



# CASI CONNECTION

A newsletter for the families and friends of CASI Foundation for Children, Inc.

Summer 2010

## OUR MISSION

CASI Foundation for Children is committed to uniting families through adoption and improving the quality of life for orphans world wide.

Established 1992  
A non-profit 501c(3)

## CASI's Office Hours

Monday-Thursday

8:30 am - 3:30 pm

Friday

8:30 am - 1:00 pm

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## CASI Full Speed Ahead

As many of you may know, this year has been full of change here at CASI. With a few new faces in the office and amongst our caseworkers, we continue on with our commitment to providing our families with excellent service and support. In effort to develop and improve upon resources for our families we have a few goals in progress;

- To provide more “in-house” opportunities for adoption education including training and support groups. These resources will benefit families during the home study and adoption process as well as those just beginning to explore adoption.
- To provide further avenues of support to our families after placement including counseling services. We truly want to be a part of your journey from start to finish and understand it isn't always over when your child comes home.
- To build upon and form new relationships throughout the state to share the resources and the benefits of adoption for all involved.
- To expand the network of the Domestic Infant Program in order to decrease the average wait time.

In accomplishing these goals, we hope to bring CASI to a level of unparalleled service. We encourage you to give us your feedback. How do you feel CASI could improve? How has your experience been? Please email [info@adoptcasi.org](mailto:info@adoptcasi.org) with your responses.

## Meet RuthAnn Howard CASI's Executive Director



I have been asked to share a little about myself with you. I was born and raised in Nampa, Idaho. I grew up in a small family as I have only one biological brother and a step-brother and sister. I am married to a man whom I consider to be the “most wonderful man in the world”. He is truly my best friend! Brian and I do not have children; however, it is our goal to adopt in the near future; something we started to plan long before I came to work here.

Upon graduating from high school I moved to Oregon to attend Eastern Oregon State College. My Major at the time was Psychology with a Minor in Sociology. Two years later I transferred to Boise State University to finish my degree; it was while I was attending BSU that I changed my major to Social Work. During that time I did an internship with the Idaho Youth Ranch and upon completing school I was hired by IYR as one of the first Family Preservation Counselors in the State of Idaho. As a Family Preservations Counselor I worked with at-risk youth in their homes. Many of the youth I worked with were in foster care. That same year I made a decision to move from an FPC to a Program Coordinator for the Youth Ranch's Emancipation Home which was a program that worked specifically with at-risk foster teens who were unable to maintain placement within a formal foster care setting. I was able to develop and implement a transition program for the teens in the program to help them learn independent living skills. While at the Youth Ranch I realized I wanted to return to school to obtain my Master's Degree. In June of 1993 I left Idaho and moved to the State of Washington to attend Walla Walla College. One *very* long year later, in June of 1994, I had my MSW in hand and returned to Idaho. My experience as a Social Worker includes being a Private Practice Counselor for women and children of domestic violence; an adult program counselor for an in-patient psychiatric hospital; an Intensive Behavioral Intervention Specialist and Program Coordinator; a Psychosocial Rehabilitation Specialist for the Department of Correction and a Clinical Supervisor for a Developmental Disabilities Program. All of my employment experience has given me extensive knowledge in working with children which is my true passion. I am new to the field of Adoptions, however, I believe that my 18 years of experience in working with children and families will help me in making this a very smooth transition. I am honored to be working for CASI Foundation for Children and I look forward to working with a great team of people who share the common goal of making CASI the best it has ever been.

## (Re) Introducing CASI's Case Workers



My name is Robin Happeny and I am the contract case worker for Region 1. I grew up in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho and attended the University of Idaho where I participated in exchange programs in both Massachusetts and Barcelona, Spain. After I graduated with my B.A. in Justice Studies I have worked in various private, nonprofit and government organizations that focus on the wellbeing of children and families. I just graduated in July from Eastern Washington University with a Master of Social Work degree. I love being an adoption social worker because I get to see families come together with such joy and love for their new addition! I am excited to be with CASI and feel privileged to be a part of the process that brings children to their forever families!



