

A Thank You From California

ate in 1994, the Friends Foundation received a contribution to support the Library from David J. Sweeney of Santa Clara, California, in gratitude for information the ICPL Information Desk found for him in his search for his birth-mother. He described the process as follows:

Someone (information librarian John Hiett) located and FAXed an obituary (from the Iowa City Press-Citizen) to me and all of the pieces suddenly fell together like a Swiss watch.

I'm not the only person who knows that libraries are important, and that librarians are often the smartest people you can meet. They alone have the ability to lay their hands on the one piece of information that makes sense.

Now here's the rub: You know that adoption is a sensitive issue. I'm about to contact a woman who provided for my well being over 28 years ago, and then said goodbye forever. Thanks to the Iowa City Public Library, I know exactly where she is. I've got to be totally respectful of her privacy.

I expect that she grew up in Iowa City. This fact makes my discretion ever more key.

I have to do this just right, It may be a pretty 'California thing' to say, but I need to get my head straight before contacting her. I'd love to give you the whole story--it's pretty fascinating, and has strong local interest. But by now you realize I shouldn't. Someday, I might.

I'm 28, a corporate photographer with a B.A. in English, I obtained some documents which led me to Iowa. After considerable research, I learned the name of my birth-grandfather, and your Library was able to provide an obituary containing the married name of my birth-mother. Ironically, she lives in California, not two hours from me! Go figure.

When I get the nerve to contact her, I'll have a lion's share of questions. But I'll start by saying "Thank you." The search took over two years. Thank you ICPL for giving me what I need to do it.