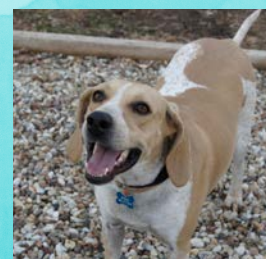
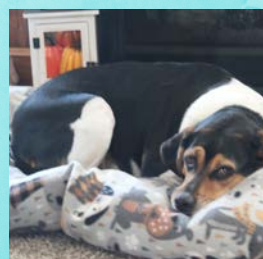
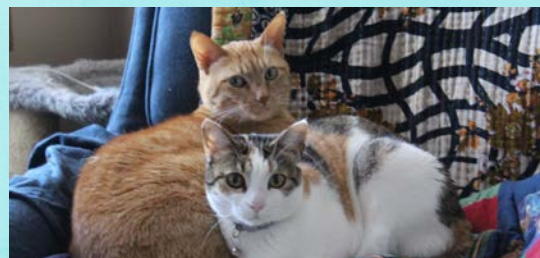


# CHRISTINE AND JEFF



**Madilyn and Kaydence**  
Our children from a previous relationship



**Gus, Olive, Izzy and Sally**



HELLO FROM THE

# SUNFLOWER STATE

Kansas

Thank you for taking the time to learn about and consider us as a potential adoptive family for your child. We cannot even come close to understanding the strong emotions that may come with thinking about this difficult decision. As an adopted child herself, Christine understands the adoption process and has seen and experienced both the joy and grief that comes with it. Your child will never have to feel alone as they grow up as an adoptee; Christine will be able to share her own personal adoption story as your child grows and learns of theirs. We would forever be humbled and inspired by your choice and are hopeful to go on this journey with you. We wish you strength and hope as we continue to root for you!

# ABOUT US

**We are always looking for those off the beaten track adventures.** Just recently we visited a haunted hotel in Missouri.

This historic hotel had a lobby that seemed to resemble a scene from "The Shining" and just seeing it, we knew we were going to have a good night. We spent the evening touring the hotel with a guide that told us all of the unexplained happenings and took us to rooms that had more paranormal activities than others. Even though we did not experience anything paranormal, we both claimed we weren't too scared, but it did take us a bit longer to get to sleep that night. Every little sound put us on high alert!



Another passion of ours is **being outdoors**. In Kansas, we take advantage of being 10 minutes away from a lake. During the summer months, we are at the lake with Kaydence and Madi, along with friends and family at least once a week. The only thing that keeps us out of the water is snakes....or what we think is a snake.

Last summer, everyone was in the water, listening to music, soaking up the sun and enjoying playing around in the water until Christine thought she saw a snake in the water, heading towards the group. Everyone scrambled to the shore, only to find out the snake was actually a stick! Your child will love days playing in the water, spending quality time with friends and family.

When at home, **we love to have game nights**. Throw, Throw Burrito is a family favorite! There is lots of dodging and diving as stuffed foam burritos fly through the air! One night, when playing, Kaydence snuck away for a few minutes. Moments later, she came back into the living room armored up with a Captain America shield. "I will NOT get hit now!" she exclaimed as she continued with her cards. We all busted out laughing and laughed even harder when it was her and Madi's turn to burrito duel. Kaydence did a great job of smacking the burrito away with her shield, making super hero sounds as she did it!



# ABOUT CHRISTINE

as told by Jeff



Christine **enjoys learning about other cultures and experiencing them firsthand.** Growing up, she always knew she wanted to experience all the world had to offer. She moved to Kyiv, Ukraine all by herself when she was 23 years old to teach. After 5 years in Kyiv, her next teaching job took her to Saudi Arabia. During every school holiday, Christine was able to travel and experience a variety of different people and cultures. One of her most memorable trips was when she had an opportunity to eat dinner with a Chinese family while camping on the Great Wall of China. She spent the evening learning about their dinner customs and how foods were made. The mother of the family welcomed her in and quickly ushered her into the tiny kitchen, threw her an apron, and put her to work chopping vegetables, all done without speaking a word of English. Through lots of hand signals and charades, Christine was able to help make an amazing meal that she will never forget. Your child will be raised with an understanding of different cultures and people.

Christine has a **passion for children.** She has been a teacher for the past 18 years and she has taught Kindergarten to 5th grade. I appreciate the fact that she can keep calm, cool and collected when surrounded by chaos. While teaching in Saudi Arabia, she brought in a pumpkin for her students to carve for Halloween. Carving pumpkins were not easy to get in Saudi and she knew that most of her students had never experienced designing a face and pulling out pumpkin guts'. I took the afternoon to come in and help her with this project. As I walked into the classroom with the pumpkin, her 1st graders cheered with excitement and the energy level skyrocketed quickly but Christine stayed calm. She gathered her students into a circle, reminded them of the expectations during the project but also allowed them grace during this exciting time.