My name is Elizabeth Tate. For me adoption runs in my blood, encompasses my thoughts and gives me wings of motivation. I was adopted by my parents when I was an infant. As a teenager, I found myself in the difficult position of choosing to place a child for adoption and as an adult, I was blessed to adopt my son from China. I graduated from Boise State University in 1992 with a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work. I began my education with the desire to work in adoptions; until I met that goal, I worked in the mental health field and continue to work with adults and children diagnosed with mental illness. I began working for CASI as a caseworker in May 2006. I coordinated the International Adoption program for two years, until 2008, when I transitioned again to employment as a caseworker. I feel blessed and enriched by the families I meet and the work I do. I honestly relish in sharing the joy of adoption with people. In June, I will begin the Graduate Social Work program through Boise State University in Twin Falls, and will help McKenzie with families in the Twin Falls area for awhile. I believe strongly in the power of adoption and know that love knows no bounds; biology or adoption, it is the ties of love and compassion that binds families together.



My name is McKenzi Thompson and I have worked for CASI since 2007. I originally began working for CASI in Southeastern Idaho, but moved to Twin Falls, Idaho in 2008. A caseworker position opened in 2009 and I have been working as an adoption caseworker ever since. I graduated from Idaho State University with my Bachelors Degree in Social Work and Walla Walla College with my Masters Degree in Social Work. I enjoy working with families and being an instrument in their adoption journey. Most of all, I love happy endings!



My name is Rebecca (Becki) Sanchez. I've been a social worker since graduating from Utah State University in 1994, a long time ago. I have always enjoyed working with children and families. As a social worker I have worked at Migrant Head Start, child protection, and in developmental disabilities programs, as well as in adoptions. I've worked for CASI since December of 2003, and I've enjoyed it immensely. Adoption is one of the few very positive areas of social work. I love seeing families come together, especially when I can be the home study worker and then can supervise a placement. The variety of placements keeps me on my toes and learning. I've supervised infant placements, foster/adopt placements, and international placements from China, Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Thailand, Haiti, Ethiopia, and probably some other places that I'm forgetting. I hope to work for CASI for years to come, serving Southeast Idahoans who want to make adoption a family affair.

# Recipe of Month

*Submitted by Tammy Johnson*

## Almond Toffee Bars

### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup butter or margarine
- 1-1/2 cups quick-cooking rolled oats
- 1/2 cup graham cracker crumbs
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate pieces (6 ounces)
- 1 cup almond toffee pieces
- 1 cup sliced or chopped almonds
- 1 14-ounce can sweetened condensed milk



### Directions

1. Heat oven to 325 degree F. Melt butter or margarine in a 13x9x2-inch baking pan in the oven (about 6 minutes). Remove pan from oven. Sprinkle oats and crumbs evenly over melted butter or margarine; press lightly onto bottom of pan using the back of a large metal spoon. Sprinkle the chocolate pieces, toffee pieces, and almonds evenly over crumb mixture. Drizzle all with sweetened condensed milk.

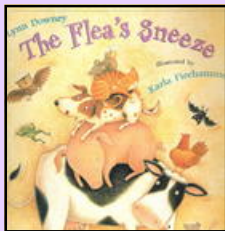
2. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until edges are bubbly and center is just lightly browned. Remove from oven and immediately run a narrow metal spatula or table knife around edges of pan to loosen the cookie. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack; cut into bars. Makes 48 bars.

## CASI's Favorite Children's Books



**Runaway Bunny** By Margaret Wise Brown (Ages Newborn and up)

Baby Bunny wants to go off on his own without his mother but she loves him so much she will follow him anywhere, doing anything to let him know she is always there. A touching story about a mother's love and a small bunny's (or child's) imagination.



**The Flea's Sneeze** By Lynn Downey (Ages 12 months and up)

A fun, rhyming story about a flea and his quest for a tissue and some sleep. Great repetition for young readers and listeners alike. While naming off the animals the flea encounters encourage your toddler to make the sounds of the particular animal.




**Just Go to Bed** By Mercer Mayer (Ages two years and up)

We have all heard the excuses about what keeps our children up later and later. A creative little critter tries to outwit his dad who is always one step ahead of him and has a witty comeback for each excuse. A family favorite, but from time to time my "little critter" still tries to think of creative ways to stay up late.




