

# the MISSING LINK

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MISSING CHILDREN SOCIETY OF CANADA

SUMMER 2010

## NOAH KIRKMAN REUNITED WITH FAMILY IN CALGARY AFTER 2 YEAR ORDEAL

### NOAH KIRKMAN,

a young Calgary boy, was vacationing with his step-dad in Oregon when he was apprehended by local police who became concerned about the boy's behaviour and the fact he was not wearing a helmet while riding his bike. Noah suffers a severe form of attention deficit disorder and changes to his surroundings are very disruptive to him. Because of this disorder, the Police alerted the state's Department of Human Services who immediately placed him in foster care. Since 2008, he had been placed with several foster families in Oregon.

The family's lawyer stated that under international legal conventions, when it was decided Noah's situation required the intervention of social services, the Oregon court had an obligation to send the boy back to Canada – instead they kept him as a ward of the State of Oregon.

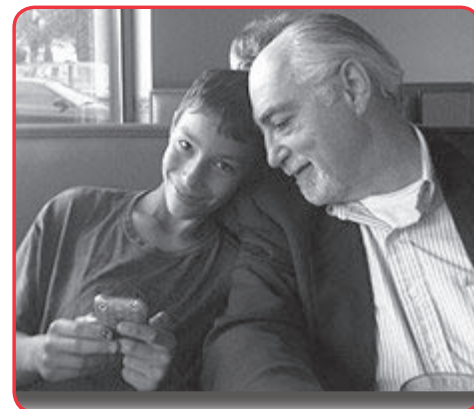
Lisa Kirkman, Noah's mom faced a legal custody battle with the State of Oregon who up to now had refused to return Noah back

**“ MCSC is proud to have been able to play a role in the reunification of the Kirkman family.”**

to Canada and to his family. A Hearing was held in Oregon on May 28, 2010 where Lane County circuit Judge Kip Leonard (now retired) continued the case. Judge Leonard summarized that Noah would most likely be returned to Canada after the school year, which in Oregon was scheduled to end on June 17, 2010. Noah's grandparents attended the Hearing and were very happy that Noah would soon be released. In a surprise development, Noah would actually be released a few days earlier than that anticipated date, arriving at the Calgary airport to a tearful and joyous reunion with his mother and family on June 11, 2010.

Since last September, MCSC has been in contact with Lisa and her family to assist in advocating for Noah's return and to provide a shoulder of support. Through the Kirkman's ordeal, MCSC investigators have become very close with the family - sharing in their frustration and dedication - and now sharing in their joy.

“There were so many dedicated, caring people and organizations involved in bringing Noah home. MCSC is proud to have been able to play a role in the reunification of the Kirkman family,” said Amanda Pick, Executive Director of MCSC. “We are thrilled for Lisa, her parents, and her family. They have



**A beaming Noah Kirkman cuddles with his grandfather, Michael Heltay, after being reunited with his family.**

*(photo by Phyllis Heltay, Noah's grandmother)*

worked tirelessly for the past 2 years, fighting for their child. We congratulate them and everyone who helped fight for Noah.”

Welcome home, Noah.

**HELP US CONTINUE THE SEARCH  
DONATE ONLINE AT [WWW.MCSC.CA](http://WWW.MCSC.CA)**

## BIKING ACROSS EUROPE IN SUPPORT OF THE SEARCH FOR MISSING CHILDREN

**KEN THOMPSON AND STEPHEN WATKINS** are both enduring nightmares that no parent should face. Both are Canadian fathers of young boys abducted by their non-custodial mothers. Both believe their children were taken to and continue to be hidden somewhere in Europe. Given their similar circumstances, the two fathers have been brought together in a Europe-wide campaign to find their boys.

Stephen Watkins, the father and custodial parent to Alexander and Christopher Watkins, has spent the past year working with authorities to locate the abducted boys. The boys disappeared during a weekend access visit with their mother, during which they were driven across the US border on March 8, 2009. A rare INTERPOL Red Notice was issued seeking the arrest of the abductor in September 2009. In January 2010, Mr. Watkins was able to obtain a Court Order in Poland which allowed the Polish Police to actively search out the abducting parent. American officials have confirmed that the non-custodial parent and the boys - then ages 7 and 4 – boarded a flight to Germany. They were last seen at the Frankfurt Airport. They have not been heard from since and are believed to be in Poland, Austria or Germany.

The Frankfurt Airport was also the last place that 4-year old Andrew Thompson was seen. On April 24th, 2008, Andrew John Thompson was taken from Australia by his non-custodial parent Melinda Margaret Thompson (nee Stratton). They flew from Sydney to Frankfurt, Germany and have not been seen or heard from since. Ken Thompson, Andrew's father, as well as Australian authorities hold concerns for the boys' safety and Melinda's emotional well-being.

