



◀ COREY & RYAN ▶

DEAR BIRTHMOM

WE'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE OURSELVES.

We're Corey, a database administrator (sort of a computer programmer) and Ryan, a project manager for a consulting company. *Our son, Silas, came into our lives at 5-weeks-old in February 2016.* We've been together for over nine years, and we celebrated our seven-year wedding anniversary this past spring. We own a small single-family home on the Northwest side of Chicago. We love family, food, cooking, animals, gardening, and travel. *We want to complete our family by adopting another child.*



We love being silly together!

THINGS WE WILL TEACH ► OUR CHILDREN ◀

- HOW TO LOVE THEMSELVES
- THE VALUE OF A FORMAL EDUCATION
- WHERE THEIR FOOD COMES FROM
- THE VALUE OF A STRONG WORK ETHIC
- HOW TO BE SELF-SUFFICIENT
- HOW TO TAKE CARE OF ANIMALS
- ABOUT THEIR OWN AND OTHER CULTURES



We are excited to adopt again!

OUR LIFE TOGETHER

WE MET & FELL IN LOVE IN THE FALL OF 2006,

Bought our house in 2008, and were married in the spring of 2009. Our friends often note how well we complement each other. Ryan is a planner and an organizer, while Corey tends to be more of a dreamer and likes to physically (and figuratively) get his hands on home projects, such as our quail hutches, self-watering vegetable garden, chicken coop, and other food-producing projects. We adopted our first child, Silas, in 2015.

ONE OF THE NOTABLE THINGS ABOUT US IS THAT WE GROW A GOOD DEAL OF OUR OWN FOOD ON OUR PROPERTY IN THE CITY OF CHICAGO — which really requires both of our skill sets to achieve. We love to cook, especially for our friends. We also love to travel, and we recently visited South Korea and took a road trip through the US Pacific Northwest.

A day in our household starts early. Corey usually tends to our outdoor animals, while Ryan makes breakfast, preps lunches, gets our son ready for school and feeds our two dogs and our cat. We prep for the day ahead while listening to NPR, walk the dogs, then we're off to drop off Silas at his bilingual daycare before heading into work. We try and both leave work at the same time so we can pick up Silas together before heading home to make dinner, get Silas bathed and into bed, and prepare for another day.

One of the defining conversations we had about our relationship was around whether or not we were interested in having children. This talk happened right as we started dating, and it was a make-or-break factor in the relationship for Corey. *NOW THAT WE HAVE A SON, WE CAN'T WAIT TO ADD ANOTHER MEMBER TO OUR FAMILY.*



We are so EXCITED to welcome another child into our family!

A LITTLE ABOUT RYAN

"DADDY"

I'M A FLORIDA NATIVE WHO MOVED TO CHICAGO AFTER COLLEGE. I'VE MADE MY HOME HERE AND WHILE WE DON'T HAVE ANY IMMEDIATE PLANS TO MOVE, I LOOK FORWARD TO MAKING A MOVE AT SOME POINT IN THE FUTURE TO A LOCATION WHERE WE CAN HAVE MORE OUTDOOR SPACE.

