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## Lars

## Stephanie

### Job Description:

Computer Software Tester

Nurse Practitioner

### Education:

Associate Degree in Business, Certifications as a Specialist and Content Management

Master of Science in Nursing

### Favorites:

#### **Hero**

My Uncle Dieter

#### **Hero**

My Grandma

#### **Hobby**

Playing keyboard and guitar

#### **Hobby**

Hiking in Metroparks

#### **Movie**

Star Wars

#### **Movie**

Notting Hill

### **Memory with Spouse**

Vacation in Salzburg

### **Memory with Spouse**

Exploring Ireland together

### Children:

None

## What Led Us to Adoption

We talked about adopting even before we were married because we have seen first-hand how wonderful families through adoption can be for all involved: the adopting parents, the birthparents and most importantly the child. Lars was raised by his aunt and uncle and Steph's best friend was adopted from Korea. The process recently has become very familiar to us, as we have had several close friends who have adopted babies. These friends are important to us and we hope that your child may find comfort in having peers with their own adoption stories.

When we found that having children biologically would not happen for us, we began learning more specifically about the various types of adoption. It soon became apparent that an open adoption was right for us in so many ways. Most importantly, this is beneficial for the child but we also realize that it's an opportunity to have a beautiful unique relationship between the adoptive and birth parents. We are excited to be part of an open adoption. We firmly believe that God has different ways of making a family and He has chosen this for us.

## Our Leisure Activities

Music is an important part of our lives. Lars played keyboard and sang in a band when he lived in Germany. While he does not play professionally anymore he still writes and plays music as a hobby. Stephanie loves music as well; she took many years of piano lessons as a child and played several different instruments during high school. We set up a music room in our house with a variety of Lars' guitars, keyboards and even a piano. We plan on exposing our child to the world of music and helping them with lessons if that is something he or she would like. At the very least we hope he or she will laugh at their goofy parents playing Rock Band Wii with family and friends!

Traveling has always been a passion of ours. It's difficult to pick a favorite destination. We love our vacations in Europe with Lars' family every few years, but we also treasure our quiet weekend getaways. Last minute road trips to visit family and friends are always a treat!

Most of our leisure time is spent in our home, neighborhood or town. We certainly enjoy the simple things in life! We love having friends over for game nights in the winter and patio barbeques in the summer. We spend a lot of time "working" in the yard although this most often turns out to be "play time" with our neighbors. We both love to walk in the metroparks and we are so fortunate to have a lot of natural walking trails very close to us. Most of all we just enjoy being together!

## Our House and Neighborhood



Our home is in a newer development in a friendly suburban town with an excellent school system. Recently our community was rated as one of the best cities in America to raise a family! Our town has a wonderful nature center, library, pool, gym and countless activities for children of all ages. While we do spend a lot of our time in our local area, we are only a 30-minute drive to a large city with many theaters, museums, state of the art medical facilities and our favorite professional sports teams.



Our Home



### Our Back Patio

We are within walking distance to many parks and hiking trails and several playgrounds that are constantly filled with children. We love taking evening walks throughout the neighborhood. It's amazing how many great people we have met while chatting on the sidewalks. There are block parties every summer and last minute get-togethers on the weekends. While the neighborhood is nicely landscaped and well cared for, it is special to us because of the people - We are convinced that we have the best neighbors in the world!

### Our House and Neighborhood, continued

Our house is an open 4-bedroom house with a casual, warm and inviting atmosphere. We love spending time improving our home, whether it's painting a room, decorating for the holidays or planting more flowers in the yard. Our favorite addition is our large patio that has become a second living room for us. We love to have friends, family and neighbors over for frequent barbecues and parties. There is plenty of open lawn space to play cornhole (our favorite neighborhood game), volleyball, or a good old-fashioned game of catch. In the evening everyone gathers around a bonfire to talk, laugh and help the kids roast marshmallows. We even have brought out our movie projector so we can watch movies outside during the summer nights.

### Our Extended Families

We are very fortunate to have so many family members living within 15-20 minutes from our home. Steph's parents have been married for almost 40 years and are absolutely elated to have another grandchild. We spend a lot of weekends with them as well as Steph's sister, brother in law, nephew and niece. In fact, our niece and nephew already have some of their toys set aside to give to a new baby. They are so excited to have another child to play with. We also have many cousins with young children and infants that live very close to us. We are very blessed to have Steph's grandma in our lives. She is looking forward to welcoming another great-grandchild into the family.



Stephanie's Extended Family

Living so close to one another, we are able to spend a lot of time together. We are together at the holidays, each and everyone's birthday, and for weekend summer barbecues. A common place to gather is watching the kids' sports games - soccer, basketball, and our favorite - tee-ball. We have always been a very close family so it is no surprise that everyone has been so supportive of our adoption process. We love them all so very much!

