



International, Inc.

STARS OF DAVID: A JEWISH ADOPTION INFORMATION & SUPPORT NETWORK is a non-profit organization providing a compassionate network of support, adoption information, and education to prospective parents, adoptive families, adult adoptees, birth families, and the Jewish community.

For more information:
Stars of David
International, Inc.
3175 Commercial Ave
Suite 100
Northbrook, IL 60062
1-800-STAR-349

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Contact Information: Yours
Please forward any new
e-mail or snail mail
addresses as well as phone
numbers to:
Elyse Flack at
StarsDavid2@aol.com

Chapter List
We are updating our list of
chapters and contacts.
Please notify Sue Katz at:
StarsDavid1@aol.com

Star Tracks

Volume 22, Issue 3,
www.starsofdauid.org,
startracks@starsofdauid.org

Winter 2007—Star Date 5767
Editor: Kim Neufeld-Askinazi

Shalom,

My name is Kim Neufeld-Askinazi and I am very excited to be the new editor of Star Tracks. I would like to thank Elyse Flack, the Director of Stars of David, for giving me this wonderful opportunity. I live with my wonderful husband and beautiful 17 month old daughter. Our daughter was born in Guatemala and we brought her home at 4 months old in December of 2005. She has brought so much joy to our lives.

A little over a year ago we traveled to Guatemala to meet our daughter for the very first time. Once we had begun the adoption process I knew that I wanted to hold our baby as a newborn. I knew we would be taking a risk by going down to Guatemala so early in the adoption process because the adoption wouldn't be final for months but my feelings of wanting to hold her outweighed the risk. We walked into the lobby of the hotel in Guatemala City and there she was--a little bundle of joy all swaddled up in a blanket. She was so tiny and so beautiful. We had seen pictures of her from when she was five days old and now she was 2 weeks old. All we could see was a full head of black hair and big black eyes staring at us. When her foster mother handed her to me I cried and could not take my eyes off of her. She looked right into my eyes and it was like she knew that I was going to be her mommy. It was a feeling I will never ever forget. I told my husband it was like I had just given birth to her. We spent the next six days cuddling with her, feeding her, bathing her, loving her, and of course changing outfits and taking lots of photographs. The morning of September 5, I woke up sick to my stomach. The day had come when we had to hand our daughter back to her foster mother. The only thing that kept me sane was that I knew she was in very good hands. I felt like a piece of my heart had been taken away from me when I handed her over. I have never cried so much in my life but never regretted visiting her for one second.

I often get asked, "Why did you choose Guatemala?" There are a few reasons why we decided to adopt a baby from Guatemala. The babies tend to come home at a younger age than some of the other countries. The babies are cared for by foster families where they get the one-on-one attention that is so critical in the early period of an infant's life. Our daughter had a wonderful foster mother who did such a great job caring for her. My heart broke for our daughter's foster mother on our pick-up trip because we knew how much she loved our daughter. Guatemala is only about a five hour plane ride from where we live and we wanted to be able to visit our daughter's birth country when she got older. I have always been interested in the Hispanic culture and I felt that it would be easy to incorporate our daughter's heritage into our family life.

I want to hear from YOU! My email address is startrackmail@yahoo.com.

Do you have any personal stories, articles, upcoming conferences or events and, photos you would like to share? Please send any comments and suggestions. I want this newsletter to be about you and for you!

Kim



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Star Tracks, Editor,
startracks@starsofdavid.org

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Hotline: 1-800-Star-349

E-mail: StarsDavid@aol.com

Newsletter: startracks@starsofdavid.org

Website: <http://www.starsofdavid.org>

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Please let us know if you are interested in participating on the National Board. We are looking for people with experience in fund-raising, publicity, grant writing, and board development.

Director's Message

Hello Stars:

I want to wish you all a belated, but very happy and healthy, new year. May the New Year bring peace. Among the many sermons from rabbis and lay people I have heard recently one subject has stuck in my mind. What is the difference between meaning to do some-thing and actually getting the job done? Do you get "credit" for thinking about doing a "mitzvah"? Or doesn't it count until you actually do it? As I sat there I myself wondered what the answer was. I would hope that every one of us tries on a daily basis to think of ways we may be able to do a "mitzvah." However, I would guess that most of us merely think it and do not have time to do it. Some of us do it in the form of tzedakah (giving money) rather than volunteering our time and effort.

I personally feel I do a "mitzvah" every day - I give of my time – I am the National Director of an Adoption Support Group. Everyday I answer calls or emails for this organization out of the goodness of my heart because I am dedicated to helping Jewish families make forever families through the miracle of adoption. I am a volunteer in both of the schools my children attend. I love to try to "match make." I have successfully done that twice in my life. To me that is also a "mitzvah."

I would like for all of you to ask yourselves what you have actually done for another person lately. What have you done for your support groups lately? Do you just "think" about what you might do or do you do it? I would like each and every one of you to do something for someone else or give something to someone else to help them, in honor of your family. Be thankful and grateful and be an example to your children. I was extremely busy this past fall working with the Stars/Chicago Chapter, Adoptive Families Today and Families with Children from China on the 13th Annual Midwest Adoption Conference , which is now the third largest adoption



conference in the nation. The conference was held on Sunday, November 5, 2006 at Harper College in Palatine, IL. Our keynote speaker was Barbara Tremiere and Debbie Riley of C.A.S.E. were among our featured speakers. Once again, the conference was very successful and we have already begun planning for the November 2007 conference. We hope to see you there!