Christine is the family's event planner. She plans everything from weekend getaways to local afternoons. Because she knows Kaydence and Madi's interests well, she always manages to find classes that they would enjoy. Madi's happy place is on a horse, so each summer, Christine gets in touch with a local ranch where Madi could take riding lessons and then help care for the horses a couple of times a week each summer. She loved that Madi would be dressed and ready to go hours before the actual time they would need to leave for lessons.

# ABOUT JEFF

as told by Christine

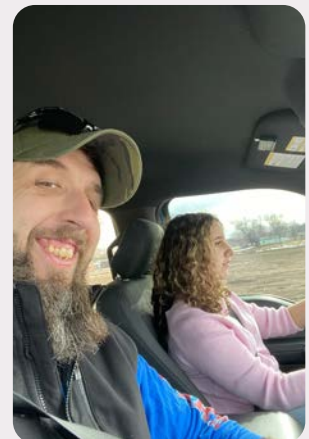
Jeff truly has a **heart of gold**. He is the person who will help a senior citizen with her groceries and hold the door open for 15 people behind him. We recently went to Arrowhead Stadium for an event, with seats in the upper section. Jeff spotted an older woman struggling to climb the stairs to her seat. Others did not offer help, but Jeff jumped into action, offering his arm and words of encouragement as he helped her all the way up to her seat. Her face was full of gratitude and she could not say thank you enough. Your child will have a strong role model that will lead by example.



Jeff understands the **importance of making strong, personal connections**. After 22 years in the Army as an infantryman, he ended his time in the military in the Soldiers in Transition Unit, helping soldiers transition out of the Army. This can be a challenge for some as they make this life-altering step, so Jeff always told his soldiers to call on him at any time. One soldier called him in the middle of the night, in crisis and needing to talk to someone. Jeff did not think twice as he calmly talked to this soldier and reassured him that he was a person of value. They spent a few hours on the phone and made plans to meet up for breakfast the next morning. A few years have passed since this incident and that soldier still keeps in touch with Jeff, thanking him for just being present and able to listen. Your child will have a father who will be there for them at all times, celebrating the highs and supporting during the lows.



Jeff is a **hands-on father** that allows his children to learn and grow in their own way. Kaydence is working towards getting her driver's license and started asking Jeff to help her practice driving last summer. He drove her to the high school parking lot, moved her into the driver's seat, and stayed as quiet as possible as she figured out how to adjust the mirrors and seat. He could tell she was nervous as she continually switched between slamming on the accelerator and brake pedal. Kaydence kept apologizing but Jeff reassured her. After a few more minutes of this, Jeff suggested he get out of the car and walk beside the truck as Kaydence continued to practice. This immediately helped Kaydence feel at ease, as she didn't have an audience that she felt was watching every move she made. In the end, the driving practice was a success and only a trash can was injured in the process!



# THE BEGINNING OF US

**We met** at a social being held **at the USA consulate in Saudia Arabia** in 2017. Christine was teaching 1st grade at an international school and Jeff was stationed there to help train the Saudia Arabian army. We started talking and a spark was formed. We spent the whole night talking and laughing with our groups. The next morning, Jeff sent Christine a text message, saying "Hi, this is Jeff. The guy in blue shirt." Of course, Christine remembered who he was, and his message immediately put a smile on her face. Our relationship started out as a wonderful friendship, and that friendship blossomed into a romance. Christine knew that Jeff was the "the one" when she blurted out that she loved him as much as she loved French fries during a dinner together. The room got quiet, and it was Jeff's turn to have a huge smile on his face.



Once back in Kansas, **Christine met Jeff's daughters**, Kaydence and Madi during Thanksgiving break. Jeff had told the girls all about Christine and vice versa but even with all that information, all parties were a bit nervous. All those nerves melted away the minute the girls arrived at home. They walked through the front door and greeted Christine with a huge smile and hug. **It was almost like the three had known each other for a long time.** During the first week all together, we made sure there were many opportunities to bond. Christine and Madi even made the pumpkin pie together for Thanksgiving Dinner. Each night, we all played a variety of different board games, such as *Clue* and *Mouse Trap* at our dining room table while eating left over pie with whipped cream. Christine's heart melted as the girls hugged her good night before they went off to bed starting on their first night and continues to this day.



