



A D O P T I O N S N E W S L E T T E R

MLJ Adoptions, Inc. wishes you and your family a very MERRY CHRISTMAS! As we celebrate with our families this holiday season, let us remember and give back to those orphans that do not have a family to celebrate with.

"Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world." James 1:27.

COUNTRY UPDATES

Ukraine

Several of our adoptive families are currently in Ukraine traveling to complete the legal process of adoption in their child's country or origin. Our team is thinking of them and wishing them safe travels. Many of our traveling families participated in the hosting program offered by The Fatherless Foundation, Inc. and thereafter decided to proceed with the adoption of an older child.

There is a group of six children visiting from December 28 through January 11 to spend the holiday season with a family through the Fatherless Foundation. Children available for hosting are between the ages of 7-14. If you are interested in hosting or adopting a child from Ukraine please contact, Lydia@mljadoptions.com.

Nicaragua

The Fatherless Foundation is facilitating a hosting program from Nicaragua. Families are needed to host children during the month of March. The cost for hosting from Nicaragua is \$2,500. This opportunity is for Indiana residents only. Please contact mark@mljadoptions.com if you are interested.

Further, from November 24-29, Latin America Program Director, Mark Reder and Executive

Director, Michele Jackson traveled to Nicaragua with several other individuals to visit orphanages.

The trip was a huge success, not only for the beautiful children that the group visited to play with and give donations to, but also for the volunteers who participated in the service trip. Many of the volunteers had never visited orphanages before and were truly changed by the experience. We encourage you to read the blog written by guest blogger Tony Stewart sharing his experience, which ended up being something different than he expected.

Honduras

Married couples and single women may adopt from Honduras. Parents must be between the ages of 25 and 51 and must have been married at least three years when submitting their dossier. Only one child may be adopted at a time, with the exception of sibling groups.

Contact Mark@mljadoptions.com, if you are interested in adopting a child from Honduras or hosting a child from Central America.

Democratic Republic of Congo

There is an orphan crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In the Congo alone there are 4.5 million orphans (though not all are available for adoption). Currently referral times are immediate to three months, however, as this program becomes more popular we anticipate that it will be adjusted to four-six months. We are thrilled to have received so much interest in the Congo from prospective adoptive families! Thank you for opening your hearts and homes to these children that are so much in need of a loving forever family.

Contact Sonja@mljadoptions.com, if you are interested in adopting from the Congo.

Guatemala

In late November, the Guatemalan National Adoption Council (CNA) announced that letters of intent were being accepted by the CNA for participation in an intercountry adoption pilot program. The U.S. Department of State has submitted a letter of interest to the Guatemalan government regarding participation in the pilot program. Please note that this does not mean Guatemala is opening its doors for intercountry adoption. Guatemala is not currently processing adoptions.

Vietnam

Vietnam remains closed to intercountry adoption, though we continue to follow the Country's progress.

Other Countries

If you or someone you know is interested in adopting a child from a country where we do not have a current program, let us know, as there are several services that we can provide.

ADOPTION PREPARATION

Homestudies

We offer home study services for both domestic and international adoption. For information regarding a home study please contact Brooke@MLJadoptions.com.

Adoption Education

The next adoption education course will be offered at MLJ on January 27 from 6-8 p.m. This session, entitled "Parenting an Adopted Child," is a mandatory course for adoptive parents. This course discusses the stages of child development as they affect the adopted child.

The next education course will be offered at MLJ on February 24 from 6-8 p.m. This session is entitled "The Adopted Child," which examines how and adopted child may feel or act differently or the same as a biological child.

Please contact sonja@mljadoptions.com, or visit www.mljadoptions.com to RSVP.

HAGUE APPROVED

MLJ Adoption, Inc. is thrilled to announce that we received Hague Approval! The Hague Convention is an international treaty signed by many countries, including the United States, which intends to regulate practices and procedures in international adoption. This is exciting news, as approval will open up several country options for us, as an agency, and for our prospective adoptive parents. We are currently researching the addition of new country programs in Latvia, Bulgaria, Belize, Mexico and several other countries.

GIVING BACK

Our Ukraine Program Director, Lydia Tarr is currently in Ukraine for purposes of her own adoption. While visiting orphanages, she saw a great need. Many of the children are in dire need of warm clothing. Many of the children do not have hats, gloves or socks and much of the warm clothing that they do have are ripped or falling apart. Currently the temperature in Ukraine is in the negative teens and twenties!

It is our hope to fill six large suitcases to capacity with socks, gloves and thermal underwear to send back with the children that are visiting from December 28 until January 11. In Ukraine, they celebrate the Orthodox Christmas on or near January 7th. This would be a wonderful present for the children. Please join us giving these children a warmer Christmas, by dropping off your donations at our offices on or before January 6th. Please contact sonja@mljadoptions.com if you are interested in donating.

LOOKING TO 2010

Church Partnerships

In the coming new year we are looking to partnering with several churches in an effort to spread the word about adoption through the creation and development of orphan ministries. Please contact Sonja@mljadoptions.com if you are interested.

New Country Programs

We are currently researching and considering intercountry adoption programs in Latvia, Bulgaria, Mexico, and other Central American countries.

Initial Adoption Seminar

MLJ is offering a Free Initial Adoption Seminar for those considering either international or domestic adoption on January 28, 2010 from 6-7:30 pm. The seminar will be conducted at MLJ Adoptions, Inc. located at 8910 Purdue Road, One College Park Road, Ste. 480, Indianapolis, Indiana 46268.

Please visit www.mljadoptions.com to RSVP.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why do we need to "readopt" our child after returning from traveling?

Readoption is the legal process of domesticating a foreign decree of adoption, meaning that the foreign adoption decree is officially documented within our

legal system. Through readoption, the child will be issued a birth certificate from their parents' state of residence and the child's name may be legally changed at this time.

A problem arises where parents forgo this process even though they legally adopted the child in the child's country of origin. If the child's name is not legally changed such child may have a problem enrolling in school under a name that is different than the one on their foreign birth certificate. The readoption order also grants the child all legal rights that would be afforded to such child if the child were a biological child (i.e. inheritance). Further, later in life the child may not qualify for certain state or federal benefits if no readoption was granted. Readoption is a necessary legal process for every child adopted abroad.

Please contact sonja@mljadoptions.com if you would like to learn more or proceed with the readoption process.

2. What is the difference between adopting a child in Hague Convention Country and a non-Hague Convention Country?

If prospective adoptive parents wish to adopt a child from a country that is a member of the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, the adoption process will be governed by the Hague Convention and the federal laws that have implemented that Convention. Parents may only adopt through a Hague Accredited or Approved adoption service provider, like MLJ. In Convention adoptions parents must complete at least 10 hours of specific education. Further, there are different immigration forms that are used in the Convention adoptions called the I-800A and I-800 forms. In Convention adoptions children are issued IH-3 or IH-4 visas as opposed to IR-3 or IR-4. The process of adopting a child from a Convention Country is more complex, in an effort to complete adoptions in the best interests of the child and to avoid abuses in intercountry adoption.

Stay connected! Follow MLJ on Twitter and become a fan on Facebook. There are several photos from our recent trip to Congo on our Facebook page.