

# Alaskan Golden Nugget News

## Community of Christ

Summer 2009

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### Thoughts to Consider...

by Willa Frey

The leaves have patches of yellow on them and look like clumps of golden grapes hanging on the trees. Soon they will all be a blaze of glory! Someone has said that in the Fall, all the leaves look like flowers.

How true! What a wonderful reminder that God is in creation. What a wonderful time to praise God!

God has that magical touch that decorates all of our seasons with beauty and grace and give cause for rejoicing! Problems seem to come along as well, but God is still there to guide us through them and helping us to understand Him better and become stronger. Isn't God's plan fantastic!

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### Alaska Family Reunion Report

What a delightful, busy summer it has been! In July many of us were blessed to be able to attend the Alaskan Reunion (July 12-17) at the LaVerne Griffin Youth Camp in Wasilla.

Apostle Susan Skoor and John Smallwood were the guest ministers. What a delightful time and opportunity for ministry for everyone! We appreciate their efforts and concerns.

We had several visitors from out of state that rounded out our little group this year. We also had several folks from the local community come out in the evening for worship and campfire.

The days were beautiful so the kids were able to swim every day and we all got in a boat ride or two.

The entire group participated in a day trip/digital scavenger hunt to the mine at Hatcher Pass. We were split into four multi-generational groups and given our lists. We had to find each item and photograph at least one member of the group with it.

Our intent was to review the pictures later, count all the points and figure out who the winning group was. As usual with the best laid plans....we had a computer glitch

and by the time we figured it out, our time was almost gone, so we all just looked at all the pictures, laughed a lot and told everyone else they were the winner. Sandy made up CD's with all the pictures to share with everyone at camp so they could remember the experience.

We were all pretty exhausted by the experience, but Kate gets extra points for pushing Julia in the stroller all the way to the top of the mine area.

Several folks followed this with a quick trip to the Reindeer Farm where they were able to pet and feed the "Rudolph-like" creatures.

It was a wonderful day and a wonderful week. Julia Steinel won the popularity contest for the week. Her grandma's were willing to share with the rest of the camp, so it worked out well for everyone who wanted a little "Julia time".

Chad and Katie (Graceland friends of Chris and Kate Steinel) shared their ministry of praise and prayer with us each morning to start the day. We appreciate their taking time between moving to join us this year.

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## Aniak News David/Karen Ward

We are visiting with Flo Pearson in Anchorage now and will be headed for Aniak Sunday for a meeting there, then with school starting on Aug. 24<sup>th</sup>. We have had a hot summer in Independence, MO with me doing a lot of painting on our house. I painted kitchen cabinets, the front of our house where there is new siding and benches. Dave worked on a truck he was given and various house repairs.

With school starting, we had to leave the 95 degrees to come to the 50 degrees here in the state.

The summer is such a renewal for us with the church. We miss going to Community of Christ plus singing out of the hymnal.

## Delta News... By Cheryl & Gary Cooper

This summer has been a busy one with gardening, bike riding, canoeing and kayaking in the Clearwater River by Gary. There have also been trips to Anchorage, doing some UAF grant work, and teaching some teachers in Fairbanks. Gary won a grand champion ribbon for his dinner plate sized dahlia at the Delta Fair in July.

We are sure glad the smoke from the forest fires has gone away. We know Fairbanks has had it even worse than us and are glad for the Delta winds!

(We are glad for the rains that finally came and put the fires out! WF)

## Valley News...

Neal and Ellen Long have reached an agreement with a buyer for the restaurant in Craig, but the sale will not take place until November. Neal, Ellen and Jared will be returning to the Mat-Su Valley at that time if all goes as planned. Brian Long has landed a good part in a Broadway production, a medley of musicals.

Reunion was held in July with numerous activities and we all enjoyed being together again.

A baby shower for Kristin Clark was held July 25<sup>th</sup>. Her baby is due August 26<sup>th</sup> and is already known to be a boy and will be named "Keegan". Her husband, Ray has been assigned to work in Seward for several weeks and everyone hopes he will be home in time to see his son born.

The 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday fellowship on July 26<sup>th</sup> was held at the Coppock's home and they enjoyed a barbecue and potluck held on the

## by Carole Coppick

deck. It did not rain very much until we had all finished eating! Bill and Lela Ayers drove out from Anchorage to attend and we were all glad to see them.