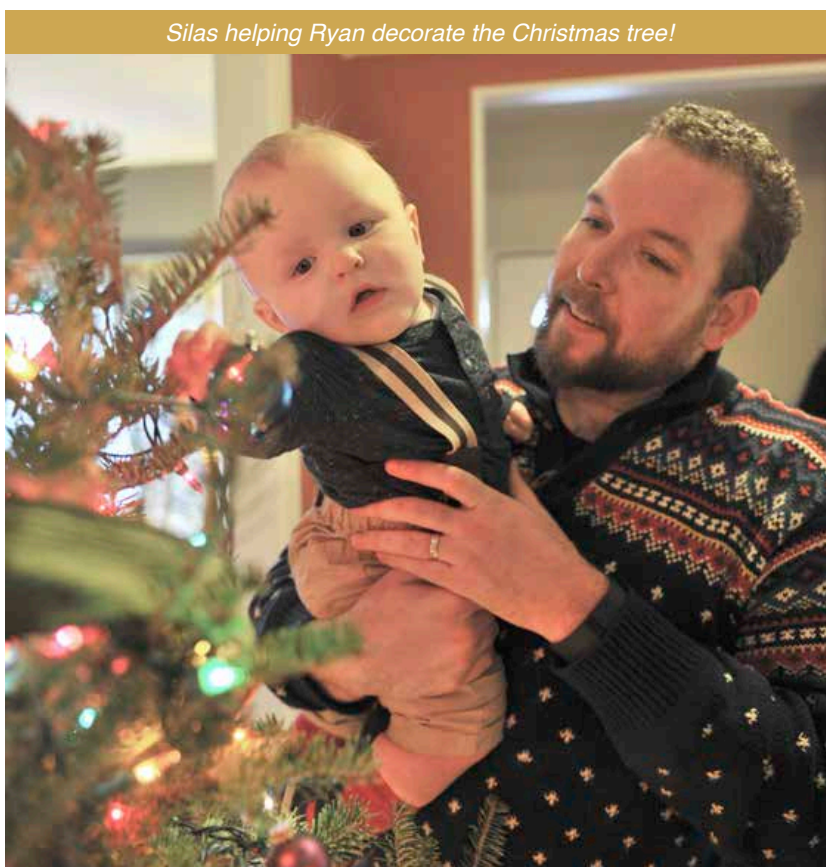
I share Corey's passion for urban agriculture, though I tend to not get my hands as dirty as he does. My interest in growing our own food is more closely related to my love of cooking and eating. I learned to cook from my mom and have always had a passion for food, both highbrow and lowbrow. I love 'putting up' our annual harvest of vegetables, turning them into pickles, relishes, and chutneys that we share with our friends and family as gifts through the colder months of the year. Some of my favorite dishes to make are homemade pizza, toter-tot-chos (nachos with tater tots instead of chips), and hand-packed burgers fired on our backyard grill.



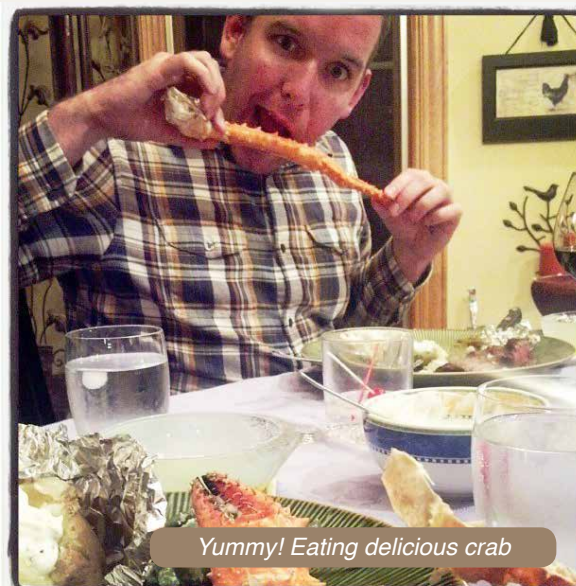
Ryan's childhood friends



Ryan in a garden in South Carolina



Silas helping Ryan decorate the Christmas tree!



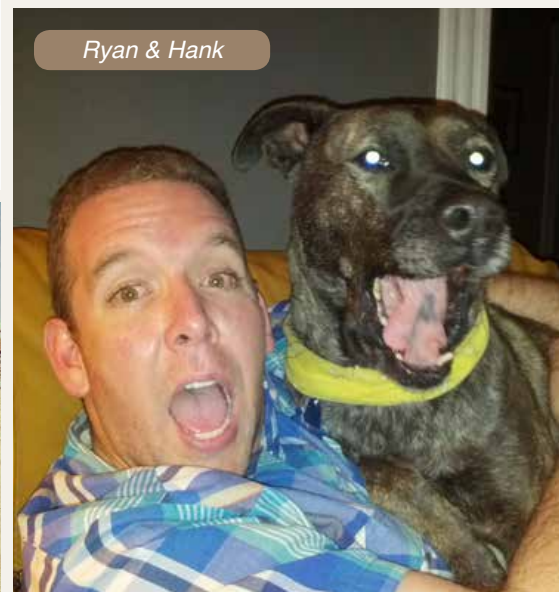
Yummy! Eating delicious crab



Soakin' up the sun



At Paradise Cafe



Ryan & Hank

Though I don't go see as many live concerts as I used to, going to shows is one of my favorite past times, and I love exploring, listening to, and collecting new music in a range of genres, from 'indie rock' to experimental, to R&B and dance music. Whenever we're at home, there's music playing – we've even got speakers out in the backyard that are wired to our stereo so that we can enjoy music outdoors, and we keep an iPod in Silas' room attached to a speaker base so he can listen to music as well.

