

Mike & Kerry



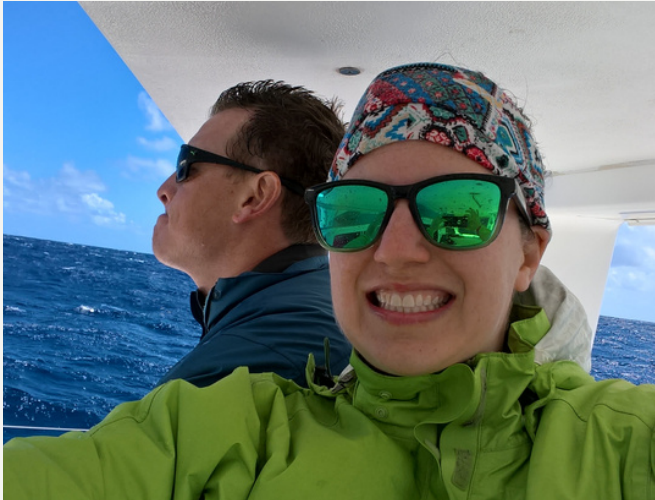
plus Pippa & Parker

Nice to Meet You

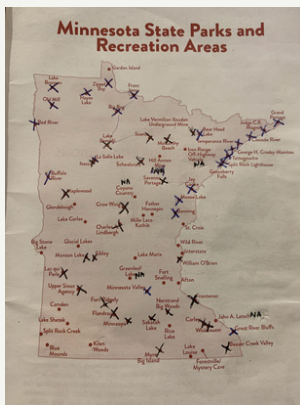
We do not know what events and circumstances brought you here and we admire your strength to consider adoption. If you select us, you will be a huge part of our hearts. We will make sure your child will know the love you have for them. We promise we will love them fully, always supported, and will have a life full of adventure. As your journey unfolds, we wish you comfort and peace. Thank you for the opportunity to share who we are with you.



Who We Are



We love **creating sailing adventures together**. One winter, we boarded a 42-ft catamaran sailboat with four friends and sail on a 14 day long, 400-mile sailing trip through the Caribbean. One a day that walked amongst towering waterfalls, our local guide took out a knife, cut the bark from a gigantic tree and said, “try it!” It was cinnamon! The guide had cut cinnamon bark off a cinnamon tree for us to munch on. It was best cinnamon we have ever had! Now whenever we travel to the Caribbean, we look for cinnamon trees.



Curiosity drives us to explore. We love to plan weeklong camping trips zig zagging our way through national and state forests. For three years, we hiked all 67 state parks in Minnesota which are full of pine trees, rushing rivers and waterfalls. One story we love to tell is the time we explored the second largest bog ecosystem in the world! As we walked along a floating dock system amongst red peat moss and we were memorized as certain plants had trapped water, only to lure insets into their trap! Your child will grow up being able grow their curiosity in all types of environments.



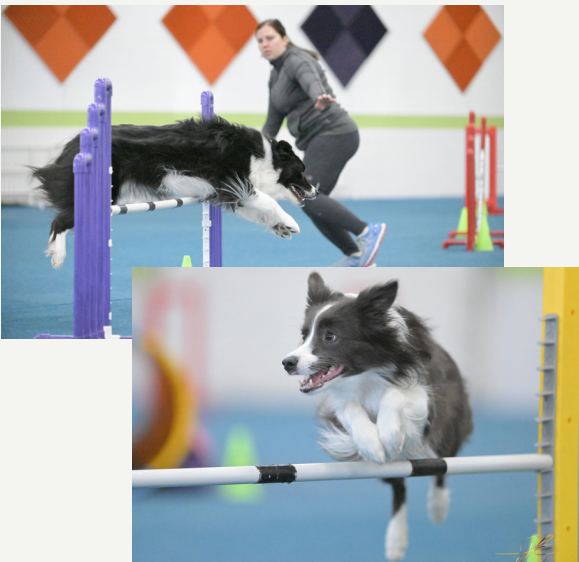
As often as we can be on the go, we make sure to **share our passions through experiences** with our nieces and nephews who we adore. Mike and Kerry both love college football. Most recently, we took one nephew to Iowa City, IA, Kerry’s alma mater, to experience a college football home game. Prior to heading to the football game, Kerry taught all the fight songs to her nephew. During the game we all yelled so hard we lost our voices. Our nephew now proudly hangs Iowa Hawkeye gear in his bedroom. Your child will grow up with parents who create memories through experiences.

