

# BirthMom Buds Bulletin

BirthMom Buds



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## Special Points of Interest

- Annual Retreat details and slideshow submission call in the Announcements Section
- Interview with an adoptee who found her birth parents via Facebook, in Adoption Spotlight
- A fun acrostic in honor of Mother's Day, in Ideas and Insights

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## Announcements

**Upcoming Retreat** – There is still time to register and attend the 9<sup>th</sup> annual BirthMom Buds Retreat. [Check out the invitation](#) for additional information and email us to register. Please remember if you are planning to attend you must register.

**Slideshow Submissions** – We are currently accepting photos for the 2013 slideshow. The slideshow will debut at the BirthMom Buds Retreat and then be on the website at the end of May. For more information on the type of photos to submit and to see links to past slideshows, please visit [this webpage](#). (Deadline is April 15, 2013.)

**Weekly Hosted Chats** - Don't forget about the weekly chats in our private chat room every Monday night at 10pm Eastern. You can find the chat room under "live chat" in [the forums](#).

**Mentors Needed** – We are always in need of mentors for our Pregnant and Placing program. For more information about this program and how to become a mentor, please visit [this webpage](#).

**Bloggers Needed** – We are looking for bloggers for the [BirthMom Buds Blog](#) who can post once a week. For more information, please email Coley at [birthmombuds@gmail.com](mailto:birthmombuds@gmail.com).

**Donations** - Several of you asked about contributing to retreat expenses so we have set up a donation button to make that easy for you. If you'd like to make a donation of any amount, please visit [this webpage](#).

## Inspiration

### Who Holds Me? By Cynthia Christensen

We all know that longing. It may look different with our varied stories, but the basis is the same – who/what will bring us comfort? We long to hold our babies, to be their comfort and yet we can't even manage to bring comfort to ourselves. Who holds us and comforts us on this roller coaster adoption journey?

The following lyrics are to a song by Natalie Grant called "Held". I played this song over and over after placement. It was to me like a huge finger pointing straight up to the Heavens to remind me of the promise AND THE PROMISSOR – the promise of being held when everything fell. We aren't alone on our journey. You aren't alone on your journey. Let yourself be held today.

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## Inspiration continued from page 1...

### Held

Two months is too little  
They let him go  
They had no sudden healing  
To think that Providence  
Would take a child from his  
mother  
While she prays, is appalling  
Who told us we'd be rescued  
What has changed and  
Why should we be saved from  
nightmares  
We're asking why this happens  
to us  
Who have died to live, it's unfair  
This is what it means to be held  
How it feels, when the sacred is  
torn from your life  
And you survive  
This is what it is to be loved and  
to know  
That the promise was when  
everything fell  
We'd be held  
This hand is bitterness

We want to taste it and  
Let the hatred numb our sor-  
rows  
The wise hand opens slowly  
To lilies of the valley and tomor-  
row  
This is what it means to be held  
How it feels, when the sacred is  
torn from your life  
And you survive  
This is what it is to be loved and  
to know  
That the promise was when  
everything fell  
We'd be held  
If hope is born of suffering  
If this is only the beginning  
Can we not wait, for one hour  
Watching for our Savior  
This is what it means to be held  
How it feels, when the sacred is  
torn from your life  
And you survive  
This is what it is to be loved and  
to know  
That the promise was when

everything fell  
We'd be held

You are worthy. You are worth it. You have so much life ahead of you. You have a future filled with hope. And rest assured, the best is yet to come. Grab hold of the hope and soar on it to your next destination – and the next, and the next. While you are on your journey, find your sparkle and hold on to it tightly as others will try to steal it away. Remember, it is a gift from God. You are a gift from God. Yes, the sacred has been torn from your life, but you...you survive!

**“You are worthy. You are worth it. You have so much life ahead of you.”**

Cynthia Christensten is the author of *Restorative Grief: A Guide To Healing From Adoption*.



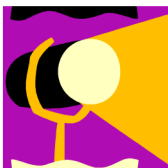
## Adoption Spotlight

### Using Facebook to Aid in your Search by Coley Strickland

You may have noticed the recent trend in birthparents and adoptees using Facebook as a tool in their search for one another.

The first person I saw doing this was Jennessa Simons. She was born in 1991 and adopted by a couple who lived near Salt Lake City, Utah. Recently, Jennessa turned to Facebook to search for her birthparents. I consider her to be the first person to do so and her picture was shared 165,000 times.

Jennessa graciously agreed to answer some questions from me



about using social media to find her birthparents.

