

# March Adoption STAR NEWSLETTER

March 1, 2010

Dear Friends,

**It's Adoption STAR's 10<sup>th</sup> birthday.** We turn 10 years old this month. Don't miss the Birthday Party we are having in May!

## **Dazzling Decade ~ A Night of Stars**

Saturday, May 1, 2010

6:00 pm

Marriott, Amherst, New York

A special tenth birthday gala with dinner, drinks, music and auction items to celebrate the amazing accomplishments and beautiful families created in the past ten years. Your attendance is a must!

For more information email [info@adoptionstar.com](mailto:info@adoptionstar.com)

PLEASE EMAIL [michele@adoptionstar.com](mailto:michele@adoptionstar.com) to request sponsorship information. The committee has developed amazing benefits for sponsors. **Sponsorships are available for individuals, families and businesses and provides you with the ability to sponsor Adoption STAR's 10<sup>th</sup> birthday year and all it's events, not just one specific event.** Contact Michele today. Also if you have auction items to donate please contact Kathy Glaeser at [nykathyo@aol.com](mailto:nykathyo@aol.com)

## **A Letter From The Dazzling Decade Committee Chair ~ Judy Chick**

Dear Friends:

You already know that Adoption STAR is a compassionate and unique organization that offers people guidance. You probably already know that the agency offers comprehensive services to adoptive parents, birth parents and adoptees, including but not limited to domestic and international adoption placements, home studies, post placement supervision, counseling, education, support groups, social groups, etc. The mission of Adoption STAR has always been to create forever families through adoption.

What you might not know is why I agreed to become the Dazzling Decade Committee Chair.

When my daughter and her husband could not conceive after three years of fertility treatments, they turned to Adoption STAR. Our entire family was in pain. We felt lost and confused when it came to adoption. Adoption STAR guided us all and gave us the Support, Training, Advocacy and Resources we needed. Eighteen months after starting the adoption process, my daughter and son-in-law became parents to a two-day-old beautiful baby boy. Now Joshua is almost three years old and has

changed the lives of our entire family. My daughter believes the reason she was unable to conceive was that she was meant to be Joshua's mother. I believe that too and I am so grateful and thrilled that this precious little boy is my grandson. That is why when the people at Adoption STAR told me that 2010 was their tenth birthday and asked me if I would be the Chair of the initial event of their special anniversary year; this very proud Grammy said "Yes" without hesitation!

I am especially excited that we will honor Michele Fried with the first "Michele Fried Founders Award." Not only is Michele the founder of this unique agency, she has continued to be its guiding light and nurturer for ten years. This award will be given annually to an individual whose contributions, expertise, and dedication to adoption, mirror Michele's.

We will also be awarding the first "Adoption Friendly Workplace Award" to Western New York businesses that have established fertility and/or adoption benefits and loans for its workers.

I hope we can count on you to join us to celebrate Adoption STAR's 10<sup>th</sup> birthday on May 1st and I thank you in advance for your commitment to help support Adoption STAR now and into the future.

Sincerely,  
Judy Chick  
A Proud Adoption STAR Grandmother  
Chair, ***Dazzling Decade - A Night of Stars***

***A Message From One of the Dazzling Decade Committee Members ~ Sue Reardon***

If you have already adopted through STAR...I need YOUR help!

We are making birthday cards designed by STAR kids. These will be used for the event coming up in May. If you'd like to participate, I need you to...

- 1.) Have your child create a picture for the front of a birthday card. This might be a cake, balloons, stars, kids, families, etc. For babies, maybe hand/foot prints. These should be colorful, fun and creative. Don't worry... it is NOT a contest!
- 2.) Keep in mind that that size of your submission may be different than the size (ratio) of our card, so keep the picture away from the edges if possible, as we may have some cropping to do.
- 3.) Incorporate into the picture, your child's name and the year they were born.
- 4.) Send me the picture. This can be mailed directly to me at 152 Guinevere Dr. Rochester, NY 14626. Or you can scan the picture yourself and e-mail the Jpeg to [shawnsue4ever@yahoo.com](mailto:shawnsue4ever@yahoo.com) since this is the format they will all eventually be converted to.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask. I'd like to get these within the next several weeks if possible.

