



A Child's Hope



Lucy's Letter

Volume 2, Issue 4

Kentucky Adoption Services, Inc. Dec, 2006

Dear Friends,

I am hoping that each of you is having a wonderful and blessed Holiday Season. It can be easy at this time of year filled with presents and shopping and abundant food to forget the many throughout the world who do without the basics we consider necessary for life. I encourage each of you to take some time to reflect on the joys and blessings of this past year and to also look forward to the upcoming year and to consider the ways - both large and small - that each

of us can positively impact our world and show the love of Christ Jesus to all we encounter! Thanks for your support this year and for allowing us to be a part of your lives. We are humbled by this trust. For those of you still waiting for your children, we realize the holidays can be profoundly difficult. Our thoughts and prayers are with you! Merry Christmas!!

*Bendiciones,
Lucy*

Special points of interest:

- © Join our KAS clients yahoo group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kasclients>
- © Check out the new group for KAS China Clients at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/kaschinagroup>

Update on the Haiti Orphanage

WOW! The most fitting description of our Haiti Orphanage Project can be summed up with this one word!! We purchased the land in September and now in December our orphanage is under roof. I cannot believe how quickly things have come together. We have an Orphanage Director hired in Haiti and we are looking forward to making a significant impact in the town of Jolivert in the mountains, where we are located. We will be making a mission trip back to Haiti January 17 - 24, 2007 and hope to finish the plumbing and electrical in the orphanage at that time. (I am hoping that I am not in charge of that because if so when you flush the toilet the lights may turn on!!) We are still in desperate need of money to completely finish this project - to purchase baby beds, formula, diapers, etc.



In addition, as soon as this project is finished we plan to start on a new house for "grandma", whose plight I described in the last newsletter. I am so thrilled to be returning to Haiti to get to know Grandma a little better and to I hope bring the people there some things that will make their lives a little brighter. We have had several soccer and basketball uniforms donated because we are also helping sponsor a school and this was one of their requests. Thanks to the Hardison Family and The Shelby County Parks Department for these donations!! Please let me know if you are interested in any future mission trips or would like to contribute to this project!

KAS Holiday Celebration

Our Annual KAS Holiday Celebration is scheduled to take place on Saturday, January 6, 2007 from 2:30pm-5:30pm. The Celebration will take place at Settle Memorial United Methodist Church (201 E. 4th St.) in Owensboro, KY. If you are coming from out of town please see the map on the flyer on pg. 5. We will have fun activities for the kiddos and we will

serve snacks and drinks. This is a wonderful opportunity for our families to get to know one another and for the children to socialize. Anyone interested in adoption is welcome to attend. Please come join us for this wonderful celebration.



Special Features In This Issue

Family Story	2
KAS Kulture Korner	3
Guatemalan Recipe	3
Support a Soldier	3
Program Updates	4
Welcome Home	4
New KAS Staff	4
Holiday Celebration Flyer and Map	5
Special THANKS!	7
07' Fee increases	7
Fundraisers	7

FAMILY STORY—Matt, Tracy, Bryson, and Ashlyn McGary

Before we were parents, we never knew that something so small could affect our lives so much. We never knew the feeling of having our hearts outside our bodies, or that something so small could make us feel so important and happy, but we ALWAYS knew we would love being Mom and Dad.

Our journey began October 1, 2004. . We were eager to start the process, and were thrilled that we would be working with an agency so close to home. After meeting with Lydia and Lucy, we immediately felt like family to KAS, and we started to fulfill our journey.

On January 26, 2005 we received our referral of our beautiful baby boy we named Bryson. He was only 10 days old. We thought he was too good to be true. We sent care packages to him, and received updates and photos frequently.

On August 21, 2005, however, the photos became a reality and we were on our way to Guatemala to pick up our son. Once we arrived we could not believe the intensity of feelings that came over us when we saw Bryson for the first time. We can only describe it as the most pure, unconditional love that we have ever felt. The feelings of all the hard work that had gone into the adoption process, the waiting and the fear of the birth mother changing her mind were completely wiped away, because we finally had this beautiful child in our arms to love and nurture.

