



# Mesa Chapter Families Supporting Adoption Newsletter

## Planning a Trip to Australia

May 2008

Inside this issue:



Deciding to have a baby is like planning a trip to Australia. You've heard it's a wonderful place, you've read many guide-books and feel certain you're ready to go. Everyone you know has traveled there by plane. They say it can be a turbulent flight with occasional rough landings, but you can look forward to being pampered on the trip.

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So you go to the airport and ask the ticket agent for a ticket to Australia. All around you, excited people are boarding planes for Australia. It seems there is no seat for you; you'll have to wait for the next flight. Impatient, but anticipating a wonderful trip, you wait--and wait--and wait. Flights to Australia continue to come and go. People say silly things like, "Relax. You'll get on a flight soon." Other people actually get on a plane and then cancel their trip, to which you cry, "It's not fair!"

After a long time the ticket agent tells you, "I'm sorry, we're not going to be able to get you on a plane to Australia. Perhaps you should think about going by boat."

"By BOAT!" you say. "Going by boat will take a very long time and it costs a great deal of money. I really had my heart set on going by plane." So you go home and think about not going to Australia at all. You wonder if Australia will be as beautiful if you approach it by sea rather than air. But you have long dreamed of this wonderful place, and finally you decide to travel by boat.

It is a long trip, many months over many rough seas. No one pampers you. (Isn't that the truth!) You wonder if you will ever see Australia. Meanwhile, your friends have flown back and forth to Australia two or three more times, marveling about each trip.

Then one glorious day, the boat docks in Australia. It is more exquisite than you ever imagined, and the beauty is magnified by your long days at sea. You

**Don't forget our  
FSA Temple night  
this Saturday,  
May 3rd!  
(refer to page 5  
for details)**

If you have a story you would like to share or an article you would like to see in our newsletter, please contact Emrie Stoten at [emrie@hotmail.com](mailto:emrie@hotmail.com).

## Planning a Trip to Australia continued

have made many wonderful friends during your voyage, and you find yourself comparing stories with others who also traveled by sea rather than by air.

People continue to fly to Australia as often as they like, but you are about to travel only once, perhaps twice. Some say things like, "Oh, be glad you didn't fly. My flight was horrible; traveling by sea is so easy."

You will always wonder what it would have been like to fly to Australia. Still, you know God blessed you with a special appreciation of Australia, and the beauty of Australia is not in the way you get there, but in the place itself.

Diane Armitage printed in the April 21, 1995 "Dear Abby" column.

## Workshop Series Review

The first workshop in the FSA monthly workshop series was held on April 10th. "**Pumping Up Your Profile,**" and "**Creating a Website for Dummies,**" was a hit for those who attended! Tips were shared on how to attract birth parents to adoptive couple's profiles and how to build personal websites. Following the meeting, Kristy Sandum said,

"The workshop was so helpful! I did not realize how easy it can be to make your own web page. I was so excited last night when I got home that I started one!"

FSA member, Joni Joiner, also learned a lot from her attendance at the workshop.

"The information that was given at the workshop helped me to feel so confident about making a personal website that my husband and I came home and started right away at making our own web page. We also updated our pictures on the LDS website, as suggested, to show what fun we have together rather than just boring pictures like we had before the workshop."

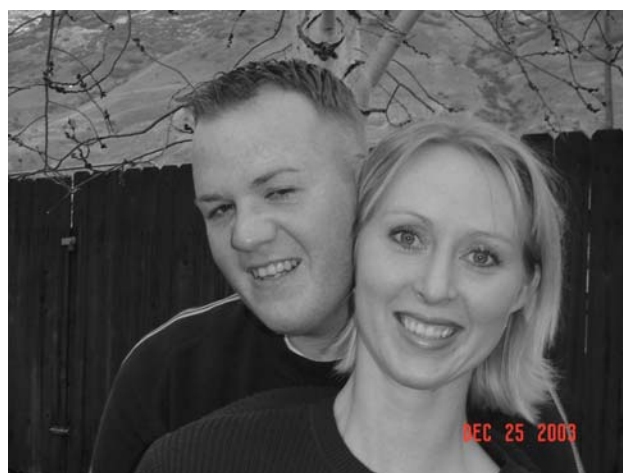
Be sure to not miss this month's workshop at 6:30 p.m. on May 8th at the Westwood Meetinghouse in Mesa! See page 5 for more details.

## Spotlight: Sandum Family New FHE Coordinators

Hi! We're Chris and Kristy Sandum. Our names are a bit on the 'cheesy' side but hey, we didn't plan it that way! We're excited to be one of the new FHE coordinators for FSA and look forward to meeting and associating with many of you.