Elyse Flack, National Director
 Stars of David International, Inc.
 3175 Commercial Avenue, Suite 100
 Northbrook, IL 60062
 1-773-274-1527 phone and fax
 1-800-STAR-349; StarsDavid2@aol.com

Local Adoption News

Attention, chapter leaders, potential chapter leaders, and members in every stage and state of adoption, please send us your chapter/area news as it breaks so we can update the newsletter and website in real time. Thank you.

North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) 33rd Annual Conference

Dates: July 25-28, 2007
Location: Tampa, FL
 North American Council on Adoptable Children
 970 Raymond Avenue, Suite 106
 St. Paul, MN 55114
 (651) 644-3036, *Fax:* (651) 644-9848
For more information, contact: info@nacac.org
<http://www.nacac.org>

Joint Council on International Children's Services Annual Conference

Dates of Conference: March 29-31, 2007
Topics: Adoption Permanency
Location: Indianapolis, IN
Contact Information: Joelle Ruben
 117 South Saint Asaph Street

Alexandria, VA 22314
 (703) 535-8045, *Fax:* (703) 535-8049
For more information, contact: jcics@jcics.org
http://www.jcics.org/Annual_Conference.htm

Korean American Adoptee Adoptive Family Network (KAAN)

Dates of Conference: 7/20/2007 - 7/22/2007

Location: Boston, MA
Contact Information: Chris Winston
 P.O. Box 5585
 El Dorado Hills, CA 95762
 Phone: 9169331447
For more information, contact: chris@kaanet.com
<http://www.kaanconference.com/main/Home.asp>

Adoption 2007: Building a Real Family

Sponsoring Organization: NYS Citizens' Coalition for Children, Inc.
Dates of Conference: 5/10/2007 - 5/12/2007
Location: Albany, NY
Contact Information:

NYS Citizens' Coalition for Children, Inc. 18th Annual Adoption Conference

Dates: May 10-12, 2007
 410 East Upland Road
 Ithaca, NY 14850
 607-272-0034, *Fax:* 607-272-0035
For more information, contact: office@nysccc.org
<http://www.nysccc.org>

AJFCA/IAJVS Annual Conference

Dates: April 15-17, 2007
Location: The Roosevelt Hotel, New York City
 Association of Jewish Family & Children's Agencies
 620 Cranbury Road, Suite 102
 East Brunswick, NJ 08816
 Ann Zeller, Director, Meetings and Conferences
 561-968-8927, *Fax:* 561-968-3866
For more information, contact:
anniezeller@aol.com; azeller@ajfca.org



Temple Emmanuel of Wakefield, MA

Temple Emmanuel of Wakefield, MA announces new programs and an invitation for Stars of David members. Temple Emmanuel has served Jewish families for almost 60 years. It is considered "North Shore's hidden treasure," an independent synagogue that welcomes interfaith families. You are welcome to attend: NEW KINDELA CLUB for ages 2-6 Jewish Themes, Jewish Peers, Arts! Play! Crafts! Stories! The club is led by Holly Staples, a public school teacher and parent of a 2-year-old son who was adopted. FREE! monthly sessions.

March 3 at 7 pm will be our Family Purim Service. Kids and Adults are encouraged to come in costume.

April 3 will be the annual Community Seder. (Reservations are required)

Details for all Temple Emmanuel events are on their website.
[Http://www.geocities.com/temple_emmanuel](http://www.geocities.com/temple_emmanuel)

Temple Emmanuel
120 Chestnut Street
Wakefield, MA 01880
For more information: 781-245-1886 (leave a message)



ADOPTIVE FAMILY PROGRAMS

Ametz Adoption/JCCA
120 Wall St, NYC 10005
212-558-9949
www.jccany.org

Being a parent is probably the most difficult and time-consuming commitment in your life. Learn the unique challenges of becoming or living as

an adoptive family. JCCA sponsors interactive programs for parents and parents-to-be, provide a central location to learn about adoption and adoptive parenting before, during and after a child is placed in your arms and home. Check their calendar for upcoming programs: www.jccany.org

HOW TO ADOPT DOMESTICALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY

Learn all you need to know about adoption. Obtain information on procedures, regulations and options for domestic and international adoption. Step by step descriptions of the processes, children available, costs, time frames, state and federal regulations and the homestudy process will be addressed.

WAITING TO ADOPT GROUP: *The Survival Guide*

You've begun the adoption process and anxiously await the arrival of your child. Join others who have similar questions and concerns as you learn survival tips and pursue unfamiliar territories. Group meets monthly and is led by an Ametz social worker.

POST ADOPTION SUPPORT GROUPS: *Because Kids Don't Come with Instructions*

This group is for adoptive parents and their children. Whether you're wondering how to develop successful and effective parenting skills, curious about discipline and setting limits, not sure you are doing all you can to nurture and support your child's social, emotional, and cognitive development or trying to make a decision about returning to work or balancing other activities in your life—this group is for you. While the adults learn, laugh and share the daily joys and challenges of being a parent through adoption, your children will be next door, playing in a safe and stimulating environment with experienced childcare.



AMETZ TRAINING INSTITUTE FOR PROFESSIONALS

The Ametz Adoption Program/JCCA has provided domestic and international private adoption services for over 20 years. As part of this work, there is an emphasis on meeting the needs of clients in the communities in which they live. To do so effectively, Ametz strongly believes an educated professional community is necessary. This year's offerings are geared for professionals working with pre-adoptive and adoptive families. Each 3-hour session includes a didactic presentation and time for interactive discussion. CEUs per session.

