

SASKATCHEWAN

Mark & Lara





HELLO!

We're Mark and Lara.

Thank you for looking
at our book and
learning about our us
and our family.

Adventure
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OUR STORY



We first met in high school in Coos Bay, Oregon. Our friendship was solidified in English class senior year, where we helped each other with spelling each week and working on projects together. We even did a skit once in which we played a married couple!



Our friendship continued into our college years, and we were even roommates one year of college. We started dating in 2009, after college, and we've had so many great times and adventures since then with a relationship built on friendship.



After we moved in together, it didn't take long for us to decide we wanted to spend our lives together. We realized everything from cooking to walking the dog to just hanging out at home was better together.

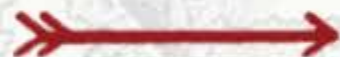


We were married in 2013 in a small wedding in a botanical garden in Hawaii with our closest friends and family, and Lara's sister was the officiant. After the ceremony, we went to a luau with all of our guests, where we danced and celebrated.





We love to have all kinds of adventures together, including hiking, camping, floating the river and exploring new places. Our favorite indoor activities including cooking, playing games and watching movies. We bring our dog Nova on most of our outdoor adventures, but we also like hanging out with her at home, along with our cats Buster and Maeby.



We also love to travel together when we get the chance. We've been lucky enough to go on a few international trips. Our favorite locations include Germany, Austria, Croatia, Honduras, Belize and The Bahamas. Fortunately, we are great travel buddies!

*Adventure
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Lara loves Mark's sense of humor, intelligence and easy-going nature. She appreciates his kindness, how supportive he is and how much he makes her laugh.

Mark loves Lara's passion, how she makes him laugh, her honesty and how much fun they have together whether playing cards or hiking on a new trail.



About Lara



I was born in Oregon and grew up mostly in Oregon and Washington. I also lived briefly in Alaska and New Mexico.

I am part of a large blended family. I have an older sister, Casey, older step-brother, Gordon and younger step-brother, Saxton. I also have many aunts, uncles and cousins.

Growing up, I spent time between my parents. I was lucky enough to live with each of my parents at different times. I think this allowed me to know each of them well and develop close relationships with my mom, dad and step-dad.

One of the most important parts of my adolescence was band. I started playing the clarinet in fifth grade and continued through high school. I was in the marching band and eventually a drum major of the marching band.



After high school, I visited a good friend in Germany. It inspired me to study German, which I ended up majoring in, in college. I was able to do a study abroad program as well.

I spent a few years after college not knowing exactly what I wanted to do for a career. I decided to go back to school for a master's degree. I graduated in 2017 with an MBA, thanks largely to the support I had from Mark and other family and friends.

I now work in contracts and procurement for a city in Oregon. It is a challenging and rewarding position. My favorite things about my job are the culture and people. It is a great environment.

My favorite things to do other than spend time with Mark and our pets are cooking, baking, gardening, spending time with family, reading, listening to music and podcasts, working out, scuba diving, traveling and hiking. I'm looking forward to sharing these with a little one and maybe taking up some new activities!



About Mark

I was born and raised in a small coastal town in southern Oregon by my mother and father. I grew up seeing my favorite aunt and brother a few times a year as we lived only a few hours a way. I also visited my grandparents, uncle and cousins at least once a summer in California.

I spent a lot of time outdoors as a child. Whether it was fishing or camping in the summer, or taking part in Boy Scouts, it seemed outside is where you would find me. These experiences helped me develop a profound respect and appreciation for nature and wild places.

I loved playing basketball also while growing up and enjoyed the camaraderie and togetherness I developed with my teammates. I learned so much about trying your best and supporting those around you through sports.

After High School I knew I wanted to learn more about nature and fish so I studied Fisheries Science at Oregon State University. I was fascinated to learn so much, not just about fish, but the streams and forests providing clean air and water to everyone.

I am now a Watershed Monitoring Coordinator with the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service to oversee collection of data in streams to evaluate how the land and forest management practices impact streams. During the summer I travel all around the pacific northwest which helps inspire camping trips with Lara and our pup.

When not hanging out with Lara or our animals, my interests are fishing, camping, backpacking, and rafting. I also enjoy working out and playing board games with friends. I look forward to sharing my appreciation and experience outdoors with a kiddo while also helping them pursue their own passions and interests they discover.