Chris grew up in northern California. When he was 17, Chris was introduced to the LDS church and was baptized. After serving in the United States Air Force, he went on a mission to Montana. I grew up in Utah and served a mission in Birmingham, England.

After our missions, we met while attending the same college class. At the end of class one day, someone accidentally picked up Chris' textbook. Since we were sitting near each other, he thought maybe I'd picked it up. While in the book store, he was reading his assignment out of his



'lost' book and the clerk told him he had to purchase the book. Chris explained the lost book and was given a student directory to look me up. He only knew my first name and where I lived but he found my phone number and called me. I thought it was a nice 'pick up' line. We ended up talking for several hours and that's how our friendship began. The next day in class, another student came in asking if someone had lost their book. She had actually taken his book, so we're very thankful for that!

We were married in Manti, Utah on March 11, 2000. The past 8 years have been full of life, enjoyment, and changes. After we both graduated, we moved from Utah to Gilbert and we love it here! Chris works as a case worker with Juvenile Sex Offenders. He's currently working on his Master's Degree in Counseling and the light at the end of the tunnel is shining! Kristy is just finishing her 6<sup>th</sup> year of teaching. She currently teaches 2<sup>nd</sup> grade in Gilbert. She's excited to fulfill one of her dreams and goals by starting her Master's degree this summer and is hoping to finish next summer.

Some of the things we enjoy doing together are: biking, racquetball, bowling, BBQ'ing, reading, hiking, and driving all over the United States. Chris loves anything to do with firearms, history, and running marathons. Kristy's loves are the piano, learning about Arizona landscape ideas, do-it-yourself projects, and making the yummiest cinnamon rolls around!

We have been certified to adopt with LDS Family Services since August 2006. It's been a journey. We've had amazing opportunities to become closer together as a couple and to really understand who we are. We've learned that our Heavenly Father remembers who we are and has not forgotten about us. We've surrendered our time frame, our desires, and our plans to God. We've felt a lot of peace in the scripture, "Be still and know that I am God" (D&C 101:16). Our hearts and minds are still and peaceful because we know and believe that God has the right child for us at His right time. It's this hope that we hold on to as we go through the ups and downs, ins and outs of this journey. Our advice would be to hold on, enjoy, and make the most of this ride!

\*Chris and Kristy Sandum\*

## Stork Report

Congratulations to  
 Josh & Andrea Allen on the arrival of  
 their baby girl  
 and  
 Justin & Amanda Arrington who welcomed  
 a baby boy!



## Placement Post: Larson Family



On March 4th, 2008 we welcomed a little boy into our family. Our placement story is unique and we find ourselves very blessed. First off, our daughter, Hollie, is adopted also and has just recently turned two. We have kept in close contact with her birthmom, and in November we received a phone call from her telling us that she was pregnant again. At first we weren't sure what to say. Our hearts broke for her, but in turn we saw this as an answer to our prayer after two infertility treatments did not take.

We talked with her for awhile, and she knew that her circumstances were that she couldn't provide for this child and knew that he belonged to our family. She told us that she wanted us to be in the delivery room this time and that we could be as much a part of this pregnancy as we wanted to. We saw that as a blessing. A couple weeks later we flew up to Idaho and went to the first doctor's appointment. There we found out that we were having a BOY!

It was amazing to be in the room and see him on ultrasound. Ryan wasn't able to make it due to work, but we got a DVD and he was able to watch it. Hollie and I went up for another ultrasound in January, and he was growing and getting so big.

Her due date was February 26th and there was a possibility he was going to come early. Hollie and I flew up the first part of February so we could make sure we were there. Ryan was on-call to leave whenever he got the phone call that she was in labor. After a few times of being told that she was in false labor and sent home, on March 3rd, 2008 she was scheduled to be induced. Being with her through the whole process was amazing. Our Ethan Cade Larson was born on March 4th, 2008 at 3:53am weighing 7lbs 15 ounces with a length of 21 inches.

We are so grateful for the blessing that he has been in our life. We know that our children were chosen to come to us, but just through a different avenue. We are so grateful for our children's birthmom and for the sacrifices that she has made. We love her so much.

