

## Dear Expectant Mother,

Hi. We are Caroline and Ray. We want to thank you for taking the time to read about us and our hopes to continue building our family through adoption. We are happily married and are excited to raise children in a loving and nurturing home.

We truly admire and respect your strength and determination to find a loving and stable home for your baby. In considering adoption, you have made a courageous decision for your child and for yourself. As we share our backgrounds and stories with you, we hope that you will consider our home for your baby. Your baby will be so loved in our home.



We are so blessed to have Bill in our lives

Coming from supportive and loving families, we always imagined ourselves raising a family. We tried unsuccessfully for several years to bear children, enduring both the promises and disappointments of fertility treatments. When bearing children was no longer an option, we knew in our hearts that having a family was just as important to us as it had always been. In 2006, we were blessed to have our son Bill join our family through adoption. We are so thankful that adoption offers us the opportunity to realize our dreams of having a family.

We live in a small town in Massachusetts, on a quiet street with no traffic apart from that of children riding their bicycles and families taking walks together. Ray is a seventh-grade teacher (which means he has the summers off!). He is home early in the afternoon and is able to spend plenty of vacation time with our family. Caroline had a career in children's publishing. She is thrilled to be staying home now with Bill.

\*\*\*

## Who We Are

We first met when we worked together at a children's software company; Caroline was in charge of production, and Ray was a software developer. We began our friendship sharing stories and laughing over lunch. While we sat among many friends, it always seemed that the stories we shared about growing up were eerily similar to one another: we were raised in Catholic households; every night we ate dinner and shared the news of the day with our families; we loved (and still love) peanut butter and jelly sandwiches on Wonder Bread; we continued to visit our parents and families regularly.



Hiking in Maine

In time, it became clear that we shared the same interests, held the same values, and maintained the same positive outlook on life. We often said, and often heard it said, that we “belonged together.” Our abilities to laugh together, to support one another, and to learn from one another are the strengths of our relationship.



**Our little Hoosier!**

We continue to share a strong, loving relationship, and now we get to share our love with our son, Bill. In September of 2006, after many phone calls, we were very lucky to meet Bill's birth mother and family in person. Just hours later Bill was born, and we were able to hold him moments after his birth. Our love for him was immediate. We remain in contact with Bill's birth mother, sending photos, emails, and letters on a regular basis. We tell Bill about her all the time, about how much she loves him, and how she is truly our hero.

Being parents is everything we had hoped for—and more! We are just amazed by Bill and everything he does. We love watching Bill grow, playing with him, reading to him, singing to him

(and lately with him), and making him giggle. And now he is learning to talk! We can't wait to hear the new words he learns each day. Our love for Bill grows every day, and as a family we are ready to share that love with a second child.

We both grew up in families with siblings. As children, we enjoyed having older siblings to play with (and sometimes bug). As adolescents, we appreciated having someone to confide in. As adults, we still love the companionship of our siblings—we still play with them and confide in them! As parents, we so want our children to have the same experiences and joys that come from having siblings.

There are so many things we plan to do as a family. We look forward to sharing a hot dog at a ball game, to playing on the swings at the park, and to building sandcastles at the beach and snowmen in our backyard! We're excited to watch “The Muppet Movie” with our kids (one of Ray's all-time favorites), to help them with their homework, and to listen to their stories at the dinner table. Our favorite holiday, without a doubt, is Christmas, and we can't wait to see the kids' joy as they watch the train circle beneath the Christmas tree. We are eager to share each and every joy and struggle with our children.



**Red Sox fans at a Nationals game!**

\*\*\*



### **About Caroline**

**Caroline:** I was raised in a loving home, where my parents taught me that family comes first. It is

certainly a belief that my brother Tom, my sisters Marian and Catherine, and I still live by. My mom was a stay-at-home mom and was always there when I got home from school. While my dad worked hard, he made sure he never missed a special event in our lives. And I could always count on my grandmother for special hugs.

Growing up, I always loved when my family gathered around the dinner table. Dinner was a time to share stories of our day, to make plans for the coming week, and to laugh. My parents made sure that we each had a chance to tell about our day, and more importantly, that we learned to listen to each other. Ray and I keep this tradition, sharing our stories over dinner every night.

I feel very lucky that I can be a stay-at-home mom. I love to see how Bill grows and changes every day. I so look forward to having another child to love and nurture.

**Ray:** What first drew me to Caroline were her infectious laugh and wide smile. As I came to know Caroline, I recognized the truly giving person she really is. At one Easter gathering, Caroline's niece, Annelise, asked for help with her math homework. Amidst all the chaos, Caroline dropped what she was doing and worked with Annelise until she understood. I see this same patience and support whenever Caroline is with Bill. Whether she is reading Bill a story, feeding him, or even changing his diaper, Caroline is the compassionate, nurturing, and loving mother she was meant to be.



