

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Lynn Ellen Doxon  
12101 Palomas, NE  
Albuquerque, NM 87122  
(505) 821-2808  
lynndoxon@hotmail.com

### **COUPLE OPENS KIROVOGRAD REGION OF UKRAINE TO ADOPTIONS**

(Albuquerque, NM, May 31, 2004). Today Ukraine ranks third in the completion of foreign adoptions, but it was not that way in 1995. In her new book Rainbows from Heaven Lynn Ellen Doxon reveals the struggle she and her husband Robert Habiger went through to adopt three children from the Kirovograd region of Ukraine. Their journey lasted two and a half years and twice Lynn and Robert had to leave Ukraine without their daughters. The fight for the adoption divided the city and caused upheavals in the local government. Finally, in January 1997 Lynn and Robert were able to bring their three girls home. Since then over 40 more children have been adopted from the Kirovograd region. Had Lynn and Robert given up, the region might still be closed to adoption and the orphanages overflowing.

By 1995 Robert Habiger and Lynn Ellen Doxon had been trying to adopt in New Mexico for eight years. Then they got a chance to adopt a little girl in Ukraine. They were positive this was their opening. Lynn traveled to Ukraine, only to discover that the girl they planned to adopt was no longer in the orphanage. She found another girl to adopt, but this one had a younger sister. Would Robert accept two children?

Authorities in Ukraine found Anastasia, Snijana, their 9-year-old brother and 13-year-old sister living in a dirt floor hut in a small village. The authorities had been called in after Snijana was attacked by a dog and found the children living with their alcoholic, and often absent, mother. The children were taken to the district orphanage. Anastasia and Snijana were later transferred to the regional orphanage for younger children. The sisters had been in the orphanage for a year and a half when Lynn arrived.

Working with newfound friends in Ukraine, Lynn managed to get a court date set to adopt Anastasia and Snijana. As Robert was on his way to Ukraine to be present at the hearing, Ukraine passed a new constitution. All the laws were thrown out and the adoption could not take place. It was almost a year before new laws were in place and they could proceed with the adoption. When they contacted an agency to help them, the agency discovered that there was a third, younger sister who should be adopted with the older two. Would Lynn and Robert take all three? Of course!

When they were finally able to return to Ukraine, Anastasia saw them and ran screaming "Papa" and jumped into her father's arms. She had remembered and waited for them for a year and a half. Battling suspicious officials and uncertain procedures, Lynn and Robert fought for four months to complete the adoption. Even after the adoption was granted, they had difficulty acquiring documents and getting the girls home.

Today, the family lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico. They continue to help other families come together through adoption and believe that, by telling their story they can encourage others who face the tough but fulfilling web of international adoption.

###