JCCA, 120 Wall Street, New York. \$35 per session, \$125 for the series. Call 212-558 9949 for registration materials. A light meal will be provided.

Apr 19, *Recognizing Inherent Strengths of Adopted Children: 1-4 Helping Them Reach Their New Potential*, Dr. Jane Aronson, Adoption Medicine Specialist

June 6, *Working with Families Who Experience Post-Adoption 9-12 Trauma: Divorce, Illness and Other Unexpected Events*, Ruth Cohen, LCSW, Private Practice

SAVE THE DATE! 2007 INFERTILITY ADOPTION AND THE FAMILY CONFERENCE

The 2007 Ametz Annual Infertility, Adoption and the Family Conference will take place on Sunday, March 11 at UJA-Federation in midtown Manhattan. Keynote address by Dr. Jane Aronson, plus over two dozen workshops on pre- and post-adoption, as well as a professional workshop track. Call 212-558-9949 for info.

INTERNATIONAL "POT LUCK" FAMILY PROGRAM

October 22, 3-5 PM

Co-sponsored by the Ametz Adoption Program/JCCA and Faces of Adoption/WJCS.

Welcoming adoptive parents, parents to be, children and extended family members. Come meet and greet adoptive families of all nationalities. Share stories, arts and crafts, music and more. Each family should bring a meatless dish, for 6-8 people, which reflects your family's culture. Kids can come in costume. JCC of Mid-Westchester, 999 Wilmot Road, Scarsdale. \$18 per family, plus dish. Call 914-949-7699 x319 to register.

NEW ENGLAND ADOPTION CONFERENCE

The 34th Annual New England Adoption Conference will be Saturday, April 28, 2007 in Milford, MA. Some of you have attended this yearly event and know that over 1,000 people attend each year. If you are interested in submitting a workshop proposal, the proposal please contact us. Saturday workshops are 1 hour to 1 hour and 10 minutes in length. If you are not familiar with this conference, you can view last year's brochure at: http://www.odsacone.org/galleries/conf_2006/brochure/index.cfm

Contact info:

Adoption Community of New England, Inc.
1750 Washington Street
Holliston, MA 01746-2234
(508) 429-4260, Fax (508) 429-2261
(800) 93-ADOPT or (800) 932-3678
info@adoptioncommunityofne.org

Adoption/Multicultural Events

China

ILLINOIS

Roselle (Greater Chicago area)
Chinese Culture Camp 2007
July 23-27 2007

Hosted by Hands Around The World for adopted children and their siblings ages 5 and up. The camp offers children an opportunity to connect with others from the same cultural background



and to grow in their understanding of their Chinese heritage through an exciting curriculum of language, music, dance, foods, history, geography, games, crafts, animals, and specialty programs. In one magical week, children are given the tools they need to begin to feel positive about their heritage, and to take pride in it and themselves.

For more information:

www.handsaroundtheworld.com.

MINNESOTA

Duluth

"Monkey King: A Journey to China"

Duluth Children's Museum

Now through March, 2007

The amazing saga of the Monkey King and his travels is a 16th Century epic and one of China's best-loved stories. Monkey King is mischievous and fun and takes museum visitors along with him on his journey along the Silk Road to the west. Join Monkey as he overcomes challenges and obstacles, learning the values of resourcefulness, bravery and cooperation.

For more information visit:

Korea

ILLINOIS

Roselle (Greater Chicago area)

Korean Culture Camp 2007

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Hosted by Hands Around The World for adopted children and their siblings ages 5 and up. The camp offers children an opportunity to connect with others from the same cultural background and to grow in their understanding of their Korean heritage through an exciting curriculum of language, music, dance, foods, history, geography, games, crafts, animals, and specialty programs. In one magical week, children are given the tools they need to begin to feel positive about their heritage, and to take pride in it and themselves. For more information go to:

www.handsaroundtheworld.com

Russia

CONNECTICUT

Fairfield, CT

Cinderella - Moscow Festival Ballet

Quick Center for the Arts, Fairfield University
April 13, 2007, 8:00 pm. Embracing the highest classical elements of both the Bolshoi and Kirov Ballet styles, the Moscow Festival Ballet was founded as a new expression of Russian classical ballet. The company will perform a full evening program of the classic favorite. For more information

visit: <http://calendar.fairfield.edu/x17993.xml>

Farmington

Russian Story Times

March 21, 2007; April 18, 2007; May 16, 2007;

4:15-5:00pm Farmington Public Library, 6

Monteith Drive

They invite children from 3 to 6 to come to our Russian Story Times for an interactive storytelling, games, singing and dancing. All in Russian. Meet new friends too.

All story times are free and open to the public.

To register for the story time, please e-mail at:

classes@evrikacenter.com or call them at 203-

975-1134. Russian Story Times are in

collaboration with Farmington Public Library.

NEW YORK

Stonybrook

Swan Lake - Moscow Festival Ballet, Staller

Center for the Arts, Stony Brook University,

Sunday, March 18, 2007 at 7:00 pm

Swan Lake is the ballet that created the image

so many have of ballet today. In 1875

Tchaikovsky was commissioned to compose the

score for a ballet that would be called Swan

Lake. A full twenty years of unsuccessful

versions would be performed and the composer

would die in 1893 before the Swan Lake that we

know, the Petipa/Ivanov choreography with the

glorious Tchaikovsky music, would finally have

its debut in 1895.