Meet Kerry By: Mike



Kerry has a superpower to **connect with people through her creativity**. One weekend, while her niece was having her favorite food, *Trader Joe's* potstickers, Kerry asked, "do you want to be a potsticker for Halloween?" Our niece's eyes lit up and the potsticker costume creation began with a visit to the fabric store. Our nephew then also wanted his favorite food, a strawberry. Foam, fabric, hot glue, pizza pans, and child aprons created their costumes came to life. The kids loved being able to walk in the school Halloween parade as their favorite foods.

Kerry is **one of the most supportive people**. In a large family, she makes sure that each niece or nephew gets special time. She recognizes it does not need to be a grand event, but it is quality time where they connect. Her favorite thing to do over the busy family holidays is to sneak away with her oldest niece for a Starbucks run. This last Christmas, the ask was to order any fun and fancy drink, and the only requirement was to also have cake pop on the side. This time, among others, allowed them to talk and stay connected. Your child will always have individual quality time, no matter how big or small.



Kerry is **goal orientated**. She grew up around dog sports and has trained our two border collies since they were 8 weeks old. Her perseverance pays off when she enters the agility ring, not just locally but nationally. Last year, she competed at the US Open Dog Agility Nationals. In 40 seconds, she and Parker navigated a course with a time to qualify to the nighttime finals. It was a moment to remember having met a huge goal, being under the lights in the center ring, Kerry and Parker finished top 10% of all the dogs in their class. Next time, both dogs will join in the fun.

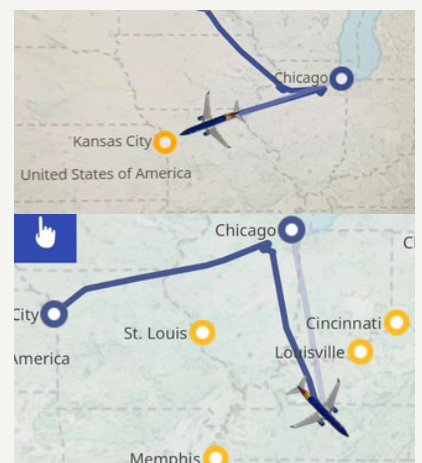
Meet Mike By: Kerry

When I first met Mike, he won me over with his love of sailing. As a young child, Mike's father and uncle taught him the passion to feel the wind. After a sailboat race, when Mike gets off the water, the **energy that surrounds him is captivating and inviting**. You can feel his passion as he shares his stories of the start lines of a sailboat race at large world event. In New Orleans, over 80 sailboats crisscrossed each other behind an imaginary start line. When the time sequence began to count down, then at the final horn, all 80 sailboats turned their boats 45 degrees and took off in the wind. On the sailboat, Mike **tells these stories as he passes his sailing knowledge to his nieces and nephews**, just like his father and uncle did for him.



Many people are good sailors, but Mike is a great sailor. To be a great sailor, you need to be calm. His calmness extends beyond sailing to his other passion, **scuba diving**. Mike will tell you that swimming below the surface is **tranquil and full of adventure**. A favorite scuba story is when Mike was exploring a coral reef 45 feet below the surface. As he swam, he saw a large sleeping sea turtle burrowed into the coral. Swimming underwater allows Mike to be connected to the sea life. Mike's calm nature lets him take the simplest moment in.

To be a great sailor, you need to be able to adapt quickly to changing conditions. Mike has an easy-going attitude and when plans change, he usually says, "we will figure it out". Once we were flying to Atlanta, through Chicago and in the descent to Chicago, the plane reascended, started circling and was unable to land due to fog. We went to Kansas City for fuel, back to Chicago, still were unable to land, and then rerouted to Nashville. Mike said, "we have our carryon luggage, lets rent a car and start driving to Atlanta." So, that's what we did. With **his calm demeanor and glass-half-full attitude**, Mike's idea got us into Atlanta, ahead of our scheduled (now delayed) flight. Your child will have a father who is loves adventure and is calm under pressure and chaos.



