

## The Reinhart Family

*by Ashley & Brian Reinhart*

Hello! We are the Reinharts and we are so happy to get to share our adoption experience with you. We adopted our daughter, Everly, last year. She is fourteen months old now and adds so much sunshine to our lives. What makes our adoption experience special is not just our daughter but also her birth mom. We are so grateful that we have an open adoption and get to have Everly's birth family in our lives.

When we envisioned our perfect adoption, we knew we would ideally have an open adoption and a relationship with the birth family. Our future child was the most important consideration to us when we chose open adoption. Any fears and hesitations we may have had were nothing compared to the positive benefits open adoptions offer to adoptees. We knew research strongly indicates that open adoptions have better outcomes for the adoptees, contributing to stronger self-esteem and positive self-identity amongst other positives. As parents, we want to give our children every advantage in life we can. For our adopted child, that includes a relationship with the birth family.

We first met our daughter's birth mom, Kaitlin, at the hospital the day she had given birth. We were so nervous and of course wanted to make a good impression. Kaitlin had not yet decided if she was going to choose adoption and wanted to meet us to help her with her decision. We were so impressed with Kaitlin and despite feeling anxious, we really enjoyed getting to meet her. She was the sweetest person and obviously an amazing mom. Her dedication to her children and strength in a situation that would bring anyone to their knees was truly awe inspiring. She let us hold our daughter and we got to chat about our lives. We learned about her kids and what they did as a family and learned what was important to her in considering adoption. We discussed our approach to an open adoption. We wanted her to know we would love for her to be involved as much as she wanted and that we would never want to sever that connection. We discussed

our firm belief that too many people loving a child was not possible- and that multiple holiday celebrations just meant that much more fun. When we left after spending about an hour with her, we didn't know what Kaitlin's decision would be. We did know no matter what she chose, the little baby we got to hold was guaranteed a future with so much love.

That evening we got the call Kaitlin had chosen us to adopt. We were of course overwhelmed and grateful and just so happy. But I also couldn't stop thinking about Kaitlin. Perhaps because we have an older son and I was already a mom, I could imagine the heartbreak she was probably feeling and I imagined she was wondering if she had made the right choice. I wanted to find her and hug her and promise everything would be ok. I wanted her to know she was family now and she and her kids were permanently lodged in our hearts.

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**cover story The Reinhart Family continued...**



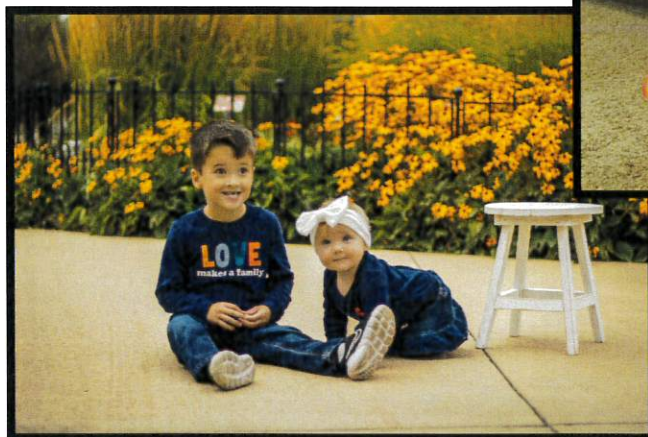
We were so excited to be able to include Kaitlin in Everly's life. We also knew we needed to let it be up to Kaitlin to decide when and if she wanted to reconnect. I am sure Kristi Roberts (our adoption coordinator) grew tired of me constantly asking if she had heard from Kaitlin. For the first 6 months the only contact with Kaitlin was the monthly letters we sent through Kristi. I tried to keep the letters from being overwhelming. I also tried to write about how we thought of her everyday when we looked at our daughter and how we were thinking of her and her kids and hoping they were well. I wrote about how much we love Everly and how amazing she is.

When Kaitlin was ready to get in touch, she reached out to Kristi and agreed to sharing her cell number. I texted her right away- we were so excited to hear from her. We made plans for a playdate at the park and we were able to spend a wonderful hour talking while our older kids ran around. Kaitlin held Everly and I took their picture. It's one of our favorite pictures and is going in a frame for Everly's room. Since then, we've met up for trunk or treating, Santa pictures, and Holi at the Children's Garden. I try to keep my eye out for community events that everyone

might enjoy as there is a large range of age in our kids. We are thankful to live in the same community so get togethers are easier. We still send monthly letters via Kristi but we also text Kaitlin on holidays and send pictures. We got to share her first birthday cake smash and pictures of her at her party. Kaitlin is always just as sweet as the first day we met. She wrote a beautiful and heartfelt letter for Everly and sent pictures for her baby book, which we will always treasure. It makes us so happy to think Everly will know her birth family, including her half siblings.

