

"Every Child Deserves a Family"

Celebrating 50 Years!

PO Box 179, Whippany, NJ 07981

A Message from our President



Carolyn Bosa

Greetings Members and Friends,

Concerned Persons for Adoption turns 50 years old this year! I am honored to serve as president during this semi-centennial anniversary. As an independent advocacy and resource group, we look forward to continuing our mission to support those individuals and families touched by adoption. **Thank you so much for your ongoing support!**

For 2022, we are busy working on the upcoming 39th Annual "Let's Talk Adoption"sm Conference that will take place virtually on Saturday, March 5. We hope you can join us from the comfort of your home. In addition, we continue to plan events such as our Book Club discussions, virtual "Can We Talk?" parent chats on topics of interest, a virtual "Men's Only" Super Bowl party, an annual summer picnic, and many more. You will find information on these events, significant news articles, and other important updates on our website, www.cpfanjanj.org, our Facebook Page at Concerned Persons for Adoption – CPFA-NJ, and our Instagram at CPFA_NJ.

With your help and generosity, more than \$1,300 was raised during our 2021 holiday gift drive! We were able to put smiles on the faces of 85 of New Jersey's foster children (for details, please see Social Update on page 6). We are very proud and appreciative of our community and the dedication of our CPFA social committee coordinators, Michelle Mulhern and Lorraine Chorazy.

We are forever grateful to Dana Fried for her leadership and outstanding contributions to CPFA for many years as president and co-president of our Executive Committee. We wish her much success, and actively support her in her new role as President of the CPFA Board of Directors beginning January 2022. Congratulations, Dana!

Together with our entire staff of CPFA volunteers, I wish you a very happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year!

Carolyn Bosa
CPFA President, Executive Committee

Mark Your Calendar!

visit www.cpfanjanj.org for details

Friday, February 4 | 8:00pm – 9:30pm
"Can We Talk?" (via Zoom)

A great way to connect with other adoptive parents to share thoughts, ideas, struggles, victories, and more – from the comfort of your home! See website for more information. Register via our website or email info@cpfjanj.org to receive the event link.

Sunday, February 13 | 3:00pm – 5:00pm
"Men's Only" Super Bowl Sunday (via Zoom)

A great opportunity for the dads to gather and talk about sports, family life, challenges, and joys. Bring a snack and a drink to enjoy while talking. Register via our website or email info@cpfjanj.org to receive the event link.

Saturday, March 5 | 9:00am – 4:00pm
39th Annual "Let's Talk Adoption"sm Conference – To Be Held Virtually!

Join us virtually for workshops on pre- and post-adoptive issues. Visit our website for the most up-to-date information.

Friday, April 1 | 8:00pm – 9:30pm
"Can We Talk?" (via Zoom)

A great way to connect with other adoptive parents to share thoughts, ideas, struggles, victories, and more – from the comfort of your home! More information will be available closer to the date. Register via our website or email info@cpfjanj.org to receive the event link.

Thursday, April 28 | 7:30pm – 9:00pm
Adoption Book Group (via Zoom)

Please join us for a lively and thought-provoking discussion on *The Laughing Rabbit: A Mother, A Son, and the Ties that Bind* by Richard Manders and Patricia O'Brien. If you would like to participate, please email CPFAnj.adoptionbookgroup@gmail.com with "CPFA Book Group Zoom" in the subject line. You will receive an email with the Zoom meeting link, password, and instructions on joining.

New Members & Guests Welcome!

To learn more about the history of the organization, detailed information on upcoming events and locations, how you can become a member or volunteer, please visit our website or email info@cpfjanj.org. Please do not contact any of the event locations for information or directions.

Mission Statement

CPFA is a non-profit organization in the State of New Jersey dedicated to the belief that every child deserves a family. CPFA is not an adoption agency, but a volunteer organization working to support those who wish to adopt, and to provide educational and networking resources to those who have adopted.

