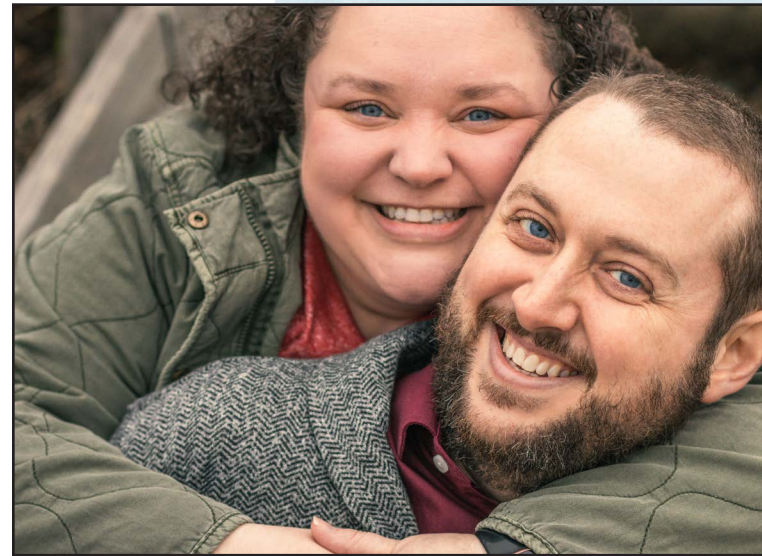
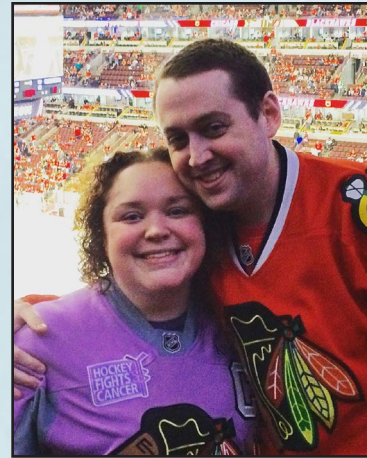
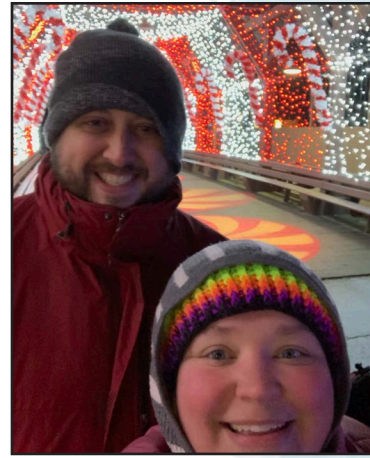




*Amanda
& John*

Amanda & John



Hi There,

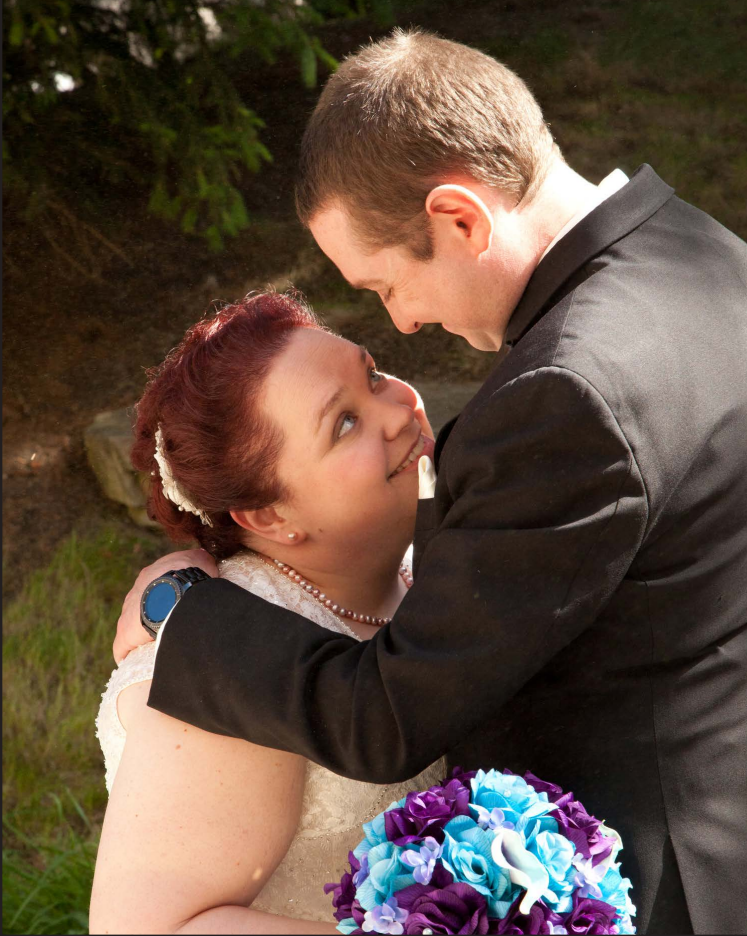
We don't know you yet, but we hope to! You might be thinking, "why these people? Why should I keep reading?" We want you to get to know a little about us, our family, our home and community, and possibly, the world you may want your child to grow up in. But more than that, we want to get to know you. We cannot begin to know how you feel or the emotions you are experiencing right now, but we know that you are incredibly brave and strong. And for that, all we can say is thank you.