On August 25, 2005 we arrived home with Bryson. This is a very special day. Not only because we brought home our son, but this particular day is also my birthday. This was the best birthday gift ever.

A couple of months after returning home with Bryson, we received a call from KAS with news that Bryson's biological mother was pregnant again. We were so excited, and could not believe how quickly everything was happening. We always knew we wanted to adopt another child, but didn't realize it would be this soon. We immediately started the paperwork process again, and could not wait to bring home Bryson's biological sibling. In March the baby was born, but the biological mother changed her mind and decided to keep the baby. We were devastated and in shock, but we knew God had a plan for this child, and we were so blessed that we had Bryson to help get us through this difficult time.

On March 21, 2006 we received a referral of our beautiful baby girl we named Ashlyn. She was five months old when we received her referral, but knew right away she was our daughter. We especially liked the idea that both kids are nine months apart, and will grow up very close in age. Ashlyn's step-by-step process was identical to Bryson's. The dates for DNA,

Family Court, and PGN went in and out on the exact dates for both adoptions. We were certain that our travel day would fall on the same date, but God had other plans.

On August 17, 2005 we arrived in Guatemala to pick up our daughter. When we looked at each other for the first time we all began to cry. Her beautiful brown eyes, and her floppy pig tails glowed as she reached out her arms for us. That was the best feeling we could ever imagine. This second trip to Guatemala

was very special. Not only did we bring our daughter home, but we befriended numerous families and their children, made special connections of the heart, and we were able to visit with Bryson's foster mother for the second time.

On August 22, 2006 we arrived home with Ashlyn. Bryson and

Ashlyn are the light of our lives. I can write several pages on how our life has changed, but the short of the long is that we are a happy, healthy family enjoying the nurturing and love that adoption has given us, and that God has blessed us with. Both kids are affectionate, calm, funny, and keep our lives busy. Every day has been a blessing. We can't believe how easily they have adapted to their new lives. They are best friends. Witnessing their first words, and steps have been inspiring.

Celebrating their first birthdays were tops. The other side of our reality were these amazing little children who could make such a leap with joy just by looking our way. Cuddly blankets, days filled with new achievements, the sweet smell of freshly bathed babies, a house filled with love and wonder and spending quality family time together. This is what we call living the love of life.

We are so grateful to KAS in helping us achieve two swift and successful adoptions. Our sincerest thanks to Bryson and Ashlyn's birth mothers, our attorney, and to Kentucky Adoption Services.

As a side note, KAS would like to welcome Tracy McGary as our newest Board Member! We would also like to particularly thank Matt for volunteering to come on our Haiti mission trip in January! Thanks Tracy and Matt!!



KAS KULTURE KORNER!

Guatemala Christmas

The procession of the posada begins most Guatemalan Christmas celebrations. Nine days before Christmas, statues of Joseph and Mary are paraded from house to house as fireworks explode, drums beat, and carols are sung. Joseph and Mary reside in a different home for each of the nine nights to reenact their search for shelter before Jesus' birth.

During their time in each house, the statues of Joseph and Mary stay in or near the nacimientos, or manger scenes, that are a traditional part of almost all Guatemalan households.

The figure representing baby Jesus is never added until Christmas Eve, when the last house of the posada throws a party for everyone who has been involved with the procession. Guests at the parties can eat treats like hot tamales and punch while they enjoy music and dancing. Tamales made with pork or chicken are the most popular Christmas dish in Guatemala (one Guatemalan website on the Internet claims, in fact, that "a Christmas without tamales is not Christmas"). Guatemalans also enjoy different punch drinks with ingredients such as dried fruit, raisins, prunes, dates, cinnamon, milk, and/or rum.

Once the party is over, many Guatemalans attend mass, sometimes the Misa de Gallo, or Mass of the Rooster. Christmas trees first became popular in Guatemala following German immigration to the Alto Verapaz region of the country during the late 19th and early 20th centuries and the arrival of Americans working for the local banana industry during the early 20th century. Children find gifts left by the Christ Child under the tree on Christmas morning (possibly a custom based on the German Christkindl tradition). Adults exchange gifts New Year's Day.

