

Families Through Hope



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**A MARE
NEWSLETTER
FOR FAMILIES
ON THEIR
ADOPTION
JOURNEY**

Quarter 3 2025

FEATURED MARE YOUTH



"Liz is kind, resilient, loving, fun, creative, passionate, and optimistic."

ELIZABETH C010458

Liz, who prefers her nickname over the more formal "Elizabeth," has a heart full of compassion and a mind buzzing with creativity. Art and creativity are passions Liz would love to share with a family. "I really love painting and I want to do that more. Diamond Art painting is something I want to do, too." In a world filled with her favorite things, Liz is a brilliant, colorful spark of kindness and strength who's ready for her forever family.

SHAMARR C010744

Basketball and football are the two main focuses of Shamarr's life. A lot of his interests and dreams revolve around these two sports. He loves being an active participant in each sport after school. When he hangs out with friends, he likes to go outside, play basketball, and spend time at friend's houses. If he could visit any place on Earth, he'd want to go to a football game simply because he loves football. When he's an adult, he'd like to play for a team in the NBA; perhaps the Detroit Pistons since his favorite colors are red and blue?



"Shamarr is such a kind, warm-hearted, easy-going young man."

FINDING FAMILY

THE WAGGONERS' JOURNEY OF LOVE, GROWTH, AND ADOPTION

By Adriana Cazzell

When the Waggoner family became licensed foster parents five years ago, they hoped to make a difference in a child's life. What they didn't expect was how deeply that child—Bella—would change theirs.

Candace and Seth Waggoner, along with their three kids (Keegan, Eleanor, and Raegan) and their energetic dog Snookie, were already an active household when they received a call: a child needed a long-term home. That call led them to Bella. "She was photolisted on MARE," Candace recalls. "After talking with her worker and showing interest, we filed an intent to adopt."



Bella (left) and Candace (right) posing for the camera on her adoption finalization day.

Bella's move into the Waggoner home came with understandable nerves. "It was kind of scary at first," she said. "But they made me feel safe and included. I really like it here." As the oldest sibling, Bella brought new energy and lessons into the family. "We've had to learn how to meet everyone's needs in different ways," said Seth. "Exploring Bella's interests has been so fun." Bella embraced her role, too. "I actually have to look out for my siblings," she said with a smile. "Responsibility is very big now."

Even little Eleanor now includes Bella in her drawings—a sweet reminder of how strong their family bond has become. Throughout their journey, the Waggoners leaned on support from MARE and their Match Support Specialist, Jenna. "She checked in weekly and gave us helpful tools, like a bonding journal," said Candace. "It helped us connect more deeply with Bella. We felt very supported during our post-adoption process and would recommend it to anyone."

FINDING FAMILY

THE WAGGONERS' JOURNEY OF LOVE, GROWTH, AND ADOPTION

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Jenna fondly remembers their time together: "It was an absolute joy working with the Waggoner family! Mr. and Mrs. Waggoner are truly wonderful advocates for Bella. It was wonderful to watch their bond grow and get to where it is today."

Despite unexpected challenges, including a tree falling on their home, the Waggoners remained resilient. "Life gets busy," Candace said, "but when you have the right supports in place, you can handle anything. The process isn't always easy, but the love is worth it."

These days, the Waggoner family enjoys movie nights, meal planning, camping trips, and lots of laughter. And now, with Bella in the mix, those moments are even sweeter.

To fellow families on this journey, the Waggoners offer this advice: "Anyone can do this. The system can seem intimidating at first, but with support and love, you'll find your way. Just don't be afraid to ask for help."

THINKING ABOUT ADOPTION?

You're not alone. Whether you're just beginning or deep in the process, MARE is here to walk with you every step of the way. Learn more at www.mare.org or call 800-589-6273.



The Waggoner family (minus Snookie) on Bella's Adoption Day.

JESSE'S IDP

Jesse just completed an In-Depth Profile and you should check it out! Jesse is a talented artist who wants to share his work with potential families and the world. He's got a keen eye and his artwork truly shows what's in his heart. View his artist portfolio to get a glimpse into Jesse's world.



In-Depth Profiles are created by youth, like Jesse. They are in the driver's seat from start to finish, so their profiles best represent who they are. They tell their own stories in their own way in the hopes that families like you will want to adopt! Check out all of their stories on indepthprofiles.mare.org now.

MOD PODGE FUN

Crafting Corner



Scan me



Kids, teens, and adults alike will enjoy creating with Mod Podge. With a dish of Mod Podge, a paintbrush, some papers (decorative napkins, tissue paper, magazine cut-outs, a "canvas," and a little imagination, anyone can make something beautiful, funky, profound, or expressive. Brush anything with Mod Podge, stick your embellishments to the wet surface and let it dry. Add another coat and dry for 24 hours. It's really as simple as that. Follow the QR code above for more Mod Podge crafting ideas.

Waiting Family Forum

Keep checking the MARE website for upcoming Waiting Family Forums and follow our social medias to notify you when registration is open.



For a complete list of events and resources, visit www.mare.org

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MARE Events



TEEN SPOTLIGHT

June 19th

MEET & GREET HOLLAND

June 21st

MEET & GREET PORTAGE

July 19th

Registration will be available on
www.mare.org

For more information,
contact jessica_thompson@judsoncenter.org or call
734-528-2070.



Elijah,
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