



State of the Agency, by Amy S. Cohen, Executive Director

Happy Spring!! I am sitting in my new office now with plenty of sunlight pouring in; I can glance up and see the trees blooming. As we begin a new quarter century, I feel that this has been a good move for AWL. Moving can be a stressful event, but we all pulled together and we moved in successfully with very few glitches. A special thank you to our staff and extra helpers: Karen, Nancy, Deborah, Jean, Sandy, Alyssa, Tyler, Roger & Julie. A very special thank you to Steve (our IT guy) for putting in countless hours to make sure our computers and telephones were up and running quickly, with very little down time. I also want to thank all our board members for their support. We would not be where we are today without you.

2010 ended on a good and busy note. We had 40 placements for the year. We were able to subsidize 16 of these placements into loving homes. Some of the money you donate allows us to reduce the fees for these placements. The money you donate also goes to help birth parents continue their education and move into better living situations. For example, a young woman who made an adoption plan with us in March completed her CNA class has secured a part time job and is looking for fulltime work now. Thank you! Thus far, 2011 has been a busy year. First there was the move and while we were doing that, we had 15 placements in the first four months of the year. It gives us all great pride to form these loving, stable families while providing care for expectant and birth parents.

The landscape of adoption has significantly changed in the past 25 years. AWL has been able to remain successful because we strive to be on the cutting edge, while providing professional, compassionate and caring services to all touched by adoption. We are proud to be adoption professionals in the Commonwealth of MA, which remains a non-profit agency state. We believe that by maintaining the high standards that we have in MA and at AWL, adoption will remain part of social services and not a for profit business.

Nancy and I have been working closely with EEC (Department of Early Education and Care) to strengthen the language of the current adoption law which prohibits out of state for profit entities from advertising and working in MA. We will be testifying at the State House in front of the Joint Committee on Children, Families and Disabilities on June 14th to support the proposed changes. These changes will allow EEC to issue "Cease and Desist" letters and fine those entities who are illegally advertising and working in MA. The bills are number H981 and companion bill H1328 which will be heard in front of the Judiciary Committee. Please contact your legislators in support of these bills.

We will continue to work with the legal department at EEC and the legislature to strengthen the language and allow EEC to enforce the law and fine those who do not abide by the law. Our goal is to make sure that adoption is about the children and not about who makes money. We firmly believe that no one should profit from the life of a child.

Another project we have been working on with the Board of Directors is to examine and rewrite our Mission Statement. At our last board meeting in April we adopted our new mission statement:

Adoptions With Love is the preferred Domestic Adoption Agency providing compassionate, confidential and trustworthy services to find the best home for each child with life long support for everyone touched by adoption.

This mission statement encompasses the work we do and the future of AWL.

I hope to see you all at the 25th Anniversary Celebration on September 18th.

Handwritten signature of Amy S. Cohen in black ink.



A Letter from Nancy By Nancy Rosenhaus, Associate Director



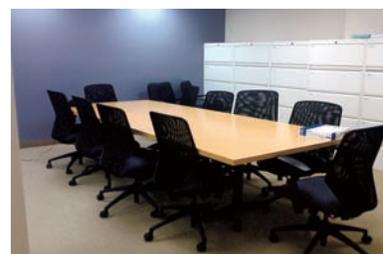
After twenty one years in our office space on Needham Street it was time for a change. Adoptions With Love outgrew that space and lost our desire to listen incessantly to the singing hairdressers in the salon below us. So we packed up and moved across town to our beautiful new offices at **246 Walnut St. Newtonville, MA.** It seems fitting that we close our first quarter century off with a move to a new environment as we look ahead to the future. May 2011 marks **25 years** of building families through domestic adoption and it is an amazing accomplishment. We have certainly come a long way from the beginnings of Adoptions With Love working out of Liz Quackenbush's basement to a small office space on Wells Ave. in Newton, and then to the Needham Street address.

Not only is it my pleasure to come to such a pleasant environment, but I work with wonderful colleagues. Amy and I have an amazing collegial relationship and friendship for almost 23 years. Karen, Deborah, Jean and Sandy are smart and funny women who make coming to work a pleasure. We have celebrated many special occasions together while at work i.e. births of children, high school and college graduations, and special birthdays. In May, we will celebrate another special birthday: Jean Stokowski who has worked part time at Adoptions With Love for 14 years will celebrate her **80th** birthday!! Jean is a very special member of our staff.

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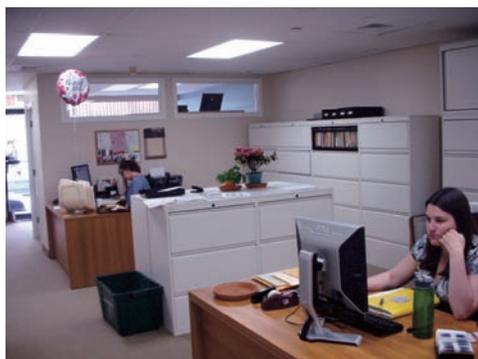
The new conference room has already hosted an evening board meeting complete with a newborn baby in attendance (his foster mom is on the board!) and a new parents group with 9 parents and babies all crying, swaying, eating, and finally sleeping. It is a pleasure to have so much positive activity in our office.



However, change is coming to our office as we get ready to say goodbye to Deborah Bamel, our birthparent coordinator who has worked at Adoptions With Love for the past 2 years, since her graduation from college. She is now leaving to go off to graduate school where she will obtain her Masters in Public Health and we will miss her tremendously. She has been such an asset to our office.