Everly will always know she is adopted and that her adoption is a happy, positive thing. Thanks to Kaitlin, she will also always know her birth mom loves her and didn't leave her and did everything she could to give her an amazing life. We are forever grateful for everything Everly's birth mom did, and continues to do, for Everly. Choosing an open adoption was the absolute best decision we made, and we know as Everly grows up her birth family will continue to have a positive impact on all our lives.

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# 113th Anniversary Gala Celebration

## Dave and Melanie True

Wyoming Children's Society is thrilled to announce that Dave and Melanie True, high school sweethearts who have been lovingly married for over 50 years, are this year's honorees at the 113th Wyoming Children's Society Gala. Their journey together is a testament to resilience, faith, and the power of bringing a family together through adoption.

As a young married couple, Dave and Melanie faced the challenges of infertility and then endured heart-wrenching loss after their daughter, Stacy fought and lost her battle to leukemia. After much prayer and reflection, they embarked on their adoption journey to fulfill their dream of a large family. In 1978 they joyfully welcomed their son, Shane, through the gift of adoption. Their family continued to grow with the adoption of their daughter Christy in 1981, son Bryce in 1986, and daughter Ashley in 1992.



Dave and Melanie True

Throughout the highs and lows of their adoption journey, Dave and Melanie have remained steadfast and supportive parents, cherishing their four adopted children. Their hearts and home have been further filled with joy as they embraced the role of grandparents to now a total of 13 grandchildren and another on the way. Adoption has always held a special place in their hearts, inspiring them to become longtime supporters of the Wyoming Children's Society. They deeply appreciate the agency's dedication to the children and families it serves.

Dave and Melanie are humbled and honored to be the recipients of this year's Gala recognition. They extend their heartfelt wishes for the continued success of the Wyoming Children's Society and its mission.

Join us in celebrating Dave and Melanie's remarkable journey and their unwavering commitment to family and community at this year's Gala.



# Farewell to Susanna Bird: A Valued Team Member and Advocate

*by Kristin Burkart*

It is with mixed emotions that we announce the resignation of Susanna Bird, who has been an integral part of the Wyoming Children's Society for the past eight years. While we are saddened to see her leave, we are incredibly grateful for the remarkable contributions she has made to our agency and the lives she has touched.

Susanna has been a tireless advocate for our birth mothers, adoptive families, and children. Her commitment to our mission has been unwavering, and her impact immeasurable. She brought a unique blend of empathy, patience, and professionalism to her role, consistently demonstrating respect and understanding in every interaction.

Throughout her tenure, Susanna approached each case with an open mind, a listening ear, and a guiding hand. Her ability to connect with individuals on a personal level and provide steadfast support has been a cornerstone of her work. Whether navigating complex situations or offering a comforting presence, Susanna's dedication and skill have shone brightly.

Her departure leaves a significant void, and she will be greatly missed by her colleagues and the many families she has supported. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to Susanna for her years of service and wish her all the best in her future endeavors.

Thank you, Susanna, for your exceptional service and for making a lasting difference in the lives of so many.



Susanna Bird



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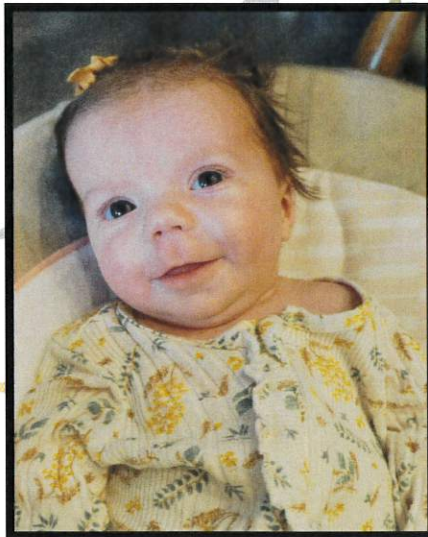
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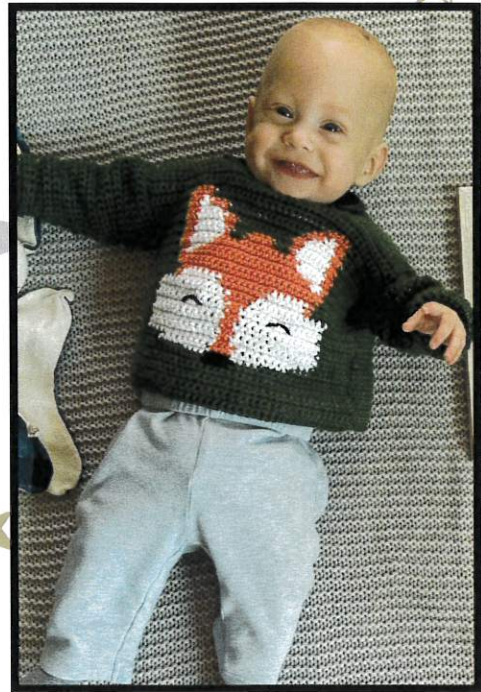
# New Arrivals



