

BirthMom Buds Bulletin

BirthMom Buds



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Special Points of Interest

- Quotes to Inspire, in Adoption Spotlight, beginning on page 1
- It's a Jungle Out There!, in Inspiration, on page 3
- Birthdays, page 4

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Announcements

Bloggers Needed - BMB is currently looking for a couple of new bloggers. If you are interested in being considered, please [email Coley](#) for more information.

2015 Slideshow - The 2015 Slideshow is now available for your viewing pleasure. You can view it [here](#).

BMB on FB - Don't forget to like [our fan page](#) on Facebook. This is a great way to stay up to date on the latest blog posts, retreat news, give your input into periodically asked questions, and more.

Mentors Needed - We are always in need of mentors, specifically birthmoms who placed after the age of 25 or were parenting a child at the time of placement, for our Pregnant and Placing program. For more information about this program and how to become a mentor, please visit [this webpage](#) or email our

Pregnant and Placing Coordinator, [Natasha](#).

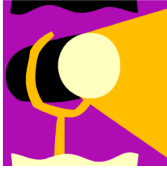
Writers Needed - We have an ongoing need for birthmoms to write articles for this newsletter. If you'd be interested in writing for an upcoming issue, please email our newsletter manager, [Monika](#).

Adoption Spotlight

Empowering Quotes by Coley Strickland

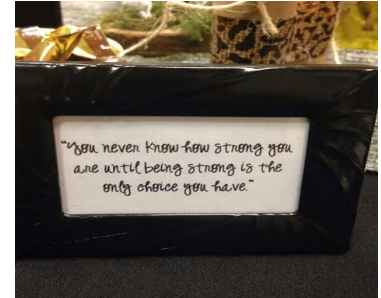
Each year, we choose a different theme for the BirthMom Buds retreat. Part of the décor on the tables is always inspirational quotes in frames. To match this year's theme of "Queen of the Jungle" we scoured the internet for some empowering girl quotes. Below are some of the quotes we found during our research. Some of these ended up (hopefully) inspiring some of the ladies in attendance at this year's BirthMom Buds retreat.

- "Love yourself first and everything else falls into line. You really have to love yourself to get anything done in this world." - Lucille Ball



Adoption Spotlight continued from page 1...

- "It is never too late to be what you might have been." – George Eliot
- "Your power comes from the courage in your heart and the passion in your soul. Feel it. Live it. Be it." – Christine Arylo
- "You never know how strong you are until being strong is the only choice you have." – Unknown
- "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." – Ralph Waldo Emerson
- "Don't over value what you are and under value what you are not." – Unknown
- "Think like a Queen. A Queen is not afraid to fail." – Oprah Winfrey
- "She turned her cant's into cans and her dreams into plans." – Unknown
- "She believed she could so she did." - Unknown



Ideas and Insights

Mother's Day *By Amanda A.*

With Mother's Day fast approaching, I know many of you are bracing yourself for a very tough weekend. I know I am! I don't acknowledge Birthmother's Day for a bunch of reasons, and while I DO celebrate my motherhood on Mother's Day it's so hard to get through. My daughter was also born on a day that falls before, after, and sometimes ON Mother's Day so this weekend is always super tough for me. I thought maybe I would write a little list of how to deal with emotions you may be feeling.

- Get those feelings out! I know this can be hard, but it's essential. Crying is OKAY...you are not weak. Trust me. Most Mother's Days I don't get out of bed. I wallow, I cry, I scream, heck I have even thrown pillows. And it's all okay.
- Have a friend waiting in the wings. Tell her to get you out of the house for an hour or two. Go have a meal. Go for a walk. Anything to give yourself a break from your head for a minute, because it can get overwhelming.
- Journal your feelings. It's by far not a cure-all but it will help to slow down for a bit.
- Be kind to yourself. Remember you are not abnormal, or crazy. Nobody has the patent on how to grieve correctly. We just do what we need to do to get through the day. And if you don't even manage to step out of bed, except maybe to gorge yourself on that cheesecake in the fridge...don't worry. Don't think less of yourself.

Continued on page 3..

Ideas and Insights continued from page 2...

Remember, ladies: Mother's Day is OUR day too! Motherhood doesn't stop when we relinquish. We may not parent our children, but that doesn't stop those dreams, wishes, hopes, worries or mothering instincts that come after childbirth. So, if nobody else has said it to you, here. I celebrate all of YOU on Mother's Day. Try to do something to celebrate you....and hang in there.

Amanda has a feature on the BirthMom Buds blog about reform. Look for her interviews and articles [there!](#)

Inspiration

It's a Jungle Out There!

By Terri Gake

Navigating the jungle of being a birthmom is no joke. It truly is a jungle in here! This is a journey unlike any other filled with the highest highs and the lowest lows and everything in between. When the sun is shining in Adoption World, there is nothing better. But when we hit a snag with the adoptive parents or it's that time of year, we are in a world of hurt.