There are reasons why these old story ballets remain in the repertoire of classical ballet companies. Dance fans love them! Moscow Festival's version of Swan Lake is performed true to the spirit of Petipa's 1895 choreography and the genius of his ability to marry movement and musicality. Staller Center is happy to welcome back the elegant Moscow Festival Ballet, the enchanted swan maidens and their princess, Odette. Tickets are \$36. For more information visit:

<http://www.staller.synysb.edu/0607/swan-lake.html>

WASHINGTON

Redmond FRUA Annual Conference
April 26-28, 2007

Take advantage of this opportunity to interact with medical professionals, therapists, teachers, adoption professionals, and other parents to learn more about a range of issues affecting adoptees, from attachment to language issues to dealing with your child's school. The conference features both a brand-new conference hotel and access to some of the West Coast's top experts in their fields, as well as professionals from other parts of the country. For more information visit:

<http://www.frua.org/conference/2007/2007.shtml>

News You Can Use



DR. DAVID BRODZINSKY, RENOWNED ADOPTION EXPERT, JOINS INSTITUTE STAFF

"NEW YORK, Sept. 6, 2006 - The Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute is proud to announce that Dr. David Brodzinsky - whose research, teaching and writing have made him a luminary in the field for three decades - is joining

our staff as Research and Project Director, effective immediately. In addition to leading projects on a variety of subjects relating to adoption and foster care, Dr. Brodzinsky will also serve as staff liaison for the Institute's new Senior Research Fellows program. Dr. Brodzinsky is Professor Emeritus of Developmental and Clinical Psychology at Rutgers University, where he directed the Foster Care Counseling Project. He has published widely in professional journals and is the co-author or co-editor of five influential books on adoption, including *Being Adopted: The Lifelong Search for Self* (1992); *Children's Adjustment to Adoption: Developmental and Clinical Issues* (1998); and *Psychological Issues in Adoption: Research and Practice* (2005). 'When someone like David is hired, it sends two clear messages: that the organization must be doing something very right to attract a professional of his caliber - and that its work is about to get even better,' said Institute Executive Director Adam Pertman. 'This is a real coup for us.' Dr. Brodzinsky said he was 'very enthusiastic' about joining the Institute's staff after a decade of serving on its Board of Directors and, most recently, as one of its Senior Research Fellows. 'My passion is for hands-on work that has real, positive effects on people's lives. No one does that better or more effectively than the Adoption Institute, so I'm thrilled at this opportunity.'

Dr. Brodzinsky recently moved from New Jersey to Northern California, where - in addition to his work for the Adoption Institute - he will continue his private practice in psychology, much of it focusing on the clinical needs of members of the adoption community. For a more-complete biography of Dr. Brodzinsky, please go to <http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/about/dbrodzinsky.php>."

New Report Finds Schools Should Do More to Serve Adopted Children

"NEW YORK, Oct. 1, 2006 - In order to give all students the best prospects for success, educators need to increase their knowledge about adoption (including aspects of foster care)



and should implement changes in their schools to make them more responsive to the needs of adopted children, according to a new report released today by the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute and the Center for Adoption Support and Education. The report, 'Adoption in the Schools: A Lot to Learn,' for the first time brings together research and years of broad experience on a range of issues that affect millions of boys and girls nationwide. It points out that, as adoption becomes increasingly normalized in the United States, more and more adoptive families are confronting challenges when their children attend school - and it offers recommendations for how educators can better meet those challenges. 'Few professionals in our country care more for children every day than teachers, but they have not received much training about issues that affect a significant number of their students,' said Adam Pertman, Executive Director of the Institute. 'As the new school year gets going, that's a gap we hope this important report will help to fill.' Debbie Riley, Executive Director of C.A.S.E. added: "Building partnerships and collaborations with educators is key to adoption success and to building children's self-esteem."

Among the findings and recommendations in "Adoption in the Schools" are:

- Education about adoption and foster care should be included in diversity courses and development trainings for teachers and other school personnel.
- Some school assignments (such as the family tree) can be problematic or inappropriate for adopted and foster children, and should be modified.
- A lack of accurate information can prevent educators from identifying children's needs correctly and, therefore, from providing effective interventions.

- School policies should prohibit harassment and negative comments about adoption and foster care, just as they already apply to gender and race.

'Educating educators about the realities of adoption is a diversity issue, because children should not be less understood or more stigmatized simply because of the type of family they happen to be in. It is also a fairness issue, because adopted and foster children are sometimes derided in ways we would never accept if the taunting or stereotyping referred to other aspects of their being - such as race, gender, ethnicity, religion or disability," says the report. "And it is an inclusion issue, because the knowledge gained in learning about adoptive and foster families also applies to families headed by single parents, divorced parents, step parents, gay or lesbian parents, parents of different races, and on and on. In other words, doing the right thing for one group of children means doing the right thing for a majority of children.' Some adoptive families are confronting a range of challenges when their children attend school, including the language used by both the children and adults; when and what to tell school personnel about the children and their pasts; and how to deal with questions related to ethnicity, birthparents, nationality, genealogical background, and some traditional lesson plans. Most adopted and foster children confront situations at school that highlight their perceived 'different' status from classmates who are being raised by their biological parents. 'Adopted children's interactions at school with both teachers and their classmates,' the report asserts, 'provide messages regarding adoption that help to shape their identity as adopted persons.' This unprecedented report was researched and written by two nonpartisan, nonprofit organizations: the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute, which is based in New York and is the pre-eminent national research, policy and education organization in its field; and the Center for Adoption Support and Education, which is based in Maryland and is dedicated to providing support and education to adoptees and their families."



