

## A Message from our President



Carolyn Bosa

Greetings Members and Friends,

The weather is warmer, we're headed outside, and I'm entering my second year as president of this awesome and all-important volunteer organization. As one of the first organizations of its kind in New Jersey, we support those who wish to adopt, and provide educational and networking resources to all those who have been touched by adoption. Last year we celebrated 50 years of service! And we need your help.

CPFA is always looking for volunteers to help with our programs and events. Any amount of time you can offer is beneficial. The book discussion group, which has been meeting for more than 14 of those 50 years, and this July will meet to discuss *Somewhere Sisters: A Story of Adoption, Identity, and the Meaning of Family* by Erika Hayasaki, is a great networking opportunity to discuss the book and other ideas and concerns. Sometimes, like last July, the author joins in these discussions. And, in the fall, you can weigh in on the vote for the 2024 lineup.

The social events committee is busy planning our annual summer picnic at Sunrise Lake in Lewis Morris Park in Morris Township, where all are invited. The kids love swimming to the inflatable playground, the Wibit, for outdoor fun. There's even talk of welcoming back our Youth Mini-Conference, but, again, we need your help. You can add your support to these adventures or petition a new one.

If you are interested in volunteering with CPFA, please send an email to [info@cpfanej.org](mailto:info@cpfanej.org). Be sure to check out our website and follow our programming and articles on social media (Facebook & Instagram).

We hope you can join us for our upcoming events. Together with our entire staff of parent volunteers, we wish you a wonderful, fun, and safe summer!

Thank you so much for your ongoing support.

Carolyn Bosa  
CPFA President, Executive Committee

## Mark Your Calendar!

Visit [www.cpfanej.org](http://www.cpfanej.org) for details.  
Also follow us on Facebook and Instagram!

**Thursday, July 27 | 7:30pm – 9:00pm**  
**Adoption Book Group** (in person only)

Please join us for a lively and thought-provoking discussion on *Somewhere Sisters: A Story of Adoption, Identity, and the Meaning of Family* by Erika Hayasaki. If you would like to attend, please email [cpfanej.adoptionbookgroup@gmail.com](mailto:cpfanej.adoptionbookgroup@gmail.com) with "CPFA Book Group" in the subject line. The group will meet at Panera Bread, 187 Columbia Turnpike, Florham Park.

**Sunday, July 30 | 1:00pm – 5:00pm**  
**Summer Family Picnic**

Bring your family for some fun on the beach at Sunrise Lake in Lewis Morris County Park! Pre-registration is required; admission is free! For complete details, see page X.

**Saturday, October 21** (tentative date)  
**Mini Conference for Families**

This event is still in the planning stages. It will feature topics/workshops for parents as well as children ages seven to fifteen. Details will be posted on the CPFA website and social media as plans progress.



## 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@cpfanej.org](mailto:info@cpfanej.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.

# Adoption Has Been Part of the Fabric of American History

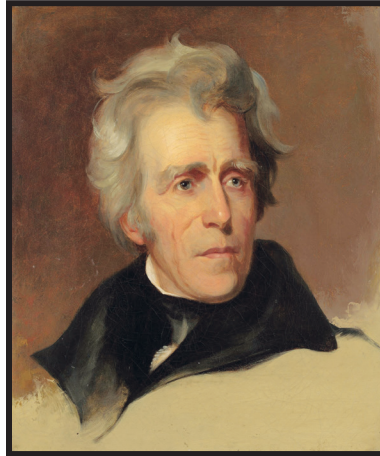
by Dana Woods Fried

Recently my family and I took a road trip from New Jersey to Nashville, NC to enjoy history, music and the landscape. Before heading from North Carolina to Memphis, TN, we visited *Hermitage*,\* the early homestead and plantation of Andrew Jackson, the 7th President of the United States. While touring this relatively majestic homestead from the early 1800s and reading about his life, some things jumped out to me. One of those things was that he and his wife formed their family through adoption.