Fun facts about Lara:

I can wiggle both of my ears, independently of each other.

I love live music and have been to many concerts.

I had a hedgehog named Wilbur as a pet when I was a kid.

I hate onions, but I love garlic!

My middle name came from my grandma, but it is spelled wrong.



I fell on a cactus and had to have the needle surgically removed.

My favorite trilogy is Back to the Future.

I love campfires and making s'mores.

I once bought a manual car, and then learned how to drive it.

I have been hot air ballooning, parasailing and sky diving.



Fun Facts About Mark:

I can juggle.

I played the trombone in middle school.

I had a pet garter snake named Fasty when I was a kid because I thought he was the fastest snake ever!

I love onions!

I have rafted the Grand Canyon.

I'm really good at foosball.

I am an Eagle Scout.

I have a blonde spot in the middle of my brown hair.

I have backpacked 130 miles in the Swiss Alps.

I can stand on my head.

The Animals

We both grew up with family pets, and our furry family members are a big part of our lives. All of our immediate family members have dogs, cats or birds as well.

Our first dog together was Augy, who we adopted at three in 2011. We lost him to cancer a couple years back, but we keep photos and other items of his around, because he was so important to us.

We adopted Nova in 2017. She is a fun, energetic and sweet addition to our family. Her favorite things are peanut butter, walks and the beach. She also likes a round of soccer in the backyard.

During the COVID pandemic, we adopted two kittens. First Buster, then Maeby. They play and run around the house together, and they love a good cardboard box.



Augy



Buster



Nova



Maeby

Our Home

We bought our house in a small town in Oregon in 2020. We have filled it with photos, art, books and a few silly animals.

We've made it our home with a few projects including finishing the fence and creating flower gardens.

We have enjoyed hosting friends for dinner and game nights, and having family visit. We can't wait to bring a kiddo into our home and make it theirs as well.



Lara and her dad's birthdays are a day apart, so we celebrate them together.



When Mark goes out of town for rafting or backpacking, he has flowers delivered to Lara at work.

Some of Our Traditions



We go to an annual beer fest with friends.

Lots of Christmas lights!



We play trivia every other week with friends, and sometimes we win silly trophies.

We do a river float every year for the Fourth of July



Every year on our anniversary, we eat cupcakes, because we had cupcakes at our wedding.



Our families do a combined Thanksgiving or Christmas at Lara's sister's house. We always bring a dessert.



Camping every summer



FAMILY



Lara and her dad



Lara, Mark and Mark's brother Doni



Lara, her mom and sister Casey



Lara and cousin Brea



Mark and his dad

Together
We grow



Mark with his grandparents



Mark with goddaughter Evelyn



With Lara's brother, Saxton, niece Aubrey, and nephew Oliver



Lara and sister-in-law Jessica



Mark with the brothers-in-law



Picnic with Lara's mom, step-dad, sister and brother-in-law

We
must take new
ADVENTURES
to know where we truly
BELONG





Our friends are like our chosen family. We have been able to lean on them through tough times and losses, and we get to enjoy great times with them. They have been amazingly supportive of us in our journey to become parents.



FRIENDS

Our favorite things to do with friends include hiking, sharing a good meal and game nights.

Many of our friends are now parents themselves, so we also love spending time with their kiddos.



Dreams for our Child

We cannot wait to share our life with a child. We want to give them a life full of love, great experiences and opportunities to explore their interests and passions.

We have been dreaming of becoming parents for a long time. Lara had always wanted to adopt in addition to having a biological child. After years of not being able to conceive, we began looking into adoption more in depth. Our parents, siblings and friends are excited to welcome a little one and support us along the way.

Our dreams include sharing our travels, adventures and traditions with our child. We also hope to share our love of animals, the outdoors and music with our child.

Our families dream of becoming grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. We will be thrilled to have a whole village to love and support our kiddo.



Hopes for Open Adoption



We are looking forward to welcoming a child's birth family into our lives. We think of birth family as extended family that we can visit, share meals and stories with and be a part of our child's entire life, if that is something they would like.

We believe open adoption is the best option to provide the things we most want for our child: love and support.

We chose open adoption, because a child cannot have too many people that love them. We believe the child should have an authentic relationship with their birth family as it is critical for their own sense of self as they grow up to know their whole story. We look forward to meeting you wherever you are in life as we embark on this journey together.

Thank you

