight of those watching.

"Up to the top, dude," Wellman yelled from below. That was just one scene taking place Saturday at Turnstone's disABILITIES Expo. Companies and advocacy groups gathered to show off new equipment, new programs and new opportunities for those with disabilities. "Where else are you going to have an open, inviting environment like this?" said Jennifer Neher, director of development and marketing for Turnstone. "This will hopefully open new doors for people."

For the full article, with photos, go to:

<http://www.journalgazette.net/article/20110508/LOCAL/305089905>

IN SEARCH OF A SPECIAL FAMILY

We are looking for that special family who could take in an almost 7-year old girl with autism spectrum disorder. She currently receives special education services plus has time in a regular class. She is tall and pretty, and can read and write. She lives in the US and we would like to find a family in the Midwest who could maintain a semi-open relationship with her current family. Contact hihiadopt@frontier.com if you are interested in learning more.

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE TRYING TO ADOPT A RELATIVE IN THE PHILIPPINES?

Please pass along this information to any Filipinos you know as well as to any Filipino culture clubs in your area. There are very specific procedures put in place in both the US and the Philippines for how this can be done. **Sadly, we have families contact us almost weekly and they have not followed the correct procedures or have been given wrong information and are now faced with not being able to bring their relative home. Please tell your friends to not hire any attorney or undertake any adoption process until they contact either the Intercountry Adoption Board of the Philippines or an agency like Hand In Hand that has been accredited to assist with Filipino adoptions.** Here in part is information from the Philippine government website that relates to intercountry adoption (www.icab.gov.ph): "Relative Adoption as applies to inter-country adoption refers to the adoption of Filipino child/ren by relatives residing abroad within the fourth (4th) degree of consanguinity. Former Filipinos permanently residing abroad and/or foreigners intending to undertake adoption **MUST** first secure the approval from the Central Authority or appropriate government agencies before filing any adoption petition. Adoption applicants from the USA must first secure their suitability and eligibility to adopt (I800A) from the USA Central Authority on Inter-Country Adoption."

PHILIPPINE CHILDREN FOR SPECIAL HOME FIND

We've received information on several new children needing families. They include these individual children: a 2-year-old girl with cerebral palsy, a 3-year-old boy with autism spectrum disorder, girls born in 1998, 2000, and 2001, boys born in 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2006. There are also these sibling groups: (boy 11, girl 9, and boy 8) (girls 13 and 11) (girl 10, boy 8, and girl 6) (boy 12 and girl 9) and (girl 11, boy 8, boy 7, and boy 6). Let us know if you want to see photos and more information on any of these children.

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE "GLOBAL ADOPTION CONNECTION"

Join our local adoption and international communities as we celebrate the cultures of adoption! **Saturday, June 18th from 1-4 pm.** Experience the food, the fun and the cultural highlights of our African community and join families from all over who share this new culture through their adopted children. This is a free event open to all! Food * Fun * Dancing * Story Telling * Crafts. Come join us at:

Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 23425 Crescent Ave., Fort Wayne, IN 46805

SPECIAL FOCUS CHILDREN

These are children from China who are waiting for families:

Boy 226B is an eight-year-old boy with post-operative cleft lip and palate

Boy 226C is three and has deformities of his limbs. He cannot walk, but can scoot on his bottom; he likes to draw.

Boy 226D is 7 ½ and has had corrective surgery on club feet

Boy 226E is 7 ½ and is missing his left hand, but he is quite capable, smart and friendly

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

Child R is a 10-year-old girl with post-operative cleft lip and palate

Boy 119A – this 2 ½ -year-old boy has deformities of both lower legs as well as missing toes on one foot. He is handsome, obedient, fond of climbing up and down on his bedrails, loves to watch TV or play games with his favorite caretaker, likes music and playing with cars.

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

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

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.

HEART OF THE MATTER SEMINARS

Talking to Your Child about Adoption is the newest online course available through www.heartofthematterseminars.com. Here are some of the comments they have received from people who have already taken the course:

"The section about difficult answers really spoke to my husband and I. Our son's past includes some very difficult realities and this course actually gave us the confidence to talk about those realities in an honest and age appropriate way."

"I'm guilty of thinking that my child needed me to keep certain things from her until she could "handle" them. The part about honesty and age appropriate intensity really changed the way I think."