25 years is an accomplishment that we celebrate. Every fiber of Adoptions With Love is built on the shoulders of those who have been part of us. Every staff member over the years, every board member, every family who adopted with us and all the children, young and now young adult. We really hope to see you at our fantastic celebration planned for September 18, 2011. YOU are part of AWL and we can't wait to celebrate our tremendous success with you!



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Our New Office Space



On April 1, 2011 Adoptions With Love moved into our beautiful new office space at 246 Walnut Street in Newtonville, MA. We have a lovely conference room and we plan on hosting a series of post adoption groups for parents. Please stop by and visit us anytime. We are in suite 103. There are 1 hour meters in front of the building and FREE parking for 2 hours just down the block.



Debrorah Bamel is leaving Adoptions With Love

Whenever someone asks me where I work, they are always fascinated by my answer. It's never a short conversation - I've found myself discussing the intricacies of adoption with everyone from my parents and roommates to total strangers! I began to wonder after a while, what was it about my job that everyone found so fascinating? I think, after two years, I have finally figured out the answer to this question: the work we do at Adoptions With Love is more than just a job. Every day, when we come to work, we touch the lives of so many people in incredible ways. This is not your typical job. And I'm so lucky to have had the opportunity to be part of the AWL family.

After much deliberation, I have decided to leave Adoptions With Love this fall to pursue a Master's degree in Public Health at Columbia University. I will be focusing on health issues that affect pregnant women and young children - a passion that has been inspired by the work I have done here at AWL.

Perhaps the most incredible part of the past two years, for me, has been seeing first hand the impact that our work has on the families that we build through adoption. Watching the sheer joy on parents' faces when they meet their baby for the first time, often right here in our office, is an image that I will never forget. Thank you to all of our adoptive parents who have let me be a part of your journey to becoming a family.

I also want to thank our birthmothers, who have confided in me and trusted me during such an emotional time in their lives. The strength and courage that you all have is truly inspiring, and I will carry your stories with me as I move on to new experiences.

And of course, I want to thank Amy, Nancy and Karen, for teaching me, supporting me, and keeping me laughing all day long. Thank you for allowing me to be part of such a special agency. It has been a pleasure to work with such wonderful people. I will certainly be back to visit and I look forward to watching AWL grow and change in the years to come.

25th Anniversary Family Celebration

Sunday, September 18, 2011



Join us in celebrating our 25th Anniversary at Adoptions With Love with a day full of fun for the entire family at the Warren Center in Ashland, MA. on September 18th, 2011.

Join our Emcees for the day Mary Richardson (formerly from Channel 5) and Anthony Everett (host of Chronicle) and hear from Executive Director, Amy Cohen and Associate Director, Nancy Rosenhaus in a brief presentation. Amy and Nancy look forward to seeing everyone they have known through the years.

You won't want to miss this wonderful celebration. We will have indoor and covered spaces just in case of rain. But the festivities will go on, rain or shine!



TICKET INFORMATION

Tickets will go on sale in June.

<http://awl25.eventbrite.com>

and **REGISTER** to stay informed about the day's events and to be notified when tickets are available to purchase. We will have a tribute book which we will put together. For information on how to become a business sponsor or to place a personal ad, please contact

Susan Heffron at:

sheffron@marketing-studio.com.

VOLUNTEER

If you want to volunteer, please contact the office by email kstrem@awlonline.org or call 617-964-4357 and let Karen know. We will be looking for people to take shifts the day of the event, and for some sub-committees leading up the the event.



Meet old friends and make new ones. Kids young and old will have fun, play and connect with other friends in support of Adoptions With Love and the fabulous work they do to create and bring families together. Over the last 25 years, AWL has brought over 1500 children into loving homes through adoption. Here are some of the highlights we already have planned for this spectacular day:

- **Airbrush tattoos**
- **Lakefront with beach**
- **Petting zoo**
- **Mad Science demo**
- **DJ/music/karaoke and dance games with prizes**
- **Sports competitions**
- **Soccer Super Stars**
- **Tennis courts (byo)**
- **Moon bounce**
- **Roving magician**
- **Pony Rides**
- **Ultimate Frisbee**
- **Tug of War**
- **Softball (byo gloves)**
- **BBQ lunch and ice cream bar**
- **Football**
- **Arts and Crafts**
- **Volleyball**
- **Ping Pong & Horseshoes**

*Join us and our Emcees for the day: Mary Richardson and Anthony Everett
Local TV personalities*

Register NOW...here's how



TO REGISTER

Go to: <http://awl25.eventbrite.com>

Tickets will go on sale in mid-June but if you register you will be on the update list for new information as it becomes available.



GET CONNECTED by going to:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/awl25>

to join our facebook group. This is a private group (separate from the AWL fan page) and is a great way to connect with old friends. You can request to be invited to join the group.



A DAY OF FUN FOR EVERYONE



Building Families Through Domestic Adoption

AWL STAFF

Amy S. Cohen, LICSW, Executive Director
Nancy Rosenhaus, LICSW, Associate Director
Nuala Sullivan, LSW, Social Worker
Debra N. Olshever, M.Ed., LCSW
Karen Strem, Office Manager
Deborah Bamel, Birth Parent Coordinator
Jean Stokowski, Receptionist
Sandy Rohtstein, Bookkeeper

AWL Board of Directors

Deborah Goldberg, President
Chris Counihan
Janet Giesser
Susan Heffron
Michael Krupa
Ray Levy
Michael Winter
Drew Zalkind