



UNITED WAY DAY OF CARING



Exciting new
programs!
See page 3

On September 11, 2003, a very appropriate date to "care for your neighbor," United Way held a "Day of Caring." FCA was one recipient of this generosity, and had many tasks performed by many gracious people in our community.

Three individuals, Crystal Campbell, Joanne Dunbar, and Diann Pearson, of the Chamber of Commerce rolled up their sleeves and dove into the "not so glamorous" task of painting our reception area. At first this seemed to be a daunting endeavor, however, the three of them along with FCA staff, made fairly quick work of the job. The staff, alone, could not have completed the amount of work in the amount of time with-

and bagged the lawn. (So, in the pouring rain they accomplished all of these tasks.) These individuals not only provided energy, time, and labor, but also provided the equipment to perform the tasks. It was like one of those home and



Pat and Tim from Williams Petroleum get ready to power wash FCA's building.



Crystal, Joanne & Diann take time out from their busy schedule at Chamber to help paint.

out them. As it was, we only had to close the office for that day and staff did the finishing touches the next day around the comings and goings of clients.

Williams Alaska Petroleum (North Pole Refinery) offered to complete some "out-of-doors" tasks such as pressure washing the outside of the building and washing windows. Due to the rain, we considered that they might ask to re-schedule. Nope, not the case. In fact, Pat Cooper, Tim Milanowski, Alena LaJiness, Alan Hoza and Doug Bishop all showed up early to pressure wash the building and "do windows." As only two people could work on the pressure washing and scrubbing and one person on the windows, that left two people who "wanted" something to do. They proceeded to don their best wet weather gear and go to work. They trimmed hedges, mowed, weed-eated, and raked

garden television shows where a crew comes and in one day performs a complete landscape make-over. We are proud of the way our property looks; kids are able to play in the playground area where it was previously overgrown. We can not thank these individuals enough. We would also like to thank the Williams North Pole Refinery for allowing these individuals time away from what I am sure would have been a busy day at work, to do this for our agency.

Thanks again and "Hats Off" to Tim, Alan, Pat, Alena, Doug, Crystal, Joann and Diann, Williams Refinery, and the Chamber of Commerce. ■



Kathi, Lisa & Sabrina from FCA take a break courtesy of Wendy's. Thank you United Way!

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FCA Adoption News



Travel to Buckland

I recently traveled to Buckland, Alaska via Kotzebue in order to conduct a homestudy for a family desiring to provide guardianship for their relative. A homestudy can best be described as an intensive investigation of a family in order to determine their ability to provide a safe and loving environment for a child. The process involves interviews with each parent, immediate family members, the child, as well as gathering information from references.

What a wonderful opportunity to observe a completely different lifestyle and culture in a remote northern village! Flying into Buckland for a day required two nights in the nearby village of Kotzebue. Kotzebue has a population of approximately 3500. Amenities include one hotel, which provides a commanding view of the ocean. It was interesting to take a walking tour of Kotzebue, watching families butchering and hanging caribou and moose from their recent hunts.

I flew to Buckland on a nine passenger turbo-prop caravan aircraft. Three flights by small aircraft fly in and out of Buckland daily. Villagers know a plane has landed by the many four-wheelers racing to "airport" to greet arrivals. Although there were numerous drivers on four wheelers to meet the airplane, I was lucky to catch a ride in what appeared to be the only vehicle, a small pickup truck. I was then dropped

off at the family's home (less than a quarter mile from the runway) where I was treated with hospitality and generosity by all family members. One by one the young children awoke and were delighted with the fresh fruit I brought, shyly watching my every move.

Later, I enjoyed a four-wheeler ride around town to sightsee, about a four minute event, to take in the village houses, grocery store, school and local Washeteria. The village of Buckland is very small; populated by about five hundred and fifty people, the majority of which are young children. The combined elementary and high school is the newest building in the village; and it is huge in comparison with all the other buildings, and contains the only flushing toilets in

the community!

What an amazing and humbling experience it was to visit another culture and observe how different life can be. Many of the families in Buckland live a subsistence lifestyle, one in which most of their food is provided through hunting, fishing and gathering. The family shared that every summer everyone travels down river by boat to Elephant Point, located on the ocean, where they hunt for Beluga whales; and where berry picking is a major event that everyone, including children, enjoy. Buckland has no running water. Villagers collect water from a nearby river and carry it to their homes one bucket at a time. Large tubs in the home are filled and water, which is dipped out when needed. Electricity for the entire community is provided by two large generators operated by local residents. The Washeteria has three washing machines to support the entire population and washing clothes is typically a day-long event, with most of the time spent waiting in line. Once a year a

barge delivers stove oil and gas for the village to Elephant Point – about a two-hour boat ride from Buckland. Running a dog sled team in Buckland has now become more of a hobby since snow-machines and four-wheelers are more popular and desired.