Lars was born and raised in small village in northern Germany by his aunt and uncle. Lars has one brother who is now married and has an adorable son. All of Lars's family still lives in Germany and we both miss them every day. However, we are able to talk to them frequently via phone and computer and try to visit every year or two. Our visits to Germany are long and make it possible for his family to remain an integral part of our lives. Recently his aunt, uncle, brother, sister in law and nephew were all here for a long visit. While we might not see them as often as Steph's family, the quality of time we have with them living in our home for several weeks is absolutely priceless.



Lars' Extended Family

It was also great having both of our extended families meet. It was especially amazing to see how Lars's nephew got along so well with Steph's niece and nephew even with the language barrier. This past Christmas the children sent each other gifts that represent how the holiday is celebrated in each of their respective countries. They are so precious and we are so excited to have a child to be part of this exchanging of traditions.

### Our Little Prince



Our Cat, Minden

We both absolutely love animals - all animals! Steph adopted our cat Minden just after visiting Lars in his hometown of Minden, Germany (hence the name). During one of her visits to the Animal Protective League to drop off donated supplies, Minden was able to convince Steph to pick him up. The two instantly bonded and she couldn't leave without him : Soon Minden attached to Lars as well. In fact, he pretty much loves everyone and anyone who will pet him, especially children. Minden often thinks he is a dog - he's always greeting people at the door, craves attention at all times of the day, and even loves to play catch with his toys.

We also love to babysit our friends' and family's dogs. Although this may sound cheesy, we have even been named Godparents to our neighbor's dog Max! We just can't wait to show our child how much joy animals can bring to our lives. Cuddling with our cat, running in the yard with the dogs and even our trips to the zoo - they will all mean so much more to us when we can share them with a child.



Our Family



Niagara Falls

# Lars & Stephanie



Snapshot at the Sea



Indians Game



With the Sheep in Ireland



We Love These Girls!

## Dear Birthparent(s),

Hello! We are Stephanie and Lars. We can only imagine how difficult this time may be for you. We hope and pray that you can find some peace and comfort as you begin to get to know us through our profile. If you would like, we welcome the opportunity to meet you in person so we can share more about ourselves.

We knew from the beginning that having children biologically would be very difficult for us. We talked about adoption even before we were married. Lars was raised by his aunt and uncle, Steph's best friend was adopted from Korea, and we have quite a few friends that have adopted children themselves. We are very comfortable with the process and know that an open adoption is the right choice for us.

We promise the following:

- ◆ To be open and honest with your child about their adoption. They will know that they are loved by both their adoptive parents as well as their birth parents. We already have a small library of children's books written about adoption so they are familiar with the idea even as a baby. As the baby grows we will continue to encourage questions and answer them with love, support and honesty.

- ◆ To share stories and pictures with you so if you wish, you can see your baby grow and know that he or she is loved and cared for. We have already started a life book for your child as they grow. If you would like, we would love to include your photos, letters or stories. If staying in contact long-term is something you are interested in, we would love to explore this opportunity :

- ◆ To share our culture, traditions and activities: Lars's German culture and language; Steph's family's Lebanese foods; searching for the PERFECT pumpkin for Halloween; driving around on Christmas Eve to view the holiday light displays; picnics and fireworks by the lake on 4th of July; roasting marshmallows on the patio bonfire; Easter egg hunts in Grandma and Grandpa's yard; our yearly hiking trip to Hocking Hills; and so many more!

- ◆ To work together as husband and wife. Our years together and our challenges in starting our family have brought us closer together. We are so in love with each other and have so much love to share with a child. While we are forever grateful that we have the love and support of so many family members living so close to us, we understand the importance of our own family unit as Mom, Dad and child. Our number one priority will always be to provide a loving, nurturing family and a wonderful place to call HOME.

- ◆ To support your child in their own unique pursuits. We will introduce them to a variety of music, art, and sports so they are able to discover their own interests and passions. Education is also a priority for us. We are very fortunate to have an excellent child enrichment center and preschool available at Lars's company. Additionally we live in a town with a phenomenal school system. Of course our child's number one resource will be having two parents to support them with many educational activities in the home. We will work together as a team to help our child succeed and follow their dreams.

- ◆ To love your child unconditionally. We may not always be perfect, no one is, but please know that we are completely committed to being the best parents possible for the child. They will never feel alone. We will laugh with them, we will cry with them, we will be there to celebrate their achievements and successes, and we will be there to pick them up and hug them when they fall.

Thank you again for giving us this opportunity to share a bit of our lives with you.

Please know that you and your baby are in our prayers. We wish for you all the peace, love and wisdom possible during this challenging time.

Sincerely,

**Lars and Stephanie**