For more information or to arrange an interview, please contact Adoption Institute Executive Director Adam Pertman at 617-763-0134 or apertman@adoptioninstitute.org or C.A.S.E. Executive Director Debbie Riley, M.S., at 301-476-8525 or riley@adoptionsupport.org.

Gay Parenting Study

Dear Parent (and hopefully potential participant), Are you a gay or lesbian parent, living in the US, with at least one child between the ages of 7 and 17, who became a parent to the child after coming out? Have you been a parent to this child since she/he was at least 24 months old? If so, please consider helping by participating in a national online study of children's emotional skills and family relationships; this is a study looking at the skills that often lead to healthy and successful outcomes for children and qualities of the family relationship that may influence these skills. After a brief interview, questionnaires can be completed at any computer with internet access and will require no more than 30 minutes at one sitting. Participant families will receive either \$15 for their time or be entered into a drawing for one of three prizes, 1) \$500 cash, 2) a 3 day/2 night stay in a Carmel, CA beach house or 3) a 7 day/night stay in a Carmel, CA beach house. For further details or to participate in this study, please visit the National Family Study website: <http://www.natfamstudy.com> or send an email to: shawn@natfamstudy.com or call toll free: (877) FAM-STDY (1-877-326-7839). To insure confidentiality, there will be no mention of sexual orientation on the website, in the surveys, or in any written correspondence with teachers. I am a doctoral student in clinical psychology at the California School of Professional Psychology at Alliant International University in San Francisco. I have been trying to reach families across the nation over the last year with very little success and desperately need your help to complete this graduate research study. I would greatly appreciate any help in getting the word out about this study, either through friends, in a newsletter or on a listserve/email group. I hope this study will help us understand more about

gay and lesbian parents and their children. Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Shawn V. Giammattei, M.A.
 Doctoral Student
 California School of Professional Psychology
 Alliant International University, SF Bay Campus
shawn@natfamstudy.com
 (877) 326-7839
www.natfamstudy.com

501(c)(3) Organization

Stars of David International, Inc., is approved as a charitable organization under 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code.

Contributions to the national organization are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Did you adopt an Asian child into your Jewish family?

The Museum of Jewish Heritage in New York City tells the story of 20th century Jewish life from the perspective of those who lived it. Created as a living memorial to the Holocaust, the Museum honors those who died by celebrating their lives. The Museum's core exhibition is organized in three broad sections: Jewish Life a Century Ago, The War against the Jews, and Jewish Renewal. It places the Holocaust in the larger context of modern Jewish history.



They are seeking donations of material for our permanent collection relating to Asian children adopted into Jewish families, including birth announcements, and invitations to life cycle events including naming ceremonies, circumcisions and bar/bat mitzvahs which carry the child's Asian, English and Jewish names, as well as photos to complement them.

If you have such material that you would be willing to donate, we would be grateful if you would contact Esther Brumberg, Senior Curator of Collections, Museum of Jewish Heritage, 36 Battery Place, New York, NY 10280. 646-437-4248, ebrumberg@mjhny.org



Hague News and Updates Accrediting Entities

The Department of State has finalized the agreements with the two accrediting entities under the Hague Convention. The Council on Accreditation (COA) and the state of Colorado's Department of Human Services are the two designated entities. They will use the standards established in 22 CFR Part 96, the final rule on Accreditation of Agencies and Approval of Persons under the IAA. COA will accept applications from adoption service providers licensed and located throughout the United States, while Colorado will limit applications to providers licensed and operating in the State of Colorado. Both COA and Colorado expect to begin accepting applications soon after their fees are approved by the State Department and published later this summer.

Many agencies have been asking “what does this mean for me now?” and “when will accreditation start?” Now that the accrediting entities have been designated, we are on our way to accreditation beginning, but first a few more steps need to occur. The fee schedule

(outlining how much accreditation will cost) needs to be published along with the substantial compliance system (SCS) that will explain the standards on which agencies will be evaluated for accreditation and the weight given to each standard. These are both expected to be published at the end of the summer.

Accreditation Process:

Once the above criteria is made public, agencies can decide to seek accreditation or not, the application process for accreditation will begin. The "transitional application deadline" or TAD, will be the cut off date for initial applications for accreditation. This may occur in September or early October. An agency seeking accreditation will need to complete an application and submit an application fee at this time. Depending on the number of agencies seek accreditation, the accrediting entities will set the deadline for initial application or approval" or the DIAA. During the accreditation process timeframe agencies will work with the accrediting entities (COA and Colorado) to demonstrate their compliance and adherence to the regulations and the Convention. It is estimated that accreditation will last for 12 months to allow enough time for all interested international adoption agencies to apply.

After the deadline for accreditation, the U.S. will submit its instruments of ratification and three months later enter into force and become a "Hague Country."

How to Prepare?

The JCICS Surviving Hague Accreditation Guide is available to JCICS Members for free and available to non-members for \$75.

<http://www.jcics.org>

Council on Accreditation

This is a link for public comment on specific agencies that should or should not be accredited.