UPDATE


# Program Up-dates

 **US INFANT Program:** CASI currently has fourteen active families on the Family List, five families on hold and several who are actively working on the home study process to get placed on the list. We have had seven placements in the last few months which have brought the number of families waiting down.


Why do birth parents choose a particular family? There is no one perfect way to present your family in your profile. Let your personality shine through. Birth parents will feel a connection with your family, whether it is the words of encouragement in the birth parent letter, the hobbies shared, pictures of good times or the smiling faces of the children already in your life.


If at anytime you have a question about the adoption process or how CASI networks for families please call Katie or send an e-mail to [katieo@adoptcasi.org](mailto:katieo@adoptcasi.org) . COMING SOON: Watch our website for an upcoming teleconference letting you ask the questions you have about CASI and Infant Adoption.

 **FOSTER/ADOPT Program:** Approximately one year ago CASI's foster/adopt program was placed on hold while the agency was restructuring. We are happy to announce that the program is up and running again! RuthAnn Howard, our new Executive Director will be coordinating the Foster/Adopt program and is thrilled to report that she has her first two applicants who are currently going through the home study process. We are actively getting the word out that the program is back in full swing and anticipate that we will begin receiving applications on a consistent basis. If you or anyone you know is interested in adopting a child/children from foster care please have them contact [RuthAnnH@adoptcasi.org](mailto:RuthAnnH@adoptcasi.org).

 **CHINA Program:** The CCAA has finished the review of the adoption application documents registered with our office before July 31, 2009. The CCAA has finished placement for families whose application documents were registered with our office before May 10, 2006. CASI received one referral. We had two families return home with their children in July 2010.

Effective January 1, 2009, CCAA has increased the orphanage donation fees. The current fees are \$3,000 USD, and CCAA is requiring the fees now be given to the social welfare institute in RMB. The RMB will be \$35,000, and will fluctuate based on the exchange rate. The minimum in USD will be \$5,000 .

 **CHINA WAITING CHILDREN Program:** Several families have chosen to adopt their child from the special needs list and it has been a wonderful experience for them. CCAA typically updates their list the third week of each month. There are no longer individual waiting lists. Children are placed on a shared list, which all agencies have access to.

 **HAITI Program:** The wait time for Haiti continues to be 18-30 months. Due to the earthquake, adoptions in Haiti ceased. Currently CASI is now working with their facilitator and orphanage to begin submitting dossiers for referrals and processing. Agencies and orphanages are adhering strictly to the regulations Haiti has for adoptive families. Please call or email [tammyj@adoptcasi.org](mailto:tammyj@adoptcasi.org), if you are interested and would like to review the adoption regulations in Haiti. Although we state that the timeline could be 18-30 months, at this time, it could be longer. Until dossiers begin to go through the Haitian system again, we are providing a timeline pre-earthquake. Updates will be provided if this timeline changes.

# Changes in CASI's Fee Schedule

*Effective July 15th for new families & September 1st, 2010 for current families*

Home Study Report.....	\$1000
Home Study report-Returning Family.....	\$700
Home Study Update.....	\$400
Home Study Addendum.....	\$150
Infant Placement Fee.....	\$8000
* 90% of fees refundable after non placement	
Post Placement Report.....	\$250
Court Report.....	\$250
Social Investigative Report.....	\$800
Foster Adopt Program Fee.....	\$900

## Foster Adoption Networking Resources

If you are considering CASI's Foster Adoption Program, please take a look at the following websites for a closer look at children currently available for adoption.

### **Children Throughout the United States:**

[www.adoptuskids.org](http://www.adoptuskids.org)

[www.photolisting.adoption.com](http://www.photolisting.adoption.com)

### **Children in California:**

[www.cakidsconnection.com/](http://www.cakidsconnection.com/)

### **Children in Colorado:**

[www.adoptuskids.org/states/co/](http://www.adoptuskids.org/states/co/)

### **Children in Georgia:**

<http://167.193.144.179/mtnmenu2.asp>

### **Children in Louisiana**

<http://www.adoptuskids.org/states/la>

### **Children in Texas**

<http://www.tdprs.state.tx.us>



*Carolyn & Orlando 31848*

*From Texas Adoption Resource Exchange*