Jackson, orphaned himself at the age of 14, took on life with grit and determination. Born to a struggling immigrant family, and through persistence, ambition and luck, Jackson became a respected lawyer, judge, businessman, politician, military officer, farmer, and then President.

We learned that Jackson and his wife Rachel could not bear children. Wishing to continue their legacy and have an heir to their name and lineage, they turned to their extended family. Rachel came from a large family. Her relatives and their children were frequent guests at the *Hermitage* house, often staying for long visits. When Rachel's brother died in 1804, his three sons became wards of the Jackson family.

In 1808, Rachel's other brother's wife gave birth to twin boys. He and his wife allowed Andrew and Rachel to raise one of the twins to be



their adopted son and heir; they named their son Andrew Jackson Junior.

When reading how they "split up the twins" I was at first outraged. Although I knew they were relatives, I wondered how a parent could decide to separate the siblings and place one with another family. In thinking about the early 1800s, I realized that leaving a legacy and heir as well as any potential wealth, was paramount. Since the Jacksons were unable to have a biological heir, their problem would be solved by raising one of their relatives. By doing so, each of the twins was able to inherit a farm and wealth, and to continue the name and legacy. The practice of a family

member adopting their relative's child(ren) is today called kinship adoption.

Over the next two decades before Jackson became President in 1829, he and Rachel cared for many orphans and became wards to many children, including those orphaned by the death of their mother at the hands of Jackson's own army.

With the decision in 1808 to adopt his relative's child, Andrew Jackson's legacy continues today; Andrew Jackson VI is currently a judge in Knox County, Tennessee.

\*<https://thehermitage.com/>

<https://thehermitage.com/learn/mansion-grounds/mansion/mansion-story/>

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| LTA Conference      | Lynn Riker            | Website                | Mark Jacobson    |
| Mini-Conference     | Open                  | Social Media           | Open             |
|                     |                       | Outreach               | Dana Fried       |

To contact a board or committee member, please email [info@cpfanj.org](mailto:info@cpfanj.org)



## 2023 Lynn Witkin/ CPFA Scholarship



We are happy to announce that Meryl Kurland is the winner of the 2023 Lynn Witkin/CPFA scholarship. Meryl will begin her MSW program at Montclair State University this fall with a concentration in Children, Youth, and Families. Although she began her undergraduate program in education, she quickly realized she was interested in Child Advocacy and Social Justice, and changed her major to social work. Meryl's dedication to child advocacy is evidenced by her volunteering as a Court Appointed

Special Advocate (CASA) in New Jersey. We wish her all the best in this worthy pursuit. Congratulations, Meryl!

## 40th "Let's Talk Adoption"<sup>sm</sup> Conference – Another Success

Thank you to everyone who attended and helped us celebrate our 40th "Let's Talk Adoption" Conference.

Our Keynote Speaker, Debbie Riley, and all of our presenters, received excellent feedback. Another big shout-out to all of our volunteers; their efforts and dedication are outstanding! One fun note: there was a 67% return rate on our conference evaluations, higher than ever before – WOW! In addition, 75% of responders stated that they would definitely attend next year.

Volunteers are desperately needed in order to provide another exceptional conference in 2024! If you are interested in planning the 2024 conference, please contact us at [info@cpfanj.org](mailto:info@cpfanj.org) by August 15.

## Foster Care Portrayed in Memoirs and Novels

by Kathleen Strakosch Walz

*"Think about your own child, your relative, your friend's child, your future child, yourself. What if you knew that this beautiful child would be placed in foster care? What would you want for that child? That is what we should be giving them now."*

- David Ambrose, *A Place Called Home: A Memoir*

"I am forever a foster child," writes David Ambrose, who survived an extraordinarily difficult childhood of homelessness and multiple foster placements in NY and MA and is now a national poverty and child welfare expert, foster dad, and an excellent writer! In October, our CPFA Book Group will be discussing this astounding memoir; we hope you will join us.