We were all saddened by the loss of Willow Koerber, beautiful daughter of Tami and John Koerber. Willow was born on July 4<sup>th</sup> and died on July 27<sup>th</sup> of SIDS. Services were held on August 5<sup>th</sup> in Wasilla. Willow was Deena Graham's granddaughter. Please include this family in your prayers.

The Mat-Su congregation welcomes the Aki family. Dale and Pam have four children: Heather (21), Gina (15), Shawn (13), and Erica (11). Dale will be retiring from the Air Force in a few months and is looking for a job. Let's pray that he will find one quickly so they can stay here with us.

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## Fairbanks News....

by Willa Frey

Summer has been very busy for many of us and especially for myself and my husband. In May, I became sick with vertigo which took several weeks to finally clear up. Then Al became quite sick and spent the next six weeks in and out of the hospital. A cyst was found on his back (2" by 8" long) which took time clearing up. He is recovering from pneumonia at present. We are very thankful for all your prayers on our behalf and doubly grateful for the way the Good Lord has intervened.

Fairbanks has had a very hot summer and forest fires that created a lot of smoke. For the first time (for me) I missed Reunion because of Al's illness – first miss in 50 years. We really missed it but there wasn't much we could do about it. So we spent a lot of time in prayer for the folks who did make it. We hear they had a wonderful week together!

Sandy Besser enjoyed visits from her daughter, Jennifer and granddaughters, Sara and Caitlyn. We all enjoyed them! On the way to the hospital, to take Al in, we had an unexpected happening. Sandy was driving her new car. Al rode up in the front and I shared a back seat with Sara. A car approaching us went out of control. It jumped over several lanes of traffic, (plus the median where a sign was knocked down) and hit the side rear of Sandy's car. The drunk driver then veered and hit a link fence bounced around and headed off – against traffic. Several persons who witnessed the accident followed and surrounded her so she couldn't move and kept her there until the police arrived. We all suffered whip lash, mild concussion and bruises. I was sitting at the point of impact but the air bag kept me from more severe harm. Sara was badly frightened.

The Meath youth had a busy summer! Breanne attended a music camp and sang at The Grand Old Opry in Nashville with the Choir of the North. Following that she was able to attend her very first IYF and Spec! Brook went to his first church youth camp outside and both really enjoyed their experiences. The youngest, Tristyn, not to be outdone, attended the Alaskan Reunion with Sandy Besser and the Ford family.

The Meath family enjoyed a visit with relatives from Texas.

David Vargason discovered in July that he had cancer in his upper leg. He and Bonnie have been in Seattle for further testing. He will undergo additional surgery to remove the cancerous bone in his leg. Keep them in your prayers, please!

Billy Boyles went home in May from his visit with Neva (daughter) He was diagnosed with heart problems and recently had surgery in Portland. Reports are that he is doing fine. Neva went to Portland to join her sister in being with him through his surgery.

The Fairbanks congregation voted to close our building. With the small number of active members we were unable to maintain the physical plant of the building. Chris and Kate Steinel are currently holding a Tuesday evening study group each week in their home. Sandy Besser is working with another small group on outreach projects into the community. Chris and Kate recently attended the "wraparound" training in Anchorage. They were inspired by the training and were able to visit with family during their trip.

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## **Anchorage News...**

I have only heard bits and pieces from Anchorage rather than a news report. I'll share what I've heard. It sounds like those folks have really had a lot on their plate!

Just prior to Reunion, "Grandma Lou" (Lou Gilmore) passed away from cancer. Her family was there with her. We will all miss her a great deal – she was a very special person!

Anchorage recently hired Rick Collins from Melbourne, Australia, to spearhead a Holistic evangelism effort. He and his wife arrived the beginning of August.

Rick and other young adults will receive training in "wraparound ministry." This is a pastoral support network modeled on the principle of helping others help themselves. It combines web-based contact with wraparound support. The Anchorage Community of Christ wants to impact young adults who are isolated, disconnected, and in need a loving community. (This information is from the August Herald) We'd all like to hear more about it. How about it, Anchorage, anyone willing to keep us posted????

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