**Christine and her brother were both adopted at birth**, so adoption is a concept that she and her family are extremely comfortable and familiar with. When we started talking about having a family, we both agreed that if it did not happen naturally, we did not want to pursue getting pregnant through IVF or other medical routes. Adoption was an easy next step when it was realized that getting pregnant naturally wasn't going to happen for our family. Your child would grow up with parents that understand and empathize with the highs and lows that come with being an adoptee. We are hopeful to join you on this journey of adoption.



# MEET KAYDENCE AND MADI

*Jeff's two daughters from a previous marriage are with us during the summer and big holidays. If chosen to be your child's family, they will have the best of both worlds; They will be extremely loved, smothered with love by two older sisters but they will also have large periods of time where they're an only child while their sisters are with their mom.*



Kaydence is our artist that loves to express herself through sketching, sewing and makeup. Recently, Kaydence has taken an interest in pottery and has spent the last two summers in pottery classes. The first summer, Christine helped her research where she could take lessons. Last summer, Kaydence changed teachers but pushed herself to try different pottery techniques and created a variety of different pieces. **It has been very exciting see her passions grow.** Your child will be supported in all of their passions and interests.



Madi has a huge passion for animals. She especially lives and breathes for horses. She takes weekly horse-riding lessons, and you can tell she is in her happy place when she is on a horse. Last spring, as Madi was finishing up her lesson and she fell off her horse. Because she reached out to catch herself, she **broke her wrist and arm.** Obviously in a huge amount of pain, **Madi's first words** as adults approached her **were "Is my horse okay?"** Your child will grow up with a big sister that will put their needs first and forever have a sibling that has their back.



Growing up with siblings, we know the **value of brothers and sisters.** Jeff grew up as the youngest of 4. Even though he was treated as the tag-a-long at times, he always had friends in his siblings. His family of 6 always took individual and family Christmas photos each year. One particular year, Jeff's mom arrived at the venue with all 4 kids in tow and Jeff's dad was running a bit late. Jeff, who was about 5, refused to cooperate with getting his photo taken until his dad arrived. His mom tried all her tricks, but Jeff wanted to wait for his dad. Finally, his brother coaxed him into getting a "brothers' photo" taken and this led him into being comfortable in getting his own photo. In the end, all of the kids got their photos taken and were ready for the family photo once Jeff's dad arrived.

# MEET THE PETS

**We both grew up with pets** in the house and are big supporters of animal rescue. We have two cats, Gus and Olive, that Christine rescued in Saudi Arabia and then brought back to Kansas. Gus loves snuggles, cat treats, and sleeping all day. Olive is our little adventurer, who wonders all over the neighborhood. We also have Izzy and Sally, our dogs that we rescued from a local rescue organization. Izzy is our loyal beagle that never turns down a meal, while Sally is our hound that demands daily walks and loves to sunbathe in the backyard.

Sally keeps us on our toes. The first Christmas season we had her, she was still adjusting. When we were home with her, she always ignored the Christmas tree and presents underneath. While Christine was on Christmas break, she had to make an errand to the post office. Since Jeff was at work, the dogs had the house to themselves while Christine went out. She was gone for no more than 20 minutes. When she walked back in, she noticed that **the Christmas tree was fine, but a majority of the Christmas presents were missing!** She followed a trail of wrapping paper scrapes out to the back yard to find unwrapped presents, crinkled paper and bows scattered across the yard...in the snow. Sally showed guilt in her face and body language immediately. With her big brown eyes, it was impossible to be mad at her. Fortunately, all of presents were able to be saved and rewrapped.

**Our pets love kids.** Sally is the baby whisperer. The first time our friends brought their baby, Raya, over, she fell in love. Her main focus was on Raya and she ignored everyone else as she sat at the baby's feet with her tail is wagging and a huge smile is on her face. She was calm and gentle as Raya reached out and grabbed at her ears and nose. She just loved the attention.



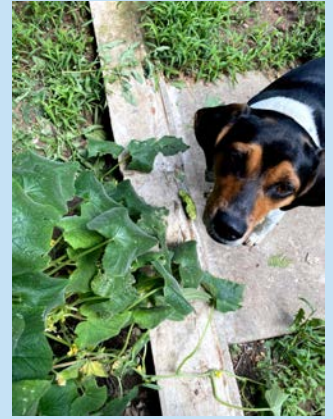




# WELCOME TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

We knew from the moment we walked into our house in Kansas that it was “home”.