Thank you!

Sue

**A Message From Our Founder ~ Michele Fried**

2010 is an incredibly special year for Adoption STAR as we will be celebrating our amazing accomplishments and magnificent families that were formed in the past decade. I have never been more excited about where we are today.

Professionally, I am so impressed with the agency, it's staff and those who chose to be the agency's clients... our birth parents and adoptive parents... we truly attract an incredibly special group of people. It has been my honor to get to know many of the agency's clients throughout the years and their dedication to their adoption journey continues to amaze me.

Personally, I am in awe of what this once little agency has become, as an adoptive parent, I am truly impressed with our comprehensive services, and deep down, I am like a little girl truly celebrating turning 10 years old wanted to take in every moment!

The Adoption STAR celebration kicks off this month ~ in March and will continue through early 2011. The official "birthday party" will be on Saturday, May 1, at the Buffalo Marriott, beginning at 6:00 pm. My family and I are counting on celebrating with you on Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup>. ***This celebration is not only for the families touched by Adoption STAR but truly for the community-at-large.*** Please share this information with your family, friends, co-workers, neighbors... everyone

We have many individuals, businesses and organizations that you will hear about throughout the year who are proudly sponsoring our 10<sup>th</sup> birthday year! Thank you to all those who are sponsoring Adoption STAR's successful decade!

I hope to see ALL of you on May 1.

~ Michele

**Haiti**

Even as we celebrate our 10<sup>th</sup> birthday, we are committed to not forget Haiti, especially the children. As you already know, on January 10, 2010 a massive 7.0 earthquake struck just outside of Port-au-Prince, the capital of Haiti. Since that time Adoption STAR has been working non-stop to stay in touch with the orphanages where we had children residing awaiting their adoptive placement with their U.S. adoptive families. We are pleased to inform you that all of our children previously matched for adoption recently arrived safely to their families (NYS and OH.) We will not forget the orphans that remain in Haiti.

**To date, Adoption STAR due to YOUR support and generosity from businesses such as Tent City – Washington Surplus store in Buffalo, The Talking Phone Book, and many individual donations the following donations have already been provided to Haiti:**

1. Fr. Michel Pugin has just left for Haiti as a representative of Adoption STAR and will be spending one month with the children of Renmen orphanage in an attempt to bring some normalcy back to their lives and to help begin the school that has been shut down since the earthquake. Everyday the children have been asking when school will start again. Fr. Pugin will be providing us with updates.
2. \$1,500 donated directly to assist in the care of orphans in Haiti.
3. Donation of tents already set up in Haiti (thank you again Tent City!)
4. Over 100 pajamas provided to orphans (thank you Talking Phone Book employees!)
5. Countless boxes of supplies as per the orphanages' wish lists.

Adoption STAR's commitment is to continue to raise funds:

1. To assist in rebuilding two orphanages that we work with.
2. To send money, food and much needed supplies to these orphanages.
3. To continue advocacy efforts to increase the number of orphans who are able to come to the U.S. under humanitarian parole.

For more information on Haiti and the work Adoption STAR is doing on behalf of Haitian orphans, please visit the following links on the Adoption STAR website:

<http://www.adoptionstar.com/> on the home page you will see information on Haiti and you can follow the various links from the home page or visit each separately below:

[http://www.adoptionstar.com/childplacement\\_haiti.php](http://www.adoptionstar.com/childplacement_haiti.php)

[http://www.adoptionstar.com/special\\_updates.php](http://www.adoptionstar.com/special_updates.php)

<http://www.adoptionstar.com/donate.php>

<http://www.adoptionstar.com/contact.php> (check the options in the drop down box)