In an effort to raise awareness and funds for the ongoing search efforts, Ken Thompson is biking across Europe this summer. The “European Bike Crossing Campaign” will highlight the search for his son Andrew and other missing children including Alexander and Christopher Watkins. A campaign poster featuring Andrew, Alex and Christopher has been distributed far and wide by European authorities. The Missing Children Society of Canada is proud to be among the internationally-recognized organizations to be supporting and benefitting from this campaign. For information about the campaign, or to follow Ken's biking journey, please visit his blog at: <http://findandrewthompstoneurope2010.blogspot.com/>



Andrew Thompson



Alex Watkins



Christopher Watkins



## CANDLELIGHT GALA 2010

ON BEHALF OF OUR SEARCHING FAMILIES across the country, we would like to extend our deepest thanks to everyone who supported our Candlelight Gala which was held on Thursday, May 27th, 2010 at the Fairmont Palliser Hotel in Calgary, Alberta. We are thrilled to announce that this year's gala succeeded in raising over \$55,000! It was an emotional evening, and we were honoured to be able to connect with so many wonderful attendees, volunteers, donors and sponsors. Thank you also to NorthGate Aviation, our host sponsor, for their generous support. And thank you to Dave Rutherford for lending his entertaining and professional skill as our evening's emcee.

The evening showcased a video tribute to **Brittany Stalman** who has been missing since November 13, 2006 from North Delta, BC. We would like to extend a special thank you to Stacy Stalman, and her family and friends, for sharing Brittany's story with our audience through your incredibly moving video. Your video allowed everyone in the room to personally feel your experience and gain a glimpse into how your lives have been affected by Brittany's disappearance. The entire room was moved by your honesty, courage and emotion. Brittany is in all our hearts, and we thank you.

To view [Brittany's video tribute](#) and photos from the Candlelight Gala, please visit our website at [www.mcsc.ca](http://www.mcsc.ca) or check our [Facebook page](#).



## LIGHT THE WAY HOME - 2010 CAMPAIGN

EACH MAY, MCSC'S ANNUAL 'LIGHT THE WAY HOME' CAMPAIGN shows searching families that we all stand with them in their hopeful search. "Our searching families are faced with a terrifying reality every single day. Their unimaginable pain drives us to keep the active, front-line search going, and to show them that all of Canada stands by their sides," expressed Amanda Pick, Executive Director of MCSC and a mother of two.

This year, MCSC's Light the Way Home campaign reached out to Canadians to make a personal connection to the organization's continued search for missing children. The public was invited to join the country in lighting a candle at 8:00 pm on the evening of May 25th, National Missing Children's Day. Canadians were also asked to send a personal 'Message of Hope' to our searching families. We are thrilled with the response - receiving over 100 heartfelt and touching Messages of Hope. These messages will be collected and shared with our searching families.

To view the [Messages of Hope](#), please visit us online at [www.mcsc.ca](http://www.mcsc.ca).

## SUPPORTERS & SPONSORS

**WILLOW PARK WINES & SPIRITS:** The Bonaventure Drive SE location in Calgary has generously agreed to donate 10% of all purchases of wine, beer and spirits purchased between May 1 and September 15, 2010 to a maximum of \$10,000. Simply submit your original receipts to MCSC. Please contact us for more information.

**GOODLIFE FITNESS VICTORIA MARATHON:** MCSC has been selected as an official benefitting charity for the GoodLife Fitness Victoria Marathon on October 10th in Victoria, BC. Participants can raise funds for MCSC while they raise their heart rates! For details, please check our website or Facebook page.

**CALGARY POLICE RODEO SADDLES UP AGAIN:** Once again, MCSC is the benefitting charity of the Calgary Police Rodeo. The rodeo, which takes place Saturday August 21 in Airdrie, brings law enforcement competitors from across North America. Catch the action at the beer garden, barn dance, and Children's Carnival!

## MORE WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** We can't do it alone. We need your help in the search for missing children. Opportunities include Special Event Committee members, event day volunteers, and admin support. Please contact us by phone at 1-800-661-6160 or email us at [info@mcsc.ca](mailto:info@mcsc.ca) for further information.

**HUSKY CARDS:** Do you fill up at Husky or Mohawk? Ask us for a Husky Community Rebate Program card. Each time you show the card, we'll receive a rebate worth 2% of all your purchases.

## 10TH ANNUAL MCSC CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT

September 16, 2010  
Springbank Links Golf Club  
Calgary, Alberta

**Registration is NOW open!**  
Please join us for another great day of golf with good friends at the beautiful Springbank Links Golf Club - all in support of MCSC.

For details, please visit [www.mcsc.ca](http://www.mcsc.ca).

## CONTACT US

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