I was able to observe how deeply respected and important the elders are to the community. I enjoyed hearing their stories about how families share freely and of how no one goes hungry. I heard how the old school building

burned down when the teacher who was cooking left the stove unattended to go berry picking. Another funny story was how a Buckland man, fishing in the local river, pulled out a huge trout with a Fairbanks Fish and Game tag attached. He was surprised to see that a Fairbanks trout had traveled through the ocean and rivers all the way to Buckland!

This trip was likely the first of many to various remote communities and a great opportunity to observe "life in the Bush!" ■



Lisa Carr

FCA Newest Programs

Permanent Families Contract

We have recently received notice from the State that FCA was the successful bidder for the Permanent Families Contract for the Northern Region of Alaska. FCA will provide homestudy services to help the Office of Children's Services complete successful, permanent placement of special needs children in Interior Alaska. It is anticipated that approximately 50% of the referrals will be children of Alaska Native heritage who are eligible for services and protection under the guidelines of the Indian Child Welfare Act. While the majority of the homestudies will take place in Fairbanks, approximately 10%-20% of the homestudies will be in the Northern Region, extending from Delta Junction and McGrath up to Nome, Kotzebue and Barrow.

Adoption specialists Melody Jamieson, Lisa Carr and Christi Taylor will be the homestudy writers for this project. Linda Huffaker has been recruited back to FCA to facilitate the referral and tracking process. We are all looking forward to this new opportunity to help find permanent homes and families for special needs children, and also to expand our services into Interior Alaska. ■

"Fosterhaven" Website Provides Therapeutic Services To All Alaskan Children In Foster Care

There are currently 2,345 children in state custody in Alaska. These youth consistently experience emotional, behavioral, developmental and health problems that reflect the difficult family and environmental circumstances that caused them to be removed from their homes in the first place.

Unfortunately, these very same youth, who so desperately need professional support, often do not receive needed mental health, medical and educational services. They typically experience frequent changes in placement that cause disruptions in service delivery, and caregivers who have differing levels of interest in accessing services for these youth.

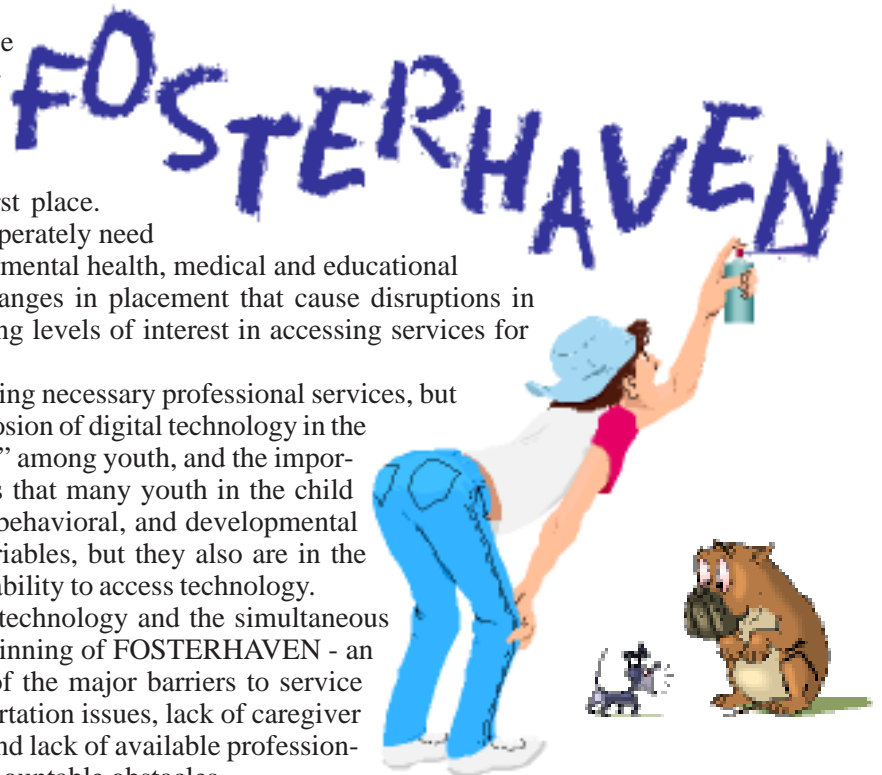
Foster children not only have difficulty accessing necessary professional services, but often fall behind in access to technology. The explosion of digital technology in the 1990's called attention the growing "digital divide" among youth, and the importance of technological literacy. The consensus is that many youth in the child welfare system not only have greater emotional, behavioral, and developmental problems than other youth matched for other variables, but they also are in the "high-risk" category for being left behind in their ability to access technology.

The trend towards greater access of internet technology and the simultaneous need for creative service delivery sparked the beginning of FOSTERHAVEN - an innovative pilot project that will address many of the major barriers to service delivery for foster youth. Barriers such as transportation issues, lack of caregiver interest in accessing services, continuity of care, and lack of available professionals in a specific area will no longer be such insurmountable obstacles.

