



Adoption Connections of Oregon

The Year in Review

By Elise Crum, Board President

Greetings and happy holidays fellow Adoption Connections of Oregon members! I wish you all the best during these busy months. ACO has had a successful year, our first as an official non-profit organization.

Our seasonal events this year were well attended and fun. These events are free and are a great time to meet and socialize with other families touched by adoption. Check the calendar for details on the winter event. We hope to see you there.

The Pinecone Playgroup has been going strong all year. We meet at a park in the warmer months and at the Crum Wendt house for those rainy cold Saturdays. The playgroup is appropriate for any age; although most kids are between one and six years of age. Siblings and extended family are welcome.

In October the teacher education in-service day was very well received, with ACO training over forty teachers. ACO also trained educators at the Village School in November. If your child's school is interested, please email aco@peak.org.

In November we completed our first ever Adoption Connections of Oregon fund raiser. We, as a group, pledged over \$1,000. Thank you to everyone who made a pledge - your generosity is invaluable! You will be receiving a letter in the mail reminding you of your commitment. There is still time to make a tax deductible donation to ACO this year. Help support the group that supports our families and helps to educate our community about adoption! A special thanks to Steve Solberg, who chaired the fundraiser and to IRIS Media for use of their conference room.

Adoption Connections of Oregon's 6th Annual Conference on Adoption also took place in November. This year included Friday night "Adoption and Media" workshops for parents and children ages 5-12, led by Astrid Dabbeni of Adoption Mosaic. The kids had a great time watching *Stewart Little* and eating snacks, with a facilitated discussion led by an adult adoptee. Parents learned about the ways in which films can be used to open up a dialogue with children about adoption. Saturday's conference topics included a more detailed presentation by Astrid on the face of adoption in mainstream media. Professor Ellen Herman from the University of Oregon discussed her 'Adoption History Project.' Mollie Monahan, a therapeutic foster parent and counselor, spoke about attachment and parenting older children. The conference concluded with a panel of adult adoptees.

HOLT International generously allowed ACO to use their conference space for the teacher in-service, the workshops, and the conference. Thanks also to the individuals who helped organize, who spoke, and who attended all of these events.

Adoption Connections of Oregon is currently researching the possibility of expanding our website, as well as finding a way to train many more teachers regarding adoption in the classroom. If you are interested helping out on either of these projects let us know. We would appreciate your input, time, and skills! Congratulations to all of us for being part of this great organization.

**ACO Newsletter
Winter 2007**

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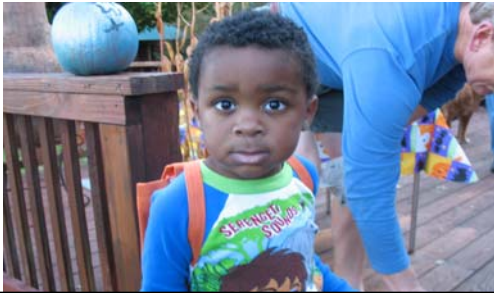
Website

ACO is a non-profit organization of families and individuals, offering support, education, multicultural activities, and friendship for anyone touched by or interested in adoption.



Pinecone Playgroup - fun at Washington Park

Our Families at Play



Fall Harvest Party at the Crum Farm



Ask the Adoption Doctor



Get your questions about international adoption-related medical, psychological, social work, and legal issues answered online at no cost. Every month, the adoption medicine specialists and associates of AdoptionDoctors.com will answer your questions about your concerns in these areas. Visit "Ask the Adoption Doctor," check out the newest questions and the archives, and submit your own question.

"A Home for the Holidays"

CBS television special

December 21, 8 pm



The 9th annual television special "A Home for the Holidays" features celebrity performances and stories from extraordinary American families who share the joys of adoption. Hosted this year by Sheryl Crow, the show inspires people to action and provides agencies with an opportunity to recruit families during the holidays. Tune in with millions of other prime time viewers to hear a positive message about America's waiting children.

Book Review by Tim Mueller

Mishka: An Adoption Tale

by Adrienne Ehlert Bashista; illustrated by
Miranda R. Mueller

This uniquely insightful tale of a boy's adoption from a Russian orphanage helps parents and children to process the wonderfully scary feeling of completing an adoption. Mo's questions are every internationally adopted child's: Where are you going? Are you ever coming back? Where are we? Are we home? The illustrations are delightful, too. Simple enough not to take away from the story, but warm and gentle, engaging and colorful. Your child will turn the pages just to admire the illustrations and to watch Mo/Mishka on his adventure. Read more here: www.drtpress.com/mishkapage.htm

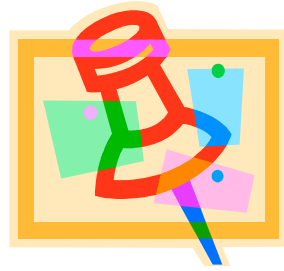
Laura Zaerr

Harp Performance/Benefit

Harpist Laura Zaerr has created an original musical CD entitled Dreamland that holds special interest for adoptive families. "If You Come from China" is written for adoptive families of all shapes and sizes. "Invisible Star" addresses the agonizing waiting period parents go through before the referral comes through.

