

## Chapter 1 : Heart of the Matter Education

*At Heart of Adoptions, Inc. our primary mission is to create families through adoption. To complete this mission, we ensure all of our clients are treated as individuals, with unique needs, situations, and emotions.*

Both of my girls are Heart Heroes! I want to tell you their story from the beginning. As soon as I saw her, I knew instantly she was my daughter. I just knew she was meant to be a part of our family. My husband and three teenage biological children needed some convincing. They were pretty shocked that I was even considering adopting a little girl from Ukraine with Down syndrome. They had many appropriate concerns. I had promised that precious girl via prayer that I would do whatever it would take to bring her home as soon as humanly possible, so getting my family on board was priority. I decided to read her bio so I could get all the information I could to discuss with the rest of the family. Her bio said that she had a complete AV Canal Defect and severe Pulmonary Hypertension and she was missing her left hand. We had absolutely no experience with heart or lung conditions nor did we have any experience with any type of limb difference. I just needed to get her home to be loved! Finally, we were all on the same page and we committed to bring Lyla home on June 8, We started working hard to get her home as quickly as possible. We received a call just weeks before traveling to meet her that she was very ill and in the hospital ICU in Ukraine. We were heartbroken to say the least. We were told that the doctors in Ukraine would not operate on her heart. I contacted a cardiac surgeon that travels to Ukraine to help little ones with heart issues. I begged him to see Lyla, but unfortunately since we did not have any legal rights he could not help us. Praying she would recover and we would be able to bring her home. We continued to wait until our adoption papers were about to expire. I could not and would not choose another little girl from the never ending list of orphans with Down syndrome. So my incredible husband stepped up to the plate and chose another little girl. We met Isabelle on December 22, in Simferopol, Ukraine. The moment she was placed in my arms "I felt it" I was her Mom and she was my daughter. I was shocked that I fell in love with this beautiful little girl so instantly. My husband was smitten immediately too. It was just perfect. I checked her chest on our second visit to make sure! We brought Belle home in January of Everyone fell head over heels in love with the newest member of our family! We were so blessed! Belle is a beautiful 6-year-old attending 1st grade. Belle loves when someone sings to her. She gives the best hugs in the world. Her year-old brother, Conor, is her favorite person in the world! It was always our intention to return to Ukraine for Lyla if she recovered. We checked on her often but the answer was always the same. It was so painful! We finally accepted that Lyla would not be coming home. Our dream came to an end. Once we accepted Lyla was not coming home with us, we continued our journey and adopted a little boy with Down syndrome from the Ukraine. We received a call weeks before traveling to meet Gavin. The call was the one I had prayed for! I had never ever seen a child so ill in my life. I held her so tight and just cried. Finally, I was holding her and with every ounce of my being showing her how loved she was with a hug. We were allowed to visit with her two times a day and she was changing with each visit. Thriving before our eyes! She was an absolute miracle! Our flight home with Lyla was a rough one. Once over the ocean she was not able to breathe. I had never experienced a child turning blue. I had no idea that they actually turn purple. Purple nose, purple around her eyes, purple lips and mouth, etc. I was so grateful I took the advice of many and had a retired EMT fly with us. He was so great! He let me know that she needed oxygen. The flight attendant, who was also a nurse amazing, put her on oxygen immediately. They also talked to us about an emergency landing. I remained relatively calm, with the help of God, of course. I told the flight attendant that she looked much better on the oxygen and I believed she could make it home. Well, she sure did make it home. I brought Lyla to see the pediatric cardiologist Dr. Leonard on September 18th. Again, I had no experience with heart and lung issues. But what in the world was this guy telling me? He agreed to set her up for a cardiac cath and talk to the surgeon. Well, she had the cath in November of Leonard presented her case after Thanksgiving. We were very satisfied. Lyla was doing so well that the surgeon scheduled her for OHS in March of Lyla was admitted for OHS but the anesthesiologist was not comfortable with her chest x-ray and she cancelled the surgery. They scheduled Lyla again in May. The surgeon cancelled this time because her