I also really like cleaning and enjoy living in a clutter-free and well ordered home. I'm kind of the opposite of a hoarder, regularly throwing out items that aren't absolutely essential to our lives.

I currently work as a project manager in the field of brand consulting, which provides me with a flexible work schedule, allowing me to spend time with Silas every day before and after work. I look forward to being able to spend as much time with your child as possible, showing them all of the great things Corey and I love about Chicago.

Ryan's ♥ FAVORITES

FOOD:
BURGERS

CHILDHOOD ACTIVITY:
WRITING HAIKU

KID'S MOVIE:
THE LITTLE MERMAID

ACTOR/ACTRESS:
CHARLIZE THERON

APP:
SCRABBLE WITH FRIENDS

HOBBY:
CONCERT GOING

HOLIDAY:
THANKSGIVING

A LITTLE ABOUT



COREY "PAPA"

My career is in computers but I've always had a deep love for living things, and for travelling and seeing how others live around the world. Part of that has involved working with children and teens in college and at other times in life. One of the most important events of growing up was when I visited the Dominican Republic as a teenager and saw how people lived there without all of the things we have here in the US that we often take for granted. I've always wanted to be a father, and I am overjoyed that we live in a time and place where that's now a reality.

I love to cook, too, but I'm not quite as refined as Ryan. I like to cook spicy Cajun and Indian foods. I enjoy building things, growing things, and working with my hands. I really like home projects, and I find myself out at the home center buying things for projects at least every week.

I was born in Green Bay, WI and went to the University of Wisconsin in Madison. I moved to Chicago in 1998, and have lived on the West side most of that time. Like Ryan, I love living in here and love being a father.



Corey is always smiling

WORK LIFE

Though *Corey's* degree is in the life sciences, he has worked in computer databases for most of his career. **He's currently working for a software company that provides good pay and benefits and allows flexibility for employees to work from home.**