Two dollars of each CD sale will help fund the Chengde Social Welfare Institute in China, which is home for 40 children who are not able to be adopted. This fund is administered through Families with Children from China, FCC.

Laura will be performing in Corvallis on Saturday, Dec. 16, 2:00 pm at First Presbyterian Church, located at the corner of 8th and Monroe. You can visit her website at www.laurazaerr.com to hear sound clips or to order a CD online.



2008 NAFA CONFERENCE

Saturday April 26, 2008

at the Oregon Convention Center
in Portland

The keynote speaker for this event will be Patricia Irwin Johnston, MS, author of Understanding Infertility, Taking Charge of Infertility, Adopting after Infertility, Launching a Baby's Adoption, Adoption is a Family Affair! and editor of Perspectives on A Grafted Tree: Thoughts for Those Touched by Adoption.



A Priceless Gift

A place to call home is a priceless gift for a child! Please consider adopting a waiting child so they, too, can have a loving home for the holidays. Learn more by contacting Wendy's Wonderful Kids at Boys & Girls Aid. 503-542-2330

Adoption Book List for children

By Melissa Kilgore

Books are a great way to encourage your child to explore adoption questions or emotions that he or she may be feeling. It allows children an opportunity to see parts of their story in the books that they read and may also open up new topics that they didn't previously feel comfortable sharing. I wanted to list the children's books we have found useful and hope that you will also submit others to ACO's newsletter. If you're interested in reviewing other adoption books, visit Tapestry Book's website at www.tapestrybooks.com. It has a great selection that addresses different types of adoptions as well as parenting the adopted child.

Never, Never, Never Will She Stop Loving You, by Jolene Durrant

Tell Me Again About the Night I Was Born, by Jamie Lee Curtis

How I Was Adopted, by Joanna Cole

Let's Talk About It: Adoption, by Fred Rogers

Happy Adoption Day, by John McCutcheon

Transracial and transcultural adoptions can make raising a child more challenging since you also must address how your child will learn about his own race and culture. Building a child's self-esteem needs to take these differences between family members into account. Exposing your child to different skin colors through books can help address some of these early questions and concerns that your child may have about looking different. Below are the books that have helped us in raising our African-American children. These books are multi-racial and suitable for young children. If you have books that have helped your children with these topics, please consider sharing them in a future newsletter.

Board Books:

Joy, by Joyce Carol Thomas

Pretty Brown Face, by Andrea and Brian Pinkney

I Love My Hair, by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley

The Story of Rosa Parks, by Patricia A. Pingry

The Story of Martin Luther King Jr., by Johnny Ray Moore

Children's Books:

On the Day You Were Born, by Debra Frasier

Whoever You Are, by Mem Fox

We're Different, We're the Same, by Bobbi Jane Kates

Amazing Grace, by Mary Hoffman and Caroline Binch

Boundless Grace, by Mary Hoffman and Caroline Binch

Cherish Me, by Joyce Carol Thomas

Shades of Black: A Celebration of our Children, by Sandra L. Pinkney

Girls Hold Up This World, by Jada Pinkett Smith

The Colors of Us, by Karen Katz

Bippity Bop Barbershop, by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley

Open Adoption & Family Services, Inc.

**Free information meetings for
prospective adoptive parents
held in Eugene every other month.**

Please call (541) 343-4825
for more information

OA&FS Eugene office
315 West 10th Avenue, Eugene
www.openadopt.org

Journeys of the Heart Adoption Services

Home office Hillsboro, Oregon Domestic and
International Programs
Information Seminars in Portland
January 16, 2008
February 20, 2008

503-361-3075
www.journeysoftheheart.net

ACO WINTER GATHERINGS

Winter Celebration & Potluck



Date: Saturday, February 9th

Time: 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Where: Washington Park cottage
(19th and Washington St. next to
Washington Park)

Bring a dish that celebrates your child's heritage. ACO will provide entertainment, drinks, plates, cups, and utensils (feel free to bring your own if you would like to lessen your environmental impact)

For more information please call Marlene at 342-5591. Hope to see you there!



Parent Salon featuring guest speaker, Lyn Marx

Date: Sunday, January 13

Time: 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm

Where: The Solberg's home
3960 Hilyard St. in Eugene

Parent Salons are informal gatherings held in an ACO member's home with the goal of providing education and support around adoption issues. Discussion often evolves around talking with your child about his or her adoption story.

Lyn Marx, licensed professional counselor, will be our guest speaker this January. She plans to share information about her online practice and introduce Narrative Therapy and the four types of stories that are especially helpful for children who are adopted.

This is a parent event (lap infants are welcome.) Refreshments will be served.

Pinecone Playgroup

January 26 & February 16
10:30 am - 110 Briarcliff Rd. in Eugene



Come and play with other adoptive families.
Bring a snack to share.