Our favorite part of our home is the backyard. We have started to add to the vegetable garden we plant every late spring. When we first started growing cucumbers, we noticed that our full-grown cucumbers always had teeth marks on them or chunks missing. We thought maybe rabbits were getting in, so we tried to rabbit-proof the garden but had no luck. The case of the eaten cucumbers was not solved until Christine was outside reading in her hammock. Izzy joined her in the backyard and **Christine watched as she walked up to a cucumber hanging off the vine and took a bite!**



Our neighborhood is full of families with children ranging in all ages. Our favorite sound is the ice cream truck that frequents our neighborhood in the spring and summer months, which makes us feel like kids again. This past October, the girls were able to come home during their Fall Break.

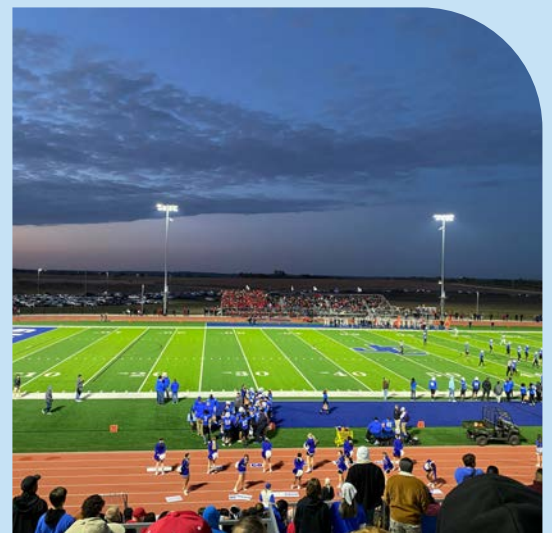
We were having a lazy day on the back patio and Madi was convinced she heard an ice cream truck. We reminded her that it was October and ice cream trucks don't run in the Fall. However, the music was finally close enough for us to hear and sure enough, it was an ice cream truck making its rounds on a random Saturday! All four of us ran for the front.

**We were the only adults in a line of children**, discussing which treat we should get. The other kids in line didn't mind us and helped us choose our ice cream. All of us ate our treats on the sidewalk and afterwards.



Our town is slowly making changes from being a sleepy little town to a small community that hosts city-wide holiday parades, carnivals/fairs, and music in the park. During football season, we enjoy supporting the local high school varsity football team. The last game we went to was the local homecoming game. The temperature had dropped from 60s to 40s and the wind picked up. So, **we bundled up and were ready to cheer on the team.** It was fun seeing friends and their families sitting in the bleachers with us. We all huddled together, and our little group grew as more friends joined in the bleacher huddle. Everyone was sharing blankets, passing around hot chocolate and looking out for the younger kids who were running around, not even noticing the cold.

Unfortunately, our home team lost the by ALOT, but the stadium was still full of loud supporters. Your child will grow up in a town that celebrates diversity and with a group of people that will support and look out for them whenever we are together.



# MEET THE FAMILY

*If chosen to be your child's parents, they will have 4 grandparents, 7 aunts and uncles, and 5 cousins.*

In our family, every reunion has **a family Mario Kart tournament.**

We have a Nintendo Switch and are able to have 4 players race at once. The last tournament that took place lasted for about 2 hours! The racers were sitting on the sofa, eyes glued to the TV, and friendly taunting was going back and forth. Jeff's dad has been the reigning champ of the family but this time, both Madi and Kaydence had been practicing so that they could attempt to be the champions. Jeff's dad was in for a surprise as Madi's car zipped past him to win the race. Even the cousins that were not playing stopped what they were doing to watch the outcome. There will be a rematch soon!



Christine's side of the **family has to have Texas Sheet Cake at every gathering.**

It is served with vanilla ice cream after a meal, although, family has been known to trim off the edge, sneaking in a few bits here and there. Usually, before a family get together, we all plan who is bringing the cake. At one Thanksgiving, we had a planned out who was bringing what for the meal but somehow Texas Sheet Cake was never delegated. The day before Thanksgiving, we all arrived at Christine's aunt's house. It's a busy scene of warm greetings, bringing in bags from the car and putting food away. Once we had all settled, Christine's aunt noticed that we had 5 Texas Sheet cakes! Everyone brought one, just to be safe. By the end of our time together, all cake was eaten! Your child will grow up with a family that loves to gather around food and fellowship.



**A sporting event is usually always playing on the television at our family gatherings.**

During this past family get together, we were able to host 14 people for Jeff's Army retirement ceremony. The March Madness basketball tournament started that same weekend and we all enjoyed sitting around, snacking on food from a full kitchen, and cheering on our favorite teams. Even our moms got involved! They knew nothing about the sport, so they kept asking questions about what was happening in the game. Christine's dad Googled the answer, because he too did not know the game. Jeff and his sister-in-law would tease each other about their team of choice. After everyone had left and made it back to their own homes that Sunday evening, We were impressed that our family members were still invested in the tournament, and we continued our watch party from afar. Jeff's mom even continued to text out her questions of the game to the group chat.