Jack Young, Cheyenne



Sadie Anderson, Cheyenne



Cyan Linn, Jackson

## Children Who Wait Meet Kenzie!

Wyoming Children's Society is committed to recruiting adoptive families who are interested in bringing permanency to children who are waiting in the public foster care system. Currently, there are over 400,000 children in foster care with over 100,000 of those children available for adoption. Kenzie are just two of the children who are waiting for their forever families. Financial assistance is often available for adoption related expenses. If you are interested in learning more about adopting a waiting child please contact Wyoming Children's Society.



Kenzie (16) recently discovered the wonders of henna and has taken up an interest in make-up, nails, and hair! This teen blossoms with creative arts. If she isn't crafting or sewing, she can be found in the kitchen whipping up delicious bakes or cooking yummy recipes. One of this sweet girl's best skills is in her drawings. She adores dogs and trips to McDonald's for a meal. Follow it up with a drink from Starbucks, and Kenzie will be in heaven. Her favorite color changes often! Kenzie has positive relationships with peers and adults. While she is shy at first, give her some time, and Kenzie will surely come around. She talks about being a crime scene investigator in the future.

As an eleventh grader, she does well in school.

Kenzie would like a family with pets; however, her caseworker will consider all family types. She has significant connections to maintain following placement. Financial assistance may be available for adoption-related services. Kenzie resides in Utah. Child ID: 205369

## Other News

### Wyoming Children's Society Awarded \$25,000 Grant from Kohl's National Giveback Initiative

In November, Wyoming Children's Society was thrilled to announce that it had been selected as a recipient of a generous \$25,000 grant from Kohl's National Giveback Initiative. This grant significantly bolstered the organization's mission to provide unwavering support to women facing unplanned or crisis pregnancies.

The funds from Kohl's National Giveback Initiative were allocated directly to our comprehensive support programs, which aim to offer non-judgmental, balanced, and compassionate assistance to women navigating the challenges of unexpected pregnancies. We are committed to providing a range of support services, including options exploration, housing assistance, transportation, medical expenses, food, and other life necessities. At the core of our mission is the dedication to being available 24/7 for women, ensuring they have a reliable source of support and guidance regardless of the path they choose. We recognize that facing an unplanned pregnancy is a deeply personal and often overwhelming experience, and we aim to be a pillar of strength during these critical times.

We are immensely grateful to the associates at the Cheyenne Kohl's and Kohl's National Giveback Initiative for their generous support of our organization's mission. It is our commitment to offer a safe, understanding, and supportive environment, empowering women to make the decisions that align with their personal values and circumstances.

Kohl's grant to Wyoming Children's Society was made through the company's National Giveback Initiative, which provides associates with the opportunity to nominate a nonprofit they're passionate about for a \$25,000 grant. Through the initiative, Kohl's will donate grants to selected nonprofits nationwide, demonstrating the company's ongoing commitment to family health and wellness. The full list of selected grant recipients is available on [Corporate.Kohls.com](https://www.Corporate.Kohls.com). Donations are made possible through the Kohl's Cares Goods for Good merchandise program, which sells children's books and toys and donates 100 percent of the net profit to charitable organizations across the country.

### 2024 WyoGives



We are excited to announce that Wyoming Children's Society will be participating in this year's WyoGives event on July 10, 2024. This event is a powerful, statewide 24-hour online fundraising event that is designed to bring the state together as one community to raise money and awareness for Wyoming's nonprofits. We really appreciate all our donors, and we encourage donors that plan to donate this year to do it on July 10th! There are great opportunities for us to receive matching funds, but we need you all to donate.

On July 10th, just go to <https://www.wyogives.org/organizations/wyoming-children-s-society> and donate! It's that easy!

# News from Wyoming Children's Society Board of Directors

## Wyoming Children's Society wishes to Thank These Board Members for Their Years of Service

It is with deep gratitude and a touch of sadness that we announce the resignation of three esteemed members of our board: Stephanie Teubner, Megan Romano, and Tyler Tonso. Each of these individuals has contributed significantly to the Wyoming Children's Society, and their presence will be greatly missed. We extend a heartfelt thank you to Stephanie, Megan, and Tyler for their exceptional service to our agency and the wider community. Their leadership, advocacy, and dedication have been vital to our success and growth. While we will miss their presence, we are deeply grateful for the lasting contributions they have made.