<http://www.coanet.org/front3/page.cfm?sect=54&cont=4337>



LEGAL ADOPTION ISSUES

Bills that would allow adopted people 18 and older to obtain their original birth certificates and medical histories in New York State, subject to a contact preference filed by birthparents, moved to committee in both chambers of the state legislature. The senate bill (S00235), sponsored by Senator Bill Larkin, was referred to the Health Committee on Jan. 3; the Assembly companion bill (A02277), sponsored by Rep. David Koon, was referred to the Health Committee on Jan. 16.

The legislation establishes a "Bill of Adoptee Rights" and allows birthparents to file contact preferences anytime, "but does not limit the right of the adopted person to receive updated health information." States that currently allow adopted adults to receive a copy of their original birth certificates are Alabama, Alaska, Delaware, Kansas, New Hampshire, Oregon and Tennessee. States considering similar legislation in 2007 include Maine, Missouri, North Carolina and Minnesota. To read the proposed N.Y. measure, go to: <http://assembly.state.ny.us/leg/> and search by the bill number.

A handful of bills were introduced in the U.S. House in January; they address international adoption, the adoption tax credit, domestic adoption practices, and infant abandonment:

- Rep. Jo Ann Davis of Virginia on Jan. 4 introduced the "**Intercountry Adoption Reform Act (ICARE) of 2007**" (H.R. 120). The measure, which was referred to the Judiciary Committee, would establish an Office of Intercountry Adoption and confer automatic citizenship to adopted children upon entry of a final adoption decree (rather than upon entry into the U.S.). The original ICARE bill was introduced in 2003, and again in April 2006 as an amendment to the controversial 2006 immigration reform bill, "Securing

America's Borders Act" (S.2454), which failed to pass.

- Rep. David Camp of Mississippi on Jan. 12 introduced the "**Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act of 2007**" (H.R. 471); it was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means. The bill would continue the adoption tax credit and adoption assistance provided by the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, due to expire in 2010. The Senate last year failed to pass a similar bill making the adoption tax credit permanent.
- Rep. Philip English of Pennsylvania on Jan.5 introduced the "**Religious Freedom for Providers of Adoption, Foster Care, and Child Welfare Services Act**" (H.R. 289); it would withhold federal funds for foster care and adoption assistance from states that "restrict the freedom of religious organizations to provide foster care and adoptive services consistent with the fundamental religious beliefs and principles of these organizations." The measure went to the Committee on Ways and Means.
- Rep. Jo Ann Davis of Virginia on Jan. 4 also introduced the "**Adoption Information Act**" (H.R. 104), which would amend Title X of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 300 et seq.). The measure would require any family planning program receiving federal funds to provide clients, in both written and verbal form, a comprehensive list and contact information of local adoption service providers. The bill was referred to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.
- Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee of Texas on Jan. 5 introduced the "**Baby Abandonment Prevention Act of 2007**" (H.R. 259); it would establish a task force within the Bureau of Justice Statistics to collect data and report to Congress on the prevalence, trends,



demographics, circumstance, and quality of life outcomes for abandoned infants. The bill was referred to two committees: Judiciary and Education & Labor.

To read any of these proposed measures, go to: <http://www.thomas.gov/> and search by bill numbers in the bill number field.

Red Cross, Red Crescent and now the Star of David

For decades, the international community appeased the purveyors of anti-Semitism by denying Israel's version of the Red Cross from openly practicing in the world using its symbol--the Red Star of David. Magen David Adom saves thousands of lives and remains one of the world's greatest disaster response teams. Over the last few months, U.S. Congressman Mark Steven Kirk of the 10th District of Illinois states that, "He has worked with the Red Cross, Magen David Adom, the State Department and my colleagues in the House and Senate to support MDA's admission to the International Committee of the Red Cross with full use of the Star of David."

Finally, with the backing of the United States and excellent diplomatic work by Secretary Rice's team in Geneva, MDA was officially admitted with a Star of David inside a diamond as its symbol. This is a watershed moment for the international community for which we should all be proud.



ADOPTIVE PARENTING **by Nancy Golden**

Can You Be Cool And Be Adopted? Your Pre-teen May Not Think So

Twelve year old Mark's parents have done a great job of educating themselves about the issues and challenges of adoptive parenting. They are actively involved in adoptive parent organizations and feel comfortable talking with their children about adoption. Up until just recently, their oldest child, Mark, was also open to talking about adoption. That's all different now. In September, Mark entered a new school and much to his parent's amazement, is adamant that no one in this school know that he is adopted. Furthermore, Mark leaves the room in a huff if his parents bring up the subject. If asked, Mark says he's fine and just doesn't want to talk about adoption.

*What could be going on?
Is Mark's behavior unusual?
Have his parent's missed something?*

The good news is that Mark is displaying normal behaviors for his age. The bad news is that young adoptees often struggle with their adoptive status during the pre-teen years. By this age, children's cognitive understanding of their adoption story has increased dramatically. They are able to recognize on a much deeper level what it means to be adopted and to have two sets of parents; birth and adoptive.

Thinking about their birth mother's inability to parent may generate conscious and unconscious feelings of being less-than or somehow damaged. Many feel embarrassed about their background. During the pre-teen years, children want to be just like everyone else, and for many, being adopted means being different. This feeling of difference often prevails whether or not peers are aware of the child's adoption status.