Looking for seashells with Bill

\*\*\*

### About Ray



Happily approaching the finish line!

**Ray:** Mom and Dad raised Patty, Maureen, and me (yes, the youngest, and the only boy) in a home filled with laughter and warmth. As a family we ate, traveled, and celebrated together, and we supported each other. We were taught that it was okay to tell a family member that you loved them. As a teenager, I learned to value relationships when my sister Maureen suddenly passed away at the age of 20. While her death was painful to endure, I've always taken comfort in that, the morning before she passed away, we had the opportunity to say, "I love you" to one another. Since then I've always made it a point to treat people warmly and respectfully, because I know how valuable relationships are.

And now I'm a seventh-grade teacher—and lovin' it. I'd had a successful business career,

but over time I realized that I wasn't making a difference in people's lives. I enjoy the rewards of teaching, especially in the way it helps young people to grow. Being able to help children develop and to share in their experiences is also why I love every moment with Bill. I just can't get enough of being a dad.

**Caroline:** Ray is one of the most out-going and optimistic people I know. He has a fabulous sense of humor and a big booming laugh. Sometimes I think I'm married to Santa Claus! Ray's joy for life is contagious. I love to spy as Ray sings to Bill, tells Bill about his favorite Red Sox players, or makes silly faces just to get Bill to laugh. But what I love most about Ray is that he's never afraid to show Bill and me how much he loves us. And I know he has more than enough love to share with another child.



**Cheering for the Colts!**

\*\*\*

## Home



Our home is in a small town in central Massachusetts. The town is classic New England, complete with a town green, several parks, and beautiful old buildings. We are just a short walk to the library, the park, and our church. Each year the town holds a "Spirit" festival, with a parade through the town center, a road race, and games for all the children. It is a terrific place to see friends.

We love our neighborhood. Our neighbors include families with young children, families with teens, and several grandparents. Each year the street is shut down for our neighborhood block party. Everyone

brings food, and there is always a pick-up whiffle ball game for kids and parents alike.

The schools in our town are some of the best in Massachusetts. In fact, the schools are one of the main reasons we decided to live here. And we are even close enough that on a warm spring day, we can walk our children to school.

\*\*\*

## Family and Friends

It is absolutely amazing how similar our families are. For example, the annual family vacation is part of a tradition that goes way back in each of our families. And both vacations were inspired by the idea of giving the children (and now the grandchildren) in our families lasting memories. And what memories! For years now, children and adults alike have looked forward to hitting the beach, boogie boarding, the tournament of the week (basketball, volleyball, tennis, golf, Pictionary), the cookouts, the mini-golf, and most especially, the stories.



**On vacation with Ray's family at the shore**

Holidays and vacations are not the only times we speak with our parents, siblings, nieces, and nephews. Family is extremely important to us, and we talk with family members on a weekly basis, at the very least. Holidays are always spent with family, plus we regularly make trips to visit each other just for the fun of it. And now with Bill in our lives, our families just can't get enough of him!

We have been blessed to carry forward friendships from all stages of our lives, from kindergarten through graduate school and beyond. Our friends run the whole gamut: some are single, some are married with children, and others, like us, are going through the adoption process. In each case, we have a tremendous support system. And we love to watch as our children form friendships with one another.



Enjoying vacation with Caroline's family

\*\*\*

### In Closing

Any child that joins our family through adoption will grow up in a home filled with love, tenderness, and lots of laughter and joy. We will do our best to make sure they feel safe and secure in our love and that they know we will always support them. We will encourage our children's educational growth, as well as provide them with the opportunity to attend college. Most importantly, we will do everything we can to make sure they live comfortable and happy lives.



We believe in communicating the truth about the adoption early in an adopted child's life. You will always be mentioned with love and respect, and we are happy to send pictures and letters describing your child's growth.

We hope that this letter has provided you with information that makes your decision a little easier. We know this is a difficult decision. If you would like more information about the two of us please call Steve or Joel Kirsh at 1-800-333-5736. If you call after regular business hours, either Steve or Joel will be paged and will return your call as soon as possible. Calling in no way means you have to move forward with the adoption.

We will work with the Kirshes to provide you with the information you need in order to make a well-informed decision.

Ultimately, your decision is based on what you consider the most important qualities in adoptive parents. We hope that you recognize in us some of those qualities, and the commitment we share in raising healthy, happy, and much-loved children.

We wish you all the best.

*Caroline - Ray*