Love, Ryan, Kerri, Hollie and Ethan

## Announcements

### Adoption Workshop Series

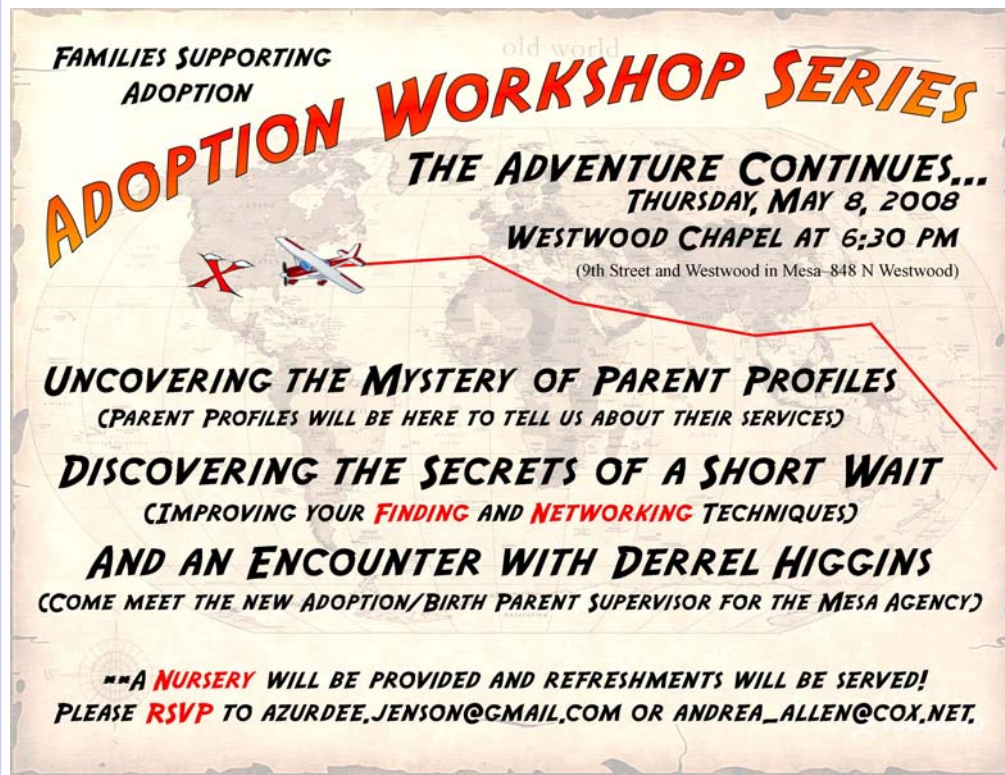
### Open House

**Save the date!**  
Larry Draughon's  
Farewell  
Open House  
will be  
Friday, June 6th

### Regional FSA

A Regional FSA Conference will be held in Mesa August 8th & 9th in conjunction with the National FSA Conference. There will be satellite broadcast presentations from Salt Lake City in addition to workshops and activities on the regional level.

Mark your calendars now and plan on attending this exciting event!  
Watch for further information in the coming months!  
We look forward to seeing all of you there.



**FAMILIES SUPPORTING ADOPTION**

# ADOPTION WORKSHOP SERIES

**THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES...**  
THURSDAY, MAY 8, 2008  
WESTWOOD CHAPEL AT 6:30 PM  
(9th Street and Westwood in Mesa - 848 N Westwood)

**UNCOVERING THE MYSTERY OF PARENT PROFILES**  
(PARENT PROFILES WILL BE HERE TO TELL US ABOUT THEIR SERVICES)

**DISCOVERING THE SECRETS OF A SHORT WAIT**  
(IMPROVING YOUR FINDING AND NETWORKING TECHNIQUES)

**AND AN ENCOUNTER WITH DERREL HIGGINS**  
(COME MEET THE NEW ADOPTION/BIRTH PARENT SUPERVISOR FOR THE MESA AGENCY)

**\*\*A NURSERY WILL BE PROVIDED AND REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED!**  
PLEASE **RSVP** TO [AZURDEE\\_JENSON@GMAIL.COM](mailto:AZURDEE_JENSON@GMAIL.COM) OR [ANDREA\\_ALLEN@COX.NET](mailto:ANDREA_ALLEN@COX.NET).

### Temple Night

**Don't forget our FSA Temple night this Saturday, May 3rd!** We will be meeting at 5:00 pm for a special chapel session and will then attend the 5:30 endowment session.



Please plan to meet us following the session at Nielsen's Frozen Custard. This can be found on the Northwest Corner of Southern and Gilbert in Mesa, AZ. The address is 1942 E. Southern Ave and the phone number is 480-497-2161. They have a dinner menu (hamburgers, sandwiches, salads, etc.) as well as yummy frozen custard! This will be a great opportunity to visit with other FSA members!

Hope to see all of you this Saturday!

If you have feedback, suggestions, or ideas for an upcoming newsletter, please send them to [emrie@hotmail.com](mailto:emrie@hotmail.com).