While it is hard to watch your child struggle, the following are suggested ways to help:

1. Remind yourself and your partner, that these feelings and behaviors are normal. Talk with other parents who have dealt with these issues and take comfort from not being alone. Remember that you didn't 'do' anything wrong!
2. Be straightforward with your child. Tell him what you have noticed and that his difficulties are, unfortunately, normal for many adopted pre-teens. While this doesn't take away the pain for your child, it does remind him that he is not alone and there isn't anything 'weird' or 'wrong' with how he is feeling.
3. Validate your child's feelings of being different. Validating does not mean agreeing with or even understanding. Rather, validation let's your child know that you recognize how he is feeling.
4. Find time to get together with other adoptive families. While your child 'knows' in his head that his family isn't so different, being with others like himself reinforces this concept.
5. Remind your child that you are always available to talk and that you have every confidence that what he is going through is normal and that he will be feeling better soon.
6. Consider seeking professional help. Sometimes a child will agree to meet with a counselor to talk privately about his special issues. More often, the child is not interested but the parents can gain valuable insight into what might be going on in their family by meeting with a counselor.

Often, the consultant/counselor can offer suggestions of family activities or parenting techniques to help the young adoptee during this difficult time.

Nancy Golden, LCSW, Clinical Director and Co-Founder of the Midwest Adoption Center

Scrolls From China Gives Older Chinese Orphans a Future

BEND, Ore., Sept. 12 /PRNewswire/ -- Fourteen-year-old Xiao Fan lost his parents in a flood. Fifteen-year-old Si Xun has only one hand; when her parents divorced, neither wanted her. Sixteen-year-old Xiao Ying was found abandoned as an infant. Now, thanks to a new company in Oregon and the dedication of a man raised in Chinese orphanages, these teens and several others have a shot at a secure future. Launched earlier this year, Scrolls From China:

<http://www.scrollsfromchina.com>

sells intricate, museum-quality Chinese wall scrolls painted by the students. A full 30% of the scrolls' wholesale price, which is set by the students, goes directly to the artists; the rest pays for art supplies, scroll mounting and specific orphanage needs, including medical care.

Founders Robert and Stephanie Tadjiki came up with the idea for Scrolls From China after traveling to China to adopt their daughter. They were saddened to discover that most orphans in China were turned out into the world at around 14 years of age with no money, no education, no families and no job skills. But in their daughter's orphanage, an artist named Kenny whose parents, both doctors working in remote regions of China, were forced to leave him in orphanages while they traveled--had made it his life's work to teach older orphans the art of painting Chinese wall scrolls, in hopes of giving them a trade to carry with them as they left the orphanage.

The Tadjikis felt moved to help Kenny and the children, and Scrolls From China was born. "Kenny is a gifted artist. We were impressed by his enthusiasm and even more impressed by the beauty and grace of the scrolls his students create," said Robert Tadjiki. "We are pleased to be in partnership with Kenny and his students. The children are overjoyed at the response to



their work. They love hearing about how much the scrolls mean to people." With a glance at the children's work, displayed at ScrollsFromChina.com, one understands they are artists in their own right. Each Chinese wall scroll has five components essential to a traditional Chinese painting: Chinese ink, paper and silk, the tableau arrangement, the subject and seal, and the mounting. The students paint on rice paper and silk. Most of the paintings are mounted onto silk, though some are left unmatted for framing. Each scroll bears the artist's seal and comes with ceramic or wooden rods at the top and bottom, along with a silk ribbon for hanging. Some have a traditional feel, while others are stunning examples of contemporary Chinese art. "The quality of the art is exceptional," stated Robert Tadjiki. "These scrolls can help bring an authentic touch of China to any home, while supporting a cause that needs more visibility."

To view the Chinese wall scrolls available for purchase and learn about the artists, visit his website. Interior designers can contact Robert Tadjik at:
 Scrolls From China
 541-610-6967
info@scrollsfromchina.com
<http://www.scrollsfromchina.com>

Bruce Rappaport – Founded Independent Adoption Center

(Note: Stars of David is saddened to report the death of Bruce Rappaport. He attended our Midwest Adoption Conference as a speaker and exhibitor. Our condolences go out to his organization and his family.)

by Christopher Heredia, Chronicle Staff Writer,
 Tuesday, November 21, 2006

Bruce Rappaport of Pleasant Hill, a self-described Berkeley radical from the 1960s who

later became a pioneer in the field of open adoptions, died Oct. 27 after a brief illness. He was 64.

It was Mr. Rappaport's own infertility that inspired him to help bridge the gap between biological parents, foster parents and adoptive parents, bucking laws that mandated that birth mothers' identities be kept a secret out of concern they would be stigmatized by society.

In 1982, Mr. Rappaport founded the Independent Adoption Center in Pleasant Hill, which facilitated open adoptions between biological parents and adoptive parents.

In his 1992 book "The Open Adoption Book," Mr. Rappaport, a former UC Berkeley political science professor, described the open adoption process and ways for parents to head off pitfalls. The book discussed how to help willing birth mothers, with the assistance of counselors, to choose adoptive parents, a process Mr. Rappaport believed was healthier for all involved.

"One couple told me their daughter was going to be the flower girl at her birthmother's wedding," he wrote in his book. "They didn't think anything of it. They were thrilled, but to them it wasn't revolutionary. I thought it was -- well, revolutionary."