Hot Tamales Recipe

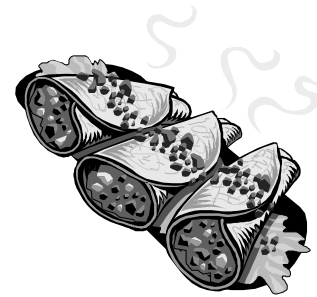
Tamales Negoros (Black Tamales)

Sauce:

2 Tbs squash seeds, toasted
2 Tbs sesame seeds, toasted
1 chile pasa, toasted
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1/4 cup toasted bread crumbs
2 pounds ripe tomatoes, sliced
2 ounces bitter chocolate, melted
1/2 cup water
1 pound boneless chicken

Dough:

2 pounds masa harina
6 cups water
1/4 cup sugar
1/2 pound butter or margarine, melted



Prepare a smooth sauce in the food processor with all the sauce ingredients except the chicken. Cook the sauce and the chicken together in a covered pan over moderate to low heat for 20 minutes. Remove the chicken and cut it into 2 inch cubes. Set aside the chicken and the sauce. Mix the dough ingredients together and simmer in a pan over low heat for 30 minutes, stirring frequently until the mash is thick and smooth. Set aside.

Assembling the Tamale: Aluminum foil cut into 12 inch squares (If you can find banana leaves, this is what they use in Guatemala), 1 small dried pitted prune for each tamale, 2 raisins for each tamale, and 2 pitted green olives for each tamale. Put 1/2 cup of the dough in the center of the foil sheet. Smooth it out to a rectangle 4x5 inches and 1 inch thick. Top this with 2 tbs of the sauce and 1 cube of chicken. Around the side gently press in the prune, raisins, and olives. Fold the foil towards the center, seal it, then give the ends a twist around to seal the ends. (If you found banana leaves, you would fold it into a packet and tie with string).

Cook in a steamer over moderate heat for 1 1/2 hours. To serve, unfold the foil and cut around the edges with scissors, leaving the center part of the foil intact. It is your plate. For banana leaves, cut string and unfold. Serve hot. Serves 7 to 8.

SUPPORT A SOLDIER

We are still collecting cards and items for Adam T. Davis. If you would like to participate please send your items to KAS. Here are a few items needed that we will send to Adam.:

Hand Sanitizer, Baby Wipes, Lotion, Sunscreen, Lip Balm, Bug Spray, Powdered Drinks, Toilet Paper, Cards. Thank you for all your help!

PROGRAM UPDATES

Guatemala - Guatemalan adoptions continue to process fairly smoothly in spite of the holidays. We are still receiving referrals at a very rapid rate and are seeking additional families for this Program, particularly those interested in the adoption of a son! There have been many rumors about Guatemala closing due to the impending formal ratification of the Hague Treaty by the US. This ratification is tentatively scheduled to occur at the very end of 2007. In addition, families who have already filed their I-600A at this time are unlikely to be effected in their adoption process. There is a significant chance that changes will be forthcoming on the Guatemalan end. At this point in time, these changes may include a transitional period and are a very positive sign that adoptions may remain open between the US and Guatemala. We ask for your continued prayers for the children of Guatemala that adoption will remain an option.

China - The China Program is taking a little longer for referrals, as families

are now waiting 12 - 14 months for the referral of a child. Although the CCAA has not formally announced new restrictions for families interested in adopting from China, these restrictions are coming and scheduled to begin May 1, 2007. Families with a history of divorce, who have a Body Mass index over 40 or with serious health problems will be precluded from adopting from China. In addition, single applicants will no longer be accepted after May 1, 2007. These changes will not be retro-active. We are also expecting the wait times may continue to increase.

El Salvador - KAS has accepted our first case from El Salvador. We are looking forward to working this case and bringing a beautiful toddler girl into her forever family! Our employee in El Salvador was recently asked to be a part of a committee to rewrite the adoption laws for El Salvador. We are excited about this opportunity to promote the best interest of children over and above politics and we are very proud of Kathryn for this

honor! Families must have been married for a minimum of 5 years and due to the length of time for adoption completion we are preferring families who already have children, which makes the emotional wait of adopting a bit easier.

