

Colville Update

Arctic Ploverland News

Spring, 2010

Greetings From the Jim Helmericks Family

Introduction

This newsletter covers approximately the time period from Spring 2009 to Spring 2010. Our family newsletter keeps slipping later and later. It will be full-blown summer on the Colville before we know it, and this is just getting started. As ever, we give thanks to God for his loving care and guidance for our family throughout a year of frustrating political turmoil, family trials, and daily challenges. Yet, in the midst of it all, we have true JOY in knowing God's saving grace, forgiveness, and constant care.

Family Highlights

This newsletter will be a bit different this year. Rather than break the news down by family members, we will simply list a few highlights and include a bunch of pictures.

Derek joined Aaron as a full-time employee of Pioneer Natural Resources last summer, Aaron continuing as an IT specialist and Derek as Environmental Specialist.

Teena did some part-time work for Pioneer by computer at home in preparation for the annual

Mutual Aid Drill, hosted by Pioneer in August. This is an Oil Spill Response training event held every year and hosted by different companies. Teena, Derek, and Aaron were all participants on the spill team located on Oooguruk Island (ODS), Pioneer's production island 6.2 miles north of the Helmericks Homesite. Can



**Aaron, Teena, Derek
MAD 8-4-09**

we presume this is the only "mother and two sons" spill response team members in the US, maybe world?

Teena drove to Fairbanks and back on the Haul Road in July, with her bother-in-law, Dick Bennet

on the way down and her sister Marti accompanying her on the return drive. We had wonderful weather and photo opportunities both ways. In between the down and up, Teena spent quality time visiting in Fairbanks and went to Adak for a week's visit there.

Jim hosted a number of crews working out of our place on the Colville, including a BLM crew doing bathymetry work along the coast, and a crew studying and banding swans.

Teena's mother was the honored guest at a family reunion held in Fairbanks in August. She is the grand matriarch of 6 children, 18 grandchildren, 34 great-grandchildren, and 1 great-great-grandchild. Not all the clan were able to attend, but we still had a big crowd and a great time.

WARTES FAMILY REUNION



It was the first time all four of Jim and Teena's grandchildren were together.



Natasha-6, Rhianna-9 mo, Teena, Melody-5, Elisha-3

Thanks to our boys, Jim's super cub, the *Golden Plover*, got some TLC this last fall when it spent time in Fairbanks getting all new gear and wheels, plus other long overdue repairs.

Teena spent time down in Arizona during the winter helping out Jim's mother, as his father's health began to fail. (The Helmericks folks had been spending winters in AZ for a number of years.) The family suffered a great loss as Dad Bud passed away January 27th, not long after his 93rd birthday. It wasn't until early May before Mom Martha was finally able to get back home to Alaska.



Jim with his parents and brother Jeff in March 2008 in Arizona.

Toby, our old Chesapeake, had a big adjustment to endure this winter when Ruby joined our family in early October. She is a Great Pyrenees puppy, whose devotion and exuberance has added a great deal of cuddly companionship, especially for Jim, who has had to "hold down the fort" alone most of the spring.

Teena was gone from home most of the time Feb-April, working for Marsh Creek LLC in Deadhorse as an Administration and Logistics Assistant. See details of this job, and more pictures of Toby and Ruby on Teena's new blog at: <http://teena-arcticalaska.blogspot.com>



Ruby

Jim continues to expand his photography business. His pictures have been published extensively, especially ones related to wildlife and weather conditions. His blog and photo site are listed below:

1. *Arctic Smoke Signals* at <http://kingeider.blogspot.com/>
2. *Golden Plover Photography* at <http://speikiei.zenfolio.com/>

Here are some samples of Jim's photography this past year.

The first picture is fractal that Jim created from a photo of one of Teena's single African Violets blossoms:



Aurora



Ice Crystal "Butterflies"



Redfox



Weasel beginning to turn brown for summer.

Spring Weasel

Love,

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

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More Photos

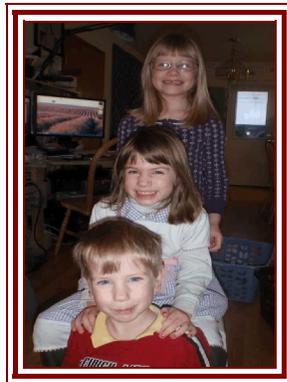
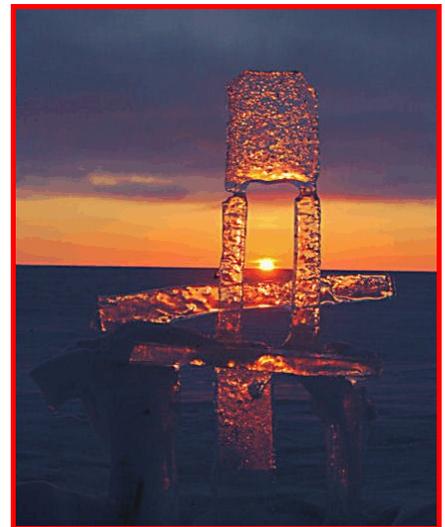


Scenery on Haul Road

I will end with one of Jim's recent photos of the sun seen looking through an ice "Inukshuk" on our lake. Jim's Sunset-Sunrise comment: *The start to another long day here on the Arctic Coast of Alaska! Above photo was taken at 12 midnight, Alaska Standard Time on May 13, 2010, even though the sun was not at its lowest, which occurred at 0030hr. AST. Because of a time zone change in Alaska several years ago, and daylight saving time in effect, we are actually two hours ahead of real local sun time.*



Natasha, Elisha, Melody



The three musketeers



Rhianna on Adak



Rhianna

God Bless You All



Teena's African Violets



Martha & Bud Helmericks



In Memory of Bud Helmericks