Kathleen Silber, Mr. Rappaport's longtime friend and colleague at the Independent Adoption Center, said Mr. Rappaport influenced the lives of thousands of families across the country.

"Bruce was a real pioneer," said Silber, who serves as the center's associate executive director. "He'll be remembered for his belief and passion for open adoption. It was a lonely place to be at a time when the rest of the world was thinking closed adoptions were best. He knew in his heart there was a better way to do it. His desire was to make a change in the world, and he succeeded."

Mr. Rappaport was born in 1942 in New Jersey, the eldest of three sons. He earned his



undergraduate degree at the University of Chicago and his doctorate in political science at UC Berkeley during the Free Speech Movement.

Friends recalled that Mr. Rappaport enjoyed living in a commune and meeting with anti-war activists including Tom Hayden and Youth International Party members Stew Alpert and Judy Clavir. Mr. Rappaport co-wrote the 13-point "Berkeley Liberation Program," a leftist manifesto modeled after the Black Panther Party platform.

He saw injustices in this country and was outspoken on behalf of folks who didn't have rights and who were oppressed," said Stan Dewey, a friend who lived with Mr. Rappaport in a small commune in the 1970s named Karl Marx's Magic Bus. Mr. Rappaport's hobbies included whitewater rafting, hooked rugs, carpentry and storytelling.

He was an amateur astronomer and docent at the Chabot Science Center in Oakland. He also was a weekly volunteer storyteller, for more than 13 years, in public schools in Oakland.

He is survived by his mother, Hazel Feldman of Pembroke Pines, Fla.; daughter Anna Rappaport of Piedmont; and brothers Steven of Gainesville, Fla., and Louis of Orlando.

This, that, and the other



Rebecca's Journey Home by Brynn Olenberg Sugarman

When I was seven, my aunt and uncle adopted my cousin, Lisa, from Korea. This was back in 1968, when international adoption was in its infancy. My cousin was five at the time of her adoption. I was fascinated and determined to do the same one day.

Thirty years went by, and I had not changed my mind. My husband and I had two young sons, and I was determined that our third child would be adopted. We were living in Oregon at the time, and we started our adoption process with PLAN, in McMinnville. Exactly a year later, I was on a plane. Afterward, as an avid reader and adoptive mom, I looked about for a children's picture book which was coming from a uniquely Jewish angle. I didn't find it. Happily, I am also a writer, and decided to write the book myself. It was accepted by Kar-Ben (an imprint of Lerner Publishing in Minneapolis.) "Rebecca's Journey Home" is fictive, yet based on Rachele's story.



Brynn and her daughter Rachele

Fortunately, Lerner matched me with illustrator Michelle Shapiro, who makes gorgeous use of color and captures the loving spirit of the adoption journey. And I can't get over how she portrays the streets of Vietnam: as if she lives there! Michelle is aunt to a child who was also adopted, and told me that this gave her a sense of intimacy with her subject matter.

Although Jewish tradition is woven into the book, I wrote with an intention to be inclusive. Although I personally identify as Modern Orthodox, I believe that the book will speak to all Jews, regardless of labels and affiliation. Its message is that a person can be many things at once: in Rebecca's case, American, Jewish, and



Vietnamese. As such, it will hopefully also find its place among the rainbow of multicultural stories available today, touching non-Jews and non-adoptive families in addition to those of us within the Jewish adoption community.

"Rebecca's Journey Home" is slotted to be released at the end of October. However, it can currently be preordered through Amazon at a reduced price, and is likewise available for preorder at a number of other websites and bookshops. I hope that young Jewish/American adoptees have great joy in knowing that there is a book out there written especially for them!

Risk and Promise: a Handbook for Parents Adopting a Child from Overseas

This book takes the information that will often come with an international adoption referral from agencies. It is designed to teach prospective adoptive parents how to decipher information and make an informed decision on adopting internationally. It is written by specialists in medicine and developmental psychology – Ira Chasnoff, Linda Schwartz, Cheryl Pratt and Gwendolyn Neuberger. It includes worksheets, developmental status checklists, questions for orphanage staff, and other resources to prepare parents to understand the risk factors and various disorders that may affect their children and to be prepared to address their children's needs. To access, go to:

<http://www.ntiupstream.com/>

Reviews regarding this book have also said that children adopted domestically through the foster care system may display similar behavior and it has helped those parents to better understand their children. Some adoption related issues are the same regardless of where the child is born so it may be worth it for every prospective adoptive parent to take a glance and even some adoptive parents who may have questions on behavior issues their adopted child may have.

Etnyca

Etnyca is an online store that sells Guatemalan products. Its best selling product is the "Until Dolls Collection" Utzil", from the Mayan mythology which means "Princess", the name of our 120 dolls collection. Handmade by artisans, each doll is a beautiful and vivid representation of Guatemalan people and traditions. They are handmade by local artisans in such a way, that exactly replicates our actual costumes. For years, our indigenous community has been economically and socially neglected by our society notwithstanding their immense contribution to our traditions.

For this reason, Etnyca donates a percentage of our sales to be invested in the economic development and social integration of our indigenous community in Guatemala. To check it out go to:

<http://www.etnyca.com>





NEXT DEADLINE

The deadline for the next issue is, as always, now... but please don't wait until then.

Star Tracks is a long time in the editing, and the sooner material arrives, the happier everyone will be. Please send info' as you think of it, and know that everything matters when it comes to adoption. Thank you.

Kim
startracks@starsofdavid.org

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