"I know this is a course about talking to your child, but I like that it also briefly addressed the messages that we as adoptive families send society. What an important topic!"

MINNESOTA ADOPTIVE FAMILY MAKES THE NEWS ON MOTHER'S DAY

One local mother said she's so happy with her life she doesn't think she could have dreamed it to be any better. Jeanette Phillips lives with her husband, Aaron, and their four children in Albert Lea. "I love watching the kids grow up," Jeanette said. Jeanette and Aaron are parents to Madeline and Morgan, 12-year-old twins, 6-year-old Andrew and 2-year-old Faith. They met on their first night of college at the University of Wisconsin — River Falls and have been together ever since. Aaron is originally from Hartland, and Jeanette and he moved around for his job before settling in Albert Lea in 2002.

"We love Albert Lea," Jeanette said. Aaron's parents, Dale and Val Phillips, of Hartland, help out with the kids a lot because Aaron works frequently and Jeanette owns her own business. "All four have a close relationship with them," Jeanette said. Her family in Wisconsin is only three hours away, and Jeanette said they like where they're at in Albert Lea. After raising the twins and seeing them off to kindergarten, Jeanette thought the house was too empty. That's when Andrew came along. "I needed another kid at home," Jeanette said with a smile. She said Madeline and Morgan get along well and always had each other to play with at home. In some ways, Andrew was like an only child because he had his mother's full attention. "It was fun having time with him," Jeanette said. Jeanette and Aaron

had talked about possibly having four children, and after talking with friends who had adopted they felt it would be a good fit for them. "There was no doubt in our hearts it was what we needed to do," Jeanette said.

She described adoption as a long journey with many obstacles. Just the starting paperwork took about a year, and they were finally matched with Faith (whose Chinese name is Mei Mei) in January of 2010. They weren't able to finish the process and pick her up in China until October. "The hardest part was waiting," Jeanette said. To prepare for the transition Jeanette read books, researched online and talked with as many people as she could about adoption. What she wasn't prepared for was how smoothly the transition was for Faith. "She belonged right away," Jeanette said. Jeanette and Aaron traveled to Faith's birth province of Gansu in northern China, where they completed the last of the adoption process. Even though Jeanette feared Faith would be shy or only bond with one parent, Faith was attached to both Jeanette and Aaron right away. She also bonded with her new siblings and accepted them all right away. The Phillips wish to honor Faith's birth and foster mothers, who they are thankful for. "We owe the world to them," Jeanette said. "We're thankful for them giving us the daughter we have." Jeanette said Faith is lucky to have had her birth and foster mothers. She said the family plans to go back to China someday. Jeanette's first priority is her kids, Aaron said. "She'll drop anything for them," Aaron said. "The best compliment we get is when people say how well behaved our kids are — that's a testament to Jeanette and how much time she spends with them." Owning her own business has helped Jeanette keep flexible hours. She's owned TouchWorks Massage in Albert Lea since 2002. She went to college for business, and always knew she'd want to be a business owner. After a car accident in 1995, massage helped her heal and she decided to do it for her career. She works with independent massage therapists and a chiropractor. She doesn't think of herself as their boss. "We all make decisions together," Jeanette said.

She knows she's lucky because she looks forward to work in the morning and looks forward to going home after work. Jeanette said she and Aaron are hands-on parents. As a family they like to go on bike rides, play games, play hide and seek, paint and color, among other activities. Though it can be difficult to schedule the kids' activities and her and Aaron's work schedules, Jeanette loves being a mother.

"I like to watch them succeed and grow," Jeanette said. "I like the craziness and innocence and being a kid with them." Article taken from The Albert Lea Tribune - <http://www.albertleatribune.com> URL to article: <http://www.albertleatribune.com/2011/05/07/no-doubt-in-their-hearts/>

"I NEED THE SUPPORT OF MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS"

If you are parenting a child who is experiencing some attachment problems and don't know how to explain it to your friends and family in order to seek their understanding and support, this letter may help you find the words. <http://www.radzebra.org/pdf/My%20Life%20as%20a%20Parent%20letter.pdf>