CPFA Celebrates 50 Years in 2022

In 1972, Julie Brohan Lombardi and several adoptive mothers sat down and formed a support group to help others navigate the path to adoption. The group, now Concerned Persons for Adoption (CPFA), was incorporated in the State of New Jersey and approved as a non-profit 501c(3) entity. Over the next ten years, separate chapters were formed for South Jersey and New York, but these closed by 1985. The original group grew as more and more people joined to obtain information on resources, to support child welfare legislation, to educate the public and parents on adoption issues, and to offer an understanding and welcoming social atmosphere for their children.

In the fifty years since, we have seen support groups and adoption agencies come and go as the world of adoption has changed dramatically. CPFA went from a small group meeting in a member's home to an average of 100 attendees for each monthly program, to seasonal programs (with the advent of the internet), and, most recently, to virtual sessions (due to Covid-19). The programs included informational sessions, adoptee panels, small group discussions, birthmother panels, and more. CPFA has adapted over the years while maintaining the allegiance to our motto, "Every Child Deserves a Family." As one of the original members, Janet Levin said, "When we find a child for a family, we are finding a family for a child."

In 1979, Lynne Witkin, an adoptive parent, social worker, and board member launched our "Let's Talk Adoption" Conference with the goal of joining adoption professionals and parents together to learn from one another. The conference was first held at Drew University, followed by Kean University, Seton Hall University, and for the last several years, Rutgers University. Over the years, conference coordinators worked with DYFS (now DCP&P),



social work schools, licensed adoption agencies, and attorneys, attracting the very best of presenters. There has been an average of 250-300 attendees each year, continuing education credits for social workers, Hague training credits for prospective parents, and yearly scholarships for students working towards a child welfare profession. Due to the success of the "Let's Talk Adoption" Conference, a separate "mini-conference" for young adoptees and parents was added to CPFA's annual programs and has also been well received.

Meanwhile, CPFA's other committees were busy: The Charity Committee collected donations of goods and money for both domestic and foreign children, and sponsored many children through programs such as Welcome House and Holt International. The Legislative Committee kept everyone up to date on changing laws, and spent many years working with adoptee groups to finally get the Adoptees Birthright Bill passed in New Jersey. The Domestic, International & Older Child Committees maintained contact with all adoption resources to help prospective parents. And, The Ways and Means Committee, which for many years



Mini-Conference



2017



relied on the Tricky Tray, at the suggestion and guidance of Hugh O'Neill, switched to an annual golf outing in 1999, which proved very successful. Additionally, over the years, CPFA has had a chat room, a library, a High School Adoption Awareness Program, a book club, and representation on the DYFS Advisory Committee and the Rutgers Adoption Certificate Program. Awards from the North American Council on Adoptable Children (NACAC) and Voice for Adoption, plus recognition from the Congressional Coalition on Adoption for many of our board members attest to the valued accomplishments of CPFA.

None of this could have happened without the dedication of our volunteers and their commitment to adoptive families as well as the support from our donors, all of whom are truly remarkable. Adoption has changed dramatically over the past 50 years and will likely continue to evolve in the future. CPFA plans to continue to support and educate adoptive families and professionals, and to adapt and evolve to meet those needs.

Concerned Persons For Adoption 39th Annual "Let's Talk Adoption"sm Virtual Conference

Saturday, March 5 • 9:00 A.M. - 4:00 P.M.

**Keynote Address:
Supporting Needs and
Strengthening Bonds
in Adoption**



**Presented by:
Jeanette Yoffe,
M.A., M.F.T.**

**For conference schedule, workshop descriptions, and
registration details, please visit www.cpfanjanj.org.**

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School of Social Work

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President	Carolyn Bosa	Social	Lorraine Chorazy
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Mini-Conference	Open	Outreach	Dana Fried
Social	Michelle Mulhern		

To contact a board or committee member, please email info@cpfanj.org



Pat Bennett Retires After 43 Years of Dedication to CPFA

Pat Bennett and her husband, Mike, joined Concerned Persons for Adoption (CPFA) in 1978. With the help and support of CPFA members, they adopted their first daughter in 1980 from Bogota, Colombia. Two years later, Pat and Mike had a biological son. They knew they wanted more children, and after several miscarriages, they adopted their second daughter in 1986 from Colombia.

