

Hello we are...

*Andrea & Melvin*



*Graceful*  
**adoptions**<sup>TM</sup>



## Our Hopes and Dreams...

We've been together for almost 17 years now and we feel like we've grown up together. We have shared many adventures and now dream of starting the biggest adventure of all, becoming parents. We're so excited at the thought of becoming parents that we constantly talk about things we'll do with our child one day. We dream about walking on the farm together holding our child's hands, the dogs walking behind us...or canoeing down a creek with our child, developing a love of the outdoors. And we can't wait to find out what makes our child unique and special and what passions excite them!

We are an active couple who likes to travel and do lots of different activities. Whether it's going on a trip to a national park, going to the beach with friends, meeting a group for trail riding or meeting the guys for a fishing trip, we're always up for a new adventure. We are truly each other's best friend and have been there for each other unconditionally. Our marriage is based on open communication and we support each other in everything we do.

Starting a family has taken longer than we originally thought. We always thought we would have a biological child and then add to our family through adoption. However, we've struggled with repeated miscarriages. Dealing with this grief and loss has actually strengthened our marriage and has made us even better at taking care of one another. With several friends who have adopted and Melvin's childhood friend being an adoptee herself, adoption has always seemed very natural to us. We now know adoption will be the amazing beginning of our family.

Our child will be raised in a stable home where they will know they are loved without question. We'll give our child everything we can to help them succeed in life and to find happiness. We're fortunate to have a beautiful home located on our family farm. Melvin spent many summers growing up on this farm exploring creeks, climbing trees, and making forts in barns. Our child will have the same opportunities, a safe place to imagine and explore the world and just be a kid.

For us to become parents, we know a mother must make the courageous decision to create an adoption plan. We truly believe you are making this plan out of selflessness and love for your child. We promise that we will give your child every ounce of our love and every opportunity in life we can provide. Please know that we will honor you and respect you, always openly celebrating you with your child.

Sincerely,

*Andrea & Melvin*



We focus on what matters to make every adoption a beautiful experience.

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## Our values and beliefs as parents...



**Communication** - Our marriage is based on open and honest communication and we believe it's important to talk things through, even when it's difficult. The stronger our communication is, the better we're able to support each other emotionally. We will model and teach our child healthy ways to express their emotions and advocate for themselves and their needs. We will encourage them to openly talk about their feelings, fears, and questions. Our child will know their thoughts and feelings are important by our attentiveness and our willingness to always listen.

**Independence** - We believe independence is one of the most empowering things we can teach our child. Both our parents had high expectations for us that helped us become independent adults. We will give our child responsibilities around the house as they grow - such as cleaning their room or helping to set the table for dinner. We'll encourage them to try to do things for themselves such as picking out their clothes and getting their backpack ready for school. We want our child to feel confident and capable so they may stay true to themselves in difficult situations.



**Family** - We were both raised in very supportive families who loved us unconditionally and have been there for the good and bad times. Because we still live close to both of our families, we are easily able to share our lives with them, often meeting weekly for dinner. Their love will help us teach our child that family is always there. We always pitch in to help each other move, celebrate birthdays, throw a wedding shower, or just hang out. Their grandparents can't wait to do crafts with them, take them swimming and fishing, and support them in the little and big things in their life. Our child will know their family is always there for them and they can rely on them for unconditional love and support.



**Education** - We want our child to love learning - at home, at school, and throughout their life. Andrea has been a teacher for 14 years and she knows children are easily fascinated by the world. We believe that one of the most important things a parent can do is be involved in their child's education and we can't wait to share that with them. We will encourage learning through play, whether it's painting and talking about colors or counting the animals on our farm. They will experience learning as we visit museums, go to the library, and travel together. We will encourage a college education for our child because it was a wonderful experience for both of us and has provided financial stability for our family. We want to offer the same to our child.



**Kindness** - We want to raise a child who is kind, thinks about others' feelings and considers their point of view. Children learn by watching their parents and the way they treat others. Our family speaks to each other kindly and we're respectful of other people - their opinions, their lifestyles, and their religions. We will use "please" and "thank you" with our child and teach them to do the same. When our child meets people who are different from them at school, we will encourage them to ask the child to play and to try to learn more about them. It's important they learn everyone has value and purpose and we don't all have to be the same.

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# Our home...

We are fortunate to live on a large family farm that has been in Melvin’s family for eight generations. Melvin spent a lot of his childhood on the farm with his grandparents and it is an important part of who we are as a family. The farm is full of open fields, creeks, ponds and woods. We can’t imagine a better place to grow up! Our child will have the freedom to explore, play in the creeks and on the hay bales, chase bugs, learn to take care of animals, play with their dogs, and find a love for the outdoors.