A very special collaboration has come together with three Western New York Groups to benefit Haitian orphans. On February 12, 2009 our community was shocked and saddened by the plane crash of Flight 3407 in Clarence Center. On January 12, 2010, lives were shattered in Haiti with a devastating earthquake. The families of Flight 3407 and Celebrate Buffalo apparel announce the launch of Flight 3407 memorial t-shirt, **Forever In Our Hearts**. 100% of proceeds from each \$20 t-shirt sold will benefit orphaned children in Haiti through Adoption STAR, a non-profit child-placing agency. Laura Voigt, sister of Ellyce Kausner and liaison to Flight 3407 families said, "In the darkness of our tragedy, there is the good. The spirit of every life lost on Flight 3407 lives with every life that is touched in Haiti." Please consider purchasing a t-shirt by visiting <http://www.celebratebuffalo.com/> WGRZ Channel 2 News and WBEN 930 AM Radio are proud sponsors of **Forever In Our Hearts**.

**Thank you** to all of you who have called and emailed with your well wishes and concerns and especially those of you who sent in donations. **Please continue to support our efforts by making a tax- deductible donation by mailing in your check to Adoption STAR, Inc. and putting Haiti in the memo line. Please mail checks to the agency's Williamsville, NY office. Thank you.** *Please share this information with*

*family, friends, co-workers and any others you feel that can assist with these efforts.*

### **Ohio**

*Adoption STAR is happy to announce that we are now licensed in the State of Ohio and have an office in Cincinnati with additional staff based in Columbus and Cleveland, etc. We are able to service all of the State and are very pleased to share this expansion with you! Ohio residents may reach us by calling us at 513-631-6590 or 216-201-9177. Our first adoption information session will be Monday, March 22, 2010  
6:00 pm - 7:30 pm  
Symmes Township Regional Library  
11850 Enyart Road  
Loveland, Ohio  
RSVP 513-631-6590 or [info@adoptionstar.com](mailto:info@adoptionstar.com)*

### **Florida**

The Open House in Florida on February 18<sup>th</sup> was wonderful. If you missed it and would like information on Adoption STAR please contact us at 954-566-6055 or via email at [info@adoptionstar.com](mailto:info@adoptionstar.com). If you would like to arrange an in-service to have your staff learn more about Adoption STAR and the services we are providing the community please contact Annyse Gross at [annyse@adoptionstar.com](mailto:annyse@adoptionstar.com)

### **Older Child Adoptions**

If you wish to receive emails about older children available for adoption, please provide your full name and email address and send it to: [zachary@adoptionstar.com](mailto:zachary@adoptionstar.com). At least one time per month you will receive photos and information on older children who need forever families.

### **Journaling**

**Whether you have made an adoption plan for your child or you are waiting to adopt or you are currently parenting, journaling is a great way to organize your thoughts and feelings and to learn more about yourself. It is also a perfect place for you to get your feelings out when you might not feel comfortable expressing them to others.** You don't have to limit yourself to writing in your journal. You can draw and paste pictures in it that have meaning to you. Be creative and use the journal to express ALL of who you are!

**Here is an idea for your Journal/Blog today:**

#### **OPEN ADOPTION**

If you have already adopted, are you content with the amount of open adoption contact you have? If not, what do you think you can do to change things? Does

adoption come up comfortably in conversations? Do you feel like family and friends accept your open relations? If not, how have you handled this? If you are parenting other children, do you feel like you've been able to explain open adoption to them? If you have not yet adopted, where are you on the spectrum of open adoption? How did you get to that point? How have you explained open adoption to your family and friends?

### **Our Email/Mailing List**

If you would like any of your family or friends to receive our newsletter, email updates and mailings, please email [Zachary@adoptionstar.com](mailto:Zachary@adoptionstar.com) with their names, mailing addresses, and email addresses. If you are a client of Adoption STAR, we would like to remind all of you to provide the agency with updated telephone numbers (work, home, cell, pager), mailing addresses and email addresses. If you have switched jobs, left a job, moved, etc., please email Zachary with your most updated contact information!