Despite being busy with three young children, Pat found time to serve on the Executive Committee of CPFA. She began as the Charity Committee chairperson, moved into the Older Child Advocate and Outreach Coordinator positions, and eventually served as President. Pat also served as the "Let's Talk Adoption"sm Conference coordinator for approximately 20 years and held various positions on the CPFA Board of Directors!

Pat's volunteerism wasn't limited to CPFA. She also founded and moderated the New Jersey Adoption Network, taught citizenship classes, developed and presented an Adoption Awareness Program for high schools, presented programs and participated on panels for conferences and organizations, and was a member of the Advisory Council for the Adoption Certificate Program at Rutgers University, School of Social Work, Continuing Education & Professional Development Program.

Pat's commitment to the adoption community is truly remarkable and unparalleled. Because of this, she received the 2001 Angel in Adoption Award from the Congressional Coalition on Adoption in Washington, D.C.

CPFA has been extremely fortunate to have Pat's unwavering dedication, expertise, and guidance over the past 43 years. She has been a cornerstone of the organization and will be sorely missed!

We cannot thank you enough, Pat, and we wish you all the best!



You Matter, Mom

~An Anonymous CPFA Member

As we shared our Zoom boxes and listened to the moderator explain optimal strategies to interact with and support our adopted youth during the November "Can We Chat" program, there was an unheard call. It was the call of a mother's pain. This distraught mother kept saying, "But I've done that and it didn't work." The moderator continued to provide more suggestions, trying desperately to help. I interjected and said, "Maybe she just needs time and room to talk about how she feels."

There are many people involved in foster care and adoption that focus on the children's needs, but how about the needs of the parents? Sometimes parents' hearts break a little and they need someone to sit with and really hear them. The other day I heard Janis Joplin's lyric, "break another little piece of my heart," and I thought, *Thank God, someone, somewhere, understood my broken heart.* It makes sense that we need someone to see our tears, to feel our confusion, and to help

support us in those moments of hopelessness and despair. It's not giving up, it's admitting what's real. This parenting thing can be beyond painful, whether your child simply walks to the beat of a different drum, has learning, behavioral or social issues, or any of the number of things that can disrupt a child's development and movement towards adulthood. I was fortunate to spend time with a gifted therapist who was not afraid of my pain, bewilderment, confusion, exhaustion, and loss. I found some space for all of that stuff. Sometimes things suck, and pretending that they don't doesn't always cut it. We need to listen and allow each other time to grieve losses of expectations, and to genuinely care for one another without judgement.

Maybe if we allow ourselves to be real, unabashedly human, then we can rise again and dance in the kitchen, or do whatever it is we enjoy, with our child.

Social Update

This year the holiday party was held on December 4th at Warinanco Ice Rink. Everyone had fun skating and chatting over delicious hot chocolate. We continued our tradition of collecting gifts and donations for children in New Jersey's foster care system. CPFA also requested donations on Giving Tuesday and was pleased by the generosity of many. With the donations, 40 gifts were purchased and delivered to Union County DCP&P for their children. In addition, a number of gift cards were purchased and delivered to CASA of Essex, CASA of Hudson, Roots & Wings, and embrella. Thank you to all those who helped put smiles on many children's faces at Christmas time!

The social chairpersons have been hard at work planning fun events for our CPFA families. The spring event will be a trip to Turtle Back Zoo in West Orange in May! Please check the CPFA website as the date gets closer for more details.



Membership & Renewal Form

PLEASE TEAR OFF AND RETURN WITH PAYMENT

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City, State, Zip: _____
 Telephone: _____
 Email: _____

Make Payable to: CPFA

Mail To: Miriam Frolow

48 Oak Crest Rd., West Orange, NJ 07052

Please Check off the Appropriate Box Below:

- ☐ \$25 New/Renewing Membership & Newsletter
☐ \$45 New/Renewing Membership & Newsletter for 2 years

Membership dues are tax-deductible.

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**PO BOX 179
WHIPPANY, NJ 07981**

*"Every Child
Deserves a Family"*

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