

# ouple recognized for adopting children

1/12/12

lost parents can recall  
vivid precision the  
ifying moment when  
r child became ill or  
injured in an ac-  
nt. The trip to the  
rgency room, perhaps  
wound that had to  
itched or the broken  
e that needed to be  
can leave permanent  
rints in our memo-

Other children battle  
nic illnesses and their  
lies bravely endure  
rugal heartache and  
s of endless doctor  
intments, medical  
, and difficult treat-  
ts. As mothers and  
ers we endure the  
exhaustion, and  
frustration because  
e end of the day, we  
ld do just about any-

g to make our chil-  
healthy and whole.  
et, countless children  
e world will never  
rience the love of  
nts—the protection  
stability that come  
belonging to a fam-

In 2011 there were  
e than 400,000 chil-  
in foster care just in  
United States. More  
100,000 of those  
waiting to be ad-  
d. Across the globe  
e are millions more.  
y of these interna-  
l orphans are alone,  
overlooked, and  
y lack basic necessi-

For those struggling  
serious illnesses, the  
ce of adoption can be  
because many pro-

spective parents are un-  
able to make the sacrifices  
needed to care for them.

But not Mark and  
Susan Walrond. They  
adopted Shane, a three-  
year-old boy from China  
who had a life-threat-  
ening heart condition.  
The condition is usually  
detected and surgically  
fixed within a few months  
of birth; however, this  
little boy did not have an  
opportunity for surgery.  
The adoption process can  
be long and grueling, par-  
ticularly when adopting  
children from other coun-  
tries. Yet the Walronds  
did not give up. Just be-  
fore Easter this year, they  
welcomed Shane home to  
Chesapeake, Virginia.

Before a child is ap-  
proved to enter the Unit-  
ed States, requirements  
from the U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration Services  
(USCIS), National Visa  
Center, and the relevant  
Embassy must be met.  
Due to the critical nature  
of the Walronds' situa-  
tion, I had the privilege  
of providing assistance  
to ensure that the case  
moved swiftly through the  
required channels. My of-  
fice contacted liaisons at  
each agency and alerted  
them to Shane's critical  
needs to ensure that his  
case was quickly handed  
off to the subsequent  
agency. Meanwhile, the  
Chinese government also  
had to work through its  
process of releasing the  
child for adoption. With  
both sides moving in uni-  
son, the visa was issued  
fairly quickly upon our



**Congressman Forbes presents Joseph and Susan Walrond with Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute's 2012 Angels in Adoption award.**

first intervention with a  
federal agency.

After several months of  
gaining strength, Shane  
underwent heart surgery  
in Boston just last month.  
He is now recovering at  
home and doctors are op-  
timistic he will have a full  
recovery. The Walronds  
have other biological and  
adopted children but they  
opened their hearts a little  
more and created a place  
for Shane in their family.

Because of the Wal-  
ronds' generosity, Shane  
will know the love of a  
"forever family" and will  
receive life-saving health-  
care that otherwise would  
have been out of reach.  
To honor this extraor-  
dinary commitment,  
I selected Joseph and  
Susan Walrond as 2012  
Angels in Adoption. Their  
selflessness saved Shane's  
life. Their continued love  
and generosity will ensure  
that it is a full one.

The Angels in Adop-  
tion program is the  
Congressional Coalition  
on Adoption Institute's

(CCAI's) signature public  
awareness campaign and  
provides an opportunity  
for all members of the  
U.S. Congress to honor  
the good work of their  
constituents who have  
enriched the lives of fos-  
ter children and orphans  
in the United States and  
abroad. CCAI is a 501(c)3  
nonpartisan organiza-  
tion dedicated to raising  
awareness about the tens  
of thousands of orphans  
and foster children in the  
United States and the mil-  
lions of orphans around  
the world in need of per-  
manent, safe, and loving  
homes through adoption.

"I applaud the organi-  
zations and individuals  
across America who dedi-  
cate each day to the most  
vulnerable among us,"  
Congressman J. Randy  
Forbes said. "To those  
who adopt, serve as foster  
parents, act as mentors,  
and advocate on behalf  
of orphans, I express my  
deepest gratitude. May  
we be inspired by their  
example."