How We Became Us



We have **known of each other since we were 18** because Mike's twin brother is one of Kerry's best friends. Kerry and Mike's brother met freshman year of college and that is where she heard about Mike. Each year Mike would visit his brother, but timing was never right. Fast forward some years, Kerry and Mike were living two time zones and 2,000 miles apart. Mike's brother and his now wife decided that it was time for the two of us to be set up at their destination wedding. A flight plus a 4-hour drive later for Kerry and a cross-country road trip in an RV with his cousins for Mike, everyone was finally together. Upon seeing each other Kerry said, "Hi." Mike immediately said, "When I last saw you; you had blonde hair!" To which Kerry started laughing and thus began the constant laughter and banter we have with each other.

Our earliest common interest was hiking. Due to work travel in 2016, we found ourselves in Salt Lake City, UT. We drove south to Zion National Park to hike *Angel's Landing*; this trail is 2.5 miles long with 1,500 feet elevation gain. Climbing the last half mile, we gripped chains bolted into the rock along path's edge, which included a 5,800 ft drop off. In the moment, neither one of us let the other know that this climb was intense and scary. Instead, **we maintained constant communication on what each other was seeing to keep each other calm and focused.** In the end we were rewarded with breathtaking views.



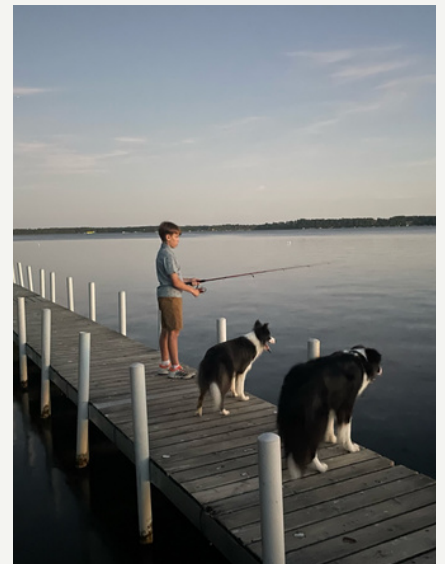
We have always wanted children and unfortunately after many years of IVF and losses, we are unable to do so. Our infertility journey spanned nine years and the conversation of adoption wove itself many times in our talks. **As the idea of adoption evolved, it provided comfort and hope.** This Thanksgiving our family did an art project where every wrote what they were thankful for on leaves and placed them on wooden 3D tree. We wrote adoption on our leaves. We are thankful for adoption to allow us to become parents.

Our Pets Parker & Pippa



Mike and Kerry are long-time pet lovers, and both grew up with dogs. When you call Parker's name, you don't have to look too far. He is quickly found close to Kerry's side, providing a constant companionship with a demeanor of calmness. The two of them have a special unique bond which **Kerry calls Parker her "heart dog"**. If you could bottle spunky and sell it, it would be Pippa's personality. She came into our lives as a ball of speed and never looked back. **We call Pippa our "passion dog"**.

Parker loves to fish. Okay, truthfully, he loves the bobber on the fishing pole. All he wants is for you to cast a line repeatedly into the water and watch the bobber move. This Labor Day weekend, **our nephew** who loves to fish, **spent hours** with Parker **on the dock**. Our nephew would pick up his fishing pole and the two dogs would gladly tag along. **Both dogs kept a watchful eye on him** and the bobber. Your child will grow up with two dogs who will provide companionship and will keep watchful eye making sure they are safe.



Pippa loves to share her feelings. Our favorite memory of Pippa is after a long day of hiking at a state park, Pippa was not herself. She was hot! She kept barking at us until we turned the battery-operated fan towards her so she could cool off. Very quickly, she was her **goofy self** again. She loves large, but be careful of leaving your seat empty, because she will exhibit her mountain goat skills and steal it. The payment to get your seat back - belly rubs.

Family Life

If you choose us, your child will grow up with four grandparents, ten aunts and uncles, and **twenty-one cousins**.

Some family lives within 30 minutes, while others live states away. Every year, there is an open invitation to the family property over Labor Day.

This year, **all three generations played a very fun and competitive game** of softball that went down to the very last inning! After the softball game, we took the time to capture the moment of the entire family. This post softball photograph is special because our family admits we are not the best with taking large family photos.