As a family, we are quirky, love to laugh and joke with one another, and try to live each day to the fullest. We sit down to dinner together each night, love movie nights with homemade popcorn, root for our favorite teams together, and can't wait for summer days at the lake or theme park. We love all things nerdy - Harry Potter, Disney, Star Wars, Superheroes... we can't wait to share all the things we love with little ones.

Thank you so much for taking the time to consider our family as you plan for your child's future. We know that this is a huge decision and it must be difficult for you to make. We are beyond honored that you are considering us and taking the time to get to know us. No matter what you decide, please know that we support you, we want what is best for you and your child, and we hope that you find comfort in knowing that we are here for you.

With Love,

Amanda & John



Interesting Facts *about us*

“ **Life is too short to be normal: be silly, be goofy, have fun, and enjoy time together... we try to live our lives to the fullest and love one another every day.**”

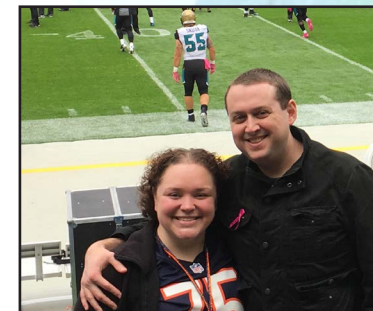
- We love sports... We both have different football and baseball teams that we follow (John likes the Jaguars and the Marlins, while Amanda is a Bears and White Sox fan), but hockey & the Blackhawks unite us.
- We are proud nerds! We love all things Star Wars, Harry Potter, Marvel, and Disney.
- We love traveling, especially to Disney World.
- Amanda loves all things crafty – she crochets, bakes, decorates cakes, and sews.
- Amanda is a huge Backstreet Boys fan and we got to meet them before a concert in Las Vegas.
- We usually run several 5ks each year.
- John adores movie theater popcorn!
- John has built his own computers and loves technology and gadgets.
- We swam with the dolphins at Disney World.
- John and his dad compete to see who can correctly complete crossword puzzles the fastest.

About us

John and I grew up halfway across the country from one another - he is from Pennsylvania (he moved to Illinois as a teenager), while I am from Illinois - and we met online in 2014. I saw his profile and decided to message him a couple short sentences... and he wrote back a short novel! I knew then that he was someone special. We started dating and bonded over our love of football, roller coasters/theme parks, and all things Disney. We got married in 2017 (a Star Wars wedding, of course!) and love every minute we get to spend together and with our families and puppies. I am the energetic, creative, and outgoing one, while John is the laid back and practical one with unending amounts of patience. Some of our favorite things to do are go to the movies (John is obsessed with movie theater popcorn), go to the local amusement park, and run 5ks. We also love to spend time playing and relaxing at home with our three dogs, Groot, Spudzy, and Beefy.



We've known since early in our relationship that we wanted to have a family and be parents. We discussed having biological children and adopting as ways to grow our family and decided that we someday wanted to do both. Although we tried to conceive for the last several years, it has not worked as we had originally planned and we decided that adoption is truly the road we are meant to follow. We are excited grow our family through adoption and can't wait to share our love and home.



about Amanda

by John

My first memory of Amanda is making a one dollar bet that my football team would beat hers. I lost that bet... and I haven't heard the end of it since. She frequently reminds me of her miraculous hole in one at Mini Golf (the ball went over the hole, hit the back wall, and bounced straight in!), which, being the gentlemen that I am, I did not protest. She has a playful and competitive spirit that makes life more interesting and fun. My favorite part of being with Amanda is that I can be myself, along with my goofy sense of humor. We both love sharing our passion of the worlds of books and movies - we drive each other crazy by quoting movie lines and singing theme songs or commercial jingles. I am very impressed with the arts and crafts my wife is capable of creating. I am the official Glitter Police and have to make sure it doesn't cover the house. Oh, and she is also a very good cook - just keep that broccoli (I call it Satan's tree) away from me. I love to travel with her, and we enjoy a variety of destinations from Las Vegas to Disney World.

