

Jeff & Tracey

Hi!

If you are reading our letter, you may find yourself considering an adoption plan for your expected child. We cannot truly grasp the courage it takes to face, and make, such a decision. If you decide adoption feels like a good decision for your baby, you may also be looking for a family who feels right to you. We are a family who, due to infertility, cannot have a second child. While we have one daughter, we long for a second child, and our daughter is eager for a brother or sister as well.

And so we would love to introduce you to our family: we are Tracey, a stay-at-home mom who spends her free time coaching baton twirling; Jeff, an engineer who schedules his work to enjoy lots of family time; Elyse, a toddler who eagerly looks forward to having a playmate; and Sparky, a fluffy white Lhasa Apso, who delightfully fills his role as our beloved dog.

We are open to a personal connection with you over the years, including photos, letters, emails, and/or visits, if this is something that you would like as well. And we look forward to sharing with your child his or her adoption story, because we know that this openness will be helpful to your child's strong sense of self and connection to you.



We have always wanted more than one child, probably because we each have several close siblings. Now as parents, we wish to create a family with those same bonds that we enjoyed growing up, and which we continue to enjoy with our brothers and sisters today. After giving birth to Elyse in 2008, we had several miscarriages. This led to the disappointing discovery that we would not be able to give birth to another child. Fortunately, we've always felt very comfortable with adoption. In fact, adoption has, in one way or another, already been a part of our lives.

Jeff's cousins, Tim and Nancy, are adopted. Tim is like a brother to Jeff; he was Jeff's best man at our wedding. And having seen the positive experience of a close friend in college, whose brothers joined his family through adoption, Tracey imagined she would adopt one day. Of course, the foundation was already there for Tracey because she grew up knowing that her parents planned to adopt before she was born. For these reasons, our family is particularly comfortable with adoption and enthusiastic about meeting the child who will join our family in this way.





Growing up, Tim (Jeff's cousin) was my partner in mischief - oh the stories! Tim being adopted was never an issue in our family; he was simply my cousin. Now that I'm looking forward to adopting, Tim's positive experience in our family gives me confidence that our child will have a great experience too.

In addition, we have many friends, co-workers and other family members who are either adoptive parents or adopted persons, and we know their experiences have been positive. We are excited about adopting, and our families are excited as well. We are grateful to be considered by you, and for the opportunity to welcome a child into our family through adoption.

Jeff: Tracey and I "met" online on Match.com and quickly determined from our profiles and pictures that we wanted to meet in person. After a few phone calls somehow it felt different, so our first date was dinner at Bertucci's, instead of the usual quick coffee, first date. We talked easily for hours about our love of travel and what it was like to grow up the youngest kid in our families.



Our wedding.



At the wedding of one of Tracey's former baton twirling students.

Call it Fate or perhaps Cosmic Coincidence, but at the end of the night as I walked her out to her car, I discovered that we had parked next to each other. With the windows rolled down to say goodnight, I quickly recognized the song coming from her car stereo because it was the exact song coming from my stereo! We both had been listening to the same Brian Setzer album when we arrived for our date! Over time, we found that we not only liked some of the same music, but we had a shared vision of a life together and a dream for having a loving family.



Here we are on our honeymoon in Peru. On our first date, we discovered that between us, we had visited all 7 continents. We're looking forward to rediscovering and sharing our travels as a family.

boy-meets-girl attraction, it was obvious to each of us that family and children were extremely important. I am very close with my family and have long enjoyed working with children as a teacher and coach. I knew that Jeff would be a great father one day by the way he related to our nieces and nephews through music and game playing.

Tracey: When Jeff and I first started dating, besides the usual



Jeff is pictured with Tracey's nephews Michael and Alex, playing Rock Band.

On trips to visit his family, he would bring his guitar to play along with his nephew, serenading us with real and made up songs, both serious and silly - ok, mostly silly. Jeff quickly became a favorite with my nieces and nephews too, with his extensive collection of board games that we'd play during family gatherings, and his interest in computer games.



Playing guitar is a regular part of family gatherings with Jeff's family.



Snorkeling in St. Thomas



Having Fun! Jeff at a nautical museum & Tracey on a Cruise ship.