### **Have you joined these groups yet?**

#### **SOFIA**

There is NO membership fee! SOFIA means supporting our families interested in adoption. It is a special group. The focus is educational and social. It is for those families who are waiting to adopt and those families who have already adopted through STAR or through another entity. Please visit SOFIA by going to their website at <http://www.wnysofia.com/>

#### **FACEBOOK**

It is so easy to do. Just visit <http://facebook.com/> and search for the Adoption STAR fan group. We hope to see you online!

#### **TWITTER**

Follow Adoption STAR on Twitter! <http://www.twitter.com/adoptionstar>

#### **BLOG**

Read what has been posted on the blog, make comments or add your own articles, stories, poetry to the blog.

<http://adoptionstar.blogspot.com/>

#### **LINKED-IN**

A group for professionals in any field who happen to be "touched" by adoption:

[http://www.linkedin.com/groups?about=&gid=846237&trk=anet\\_ug\\_grpro](http://www.linkedin.com/groups?about=&gid=846237&trk=anet_ug_grpro)

#### **Adoption STAR YAHOO Online Groups**

We highly recommend that once your home study is approved that you log onto and join the Adoption STAR adoptive parent's yahoo group. It is easy to join, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/adoptionstar/> There are so many Adoption STAR clients (those who adopted and those waiting to adopt) who all have access to each other.

**Another online group is Adoption Star Parents**

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/adoptionstarparents/> for those who already adopted from Adoption STAR. Please join this group to connect with other parents about the different stages of parenthood. No agency staff are members of the online groups ~ only adoptive parent clients. Please utilize this resource to post a message, to learn from others, and especially to receive support and connect with new friends and past home study peers, etc. When you join, please list your name and your home study group's name so others will be able to welcome you to the group.

**Messages from the Adoptive Family Department for prospective adoptive families:**  
**Please read Messages from the Adoptive Family Department for prospective adoptive families as #6 Fingerprinting has changed for NYS residents considering adopting.**

1. **Emailing:** If you wish an update on whether or not you have been profiled OR to check on the outcome of a recent profiling please CALL the agency rather than emailing us for an update. Also if you wish an update on your file to see if you are missing paperwork, etc., please contact us via telephone and not email. We receive an overwhelming amount of emails each day and cannot always get back to you timely.

Also email can be lost or bounce to spam files and never be received. In addition, questions that are specific to your file and profiling are important to us and we would prefer personal contact with you.

2. **Profiles:** If you hoping to adopt a baby domestically and are just beginning to create your profile and need assistance there is an online company founded by Adoption STAR adoptive parents who can assist you with the process: [www.petitepublishing.com](http://www.petitepublishing.com). Even if you have already created your profile and handed it in, but feel it needs a "face lift" consider Petite Publishing for this as well. Also a terrific way to make your profile unique is by having it "come alive" in a DVD presentation. For more information visit: <http://www.littlelambvideo.com/> (*Adoption STAR does not receive any compensation or any portion of fees paid to Petite Publishing or Little Lamb.*) As you know we request only five profiles (for expectant parents) to be kept at the agency. Be in touch with the agency to be sure we have more than one profile remaining. Often we run out of our clients' profiles and if this occurs you may lose out on being considered for potential adoption situations. We will not accept more than five profiles at one time (we just do not have the space to accommodate this.) Do not get discouraged if we ask for more profiles as it means your Family Advocate is working on your behalf to get your profiles viewed. Remember we cannot profile you without profiles, so if you have not handed in your profile and your home study is done, precious time is passing.

3. **Profiling Opportunities:** It is sometimes difficult for families to "hear" or "read" about available children and come to learn they can not be considered unless they are home study ready. "Home study ready" means that your home study or home study update is less than 12 months old and that no paperwork has expired such as fingerprints and child abuse clearances. It also means that we have your profile too. Without these items, we are unable to consider you for domestic adoption situations in-state or out-of-state.

