

# Colville Update

*Arctic Ploverland News*

*Spring, 2006*

## Greetings From the Jim Helmericks Family

### Introduction

**G**od's love and goodness to us is unfailing. He has carried our family through another year with loving grace and guidance. We trust those reading this have also had a fulfilling and prosperous year. We appreciate all the calls, letters, emails, and a few visits from family and friends throughout the past year.

### Family News

**J**im and Teena continue to maintain the homesite at Colville Village. Life in Alaska's "bush" keeps us challenged with daily chores and duties, yet invigorated with our independent lifestyle. Teena is no longer working for Colville, Inc., but is concentrating on working at home for the time being. She and Jim have a busy schedule with numerous guests and projects lined up for the coming summer months. Jim keeps busy with aerial wildlife surveys and other flying for Golden Plover Guiding, our commercial fishing operations, the usual maintenance of the homesite, and other projects. Summer bird projects are an ongoing pursuit and continues to bring enjoyable bird watching along with the collection of scientific data.

**D**erek and Beth still live and work in Fairbanks. Derek continues as an engineer for the Dept. Of Transportation and Beth still works for Watterson Construction. When not at work, or playing at outdoor activities, they stay busy working on building projects at home.

**J**ay and Amy remain in Fairbanks. Their girls, **Natasha**, 3 and **Melody**, 1-1/2 years old, keep their parents hopping. Another little one is due to join the family in May. Jay continues his work as Project Engineer at the Geophysical Institute for the University of Alaska Fairbanks. His skills continue to take him south to his Antarctic project and other places across the U.S. Amy is a competent "home manager", yet has found time to start a small business called Gordian Knot Productions, which offers workshops and personal consultations for effective, chemical-free birth control. She also continues to contribute her story-telling, writing, and singing talents both at church, local

functions, and various teaching opportunities.

**I**saac and Crystal maintain their townhouse in Anchorage. Isaac still has finishing touches to complete his Aviation Technology degree at the University of Alaska Anchorage. He has moved up into a ramp training position at his Alaska Airlines job. Crystal is enjoying her work for



Jay, Amy, & girls

Alaska Lasik Center as coordinator.

**A**aron has been renting a room from his brother Isaac in Anchorage this past year and worked a "two week on/two week off" shift up on the North Slope for Colville, Inc. However, he is presently looking for a new job that is more directly related to his computer skills and college training.

### Travel

**J**im and Teena made the usual "town" trips to Anchorage or

Fairbanks during the past year. But several other major trips highlighted this year's travel activities. Teena made a business trip to Inuvik, Canada, last June with several other company employees to attend a 2-day oil and gas conference. Travel was by a small 4-place plane from Anchorage to Inuvik and a lot of pretty country along the way was seen. To celebrate Jim's father's 89<sup>th</sup> birthday, Jim and his brother Jeff went down to Arizona for a week in January. In February Teena went on a week-long cruise to Mexican ports with her brother Eldon's family and Derek and Beth. Highlights of that trip were a canopy adventure in the forests outside of Puerto Vallarta, and a snorkeling adventure at Cabo San Lucas. What fun! Then in March Teena accompanied Derek and Isaac into the northern Brooks Range on a camping and hunting trip by snowmachine. We traveled several hundred miles through incredibly rough terrain, including snow-covered foothills and willow-



Mountains All Around

strewn river valleys full of deep snow and sometimes scary overflow (open water on top the river ice). Beautiful snow-covered mountains surrounded us at our main camp and temperatures ran from the minus 20's to 5 above zero Fahrenheit. No large game was taken, but we had a good time and saw a lot of amazing scenery.

**Extra Tidbits**

A new oil company has moved in as our closest neighbor this winter. Pioneer Natural Resources is building an oil production island north of our place, which will include a sub-sea pipeline to shore. They are using new innovative ways to construct their gravel island in the shallow waters just off the Colville Delta face. Time will tell how this development may affect our lives. At this point, we remain mutually good neighbors.

We can't help but share extra pictures of the little ones. They grow up so fast and are such a delight and treasure to all the family.

**God Bless You All!**



Natasha



Melody

*Love,*

*Jim and Teena  
Jay, Amy, Natasha, Melody  
Derek & Beth  
Isaac & Crystal  
Aaron*

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Teena in Vishak Valley