We lived on the farm for 11 years before we built our house. All those years, it was our dream to build a home that we would grow old in. Five years ago, we designed and built our home to look like a farmhouse that had always been here, quaint and cozy. It sits on a beautiful part of the farm, far back from the road with ample space to ride a bike and explore. Our house is surrounded by open fields with woods and a creek behind us. Close to the house is a large barn where we have horses and a goat. The little garden near our house will be perfect for our child to watch things grow.

Our home is inviting and comfortable, a place where you can relax and put your feet on the coffee table. Andrea likes to cook and we love to have family and friends over for dinner. Before we eat, people are typically gathered around the island in the kitchen talking and hanging out. In the winter, we’re usually in the living room with a fire going. In the summer, the kids like to go down to the barn to pet the horses or feed the goat. We usually grill out and eat dinner on our large front porch. We all end up sitting there in the evenings, appreciating where we live, watching deer in the field and once it’s dark, the lightning bugs. We can’t wait for our child to play along with their cousins and friends!

We have an active lifestyle and spend a lot time outdoors, perfect for a child! Andrea is excited for our child to help her out in the kitchen, help her feed and care for the animals, and learn to ride a horse. They will have lots of opportunities to play outside and help Melvin with projects on the farm.

We are currently working on the nursery. Our farm is named “Fox Hollow Farm” and we plan to incorporate a few fox stuffed animals and prints. We want the room to be simple and cheerful with lots of space to add toys and a desk when they are ready. We have furniture in the room from when Melvin was a child, along with his great-grandfather’s rocking chair. Our child’s room has a great view over the field where we see deer almost every night.

We can’t wait for a child’s personality to fill up our house with sounds of them laughing, playing and imagining. There will be lots of playing in the yard, going on walks, cuddling on the couch, and reading books to them. We can’t wait to add a little stocking above the fireplace and set out milk and cookies for Santa. We’re looking forward to helping our child decide what to be for Halloween, and then creating the perfect costume. Andrea is looking forward to baking birthday cakes for the many parties we’ll be hosting.

- Both non-smokers

### Hobbies:

#### Adoptive Mother:

Riding horses on our farm and with friends, hiking with our dogs, cooking, spending time with family and friends, reading, DIY house projects, traveling, trying new restaurants with friends and family

#### Adoptive Father:

Fishing, hiking with our dogs, spending time with family and friends, watching college sports, traveling, working on our family farm, water skiing and boating

### Professions:

**Adoptive Mother:** Math Instructional Coach (Teacher)

**Adoptive Father:** USDA Farm Advisor

### Education Level:

**Adoptive Mother:** Master’s Degree

**Adoptive Father:** Bachelor’s Degree



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# Our family...

We have actually known each other most of our lives and attended the same schools growing up. In college we worked together at a nearby nature sanctuary, became close friends, and fell in love. It was our love of the outdoors and hiking that brought us together and is still an important part of who we are today. We dated for two years then we got engaged at that same nature sanctuary where we began dating. Melvin surprised Andrea at our favorite waterfall when he dropped down on one knee to propose.

We have been happily married for almost 15 years. Melvin is such a kind and loyal person. He will be an amazing father, the kind who gets down on the floor and actively plays with his child. Andrea will make a wonderful mother. She's fun, caring, giving, and filled with empathy. As a couple, our greatest strength is our friendship, we truly enjoy each other and frequently crack each other up with an unexpected comment.

We designed and built our own house, which required us to learn many new skills and how to tackle complex projects together. It started with us putting in our own water line and eventually led to learning how to lay hardwood floors and install kitchen cabinets. It was a lengthy process filled with lots of highs and lows. We truly grew as a couple and love the home we put our blood, sweat, and tears into.

We love to spend time outdoors together hiking and exploring new places. We have favorite places to hike throughout the year and some weekends we canoe or kayak on nearby creeks. We also enjoy going to concerts and festivals. In the summers we like to travel. We have visited multiple national parks where we have camped and hiked for several weeks at a time. We love to try new things, especially on vacation, and have attempted hang gliding, paddle boarding and surfing.

Both sets of our parents have been married for over 40 years and provided us loving, stable homes. We are lucky that our immediate families live just 20 minutes away. Andrea's family lives on a kid filled cul-de-sac with a safe place for roller-skating and riding bikes. Her parents also keep a pontoon boat at a nearby lake where we spend lots of time in the summer. Melvin's parents have an in-ground pool where there are always lots of grandkids and cousins gathering to play and swim. Melvin's cousins are there with their kids and we have water gun fights and races in the pool. No matter whose family we are visiting, there's always a lot of joking and laughing. Since Andrea is a teacher, she will have summers off to spend with our child on the farm and with our families.

Our parents are incredibly excited to add a grandchild to their lives. Our child will be the first on Andrea's side! From day one, they embraced adoption as part of our story and have read an adoption book to help prepare them. They are excited to help us pick out a crib and a car seat, and Andrea's dad came to help paint the nursery. We know they will be there to love and support our child, just as they have done for us all our lives.



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