For as long as I have known Amanda, she has always wanted to have kids to share her love and passions with. She adores her nieces and nephews. We are both excited to be a part of the adoption process. Amanda is currently a special education teacher, and the kids love talking to her and rely on her to listen and provide needed support. She is their number one fan, but she also knows how to give them structure and guidance when they need it.

Family picnic with nephew



“ Amanda is a fun and goofy person, whose laugh makes the room light up while also having an intense passion for the things that she loves - especially family.”

more about Amanda...

Age: 35

Occupation: Special Education Teacher

Favorite movie: All things Harry Potter and Disney

Favorite place: DISNEY WORLD! And our home

Can't live without: Chocolate and my dogs

Perfect day: A bright, sunny summer day spent at the lake with my family. The lake is definitely one of my happy places; just the thought of the warm sun on my face & time with family makes me smile.

about John

by Amanda

John is perhaps one of the most patient and amazing people I have ever met. He is quiet and reserved until he gets to know you, and then he lets his goofy side shine through. He is a nerd through and through and it is one of the things I love most about him - he is his own unique self and is quirky and fun. John loves Star Wars, Superhero movies, theme parks and roller coasters and NFL Football. He is an avid runner and gets in several miles most days. John is also our in-house tech support. Although we don't agree on what kind of phone or computer is best (I'm an Apple girl and he is all about PCs and Android), he has introduced me to some really cool techie gadgets over the years.

He is incredibly caring and goes out of his way to make his family and friends happy. He always knows exactly what to do or say to put a smile on my face. The relationship that he has with his parents and the way he plays with our dogs and our nieces and nephews makes me really excited to see him as a father. I can just imagine the giggles and smiles he and our kids will have as they share an inside joke or get up to some silly adventure together. I envision never-ending nerf gun battles, water balloon fights, and Mario Kart competitions with a constant stream of giggles and laughs. He is so excited to start a family and has the biggest smile whenever we talk about our adoption plans. He has a heart of gold and so much love to share.



“ John is quiet and laid back, but he has this incredible goofy and playful side that is absolutely infectious & makes everyone smile.”

more about John...

Age: 36

Occupation: Software Developer

Favorite movie: Jurassic Park

Favorite place: Hershey Park

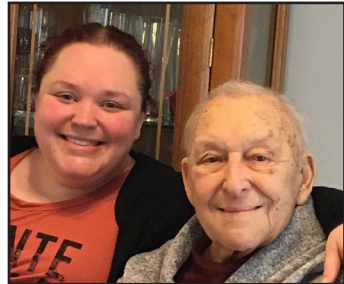
Can't live without: Popcorn

Perfect day: At Cedar Point with an unlimited skip the line pass to ride every roller coaster as many times as I want. Even better will be introducing my future children to all the best rides.

our extended family



Showing off our shades



Easter brunch with Papa



Mother's Day 5k with mom & brother



Hanging out at a family party



Family vacation by the lake



Christmas Eve dinner fun



Family outing at a Blackhawks game

John's family

I have two older sisters, so my early childhood involved a random mix of activities, from sports to My Little Ponies dolls. We grew up in Pennsylvania. My sisters and I are pretty different personality wise, so conversations are always interesting. My oldest sister is definitely the head-in-the-clouds artsy person, while my other sister is more outgoing and sports-loving. My mom is one of the kindest, most patient people there is and I could not ask for a better mom. My dad is a goofy guy, but he is also very smart and is very good at doing projects around the house. My parents are currently in Tennessee and my sisters are on the East coast, so I don't get to visit them as often as I would like. Our family tries to get together as often as we can. We hang out through Zoom and have a family group chat to keep in touch as much as we can.



Family wedding fun



Cousins and Grandma

Amanda's family

I grew up in a large, close-knit family. While my immediate family is small - only my parents, my younger brother, and me - each of my parents had three siblings and I have lots of cousins. Both sides of my family spend a lot of time together and we have family gatherings for just about every holiday and birthday. John and I host Thanksgiving and I love to cook and bake for everyone. Holidays and gatherings are filled with conversation, laughter, food, and fun. My parents moved in with us after they retired, so I have been able to spend even more quality time with them. My mom jokes that she can't wait to be a "granny" - the grandma nanny!



