

# Colville Update

*Arctic Ploverland News*

*Spring, 2008*

## Greetings From the Jim Helmericks Family

### Introduction

**A**s the years fly by the older generation tell the younger ones that time keeps moving by faster and faster, and they should appreciate every moment. Aging and change is inevitable, however, God's love and goodness is changeless and unailing. God blesses us in all circumstances, whether good or bad, and we pray for grace and guidance through all that comes our way.

### Family News

**L**ife at the Colville Village homesite has changed little for **Jim and Teena** this past year except that passing time does add more challenges to daily chores and duties as aging begins to take its toll. Teena is still working as a logistics coordinator for Pioneer Natural Resources (PNR), the small independent oil company developing a new oil field just north of our Colville Delta home. She lives at the facility about 12 miles east of home during her two weeks at work, and then is home for two weeks. Some of Teena's job has changed as she has taken on new duties, but she continues to enjoy her work, although the separation from Jim and home-life takes a toll on both of them, especially Jim, who must endure being alone much of the time

while Teena is gone. However, the never-ending maintenance of the homesite continues to keep Jim busy. Even though the air taxi is now closed, additional work continues for Jim through our Golden Plover Guiding Company, including jobs such as aerial photography and an unexpected emergency mission for PNR during the early winter season. Jim volunteered to help haul



Hauling freight to ODS

critical freight with his snowmachine and sled when PNR was desperate to move food or materials from the mainland out to their production island during bad weather when the helicopter was grounded and the ice was still too thin to support larger vehicles. This turned into several months of work, as Jim transported freight on a daily basis across the ice to the Ooguruk Drill Site, PNR's production island...sometimes pulling two sleds at once to accommodate 40' loads, such as the pipe in picture below.

**Derek and Beth** built an addition to their home in their

wooded paradise outside of Fairbanks this past year. This



Towing two sleds for 40' pipe

gave them more room for entertaining guests, plus displaying many more of Derek's taxidermy wonders. Derek's extensive finch aviary had room to grow also. Beth is still working for the Watterson Construction Company as a construction manager on several 100-million dollar projects for the military. Derek continues to work for various petroleum companies on the North Slope as an environmental engineer.

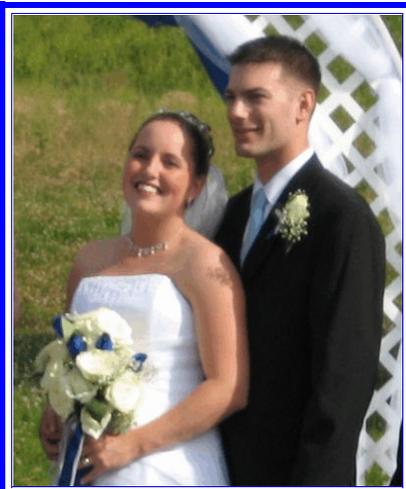
**Jay, Amy, and children** continue a busy lifestyle in Fairbanks. The girls, **Natasha** (5) and **Melody** (4 in June), and little **Elisha** (2) keep their parents hopping. Amy fits in writing projects between the care of home and three active children. Jay still works as Project Engineer at the Geophysical Institute for the University of Alaska Fairbanks plus manages Chaparral Physics

**Isaac and Crystal** still call Anchorage "home base", although Isaac is now manager of the Alaska Airlines terminal in Adak, Alaska, mid-way down the

Aleutian Chain. He works at Adak for two week hitches and then is home in Anchorage for two weeks. Isaac was honored earlier this year with an award for managing the Alaska Airlines Terminal with the highest on-time flights in Alaska. Plus he facilitated a lucrative 2-year Essential Air Service Contract for Alaska Airlines at Adak. Crystal now has her CPT coding license, and works at a local medical facility. They recently gave us the exciting news that they will be presenting the family with a new member come November.

**A**aron and Autumn were married on August 12th in a lovely outdoor ceremony at Hilltop Lodge in Anchorage.

The large gathering from both sides of the new couple's families and friends all had a joyous time attending the festivities and dinner afterwards. Due to both Autumn



Aaron & Autumn

and Aaron's work schedules, their honeymoon to Hawaii was postponed until December. Aaron started his own IT

consulting company this winter and his main contract is the continuing work as field technician for Pioneer Natural Resources on the Ooguruk Project, the same project Teena works on. Autumn works in Wasilla as a case manager for SED (Severely Emotionally Disturbed) children. She does home visits, works with both the kids and parents, and organizes any help needed. During time at home, Aaron and Autumn work on remodeling projects in the house and landscaping in the yard.

## Travel

**T**rips here and there are always an enjoyable part of our year.

Teena made a few brief trips, including a fun "all girls" trip to Seattle for a few days in February and a quick hop to Spokane to see her mother and sisters. However, the main trip of the year was a very special trip to Arizona. Jim's parents have been spending part of the winter months in Salome, Arizona in recent years, and Jim and his younger brother Jeff planned a surprise family gathering to celebrate their mother Martha's 85th birthday. Jeff and his wife Susan and our four sons were present. Two of our daughters-in-law, Beth and Crystal, and grandson Elisha were also there. We all had a grand time visiting, exploring the desert by jeep and flying over some of Arizona's spectacular scenery with Jeff in his Cessna 182. An added treat for Jim and Teena was being able to make a trip together for the first time in about 20 years.

## Extra Tidbits

**W**e continue to have guests and clients staying at our place off and on through out the year. Sometimes Jim has to entertain and care for these guests on his own if Teena is at her PNR job, but we try to schedule guests when both of us are home. Our extensive museum continues to attract guests, and it is always a joy to share the museum, our home, and all the beauty and uniqueness of the Arctic with them.

God Bless You All!

*Love,*

*Jim and Teena  
Derek & Beth  
Jay, Amy, & children:  
Natasha, Melody & Elisha  
Isaac & Crystal  
Aaron & Autumn*

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Extra Pictures



*Aaron & Autumn Wedding Party 8-12-07*



*Jay & Family 8-12-07*



Going Flying: Jeff, Jay, Isaac, Derek, Aaron



**Arizona Reunion**

Front L to R: Martha, Bud, Jim. Back L to R: Elisha, Jay, Beth, Derek, Teena, Isaac, Crystal, Aaron, Jeff, Susan.



Ready for desert adventure 3-3-08