**4. Home Study Expiration:** If your home study is coming up on expiring there is a good chance your fingerprint clearances and SCR (child abuse) clearances have already expired or will soon expire. The date of your clearances is listed in the body of your home study document. It is important to keep this up to date. Please contact the office if you need more information. We are recommending that you begin processing your update within two months before it expires so there is no lapse. Those with expired home studies (and expired SCR clearances) are unable to be considered for potential placements.

**5. Second Adoptions:** Many Adoption STAR families who have adopted previously from us have adopted again! If you are considering adopting again, it is important to begin the process to update your home study. We just want to remind those of you who wish to adopt again, the process does not require home study educational classes.

**6. Fingerprinting:** For our NY families, the New York State Office of Children and Family Services has recently implemented the use of a LiveScan digital fingerprint imaging process for the submission of fingerprints for all prospective adoptive parents and anyone in your household over the age of 18. You will receive information in your home study packet of paperwork at your initial consultation with your Adoption STAR Family Advocate including the required Fingerprint Information Form which needs to be completed and brought to the LiveScan center when fingerprints are taken. Individuals must also bring to the fingerprinting appointment appropriate forms of identification, as indicated on the back of the Fingerprint Information Form. An appointment to be fingerprinted is necessary and can be scheduled online by going to [www.L1enrollment.com](http://www.L1enrollment.com) or by calling 1-877-472-6915. The website will list locations in your area that provide this fingerprinting service. There is no fee to be fingerprinted and the turnaround time for the results tends to be quicker than the previous fingerprinting program. Once you are fingerprinted and receive approval from both NY and FBI you do not need to be fingerprinted again! If your fingerprint clearances expire before you adopt, the agency will just need to request a summary update judgment report. We expunge records after finalization so any of our previous families who return to adopt again will need to be re-fingerprinted as we do not have the option of requesting the summary update report.

**7. Waiting:** Your Family Advocate understands that waiting to adopt is emotionally draining and difficult. We have a growing list of recommendations to ease your wait time. The agency's educational credit system for both domestic and international adoptions has been created to assist you while you wait to become an adoptive parent. Adoption education is a life-long process, what better way to prepare for adoptive parenthood than to continue your adoption education! We highly recommend that once your home study is approved that you log onto and join the Adoption STAR adoptive parent's yahoo group. Finding a creative outlet often assists with one's wait. If you are planning to adopt domestically, there are a number of creative ways to help in your pursuit. One of those ways is to place your profile online at the Adoption STAR website. Here is a link to learn more: [http://www.adoptionstar.com/adoptiveparents\\_profile\\_form.php](http://www.adoptionstar.com/adoptiveparents_profile_form.php) Another other way is to arrange a training session with Sarah Rohde (716-639-3900) to begin the

agency assisted private track. Another way is to have your profile come alive by creating a DVD presentation. For more information visit: <http://www.littlelambvideo.com/> *These are just a few ideas to think about, and again, if you are struggling with the wait, we encourage you to contact the agency as we are here for you!*

**Messages about Post Adoption for families who already adopted:**

**1. Open Adoption Contact:** Just a reminder that you signed an agreement to supply the agency with photos and letters for your child's birth family whether or not the birth parents wanted an open adoption. It is imperative that you provide these photos and letters in a timely fashion. If you haven't it is not too late to do so now. It is very sad to have to inform a birth mother or a birth father that there are no photos waiting for them in their file. Even if you have not heard from the birth family, it is still important to keep to the schedule provided to you. Many of our schedules fall into the following category (but check your placement paperwork to be sure that your agreement is the same or if it requires more frequent contact): photos/letters to be sent the first two weeks after placement, one month after placement and then every month through six months after placement, then 12 months, 18 months and 24 months, and then yearly thereafter until age 18. PLEASE also remember to also include photos for Adoption STAR. We update your files with these photos, pass them around to the staff as we all love to see our babies growing up and we continuously like to update our bulletin board! Please send all photos via regular mail attention: Anna Steinberg at Adoption STAR, 47 Plaza Drive, Williamsville, NY 14221.

