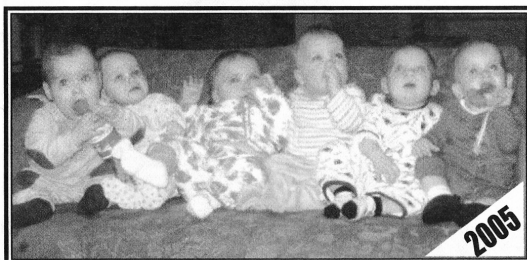
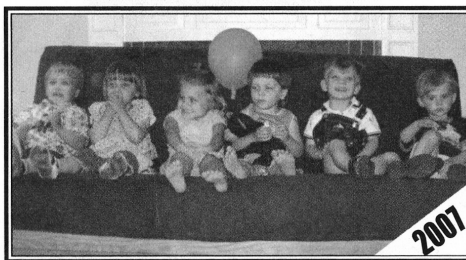


U.S. ADOPTIVE FAMILIES REUNITE SIX RUSSIAN CHILDREN FOR BI-ANNUAL MEMORIES

By Jenny O'Donnell



THIS IS THE FIRST PICTURE TAKEN AT THE HOTEL IN RUSSIA AFTER FIVE FAMILIES ADOPTED HART AND ELLE VANDZURA, SYDNEY WOLF, NICK WOLFE, WESLEY BOGART AND NICKOLAS KING.



THIS IS THEIR SECOND "COUCH PICTURE" AS THEY ARE NOW CALLED, TAKEN AT THE GROUPS' FIRST REUNION IN 2007 IN BOSTON WITH THE KIDS IN SAME ORDER. ALL THE KIDS ARE AGE 3.



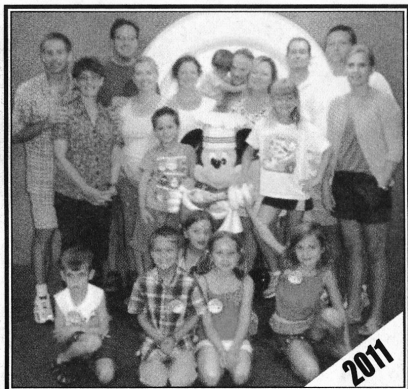
AT THE SECOND REUNION IN 2009 IN SAN FRANCISCO, HART AND ELLE VANDZURA, CAITLYN BOGART (7), NICK WOLFE, WESLEY BOGART, AND NICKOLAS KING. ALL OTHER KIDS TURNED 5 THAT SUMMER. THE OTHER WOLF FAMILY WERE NOT ABLE TO ATTEND DUE TO ILLNESS.

Six years ago, five families from across the United States adopted five different infants from Russia. After meeting in Vladivostok and Moscow, the group bonded over the unique experience of adopting a child.

"[My husband and I] started looking into adoption in 2004," said

Michele Wolfe, board certified media specialist at Bevis Elementary for 11 years. "We flew to Vladivostok, Russia in 2004 to meet our son [and] returned to Russia to adopt him in 2005."

Wolfe recalled that the group of adoptive parents enjoyed the time they spent together. "We shared the ups and downs of the adoption process, played the waiting game and spent the



THIS IS THE LAST REUNION PHOTO TAKEN THIS YEAR, 2011 AT CHEF MICKEY'S.

first couple of weeks with our new babies together in a hotel in Vladivostok," she said.

After getting to know each other and their newly adopted babies, the group had decided that they should hold a get-together every two years. They

decided on June, the month of all of the children's birthdays, in a city where each of them lives.

The first reunion was held in Boston in 2007, and the second in San Francisco in 2009. This year, Wolfe was ecstatic to host the newest reunion party here in the Sunshine State at Disney's Animal Kingdom

Lodge. They ate at Chef Mickey's, rode the roller coasters and enjoyed an unforgettable birthday celebration.

All of the children turned seven this June, including Wolfe's son, Nick. The children even sat down on a couch for the customary "couch picture," where every reunion the children sit in the same order and smile for the camera.

"Our families shared a very special experience together and it is awesome to be able to reconnect every couple of years to reminisce and share new experiences," said Wolfe of the

reunions. "Each time we reunite, it feels like a family get-together. We all feel truly blessed with these amazing children."

The group is planning their next gathering at Yellowstone National Park in 2013, where parent Boone Vandzura is a park ranger. After the last reunion, the families cannot wait until they meet again.

For more information about the reunion or the adoption process, contact Wolfe at Michele.Wolfe@sdhc.k12.fl.us.