

Dear Expectant Parent(s),

Hello. We are Duane and Lauren, and we are immensely grateful for the opportunity to tell you a little about us and to take a moment to thank you for considering the selfless act of adoption.

We can only imagine how heavy the decision you are facing must feel. Whatever path you decide, we want you to know that God works together all things for good (Romans 8:28). He also looks after all His children – which includes you and your unborn baby.

It's only natural to want to know the family you are considering raising your child and we hope this letter is the start of a beautiful friendship. Full disclosure, we are both an open book!

A little about each of us...

Duane had a rocky childhood, but it genuinely made him into the incredible husband and father he is today. By doing exactly the opposite of his upbringing, he has become an incredible example of what a Godly husband and father is. Duane's the middle of three boys and his parents are both deaf, so he spent most of his youth translating various things for them and really raised himself in many ways. His parents divorced when he was five and it was a very tumultuous time for him as a young boy. It was an ugly, long custody battle and as he became a young adolescent he spent some time in juvenile detention. However, his past has shaped his life today in a very positive way and he has such resilience.

Lauren had a much different childhood. It was wholesome and loving. Her parents are still married (37 years and counting) and gave her a pretty great example of what marriage is. She spent her youth at horse shows on the weekends and her family often took road trips and vacations. She has many fond memories of her youth and is incredibly grateful for her upbringing.



Duane and Lauren met in 2012 through a mutual friend. Duane was quick to ask for Lauren's number that night and Lauren was quick to put Duane in the friend-zone. To which Duane replied, "F*** you I have enough friends." (Excuse the language, but we hope that makes you laugh because it certainly makes us laugh!). Duane knew from the moment he met Lauren that he was going to marry her and knew he couldn't be "just" friends. So, he waited patiently and sure enough, eventually became friends with Lauren. Over time, their friendship grew into a relationship, then an engagement and a marriage in 2015. Ten years later, we are

still best friends!

Shortly after we got married, we packed up our lives in California and moved to Montana. Remember Duane's horrible upbringing? We moved to distance ourselves from his dad and thankfully Lauren's family was waiting in Montana with arms wide open. We absolutely love it here! We bought our first home and after a year of trying, we had our first daughter Emily in 2018. We bought our second home and a week after we moved in, we had our second daughter Annalise in 2020 (yup, a Covid Kid).

Emily is our nature-loving kid. She has quite a collection of sticks, rocks and even a couple crawdads in jars of rubbing alcohol. She is learning piano, skiing and ballet and enjoys all three. She is a smart kid and often outwits her parents. She has a heart for animals and a curiosity that is admirable. She is excited to be a big sister (again) and help with baby when the day comes.



Annalise is our glitz and glam girl. She loves Barbies and changes outfits no less than three times a day. She loves animals and yearns for a Yorkie someday. Her favorite subject is to learn about president's and American History. She is incredibly smart and so funny! Though she was diagnosed with ADHD and OCD at age three, we have come so far in supporting her naturally and she is a completely different kid than she was two years ago. Today, she is an absolute joy and so much fun!

We homeschool both girls and hope to homeschool for the entirety of their schooling. We love to add their interests into their school days. The girls attend a field school that gets them outside learning all kinds of things from science to geography and history. We also love that we can tailor their learning to them individually and have a strong focus on Bible-based learning.

Duane works as a maintenance manager for McDonald's and stays busy during the week. We squeeze in McDonald's family dates when possible and he always prioritizes family on the weekends. He never forgets hugs and kisses for all his girls when he leaves for work and often stops by on his way through to spend a few minutes with us.

As a family, we love to glamp (no shame in that KOA game...), hike, hunt, fish and pretty much all things outdoors. We love to have movie nights and spend a lot of quality time together as a family and with the family we have locally (Lauren's parents, Duane's cousin and Duane's mom). We have chickens, dogs, a rabbit and a cat. Lauren owned horses for 23 years and recently decided to sell them to focus her energy and spare time with the family (it also frees up quite a bit of money for more homeschool fun!). We will miss having the horses in the backyard, but we know lots of friends and we can still visit horses when we want to!

We hope this gives a small glimpse of who we are and the fun-loving home we are so blessed to have. Our family has so much love to give, and we thank you for taking the time to read our letter and consider our family. As you go on to make the hardest decision of your life, we want you to know that you are loved, and your child is loved. You are making an incredibly selfless and courageous decision! As we pray over the adoption that God has waiting for us, we encourage you to pray over it as well.

*"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." – **Philippians 4:6-7***

God Bless,

Duane & Lauren