Our family is adventurous. When Kerry was little, her parents encouraged her to **explore, be independent, and trying new things**. The four of us recently explored a volcanic island where we woke up at 3am, drove our car up 10,023 feet of elevation in 35F temperature to watch the sunrise coming over the mountains. This allowed us to share a memorable moment as a family. For us, it was moment of gratitude of being together and reflect how a sunrise symbolizes a new beginning of a day. Your child will grow up in a family that never stops exploring.

Mike and his twin brother are twenty-two months older than their twin sisters. Having **two sets of twins** created a fun childhood experience where you never had to look far for a partner to play games. One game, that is our favorite memory with our father, is playing a card game called, *Hearts*. The first time we played the game, Mike's brother ended up having all the hearts and the Queen of Spades. He thought he was going to lose only to find out he, "shot the moon!". Now, when Mike and his siblings get together, they find time to play a game of Hearts and often chant "going on a Queen hunt" to prevent another person from shooting the moon again! Last April, a twin only sailing trip was taken to Florida to honor their late father where they sailed and played a few rounds of Hearts in his honor. Your child will grow up to be around a family that is **loves to stay connected through games**.



& Traditions

Every Labor Day, Mike's cousins get together on the family property for a long weekend. The weekend's highlight is the family Olympics. The games change each year and are planned by the team that lost the year before. Everyone's favorite memory involved **sugar, kids, and glue... what could go wrong?** Each team had quickly glue candy onto a shirt, then one volunteer from each team wore the t-shirt and attempted to be the last one standing. Mike and his brother both wore the shirt from each team while 20+ children (aka sugar hungry savages) eagerly ran, grabbed, and attempted to tackle Mike and his brother for candy. Mike and his brother were terrified, and the game has never been played since.



As our families grew larger, Mike's cousins wanted to make sure each holiday they all still got together.

Thus began, the **Family Christmas that is not on Christmas**. It does not happen over the holiday weeks, but instead at a different date and rotates through different cousin's households. The white elephant gifts arrive wrapped in newspaper or brown bags and loaded in laundry baskets. One year, we gave our cousin our old vacuum since we had gotten a new one! He was in his first apartment, so it was a great white elephant gift!

Kerry's cousins all celebrated events together – graduations, birthdays and even band concerts. Not wanting to lose the traditions we had growing up; **we look forward to a cousin weekend** (no aunts or uncles allowed) full of laughter and trying new food recipes. Throughout the weekend, each family cooks a different meal, and it is a fun way to try new foods or enjoy favorites. This year, Kerry wanted to create-your-own quesadilla experience. She used the same quesadilla maker her and her cousin were given when they graduated high school. Whenever the cousins are together, they find a way to use it. It reminds us of how we used to hang out throughout our childhood. We look forward to hearing your favorite traditions to include them in ours for your child.



Cabin Moments



A lake cabin in Minnesota carries the tradition of a **weekend sanctuary where children run from house to house**. We grew up with this experience and now we have a cabin with Mike's brother and his wife, three doors down from the larger family property. The *huge* pine trees surround our weekend sanctuary. This summer, we plan on adding a fire ring and some picnic benches under the largest tree. At the cabin, your child will create a lifetime full of memories exploring the 200-year-old pine tree forest with their cousins.



Adventure on the lake is a big part of our cabin time. **Once the sun is up, fun on the water begin**. The summer days are filled with tubing, water skiing and cruising along the shoreline. and cruising along the shoreline. One weekend, our families piled into power boats and tied up next to one another. That afternoon, we enjoyed live music and snacked on ice cream from the "floating" ice cream trucks. We all felt at ease floating on the water, eating ice cream and listening to music.

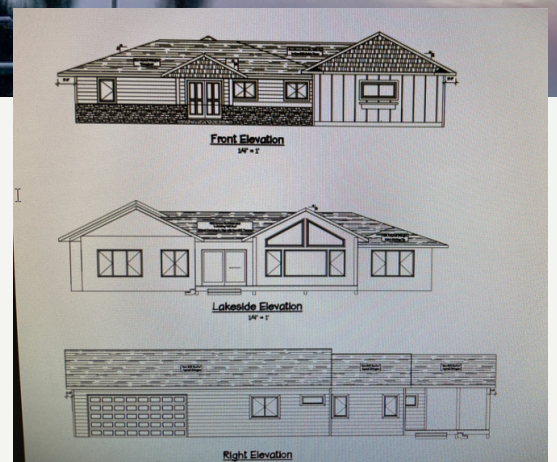
As the day winds down, and sun begins to set, **the campfires begin**. A campfire is not complete without smores. Some of our nieces and nephews enjoy the traditional graham cracker, Hershey's chocolate and marshmallow but one night, we did not want to do the 'same old s'more.' Instead, we created a new favorite - Reese's Peanut Butter Cup, marshmallow and graham cracker S'mores.