Over the past 15 years our book group has read 60 non-fiction and fiction books by adoptive parents, foster parents, birthparents, adult adopted persons, emancipated adult foster children, professionals, and good storytellers. Several powerful memoirs and novels stand out that focus on life in foster care and post-emancipation. What is remarkable about each of these stories is the foster child's perseverance in devastating circumstances of poverty and often violence or mental illness, and ultimately their sense of hope, devotion, and advocacy to helping to improve the system. These books provide a glimpse into life in the foster care systems in the U.S. and other countries, and they change our lives.

In *Hope's Boy: A Memoir*, Andrew Bridge writes about his life in desperate poverty with his mentally ill mother whom he adores. After she can no longer care for him and is institutionalized, Andrew is placed in a notorious children's facility followed by a loveless foster family who refuses to accept him. Through the kindness of a teacher, he defies the odds and follows his dream, eventually as a Fulbright Scholar at Harvard. This is a brutally honest, heart wrenching, and inspiring memoir of a child who survives a broken system and the man he becomes,

dedicating his life to helping children living in poverty and transforming the foster care system for future children.

*The Language of Flowers: A Novel* by foster mother Vanessa Diffenbaugh, is about a young woman recently emancipated from the foster system with nowhere to go, unable to form attachments, and communicating through flowers and their Victorian meanings. The story involves her gift for helping others, confronting her painful past, and the risks she takes for happiness. This heartbreaking and inspiring story is beautifully written by someone who clearly understands the issues of loss, grief, attachment, trust, and joy inherent in foster care and adoption.

Inspired by Charles Dickens' novel, *David Copperfield*, about institutional poverty, and damages to childhood in 19th-century English society, Barbara Kingsolver's new novel, *Demon Copperhead* is the story of a boy, Damon Fields, in southern Appalachia. The boy "has a fierce talent for survival" as he braves crushing losses, foster care, child labor, derelict schools, opioid addiction, disastrous loves, poverty, prejudice, and a nickname for his attitude and the red hair he inherited from his Melungeon birthfather. He survives remarkably intact. Like its epic predecessor, *Demon Copperhead* is a tale for the ages. In fact, Barbara Kingsolver just won a Pulitzer Prize in Fiction for this great novel!

Books can transport us, teach us, enrage us, and make us cry and laugh and think for a long time about the characters that stick with us. Please attend one of our book groups – you may be surprised at what moves you and what you "take home" from our discussions.





## Social Update

Join us on Sunday, July 30 from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm for the CPFA Summer Family Picnic! The event will be held at Sunrise Lake in Lewis Morris County Park, 270 Mendham Road, Morristown, NJ. Please bring a picnic meal for your family, along with beach chairs, towels, and toys for the kids. CPFA will supply snacks. You will find us under the beach tent! Entrance into Sunrise Lake is free, but you must pre-register with us so we know how many people will be joining us for a great day of sun and fun! Admission does not include the Wibit water feature; you can pay for that separately when you arrive at Sunrise Lake. To register, please visit [www.cpfanjanj.org](http://www.cpfanjanj.org).



Fun times on the train at our Turtle Back Zoo family event in May!

### Membership & Renewal Form

PLEASE TEAR OFF AND RETURN WITH PAYMENT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Make Payable to: CPFA**

**Mail To:** Miriam Frolov

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

Social events are free to all members & their families! | Membership dues are tax-deductible.

**CONCERNED  
 PERSONS  
 FOR  
 ADOPTION**  
**CPFANJ.ORG**

**PO BOX 179  
 WHIPPANY, NJ 07981**

*"Every Child  
 Deserves a Family"*

### IS IT TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP?

The expiration date of your membership is shown on your address label.

You can become a member or renew your membership by mail or by following the link on our website.

TO CHANGE YOUR MAILING ADDRESS, PLEASE CALL 973-243-2621 OR CONTACT US THROUGH OUR WEBSITE



[www.cpfanjanj.org](http://www.cpfanjanj.org)



Concerned Persons for Adoption—CPFA NJ



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