**2. Staying Connected:** Time passes so quickly and our children grow up so fast. We are working, playing, parenting... we are so busy! Even with our busy lives, we need to remember that our adoption journey has continued from waiting, to placement, to parenthood and continues forever. Adoption does not end at the placement of our children but rather it continues. What does this mean for us adoptive families? It means that your children may have unique issues due to their adoption experiences, questions about themselves and their birth families, etc. Adoption STAR can provide you with a list of professionals who provide post adoption counseling to provide you with the support and counseling necessary when dealing with unexpected special needs or other parenting issues.

**3. Newsletter:** This monthly email newsletter is a special way to stay connected. If you know anyone who would like to receive this newsletter, please provide us with their email address. You do not need to be associated with the agency to receive this newsletter.

**4. Support groups:** Adoption STAR has several support groups including online groups for you to become involved with before, during and after you have a child placed in your home. Support after adoption is encouraged and enhances the well being of the adoptive family. For more information on the agency's support groups, visit [http://www.adoptionstar.com/agency\\_support.php](http://www.adoptionstar.com/agency_support.php)

Remember to save the May 1 date!!!

*Your Friends at Adoption STAR*

P.S. View our 2010 calendar online now: <http://www.adoptionstar.com/participate.php>

## **MARCH**

### **Orientation Session -- Buffalo area**

March 07, Sunday, 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

Join us for this free orientation session to learn more about adoption and the Adoption STAR Agency. 47 Plaza Drive, Williamsville. Please call to RSVP or email [info@adoptionstar.com](mailto:info@adoptionstar.com)

### **Home Study Educational Classes**

March 16, Tuesday, 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm

This five week program prepares you for domestic or international adoption and is open to all registered Adoption STAR clients. Register today by calling 716.639.3900 or email [info@adoptionstar.com](mailto:info@adoptionstar.com).

### **Orientation Session - Ohio**

March 22, Monday, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

If you are considering adoption, either now or in the future, we encourage you attend this free informative session. Located at 11850 Enyart Rd. Loveland, OH 45140. RSVP [info@adoptionstar.com](mailto:info@adoptionstar.com) or call 513-631-6590.

### **Baby Care Class: Caring for Your Baby**

March 24, Wednesday, 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

This class focuses on newborn care and is geared specifically to the waiting adoptive parent. \$5.00 per family.

## **APRIL**

### **Orientation Session -- Buffalo area**

April 11, Sunday, 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

Join us for this free orientation session to learn more about adoption and the Adoption STAR Agency. 47 Plaza Drive, Williamsville. Please call to RSVP or email [info@adoptionstar.com](mailto:info@adoptionstar.com)

### **Orientation Session -- New York City area**

April 29, Thursday, 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm

Join us for this free orientation session to learn more about adoption and the Adoption STAR Agency. 47 Plaza Drive, Williamsville. Please call to RSVP or email [info@adoptionstar.com](mailto:info@adoptionstar.com)

## **MAY**

**Adoption STAR 10th Birthday Party!**

May 01, Saturday, 6:00 pm, Buffalo Marriott

This evening event will include dinner, music, auction items to celebrate the amazing accomplishments of Adoption STAR over the past ten years. Your presence is so very important. Open to the community-at-large. Please join us!

*Please feel free to post or forward this email as appropriate.*

**Follow Adoption STAR on Twitter!**

<http://www.twitter.com/adoptionstar>

**Become a fan of Adoption STAR on facebook!**

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Adoption-STAR/110156193216?ref=ts>

**Adoption STAR, Inc.**

**A NYS Authorized and Florida Licensed Non-Profit Adoption Agency**

**Hague Accredited Adoption Service Provider**

**STAR stands for Support, Training, Advocacy and Resources**

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**Binghamton 607-330-2158**

**Rochester 585-672-5227**

**New York City 917-470-9340**

**Syracuse 315-703-7511**

**Poughkeepsie 845-457-4883**

**Cleveland 216-201-9177**

**Toll Free 866-691-3300**

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