**Coley:** Tell us a little bit about yourself.

**Jennessa:** *I grew up in Utah, just a half hour outside of Salt Lake City. I had only one brother, adopted also, and while we fought like animals while were young, we eventually grew to love one another. My mother was a stay at home mom, and my dad worked tirelessly to take care of us. My adoptive parents never made a secret of my adoption, or my brothers. As soon as we were old enough to understand, she explained we had 'tummy mommies', and that this did not change anything, that she and my father loved us like their own. I never doubted this, and never questioned my life with my*

*adoptive parents. I believe I grew up where I needed to be.*

**Coley:** Have you always been curious/wanted to find your birth parents?

**Jennessa:** *I was always curious about my adoption, and my birth parents. It wasn't a constant thought by any means, but whereas others can look in the mirror and see their father's nose and mother's hair, I always wondered who had given me which.*

**Coley:** What made you decide the time was right when you started to search?

**Jennessa:** *My initial search began when I was eighteen. I had moved out and was living with a friend's family. My friend was curious about my adoption, and*

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## Adoption Spotlight continued from page 2...

in the course of a discussion on the topic, I began to entertain the idea of finding my birth parents. My friend was extremely supportive, but after no contact from my adoption agency, and after seeing how many registries had a twenty one year old age restriction, I became discouraged and allowed it to fall from my list of priorities.

This time around, with my Facebook picture, I didn't think I would have any results. I had sent off paperwork to the Mutual Consent Registry and registered with [isrr.org](http://isrr.org) and hadn't heard from either so far. I looked at my son one day and thought "How could my birth mother have placed me? I know just how much I love my boy; that must have taken a strength I can only imagine.

**Coley:** Why did you turn to Facebook to aid in your search and what gave you the idea to use Facebook?

**Jennessa:** I had seen pictures of kids online, holding posters saying "One million likes and our parents will buy us a puppy!" They were getting the likes (and hopefully the parents upheld the other end of the bargain), so I thought, why not me? What could it hurt? So I made my poster, and asked my friends to help me out. Thirty or so shares and I went to bed Sunday night, mildly hopeful, but not expecting much.

**Coley:** What was the response to you using Facebook to find your birthparents?

**Jennessa:** The response to my picture was overwhelming. I posted it Sunday afternoon and went to bed with around thirty shares, majority friends, and a couple friends of friends. I woke up on Monday morning with five thousand shares, and eight new friend requests. I had two new emails in the account I'd listed on my poster, people wishing me good luck.

That by itself was surprising. By the end of the day I had seven thousand shares, twenty more emails, and more friend requests. On Tuesday morning, I'd jumped to twenty-three thousand shares. I was trying to answer everyone on my email, and was already making new acquaintances. I can't remember how many friend requests I had.

That was the day my birth mother contacted me. The last time I checked that day, my picture was at forty three thousand shares.

**Coley:** Did you find your birthparents via Facebook?

**Jennessa:** Yes! I was able to find my birth family through Facebook. My birth mother gave me information for my birth father the same day she contacted me, and I began texting him soon after. I have since had the pleasure of meeting both of them, and getting to know them better. They are two wonderful people and I feel blessed to have them in my life!

**Coley:** Do you have any advice for others using Facebook to find their birthparents?

**Jennessa:** My first piece of advice for others who decide to use Facebook is to be careful with your personal information. I put mine out there without a thought to what might happen and I'm grateful that nothing bad has happened to me because of it. Secondly, join adoption pages, as many as you can. Build contacts and connections. Third, please don't give up your search. I had people emailing me saying they had found their birth families after over thirty years of searching or were still looking, despite the odds. Just don't give up. Have hope. And, if you believe in an afterlife, have faith that if you do not find them in this life, you will in the next.

**Coley:** Has this whole experience made you an advocate for adoptee Original Birth Certificate access?

**Jennessa:** I'd like to say I'm pro for Original Adoptee Birth Certificate access but I truly don't know my own feelings on the topic. Searching for your birth parents is like navigating a mine field with a blind fold. I was terrified that my birth parents would not be what I expected. Or maybe they had been wounded, or, God forbid, had died. I believe you need to work for your goal of finding your family, because if you do it on a whim, it may be a shock. But I want families reunited. You have a right to know where you came from.

Thanks to Janessa for taking the time to answer my questions! I'm so happy that you reunited with your birthparents!