If you are new to the journey OR newly joining this group, welcome! I forged ahead on my own for 25 years before joining any kind of support network. I wasn't really sure what they could offer me being so far down the road. But take it from me, it doesn't matter if you placed last week or last decade, you belong here. You are among women who understand.

So how do we navigate the jungle of Adoption World?

- **Together.** We need each other. The ladies here 'get' something about you that no one else does. While we all look different and have different stories, adoption ties us all together. We can talk freely about the ups and downs and frustrations and everyone understands. There's no judgement here because we know there is plenty of it out there.
- **Listen.** By sharing our stories and circumstances, we can gain hope and perspective. Sometimes we're stuck and can't see our way out. Sometimes looking at a circumstance from another point of view really helps us. Whatever you're struggling with, try listening to others around you. Sometimes turning our focus from our problem to someone else's for a while helps.
- **Tell your story.** Sometimes what you have to say or what you have learned or are learning can help someone else. Don't be afraid to speak up and tell about yourself and your journey.
- **Everyone has struggles.** We don't all struggle with the same stuff, and that's good! Because those of us who are not having a hard time can encourage those of you that are. Then we can switch because we all struggle sometimes.
- **We're different.** We don't all agree on the same stuff, and that's OK! What's important is that we share the bond of being a birthmom. We focus on that stuff and forget the rest.

I'm glad we're on this adventure in the jungle of being a birthmom together!

Terri is a frequent blogger on the BirthMom Buds blog. Look for more of her writing [there!](#)

Birthday Celebrations



If you'd like yours or your (placed) child's birthday shared in a newsletter, please email it to bmbbulletin@gmail.com.

April

- 1—Kaleigh Me's daughter, Grace
- 2—Suzi Ellis' son, Jace Christian
- 2—Chelsie Burke
- 6—Annie Ritsch's son, Micah Keegan
- 13—Natasha Lapham's daughter, Dominica
- 16—Lora 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

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

Best of the Blog



Why I'm Not Where You Are: <http://www.birthmom-buds.blogspot.com/2015/04/why-im-not-where-you-are.html> written by Elsa, published on April 18, 2015

Holidays: <http://www.birthmom-buds.blogspot.com/2015/04/holidays.html> written by Chelcie, published on April 15, 2015

BMB Reform Blog—Meet Ellen! <http://www.birthmom-buds.blogspot.com/2015/03/bmb-reform-blog-meet-ellen.html> interview by Amanda, published on March 13, 2015

Founder's Corner



Ladies,

We had a fabulous time at the 2015 BirthMom Buds Retreat May 1 - 3 in Charlotte, North Carolina.

This year's theme was Queen of the Jungle and cute jungle animals donned the tables and décor. We kicked off things with a Pizza Party Mixer on Friday night. After enjoying pizza, we played some icebreaker-style games.

Birthmom Bingo was really fun and watching the paper plate game was funny. Participants had to draw a scene, following our directions, with the paper plate on their heads!

Saturday morning we kicked off the all day celebration with a couple of get to know you games at each of the tables. Then we headed straight into breakout sessions. This year, Terri Gake led a session entitled Empowering Yourself through Faith. Betty Philips taught others how to navigate a reunion. Leah Outten encouraged everyone to write and share their valuable story. Amy Schumaker shared the importance of self care with attendees. After breakout sessions, we moved on to craft time where everyone made a washer necklace. We then moved on to a yummy make your own fajita bar complete with chocolate cake for desert.



We started the afternoon portion of the day with a balloon release where attendees wrote a prayer, wish, or dream for their child on a slip of paper, tied it to the balloon, prayed, and then released upward. Betty Phillips, fellow birthmother, and her (birth) son, Logan Funderburk, shared their adoption stories. A local adoptive Mom, [Lindsay Smith](#), shared her heart and love for the birthmoms of her children. Following Lindsay, Leilani shared an inspiration devotion about the power of a lioness. We then watched [2015 the slideshow](#) Coley created and afterward held the candlelight ceremony. We ended the day, by announcing the 2015 Buddy of the Year. Congratulations to Amy Schumaker!



That evening, we went to dinner as a group and then walked to see the Duke Energy building in Uptown Charlotte which was lit up pink and lavender for the night in honor of BirthMom Buds. We ended the festivities on Sunday morning with a bittersweet farewell breakfast.

We want to take a moment to thank everyone who played a part in making this year's retreat a success. Thanks to all the birthmoms who attended, the sponsors and contributors who helped us pull off this event, and the many people who donated items for our Swag Bags. Special thanks to Melanie Mosberg, our event coordinator. This event would not have been possible without each of you!

We're already looking forward to next year!

Hugs,

Coley and Leilani