Thanksgiving dinner



Family wedding pose!



Thanksgiving shenanigans



Christmas Night Star Wars time!



Our home

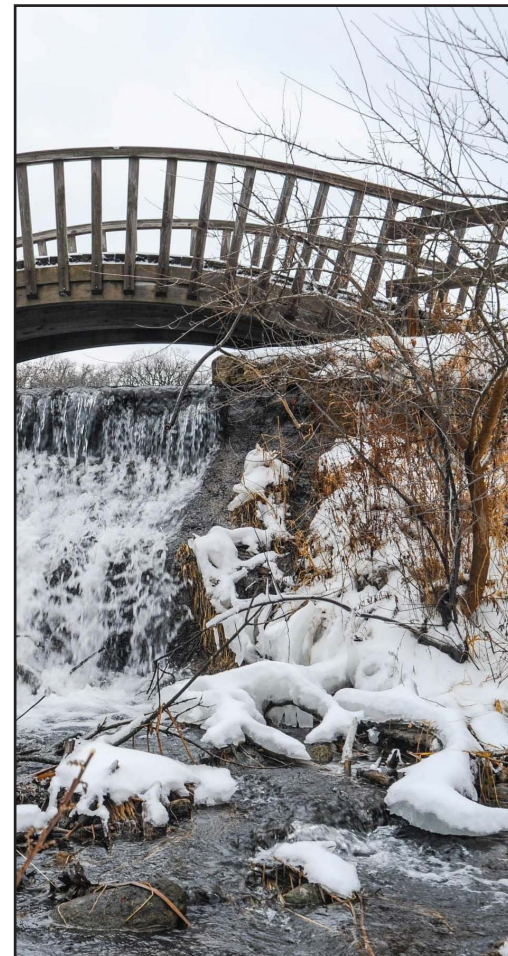


Sledding hill

our community *and home*

Although we both grew up in larger suburbs near big cities, we settled down in a small, relatively rural community in Illinois. Our house is on a quiet cul-de-sac, across the street from the school where Amanda teaches. We love that our neighborhood is super quiet and close-knit, but we are close to bigger towns with lots of things to do. We are also close enough to the big city that we can go there for sporting events and other fun. There are many different parks, nature preserves, rivers and lakes in the community as well that we love to take advantage of.

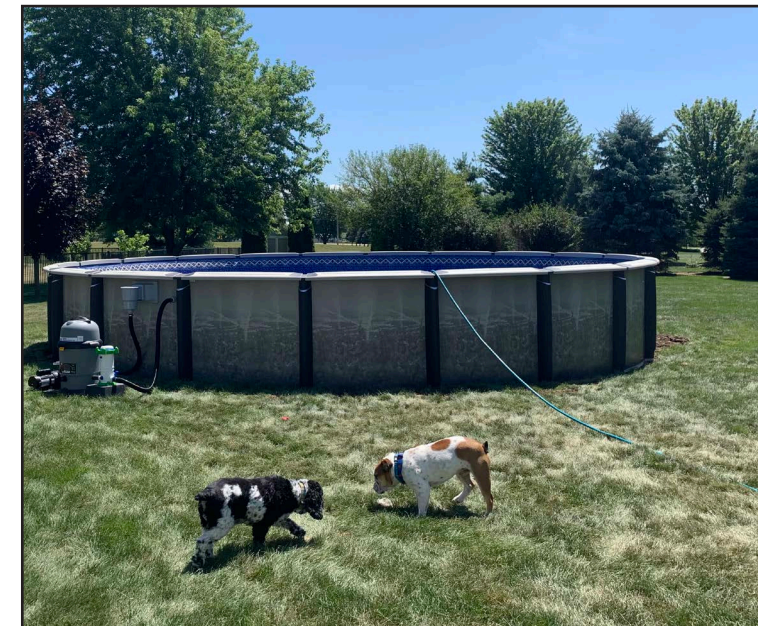
We picked our home because it is the perfect place to grow our family. We've been working on it since the day we moved in, adding little things to make it warm and inviting. Amanda has a craft room where she and her mom and nieces and nephews create projects and fun. We have a big yard that our dogs love to run and play in, which would be the perfect place for a swing set. We also have a pool that we love to swim in during the summer.



Nearby nature preserve



Local ice skating rink



Checking out our new pool

Our Friends

“Our friends are an extension of our family - they are the family we choose.”



