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“My family wasn’t just packing for my parents, sister and I, we were packing for the three people that would become part of our family. We didn’t know what to expect, or how long we would be gone.”

The Epiphany That Was Three Siblings

By Abby Andersen

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When I think of the word epiphany, monumental comes to mind. After thinking back, I have had many epiphanies in my life—starting college, graduating from high school, my first overseas trip—but the most monumental epiphany would be the day my parents told me that they were adopting. For 15 years, it had just been my older sister, my parents and me. Then suddenly, there were going to be three more individuals in the household.

the cupboards (childproofing as my parents would say) began to appear.

Finally, after filling out loads of paperwork, my family got approved for the adoption. We were immediately given tapes of children from Russia wanting to be adopted. After looking through a few videos and pictures, we finally saw them—two boys and one girl playing with toys in front of the camera. It was then that I knew my life would never be the same. My parents traveled over to Russia for five days. They met the kids, filling out more paperwork and making known our intent to the Russian government that they were going to adopt these particular kids. My parents came home and we had six weeks until we brought them home. Those six weeks were filled with so many emotions—from anticipation to excitement to nervousness and fear. We were a constant fixture at Wal-Mart, going there at least once a week for clothes, diapers, and toys. Our living room turned into packing headquarters. My family wasn’t just packing for my parents, sister and I, we were packing for the three people that would become part of our family. We didn’t know what to expect, or how long we would be gone. There was also the possibility that the paperwork wouldn’t be complete and we wouldn’t be able to take them home. There were so many unknowns.

while watching a movie on the plane. I also remember the 18 hours spent flying and how I just wanted to be at home in my own bed. We arrived in Russia and got checked into our hotel. My parents and I immediately fell asleep, knowing that the next morning our family would increase by three.

ways, she is what my older sister and I aren’t. When I was younger, I hated being outside, gardening and detested bugs with a passion. Annika thrives on being outside. In the summer, you can often find my mom and her outside in the garden. Austin is 7 and even though he is younger, he is very much protective of me; always watching out for me. He is the one who is eager to learn and go on errands with me. I love that about him. Alex is 5 and is the baby of the family. I can never leave the house without him giving me a hug and a kiss goodbye. He is so adventurous and ready to try anything.

It has been three and a half years since we came home. The three children had Russian names, but since my mom, dad, sister and I have “A” names, they needed them too. Annika, Austin and Alex are the joy of my life. I love waking up to them talking and love falling asleep to their laughter. Even though it’s been hard and my whole family has had their struggles, life is so much sweeter and fuller. Annika, who is 10, is the little sister I always prayed for. In so many

So this epiphany is one that had definitely changed my life forever. No longer is my family an even number of four, but an amazing and perfect number of seven.



The changes started right away. Almost overnight, packages filled with paperwork were arriving all the time—paperwork to be filled out and immediately sent back. Our family got to know the FedEx man personally. Our adoption social worker was also a constant in our house—making sure that we were a suitable

family for adoption. The changes continued. After we found out that we were getting two boys and a girl, rooms started to get switched around. My older sister and I, after having our own rooms since we were born, now looked at the fact that we were going to be sharing a room. Toys from when I was little started coming up and making reappearance. Outlet covers, latches on

At last the day came for us to fly to Russia. I remember it so clearly. The flight left at night, so we had some friends take us to the airport after lunch. I remember wearing jeans, my jean jacket and my favorite pink shirt. I remember eating nasty airline food and laughing until I cried

Annual Report 2007

Domestic Infant Adoption	Infants placed in homes6
International Adoption	Children placed in homes18
Foster Care	Infants placed in interim care1
	State/contracted children placed in care85
	Licensed foster homes70
Pregnancy Counseling	Clients served20
	Children released for adoption8
Family Counseling	Clients served4
Embryo Services	Embryo adoption home studies completed	1
Revenue	Children services	\$131,000
	Adoptions and counseling	\$477,000
	Contributions	\$109,000
	Other revenue	\$1,000
	Total revenue	\$718,000
Expenses	Children services	\$112,000
	Pregnancy and adoption services	\$527,000
	Support services	\$110,000
	Total expenses	\$718,000

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