pulse ox was too low. He also told us that she would not survive surgery and they were not able to help her. Lyla needed this surgery to survive. Now she is going to die? She looked so good! How could it be? He fought the insurance too! We went but her surgery was cancelled. Lyla was not well enough for surgery. Marx did not give up on her. He scheduled her again for January of When we returned in January no one could believe she was the same child they had seen in October, she looked so much better. Her cath results improved too! So it was decided Lyla would finally have her life saving surgery January 16, ! It was obviously just so meant to be that her repair would be done in Boston! She recovered in record time and was discharged on January 23, ! I am still in complete awe! They received blood from the heart the wrong way for three years, so it will take some time to get use to receiving blood the right way. She has been hospitalized three times since her surgery. She is going strong. Living her life to the fullest! The last two months she has improved significantly. She only requires her oxygen at sleep and for short periods of time during the day or with activity. Lyla just turned 5-years-old. She is attending kindergarten and loving every minute of it.

### Chapter 2 : Helping our most vulnerable children find safe, loving, permanent homes.

*Meredith Shepard joined Heart of Adoptions in August as an Adoptive Parent Coordinator. She works closely with waiting adoptive families handling day-to-day needs and assisting with matching adoptive families to birth families.*

Contact Us Pet Adoption Thank you for your interest in pet adoption! Adopting a pet comes with numerous advantages including: Millions of healthy, adoptable pets are euthanized every year simply for a lack of a home. Many adoptable pets are already trained. When you adopt an older pet, you will often get a sense of their personality and temperament. You also already know their full grown size! An adoption fee can save you money! There are all types of pets waiting for their forever homes. There are many puppies and kittens available for adoption. You can also adopt birds, horses, rabbits, and a variety of other small and furry pets. Most adoptable pets are happy, healthy, house-trained, high quality pets. As you begin your search for a new family member, there are a few important things to keep in mind. Most importantly, you need to think through what will be a good fit for both your family and the pet. Thinking through the lifestyle and needs of both your family and your future pet will help ensure you find the right companion. Here are some important considerations to help you and your family identify some of the qualities you would like in a new companion animal: Household Type – The amount of space in your home is an important factor in determining the right adoptable pet for you – a large home or a studio apartment affects the type of pet that makes sense for your current situation. Additional considerations are things like yard space – are you living in the suburbs or the city, do you have access to outside space, etc. Family Dynamic – If you live in a hectic, loud home with kids running around, that should be considered. Or, if you have other pets, you will want to ensure your new companion will get along with everyone already living in your home. There are many more possible considerations – gender, allergies, etc. They will be able to help you narrow in on selecting a pet that will match your lifestyle, while also ensuring your lifestyle matches the needs of the pet. Good luck in your search!

### Chapter 3 : Pet Adoption – The Heart of Rescue

*adoptions interwoven with the filmmaker's story as a birthmother revealing the enormous complexities in their lives with illuminating historical background. Among the numerous screenings of Unlocking the Heart of Adoption.*

### Chapter 4 : Unlocking the Heart of Adoption – A documentary by Sheila Ganz

*Pet Adoption Thank you for your interest in pet adoption! Whether you're just looking, or you're ready to adopt, we're here to provide the necessary information for adopters to help their pets adjust to life in their new home.*

### Chapter 5 : The Heart Gallery of Iowa | Iowa Foster and Adoption

*The Heart of Adoption. Becky Wright. From the Album The Heart of Adoption October 27, Be the first to review this item Start your day free.*

### Chapter 6 : Search for Heart Galleries by State

*post-adoption follow-ups To expedite the process, please complete the application instead of calling. If all required fields on the application are not answered, we will not receive the application.*

### Chapter 7 : Adoption Information – The Heart of Rescue

*The Heart of Adoption [Vickie Patterson Bryan] on www.nxgvision.com \*FREE\* shipping on qualifying offers. The Heart of Adoption is designed to bring encouragement and a point of contact between God and those who want a child.*

Chapter 8 : Heart Gallery of America - Home Page

*Adoptions From The Heart is the East Coast's most trusted private adoption agency, specializing in open domestic and international placements.*

Chapter 9 : Heart for Adoption

*adoption@heart delivers adoption services across the Heart of England area and is your Regional Adoption Agency.*