## Ideas and Insights

### Birthmama

By Sarah Noelle

Since I placed 11 & 9 years ago, I really have kind of shied away from calling myself a birthMOM simply because MOM is what I knew they were calling their adoptive mom & I wanted her to have that title as God had blessed me with the ability to give her the honor of hearing herself called that beautiful word. Because of that, I've often referred to myself as a birthMAMA. For this reason, I decided to do an acronym prose about adoption using what I lovingly refer to myself & others as in regards to the wonderful kids we placed:

**B**elieving that your child deserves the best life possible started your journey,  
**I**ncluding a couple with the desire for a baby & a family to call their own,  
**R**adical grace is then poured out over a divine meeting of four hearts: the couple, yours & the baby's.  
**T**ake a dollop of struggle, a heaping of love, a pinch of humor & souls full of hope,  
**H**elping each other through the pain, the hurt, the emotional rollercoaster, the sadness & the tears,  
**M**anifesting happiness whenever possible, happiness that can only come from peace of mind & decision.  
**A**llow yourself time to grieve, cry, talk, dream of the future, remember your placement & to pray.  
**M**arvel at the beautiful life you have brought into the world & the loving family you helped to create.  
**A**sk yourself where you want to go from here, what you want from your life from here on out, & then go & LIVE your story out in love & joy.

Sarah Noelle's adoption story can be found at [www.sunshine-in-a-bottle.com](http://www.sunshine-in-a-bottle.com) under "a little story sunshine."

## Birthday Celebrations



### April

- 1—Kayleigh Me's' daughter, Grace
- 2—Suzi Ellis' daughter, Jace Christian
- 2—Chelsie Burke
- 6—Annie Ritsch's son, Micah Keegan
- 13—Natasha Lapham's daughter, Dominica
- 16—Lora Urquart-Rudsill's son, Devin
- 17—Leigh Harding's daughter, Jessica, aka Supergirl
- 19—Stephanie Dillon
- 24—Sammii Lynn's daughter, Hailey
- 26—Ashlee Mendenhall's daughter, Tayber
- 30—Erin Crawford

### May

- 17—Tabitha Nilsen
- 22—Karen Braddock's twin daughters, Emily and Elizabeth

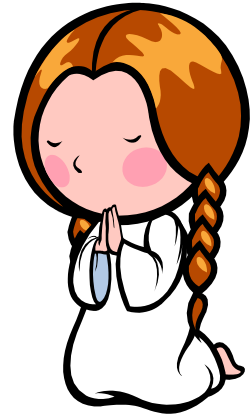
### June

- 3—Alicia Sappingfield's son, Ezra
- 3—Miranda Moss-Addy's son, Thomas
- 7—Ashlee Mendenhall
- 9—Tabitha Nilsen's son, Ellis Morgan
- 10—Maria Alexis Laney
- 14—Amber Berryman
- 27—Leigh Harding
- 30—Janice Collins

## Prayer Requests

By including the prayer requests section it is not our intent to force religion on anyone. We've had multiple requests to include this section. If you don't pray, simply skip this section. If you have a prayer request for a future newsletter, please email it to [bmbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:bmbulletin@gmail.com).

- Pray for all searching adoptees and birth parents to find one another.
- Please add the US Military to your prayers on a daily basis. They have a hard job keeping our country safe!
- Please pray for C, a struggling single mother, who is due to have a baby in July.
- Pray for Sandi Aikens – she has cancer, diabetes, and her family is in shreds right now.
- Kali Blair needs prayers that she can get on disability so she can get meds to feel like herself again.
- Martha Sims' reunion with the son she relinquished went badly. She would like prayers that she will not lose him again and that she will find peace in the situation.
- Erin Crawford is due April 2nd. Please pray that the labor goes well and that her baby is born healthy.



## Best of the Blog



**Mommy or Birthmom?:** <http://birthmom-buds.blogspot.com/2013/01/mommy-or-birthmom.html>  
written by Terri, published on January 31, 2013

**Spotlight Blogger: Meet Renee:** <http://birthmom-buds.blogspot.com/2013/03/spotlight-blogger-meet-renee.html> published by Monika on March 8, 2013

## Founder's Corner

*Dear Friends,*

*We have been busy planning and preparing for the upcoming retreat and are literally counting down the days! We're excited to have a few days away from work, home, and all the everyday responsibilities and spend some time in Charlotte, North Carolina hanging out with some of our favorite birthmoms. We can't wait to see old faces and meet new ones.*

*And though it seems early, you won't receive another quarterly newsletter until after Mother's Day so we want to just take a minute to wish each of you a peaceful and happy Mother's Day.*

*Do something special for yourself, whether you are parenting other children or not. You deserve it.*

*Hugs,  
Coley and Leilani*