# OUR TRADITIONS

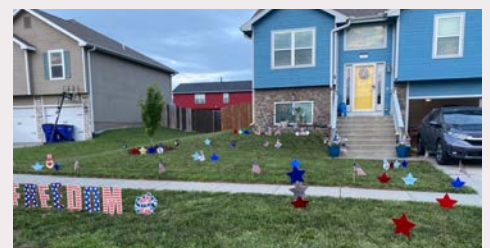
Christmas is our favorite holiday! **We enjoy** bringing the magic of Christmas to Jeff's two girls and **trying to figure out new ways to keep the magic of Santa Claus alive!** Every Christmas Eve, when we get home from looking at Christmas lights we always leave milk and cookies out for Santa and of course carrots for his reindeer and Jeff reads *The Night Before Christmas*. 4 years ago, Jeff had arranged for their grandfather to call them and act as Santa. He changed the number's contact name to Santa and as we were driving around looking at lights, the girls were amazed when Santa's name came up on the car's screen as an incoming call. They both shared their Christmas list and described the treats that they would leave for him and the reindeer. It was such a special call for them.

Even with the girls getting older, they still hold to this tradition, and we will continue with your child.



One of our favorite family traditions was started by Jeff's Dad. On the last night of any time we are all together, we have a **KitKat meeting**. Everyone sits in a circle, Jeff's dad calls the meeting to order and we all talk about our favorite part of our time together. During the Covid lockdown, our families were not able to see each other in person. Instead of the normal phone calls and text messages that happen during the holiday season, Jeff's parents asked to hold a Zoom call and asked everyone to have their Kit Kats ready. We logged in and Grandpa then called the KitKat meeting to order, and everyone shared their favorite part of 2020 and their hopes for 2021. Since we had not all been together in person for quite some time, Jeff's sister shared that she wished we would all be together in the near future. This led to a family plan to travel to Yellowstone that summer! Afterward, we all raised a toast to the new year with our candy!

4th of July is huge in our neighborhood. Each year, we decorate the yard with red, white, and blue stars and start celebrating with our own fireworks. This past year, we bought quite a few large fireworks and **collaborated with the neighbors** on our street, taking turns setting off the fireworks, **putting on an amazing show**. Hundreds of fireworks were going off in all directions! Our street had everyone sitting in their driveways watching the beautiful show. Kids were running around with sparklers, and we were all ooing and awing. It was such a simple moment that made us proud to be a part of our neighborhood. We loved the fact that everyone was out of their homes, celebrating with each other and making plans for next summer. We would love to celebrate, honor and acknowledge important dates and traditions from your family in our gatherings for your child as you feel comfortable sharing.



# WEEKDAYS



After 22 years in the Army, Jeff has retired and spends his days focusing on his hobbies. He is able to fish, work on house projects or create new yard displays through out the week. He is very excited to be a **stay at home dad**, able to spend each day with your child.



Christine teaches 5th grade science and social studies. She has **summers off** and other **extended breaks** off to spend with your child. With school hours, she will **home early** to spend quality time with your child.



**We eat dinner together every night of the week.** Christine loves to cook, so she prepares the meal. While eating, we catch up on highs and lows of our days and just enjoy each other's company. Then, Jeff cleans the kitchen. Just recently, we decided to trade jobs. Jeff would cook and Christine would clean up. Christine quickly realized that her job just got a lot bigger because Jeff makes a HUGE mess when cooking. Chopped vegetable crumbs were everywhere, the stove top was covered in oil and lots of dishes and spoons had been used. Jeff had made a delicious meal and before, during, and after Christine teased him about his messy methods. She decided she would stick with cooking and Jeff would clean. Your child will have daily quality time with us ready to hear how their day has gone.



# OUR GRATITUDE

If chosen to be your child's adoptive family, we are dedicated to celebrating and honoring you and your child's adoption right at the start. We are committed to loving your child unconditionally, celebrating their individuality and allowing them to grow into the person that they want to be. We are dedicated to keeping them safe and protected but also giving them room to learn from their mistakes.

We hope to help your child grow up with a sense of wonder of the world around them and believe it's our job to help him or her understand the power of acceptance towards others.

If chosen, we promise to share your story - that you were the first person to love them and took a courageous step when choosing adoption. **We hope to build a continuous, open relationship with you** where we can celebrate your child as they grow up.

Without a doubt, this will not be an easy journey, and we commend what we feel is bravery on your part. We will be some of your biggest cheerleaders before, during and after the arrival of your child.