With friends meeting Wreck-It Ralph



Field trip fun



Springtime 5k fun



School spirit day!

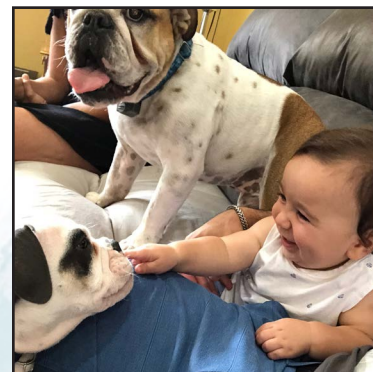


Superhero running team

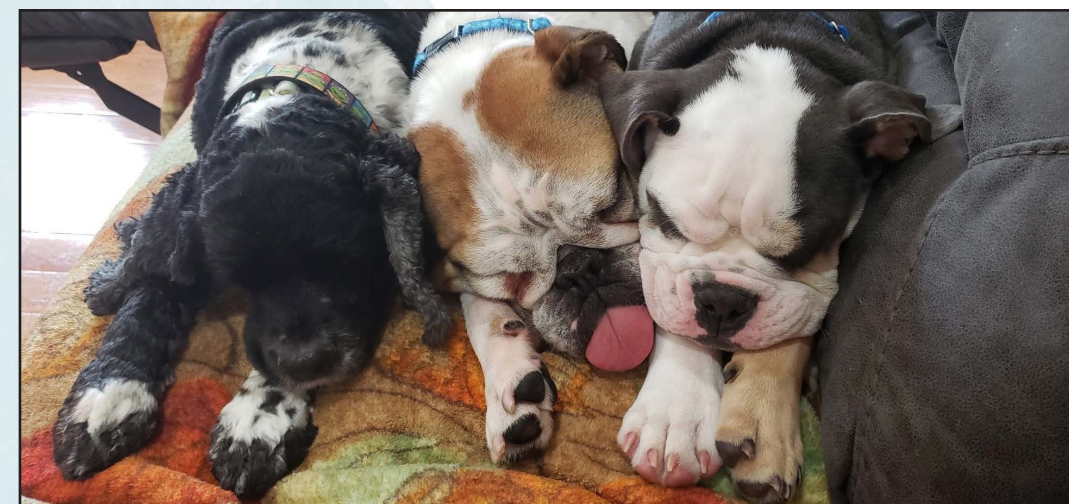


Our dogs

Our 3 dogs, Groot, Spudz-a-Kenzie (Spudzy), and Sir Beef Wellington (Beefy), are the wiggly-butt members of our family. Groot is a 6-year-old Cocker Spaniel (think Lady from Lady and the Tramp), while Spudzy (2.5 years old) and Beefy (8 months old) are both English Bulldogs. The boys are playful and cuddly little goofballs who love life and love their family. They love being around kids, and our nieces and nephews love to play with them. All 3 boys love everyone they meet and love to give puppy kisses and play. Spudzy and Beefy give some awesome stink eye, but it's just the bully face... they are the most loveable fluffballs around.



Nephew playing with puppies



We Promise

- To provide a safe and warm home, filled with laughter and love.
- To show unconditional and never-ending love and support.
- To encourage them to explore the world, their culture and heritage, and whatever opportunities they decide they want to pursue on their journey to become the person they want to be.
- To treat them with love and respect, while also teaching them the value of respecting others and the world around them.
- That they will know their adoption story and that we will foster and grow whatever level of relationship you are open to.
- To encourage education and personal growth as they follow the path they choose in life.
- To value and promote imagination and creativity.
- That they will grow up knowing the magic and wonder in the world around them, which includes the magic of Disney, roller coasters, and all other things nerdy and wonderful, of course.



Boat time with niece



Why **ADOPTION**

by Amanda

I have always wanted to adopt. It was something that always seemed meaningful and like it should be part of my life. When I met John, we talked about adoption as one way of growing our family, in addition to having biological children. We tried to conceive for several years with no luck, and since we had discussed adopting as something we intended to do eventually anyway, we decided that adoption was the path we were meant to follow.





With **LOVE**

Thank you for taking the time to learn about us, our family and home, and our lives. Even though this booklet is just the CliffsNotes version of our family, we hope that it gave you a glimpse of who we are and the parents we will someday be. Thank you most of all for considering us as possible adoptive parents for your child. It means a lot and we are honored you spent time learning about us. Whatever plan you eventually make, remember that you are strong, you are brave, and we are rooting for you.

With love and gratitude,

Amanda & John