Joining our board in 2018, **Megan Romano** has enriched our team with her unique perspective and insightful contributions. As an adoptee from South Korea, Megan has provided invaluable insights and a personal connection to our mission. Her dedication to advocating for birth mothers, adoptive families, and children has been inspiring. Megan's thoughtful leadership and compassionate approach have made a lasting impact on our organization.



**Stephanie Teubner** has been a cornerstone of our board since her appointment in 2009. Serving as our Treasurer, Stephanie has been instrumental in guiding our financial decisions with expertise and dedication. As the CEO of Blue Federal Credit Union, she has brought a wealth of knowledge and leadership to our organization. Beyond her professional role, Stephanie is a community leader who selflessly dedicates her time and talents to numerous boards throughout Wyoming. Her commitment to our community and our agency has been nothing short of remarkable.



**Tyler Tonso**, who has served on our board since 2020, brought a deep-rooted connection to our community, having grown up in Cheyenne. As a chiropractor at Avenue Health Center, Tyler's commitment to wellness and support extended beyond his professional practice to his work with our board. His passion for our mission and his proactive engagement have been greatly appreciated.

### Introducing Our New Treasurer: Robin Martin

We are thrilled to announce the appointment of **Robin Martin** as the new Treasurer of the Wyoming Children's Society. Robin joined our board in 2022 and has already made a substantial impact with her expertise and dedication. Robin currently serves as the Chief Financial Officer at the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, bringing with her a wealth of financial knowledge and leadership experience. Her deep understanding of financial management and strategic planning will be invaluable to our organization as we continue to grow and improve our services. We look forward to the continued financial improvement and stability of our agency under Robin's helm. Please join us in welcoming Robin Martin to her new role and supporting her as she leads our financial endeavors into a bright future.



# Remembering Ibbby Davis

*by Carol Burman Lindly*

Elizabeth "Ibby" Davis passed away on January 31, 2024, surrounded by her loving family, loyal friends, and adoring community. The void left by Ibby's passing is felt every day.



**Dr. Rick and Ibby Davis**

Wyoming Children's Society was so fortunate when Ibby Davis agreed to serve on the board of directors in 1993. Her leadership style and commitment to our mission helped grow the agency over the 30 years she served on the board. During her tenure, the staff and board launched international adoption programs in Russia and was responsible for over 700 Russian children being placed in their forever adoptive homes throughout the United States. She was also instrumental in our development of innovative programs serving young women faced with unplanned pregnancies.

Ibby was a dedicated and informed board member. She served as both president and vice president during her years of service providing strong leadership to fellow board members and staff. I would watch her during board meetings as she created beautiful sketches while also participating in important agency discussions. Her sense of humor was well known which ensured there was never a dull moment in our board meetings. I miss those funny voicemail messages she would often leave-just checking in to see how things were going and challenging us to always do our best work.

Ibby's talents were many. She was an accomplished artist and former teacher. Many years ago, Ibby painted a picture of three children's faces that quickly became an iconic symbol of Wyoming Children's Society. This watercolor painting of the three children graces the front of the Wyoming Children's Society office. It will forever be an important part of Wyoming Children's Society.



Rick and Ibby Davis moved to Cheyenne over 50 years ago when Rick was a physician with the United States Air Force. Their love story is truly unique. They met in kindergarten while both lived in Wyoming, Ohio! They made Cheyenne their home where they raised their two children, Katie and Stuart. Rick served the community for decades as a gifted cardiologist. Ibby continued with her art and both became involved with community non-profits serving on boards and committees. They have touched so many lives with their volunteer spirit and their philanthropy.

I am so fortunate to have two Ibby Davis original watercolor paintings! It is not unusual for me to stop and take those paintings in while thinking of Ibby. She challenged each of us to do our best, help others and make our great state of Wyoming a good place for families to grow. There is no doubt when you look up at those stars in the vast Wyoming night skies that one of them is Ibby shining her light upon us!



# 113th Anniversary Gala Corporate Sponsors

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# WYOMING CHILDREN'S *society*

## Our Mission

*Our mission is to build healthy families through adoption, and to advocate for birth families, children and adoptive families.*

## Our Vision

*A world where every child belongs to a safe and loving family.*



## Staff and Board Listing

### Staff

**Kristin Burkart**, CEO

**Kristi Roberts**, Adoption Program Coordinator

**Elizabeth Lindly**, LCSW, Placement Supervisor – Colorado

**Christy LeClercq**, MSW– Casper

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**Kelly Clarke**, Vice President  
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