For more information or to add your family
to the playgroup email list contact Elise:
elise@comcast.net

**MANN FAMILY / ACO
HUMANITARIAN SERVICE
SCHOLARSHIP**

Do you know a young adult adoptee in the 10th, 11th, or 12th grade who has given humanitarian service or displayed extraordinary evidence of humanitarian concern? He or she may be qualified to receive a \$500 tuition scholarship for post-secondary education! Nominate your candidate (or have them nominate themselves) by completing an application form. Applications are available by email: aco@peak.org. The deadline for submission is January 18, 2008.

RED THISTLE ADOPTIONS

Red Thistle provides counseling, home studies, and post-placement reports for international, domestic, and Oregon special needs adoptions.

For more information you may contact them at (503) 508-9251 or redthistleadoptions@yahoo.com

Catholic Charities

Pregnancy - Support & Adoption Services

New Family Orientation
February 1 & 2

Free Information Session
March 5

Call 503-238-5196
for more information

**Jane Brown Workshop
Coming Next Fall!**

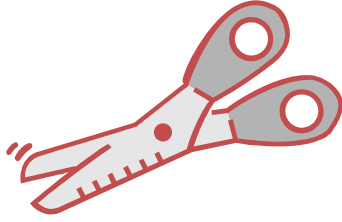


We are excited to announce that Jane Brown will be presenting at ACO's annual conference on November 7-9 of 2008.

Jane Brown, MSW, is a longtime adoption social worker, adoptive parent, and adoption educator who has been a member of the adoption community since 1977, when she and her husband adopted their first child. Jane now has eight sons and daughters, five of whom were adopted transracially, most of whom are now adults. She also grew up in a family that fostered youngsters prior to their adoptions, and has been, herself, a foster parent.

Jane is a member of the editorial advisory board for Adoptive Families Magazine, and has written and published numerous articles about adoption. Additionally, she has served on the Arizona Legislative Committee on Foster Care and Adoption. She is the creator and director of Adoption Playshops, an internationally-known program that empowers adopted youngsters to explore in creative, playful ways, what it means to be growing up adopted. She has presented across the USA, Canada, and Australia-- seeing thousands of adopted youngsters and their families each year over the last decade. Jane lives in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Jane will be presenting to parents and others interested in adoption on Friday evening of the conference and then providing Adoption Playshops to children grouped by age for 3 hour blocks on Saturday and Sunday. More news about the conference and workshops will be provided as details become available.



Kids Corner

Kente Paper Weaving

Kente cloth is made by the Asante people of Ghana. The finely woven strips are sewn together, rolled up and taken to market. The paper weaving project below uses colors similar to those found in kente cloth. Craft idea from The Kids Multicultural Art Book by Alexandra Terzian.

You'll need: a sheet of black 12" x 18" construction paper, 12 strips of 12" x 1" construction paper - 3 red, 3 yellow, 6 green, a wooden quarter inch dowel 16" long, a piece of yarn 20" long.

1. Fold the black construction paper in half. Cut 1" wide slits starting at the folded edge and cutting up. Stop 2" from the top.
2. Open up the black paper. Fold about 1" of the top edge toward the back. Glue the edge to the back, leaving a space for the dowel to pass through.
3. At the bottom edge, cut a fringe about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " long.
4. Begin weaving the colored strips in and out into the black paper. Row 1 is under, over, under, over, until the end. Row 2 is over, under, over, under, until the end. Now repeat until complete.
5. Use the colored strips to weave in this order: yellow, green, red, green. Repeat two more times.
6. Slip the dowel into the folded-over edge at the top. Tie yarn at the ends of the dowel and hang.

Adoption Connections of Oregon

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www.adoptionconnectionsoforegon.org

For information about ACO please contact

Elise Crum at (541) 345-4209

To submit an article or advertise in this newsletter, please write Erika Solberg at ACO's address or email her at aco@peak.org or call (541) 342-1134.

The article and advertising deadline is the 1st day of March, June, September and December for that month's newsletter.

A business card sized ad requested from "for profit" organizations costs \$25 for one newsletter.

Advertising for non-profit organizations is free.

ACO retains the right to reject advertising or any component of any advertisement submitted for publication.

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Interested in joining ACO?

Annual membership fees are \$15 - \$25 per family, based upon a sliding scale. Your charitable contribution helps to cover the cost of events, postage, printing, and our annual adoption conference.

As a family member of ACO, you will realize many benefits:

Announcements of upcoming events

Informative newsletters

Adoption support, networking and comradery

Toddler playgroup

Young adult adoptee scholarship information

Annual adoption conference

If you are interested in or would like more information about becoming a member of ACO please e-mail us at aco@peak.org or Elise Crum at 345-4209.

Thank you to the following businesses and individuals for their recent donations:



Cravings Inc.

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Iris Media, Inc.

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Sundance Natural Foods

Susan Barnhart

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