Corey's ♥ FAVORITES

FOOD:
TACOS

CHILDHOOD ACTIVITY:
PLAYING LEGOS

KID'S TV SHOW:
ADVENTURE TIME

ACTOR/ACTRESS:
LEO DICAPRIO

APP:
INSTAGRAM

HOBBY:
URBAN AGRICULTURE

HOLIDAY:
THANKSGIVING



Celebrating Silas' birthday



Working in a classroom



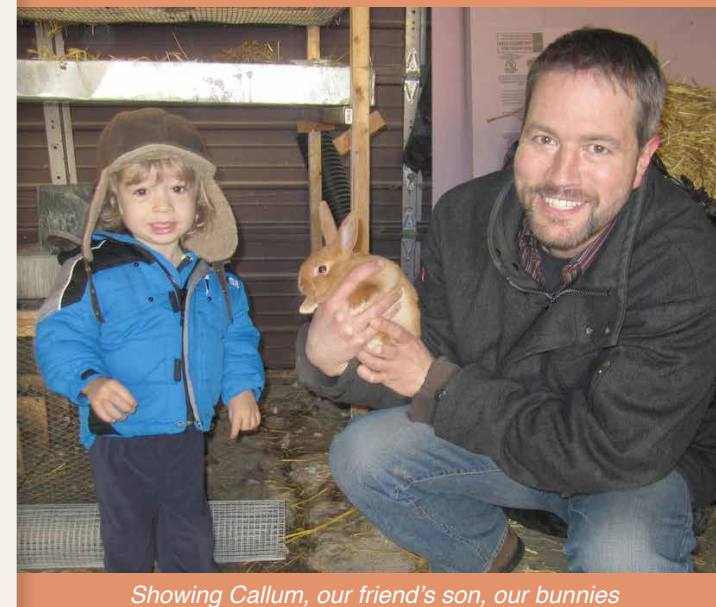
Snuggle buddies



Corey at the diner



Naptime with the dogs and cats



Showing Callum, our friend's son, our bunnies



Working outside



In the studio

Ryan has a degree in History, but doesn't work in the field he studied, either. He worked in the not-for-profit sector for his first several years living in Chicago, but now works as a project manager in a mid-sized consulting business. As a project manager, **Ryan has the flexibility to work from home or to reduce his hours to part-time as needed.** Ryan's current employer is very supportive of adoption and provides multiple benefits to families that are considering adoption.



Ryan's cousin & sister



With our parents



OUR SON



SILAS

Silas was born in January 2015 in central Florida and came to live with us in February 2015 after his birth parents decided to make an adoption plan with us. ***We are still in contact with them, and have the opportunity to meet up and visit with them when we go home to visit Ryan's family,*** as Silas is from the same community where Ryan grew up.

Silas loves animals, especially bunnies, and is growing up so fast. He currently enjoys playing on his collection of toy instruments, running around the house, being

read to, and sitting on his booster chair, watching us cook. **SILAS COULDN'T BE A HAPPIER LITTLE GUY, and has convinced us that we're ready to bring a little brother or sister into his life.** During the week, Silas attends a Montessori school where they work on all the basics on a daily basis. We've been thrilled with the support the school gives us in helping Silas develop from a baby into a wonderful little person. Even though he's only a year-and-a-half-old, we're already starting the potty training process and hope to have that wrapped up before he's two years old.



Corey's family along with his sisters-in-law

THE PEOPLE WE LOVE

Ryan is originally from the Cape Canaveral, Florida area, and **Corey** is from Green Bay, Wisconsin. Our families are important parts of both our lives, and we travel a few times a year for major holidays and to stay in touch. We have a lot of friends, many who are parents themselves, that we love to have over and to go out with to share our love of music, food and trashy television!

Ryan's parents are divorced but both still live in the same community in Florida. Ryan has one sister, Aften, who lives in Los Angeles, CA, and a cousin who was raised as his sister, Breeanna, who recently graduated from high school and lives in his hometown. Ryan's sister will give birth to her first child in July 2016. Ryan's Dad's extended family is very close and he sees his aunts, uncles, cousins, and their families at least once a year and communicates with them on the phone, by email, and via social media quite frequently. While having most of his family in Florida can sometimes be difficult, modern communications technology makes it easy to stay close, even when there's a bit of physical distance in place.

Corey has two older brothers. One is a Urology surgeon in Indiana, the other is a Philosophy professor in the University of Texas system. Both brothers are married, and one of them just had their first baby last summer.

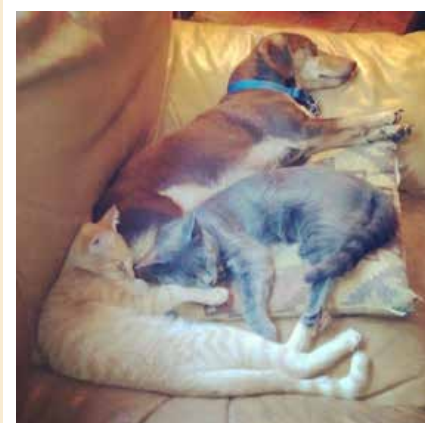


Ryan's dad's extended family



Corey with his brothers, Greg & Phil

OUR FURRY & FEATHERED FRIENDS



WE LOVE OUR PETS AND OTHER ANIMALS.

Our pets include two dogs, **Hank** and **Max**, four and five-years-old, and a grey cat, **Aldo**, whom we got in the Spring of 2014 as an eight-week-old kitten. The dogs are from animal shelters, and we got the cat (literally) from a flea market. The ever-changing array of our outside animals aren't quite "pets" like the cats and dogs are, but they're important part of our lives, too.