Neighborhood kids love stopping by during walks and taking a trip down the slide, climbing the rock wall and playing with Elyse in the "fort" on our play set.

each of us college educations; I (Tracey) am a Professional Engineer with a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering and Jeff has a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Engineering and a Master's Degree in Oceanography. We intend to give our children the same educational opportunities that we had, and we have already started to set aside money to make this happen.

Jeff: Tracey is an incredibly patient parent. I think it comes from many years of coaching baton twirling. Tracey developed a love for the sport early in life, copying her older sisters who were also involved in the sport. As she grew up, she became more and more dedicated, to the point where her parents actually built a practice space in a detached garage next to the house! She now teaches her students in the very same studio that she herself practiced in. She shows the same patience with our daughter Elyse. Elyse is growing up self confident as well as sensitive to others. She has absorbed Tracey's encouragement and this gives her the confidence to try new things and learn easily.



The baton studio does double duty as the place to hang our 16' wide x 10' tall outdoor movie screen. In the summer and early fall we have frequent, kid-friendly, Movie Nights with family, friends and neighbors.

Tracey instinctively interacts well with children and young adults of all ages. And while she has won awards, and judged, directed, and organized major baton twirling events, for Tracey, the most important aspect of twirling is enabling children and teens to learn important life lessons - how to persevere, how to dream big, how to be a team player and how to be a great athlete with integrity and grace at the same time. I enjoy seeing her happy and find what her students accomplish to be quite inspiring.



Christmas Eve at our house with Tracey's family. 2011 was the first time we hosted this family tradition.



Jeff feeding lorikeets at Butterfly World in Florida.

As for myself, I love all types of music, and I love playing music. During grade school I played saxophone, and at 17 years old I picked up the guitar. I've been playing guitar ever since, trying to play a little bit each day. Other than my family, music is one of my biggest passions in life.

In grade school and high school, I played on the soccer team. I also dabbled in the

martial arts, but did not take it seriously until just after college when I earned my 2nd degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do. Throughout my childhood, and even into my early adulthood,



Each year between Christmas & New Year we spend the week with Jeff's siblings in the Chicago area. Here we are with their families.



Tracey fits right in with Jeff's family & a week-long board game marathon. Here she is with his nephews.

my parents would come to watch my concerts, games, and tournaments. I loved them for that. Tracey's parents would literally drive hundreds of miles just to see her twirl at a college football game. Know that your child will also grow up knowing that we will support them in whatever his or her passions might be. We'll be at their games, their recitals, or whatever events that they find important.

Tracey: As a baton twirling teacher, I watch students as they mature and learn not only about the sport, but about life. My job is to give them, not only technical skills, but practical ones too. Together, my students and

I set short and long term goals for achievement. We plan out practice schedules and interim milestones for reaching their own personal dreams. As a parent, I will share my wisdom, values, and skills.

Additionally, as parents, we will work to instill compassion, patience, and respect in our children. With Elyse, we strive to lead by example, and to notice the "teachable moments" in everyday life, so as to guide her to make good decisions and to feel good about herself. We praise her for kindness, and point out opportunities for other good actions. She is able to tell us what books she'd like to read and what activities she'd like us to enjoy, and she's able to relax in unstructured family fun time as well.



Elyse with Tracey's nieces & nephews on Christmas Day. The cousins always have a great time when they get together.



If you decide to make an adoption plan, you have the challenge of selecting a family to care for and love your child; a family that will raise your child in a way that you would, if circumstances were different. If we are the family that you choose, we will ensure that your child will know and feel your love. We will provide your child with a loving nuclear and extended family as well as social, educational and lifestyle opportunities. If you can envision your baby with a family like ours, then maybe like our first date, it is Fate, or Cosmic Coincidence, that you read our letter. To learn more about us, or talk to us, call Full Circle Adoptions toll free at 1-800-452-3678.

Sincerely,

Jeff and Tracey

In addition to what we share in this letter,
there's additional information,
photos & stories, at our website:
www.jeff-n-tracey.com
and on our page on Parent Profiles:
<http://www.parentprofiles.com/profiles/db27948.html>