NEW ADOPTION SUPPORT GROUP IN INDIANA

The NE Indiana Adoption Support Group is located in Northern Indiana for moms that are in all stages of the adoption process, both domestically and internationally. We meet every 1st Saturday of the month at Nappanee Missionary Church in the Heritage Room from 9am-? (As you come in the parking lot off SR19, go around the building to the right-north side of the building. You will see a big drive-up covered entryway. That's not where you go in but a good landmark. It is the small entry door a little before-closer to SR 19-that is labeled Entrance C). This is a SAFE group to come & share the highs & lows of adoption. Please do not pass on things that are shared in confidence. Moms may stay for as long or as little as they want or as their schedule permits or simply when life (parenting) demands it. Coffee and Tea are provided and feel free to bring in a treat to share if you'd like. No childcare will be provided so please leave the little ones at home with dad or a sitter. For more info you may call Jen Fought at 260-894-4909 or email at jlfought@gmail.com

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED CHINA TRAVEL HELP

(We've shared information about this website before. If you haven't looked at it yet and take the time to do so, we think you will be pleased.)

www.weninchina.com supplements the briefings that adoption agencies provide families preparing to adopt from China, and "fills in the gaps" that traditional travel guidebooks - oriented to business, luxury, and adventure travel - don't cover. We continually add features of interest to adoptive families waiting for travel dates, those "on the road", and those who have returned wanting to learn more about their child's birth country.

* China's climate can be a real shock to North Americans arriving for the first time. With Guangzhou and many provinces frequently visited for adoptions sitting in the subtropical zone, dealing with heat and humidity requires specific packing and physical preparation. Even in the summer, upland areas like Sichuan may present a cold and damp environment that needs a different clothing approach from the rest of the country. And sandstorm season has already begun in China - as few of us have any experience with this phenomenon, we present specific measures to protect your health and equipment.

* Flying in and out of China is getting progressively easier, and we've never had so many options as in Summer 2011. We present a completely-updated Transpacific Flight Planning Guide, a new "family-friendly airport guide" for Hong Kong, and a totally-refreshed guide to Tokyo's Narita Airport. More North American airport guides are in development, too, and we'll tell you about them in our next email.

* We discuss several strategies to get out of uncomfortable encounters on the street or in shops without being patronizing or looking like a jerk in "Saying No."

* And we add a tasty article to our Food section with a background piece about the "potsticker" dumplings known as jiaozi.

Remember also to check out our resources for families to use in China and back home, including live weather forecasts for many Mainland cities, exchange rate information, and downloadable maps free to use in blogs and presentations, all found on our Tools page.

With these updates, weninchina.com now features 70 essays; each includes a link to a PDF file for printing to read off-line. Thank you for your visits, feedback, and recommendations to your clientele. It's an honor to provide this growing resource.

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A PHILIPPINE CULTURE CAMP

Camp Mabuhay Maryland/Virginia 2011

We are in our 16th year in partnership with Mabuhay, Inc. in Washington DC. This event is for any families with Filipino children or even families that are waiting for placement from the Philippines. This year, Camp Mabuhay will be held August 5-7th. Our theme this year is going to be: "A Day in the Life of a Filipino Kid" which will focus on the everyday life in the Philippines. We will learn about a typical school day, after school activities, street/recess games, and how children help with farming and other industry, among many other aspects of everyday life. Mabuhay! Eric and Jen Ledford, 2011 Camp Coordinators, (410) 341-3978 campmabuhay@yahoo.com

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 in the summer of 2012. Reservations will close as of October 30, 2011, so be sure to let MaryLee know soon if you have any interest!

UPCOMING HAND IN HAND EVENTS IN INDIANA

Free Orientation on Adoption: Tuesday, June 28, 2011 at 7PM – St. Mark's Lutheran Church, 210 N. Orange St., Albion, IN 46701. RSVP at 260-636-3566 or hihiadopt@frontier.com.

Hand In Hand Adoptive Parents Training Classes: Day 3 – Saturday July 9, 2011; Day 4 – Saturday, August 13, 2011; Day 2 – Saturday, September 10, 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.

RAINBOW KIDS

Hand In Hand is now on Rainbow Kids. This provides us an opportunity to use their extensive networking to help find families for waiting children. Check them out at www.rainbowkids.com and sign up to receive their free on-line newsletters.

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-](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Hand-In-Hand-International-Adoptions/126410800748612)

[Adoptions/126410800748612](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 about the many waiting children.

CAN YOU HELP CHILDREN WHO ARE STILL WAITING?

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!

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.