◀ HOME SWEET HOME ▶

We own a three-bedroom, two-story house on a relatively quiet street on Chicago's West side. The neighborhood is very diverse and full of children. There are multiple parks within walking distance and we visit them often with our son and our two dogs, Hank and Max. We're also very close to the new 606 park system, with the western entrance to the Bloomingdale Trail about a block away. There's also a YMCA in the neighborhood that serves as a community center.

THE KITCHEN IS THE CENTER OF OUR HOME, where we spend most of our time. We've got a huge

pantry where we keep our extensive collection of cooking tools and appliances. Our backyard is probably the second most visited part of our property – it's where we grow a lot of the food we eat and where we entertain guests when the weather is nice.

In addition to our dogs, we also have a cat, Aldo. The cat and dogs get along better than they probably should, often conspiring with each other to take advantage of unwatched food! Silas has bonded with the dogs by sharing his "people food" with them – we're still working on that – haha.

Veggies we grew ourselves



We spend a lot of time in the kitchen together

5 FAMILY TRADITIONS

1. KING CRAB LEGS AND STEAK ON X-MAS EVE (COREY'S FAMILY)
2. RAISING OUR OWN TURKEYS FOR THE THANKSGIVING TABLE
3. RENTING A CAMPING CENTER EVERY SUMMER TO SHARE WITH OUR FRIENDS
4. HAVING FRIENDS AND FAMILY OVER FOR "LUCKY" FOODS ON NEW YEAR'S DAY
5. BURNING THE ROLLS (RYAN'S FAMILY)



EACH YEAR WE LOVE MAKING OUR OWN HOLIDAY CARDS TO SEND TO OUR FAMILY & FRIENDS!



Someone's hungry!



Having fun with our friends' kids

FRIENDS

Ryan's closest friends are a group of people he's known since high school. His best friend lives in Chicago, but the rest of the group live across the country — in California, New York, and North Carolina mostly, which makes for a great reason to take road trips and to see other parts of the country.

Corey's friends are centered around Madison, Wisconsin where we visit a few times a year. Corey and Ryan have also developed an extensive network of close friends here in Chicago, many of whom have kids, are about to, or who are planning on having kids at some point in the future.

Anniversary party with all of our friends



THINGS WE LOVE TO DO

One of the more notable things in our life is the fact that we produce a very significant portion of our own food, even though we live on a normal-sized property, right in the city of Chicago. We have an extensive vegetable garden, we raise chickens and quails for eggs, and even some turkeys and ducks. We love to cook, particularly the food we've grown or raised ourselves, and we love sharing meals with our friends. We also love to travel, and aim to make it a priority for our children to have a good grounding in who they are in the world by taking them to see places around the country and the world at an early age, as we're already doing with our son.

We love family walks with our dogs around the neighborhood and taking them to the farmer's market on Sunday's or finding restaurants with outdoor seating where they can hang out while we enjoy a meal.

We love some TV and we aren't ashamed to admit it! Corey likes nerd-y shows like Game of Thrones and whatever's on Adult Swim, while Ryan's tastes tend to gravitate to either end of the taste spectrum. He loves HBO prestige programs as much as he enjoys a good reality competition show.

More than anything else, Ryan and Corey love having friends over and entertaining in general. We often have dinner parties and barbeques where we cook for groups of friends both large and small, and play dates are now a common occurrence in our home. If everyone is enjoying good food and having a good time, then we're happy.



WE hope you've learned enough about us to know whether we are the kind of people you want to raise your child. We can only imagine what is going on in your life right now - you must be an incredibly brave, wonderfully loving and generous person to make the decision you are making, and we will teach that to your child from the very start. It's our greatest goal to be responsible, committed parents, and though it may be hard, part of that is realizing that the child came from a part of you. So, if you are able and willing, we'd find a way for you to be in our son or daughter's life. We hope to speak with you soon.

Corey and Ryan



OUR PROMISE TO YOU

We will raise our children with **ALL THE LOVE WE HAVE**, and they will be *the most important thing in our lives*, for the rest of our lives. We will try to share our values of education, understanding, worldliness and responsibility with them. We'll provide the best schools we can, travel with them to see the state, the country and the world, and make them part of our extended family.

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