Place We Call Home



10 years ago, we had a unique opportunity to create our **forever home**. We had 10 years of thoughts and ideas on what our home should look like. To bring the vision to life, Kerry designed the home using a software program. Our favorite moment was when the first wall was put up which we realized our dream was coming true.



The house is **footsteps away from the water and wildlife**. We love to take our canoe up the lake inlet to search for turtles popping their heads out of the water and bald eagles perching alongside the banks. One evening we are paddling up our inlet and counted at least 20 turtles sunbathing and swimming directly under us. Your child will get the chance to explore nature and learn different species of wildlife from their backyard.

In the wintertime, we trade our paddles for cross-country skis. When the snow is right, it is perfect conditions for a ski. On a recent sunny "warm" winter day over the weekend, **we put our skis on to ski the entire way around the lake**. We saw pond hockey rinks, snowmobiles, and chatted with our neighbors who were ice fishing. Even though it is cold out, we love seeing everyone out enjoying the outdoors.



Neighborhood & Community



We do not have fences with our neighbors, so we are close friends. Our neighborhood offers a supportive environment on adoption as **our closest neighbor is an adoptee, and our next-door neighbors recently adopted their child.** This year, when they brought their son home, the neighborhood kids were having a sleepover at their house. As we tucked the neighborhood kids in at bedtime we read a children's book, "I Wished for You" to begin to teach them about adoption. Your child will be a part of a neighborhood community that **supports and embraces adoption.**

A quick walk from our house is neighborhood forest filled with oak and maple Trees. The forest was restored by our neighbors and ourselves pitching in hours of work to remove buckthorn and other invasive species. We all worked together to lay a **wood chipped path and build an area for the entire neighborhood to enjoy.**

Routinely we walk this path with our dogs and while we are walking, whenever Mike sees an invasive vine hanging from a tree, he pulls the vine down to open up the tree canopy.



No matter the season, a quick drive lands you at **play gyms that are full of kids crisscrossing moving bridges playing tag.** When our nieces and nephews had a sleepover this summer, this was our favorite park to bring them to. They loved it here because it is two levels to run around and play games. We will always remember the moments of laughter while we run and yell, "you are it!" to our niece and nephew while playing tag.



Weekdays

Mike is a leader in the software engineering industry focusing on healthcare working to positively impact patients' lives. He enjoys the opportunity to take complex hard to understand problems and work to create a streamlined strategy. He **works from home**, with minimal commuting to an office and **flexible** hours.



Kerry works as a senior manager in the engineering field for a chemical company supporting product safety. Kerry enjoys this field because she feels she makes a difference in worker's health by reducing the risk of occupational illness and exposure to harmful chemicals while manufacturing products. She has hybrid work schedule with **flexible** hours. Your child will have two parents with flexible hours to adapt to their needs.



Nothing makes a morning better than a good cup of coffee. Our favorite thing is to **start each morning with a cup (or two or three) of coffee**. In fact, we look forward to the smell of coffee and have all the fun flavors that you can typically find at your local coffee chain in our kitchen to make it extra fun. Mike's current pick is a butter toffee latte, while Kerry's morning starts with a salted caramel latte. We enjoy our coffee, cinnamon rolls and chatting about what the day will bring us. Your child will have a morning routine of being together spending quality time.





Thank You

We believe the decision that you are considering takes internal strength and trust. We truly honor your consideration. We hope after seeing these pages, you get a glimpse of what your child's life would be like with us. We aim to fill their lives with adventure, support, laughter and most importantly love. If chosen, **we would commit to you to share updates and photos** at your comfort so that you can see your child grow over the years. We thank you very much for considering us.

Kerry & Mike