Domestic - KAS continues to serve expectant mothers interested in making an adoption plan.

Korea - Families are still waiting an extended period of time for their referred children to come home. Families can expect to wait 7 - 10 months after referral for their children to arrive in the US.

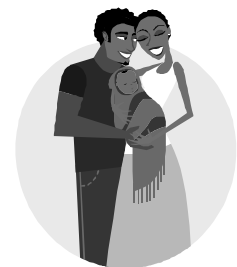
Vietnam - Program Coming for Kentucky residents!

Haiti - Program Coming as we learn more about the process so we can serve our clients with confidence and competence!

WELCOME HOME!

Arnold Flener	Mackenzie	Guatemala
Scott and Roxanne Boyd	Edwin	Guatemala
Andrew and Jamie Falco	Michael	Guatemala
Rob and Casey Hamilton	Jack	Guatemala
Russ and Katie Ledbetter	Kaylee	Guatemala
Chad and Jamie Robson	Rachel	China
Jason and Cindie Gough	Zachary	Korea

We have done our best to include everyone! Please let us know if we inadvertently left you out!



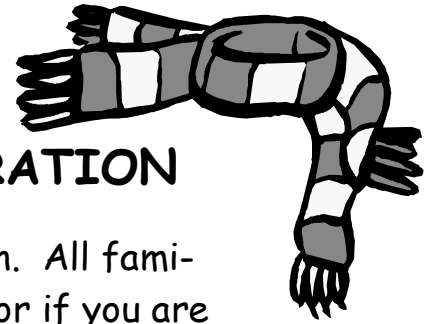
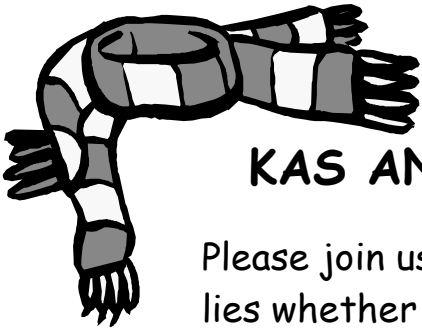
WELCOME NEW KAS STAFF

KAS would like to welcome **Mandy Lawson** to our staff. Mandy was born and raised in Louisville, KY where she met her husband of 7 years, Matt. They have lived in Owensboro for 7 years. After years of waiting, Mandy and Matt became parents to a little boy from Guatemala they named Clayton.

Mandy has also started a home business doing Personalized Photo Announcements and greeting cards.

This is what Mandy has to say about working with KAS,

"I am very glad to be a new part of KAS. From the beginning of our adoption process I always said how great it would be to be able to help others bring children home to a forever family. KAS has offered me a chance to be able to help others like they helped me. I look forward to the adventure and the challenges in my position with KAS."



KAS ANNUAL HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

Please join us for our annual holiday celebration. All families whether you already have your child home or if you are just considering adoption are welcome to attend.

When: Saturday, January 6, 2007

Where: Settle Memorial United Methodist Church

201 E. 4th St.

Owensboro, KY 42303

Time: 2:30pm-5:30pm

We will have entertainment for the children and snacks and drinks for everyone. We hope to see you there!!

Until January 15, we will be collecting items to be taken to Haiti in January for the KAS Orphanage. Anyone who would like is welcome to contribute cloth diapers, crib sheets, receiving blankets, formula, baby clothes, Desitin or any other baby product! We will have a box for any donations at our Holiday Celebration!

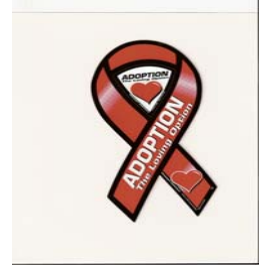


FUNDRAISERS

T-Shirts: KAS has t-shirts for your "Gifts from God" for the price of \$10.00 each (which includes shipping). KAS will receive \$4.00 to go towards Humanitarian Aid with each purchase. We have the following sizes: Large onesie, 2T, 4T, and child small. To place an order, please call Janie at the KAS office or email her at janie@kentuckyadoptionservices.org

JEWELRY: KAS has a limited number of bracelets from Guatemala available for purchase. The prices range from \$5 - \$12. We will have these at the Holiday Celebration Event for interested parties to view! We may also have a few other miscellaneous items from Guatemala and China for sale!

ADOPTION MAGNETS: KAS still has adoption magnets for sale. Families can purchase these adoption magnets for \$10.00 each (which includes shipping). KAS will receive \$5.00 to go towards Humanitarian Aid with each magnet sold. To place an order, please call Janie at (270) 684-2598 or email her at janie@kentuckyadoptionservices.org



Kentucky Adoption Services

3808 South Griffith Ave.
Owensboro, KY 42301

Phone: (270) 684-2598
Fax: (270) 684-6748



THANKS!!!

We want to offer a special Thanks to the **Koehn Family (Kelly and Rhonda)** for the collection they took from their Vacation Bible School class this past summer. They raised almost \$1000 to be donated to an orphanage in Guatemala! On my trip to Guatemala in November I was able to put this money to good use filling up the "Christmas wishes" of many of the houses at this particular orphanage. There are 165 children there and thanks to the Koehn's church's generosity the children were able to be blessed with apples and grapes - a delicacy at Christmas in Guatemala - socks, belts, sweaters, formula for the babies, powdered milk, hair gel, lotion, conditioner, shampoo and special holiday excursions. We have been assured that we will receive pictures from these planned trips! Thanks so much for the Koehn family and their vacation Bible school children who worked so hard to help less fortunate children!!

Thanks to the following families and groups for their contributions:

- **The Bennett Family** - At their daughter Katie's first birthday party they requested that guests send donations to KAS in honor of their daughter!
- **Frank and Helen Wagner**
- **Seeker's Sunday School Class from Settle Methodist Church in Owensboro**
- **Mollie & Todd Humphries**
- **St. Henry's High School** - Emily Himonidis, one of our adoptive mothers, is a teacher at this Catholic High School. They frequently offer "Dress Down" days where the students may wear clothes other than their uniforms if they contribute \$1 to a charity. This is the second time the school, at Emily's bequest, has chosen KAS, and they sent us \$625 - the highest turn out they have had yet!!
- **Patty Rucker**



Pictures of some of the Donations we were able to distribute thanks to the Koehn's Vacation Bible School Collection!

2007 FEE INCREASES & COMMENTS

Dear Friends,

We greatly regret that it is necessary for us to increase some of our fees in 2007. These changes will NOT effect anyone already in process! However, due to the increased cost of liability insurance, obtaining Hague Accreditation, maintaining adequate staffing levels and increasing the humanitarian aid we are providing it has become apparent that we cannot maintain our fees at their very low level. We still believe we will remain one of the agencies with the lowest fees - if not The lowest! The biggest changes are as follows:

- The Guatemalan Placement Fee will increase from \$3000 - \$3500
- The China Placement Fee will increase from \$3500 - \$3800 (but this will include the cost of translating post-placements, so it is actually a modest \$100 increase) However, with the new restrictions and the increased cost in China we may find it necessary to revise this fee very soon.
- We are restructuring our Domestic Fee Schedule to allow families who have decided on a placement agency other than KAS and who are not desiring KAS assistance with profiles, distribution or ICPC to opt out of that service and we have REDUCED this fee from \$750 to \$500
- The Preliminary Application will increase in cost from \$25 to \$50 and the Formal Application will increase from \$75 to \$100

On another note, also fee related, we have for years discussed the possibility of setting a set fee for Dossier Preparation that would include all mailings and seals, so that families do not feel "nickel and dimed" to death when receiving small frequent bills from KAS. We understand this is frustrating and frankly, the bookkeeping to track all UPS shipments and bill for them is nightmarish and time consuming particularly when families regularly call to inquire about small bills and we must look up the exact things mailed, the dates they were sent, where and why. However, after comparing the vast differences in what families pay for this, we have decided at this time that it is unfair to make a "set" fee because this is not transparency in fees and would penalize some families for the higher costs of others. Therefore, at this time we are still maintaining our current system of billing families for their actual mailings and their actual costs. We may revisit this at some point in the future.