FOSTERHAVEN will provide professional therapeutic individual and group counseling, and adult and peer support in a secure and safe environment. Mental health clinicians will host age-specific chat rooms and allow youth to sign up for individual "chats." Links will provide information on community and crisis resources, school news and job opportunities, and events and happenings around town. A message board will help friends linked through the foster care system stay in touch, and a creative corner will give youth the opportunity to share artwork, poems etc.

Our goal is to ensure that access to the website is a part of every case plan for youth aged 10-18 who enter or are currently in foster care. Each youth will be given a password, instructions, and a brief demonstration on how to access the website. As a youth moves from placement to placement s/he can continue to access the same providers and peers over the Internet. Foster parents, too, will be apprised of this website and its purpose.

The staff at FCA is excited about the website and its contribution to our commitment to providing therapeutic services to under-served populations. We will post a notice to FCA's website at www.fcaalaska.org as soon as we have the Fosterhaven's web page ready. ■



FCA and Community



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Thank you to everyone who donated time and/or money to make this year's Mosquito Meander a successful event. Our volunteers took registrations, timed the race, mapped the course, directed traffic, served food and so much more. Proceeds from the Mosquito Meander help FCA to fund our Child Abuse Treatment Programs. Thank you Fairbanks!



FCA's Diaper Derby event at the Solstice Fair in June was as delightful as ever. Mt. McKinley Bank donated a \$100 savings bond that was won by a lucky participant. Please join the fun next summer as we continue to host this fun event. View more pictures on our website at www.fcaalaska.org.



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Welcome Aboard!

New Board Members:

Charles Fedullo, his wife Shannon McCarthy and their two young sons recently moved back to Fairbanks after being away for almost six years. They are thrilled to be back home. The couple adopted their oldest son, Tony, with the help of FCA, and Charles is excited to help out FCA however he can. Charles and Shannon are members of St. Raphael's Church. Charles is a former reporter and news anchor in Fairbanks, Anchorage and Juneau who now works at the University of Alaska as a Journalism professor. We are excited about having him join our Board. We look forward to "picking his brain" in the many areas in which he excels. Welcome Charles.

Gary Corrick returned in July of 2003 for another term on FCA's Board of Directors. Gary has previously served on FCA's board as President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. He knows FCA's staff and programs very well. He also brings expertise and experience as an accountant with Kohler, Schmitt & Hutchison. Gary is a dedicated volunteer for FCA events and especially enjoys manning the water station at the Mosquito Meander. FCA welcomes Gary's return and the wealth of knowledge he brings to the board. ■

Resignations:



Pat Ferree, Manager of Mercury Data Group recently resigned as President and Board member of FCA. Pat is a great asset to the agency and has participated in virtually all of FCA's events and activities. He has been moved to Honorary Board member status and the staff is thrilled that he will continue to stay involved in several FCA projects.

Father Pat Berquist was a member of the Board of Directors for three years and due to his busy schedule has declined to renew his Board membership for another three years. Fr. Pat's presence on the Board will be greatly missed. ■

Fairbanks Counseling and Adoption has openings for Board Members. If you are interested in joining our Board or want more information about becoming a Board member, please contact our agency.

New Staff Members:



Our newest staff member, Barbara Wilson was born and raised in rural Michigan. She attended The University of Michigan in Ann Arbor (GO BLUE!) where she earned a Baccalaureate degree in Psychology and a Master's degree in Social Work. Barb moved to Kotzebue in 1991 where she taught social work for UAF's College of Rural Alaska for seven years. In 1998 she moved to Barrow and taught at Ilisagvik for four years. She returned to clinical work during her last year in Barrow working for the North Slope Borough's counseling services. Barb has had the great fortune to be able to travel extensively throughout rural and urban Alaska and the other 49 states, as well as visit the six inhabited continents; Antarctica is high on her list of places still wanting to travel to. Barbara will be providing services for individuals with eating disorders, and conducting groups for women with anxiety or depression, as well as individual and couples counseling. ■

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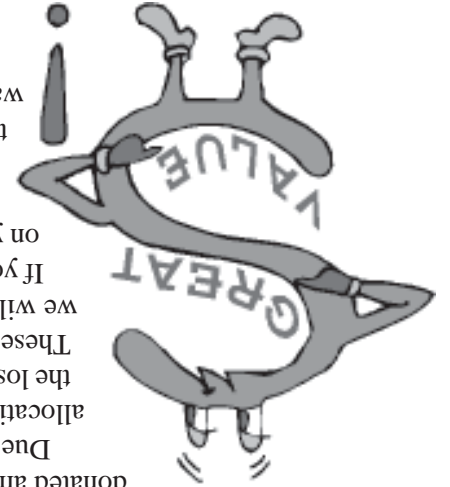
BP Challenge continues to Double Your Donation!

As of January 1, 2003, Fairbanks Counseling & Adoption opted to no longer receive pull-tab revenues. To support FCA's efforts, **BP Exploration Alaska** has generously offered to lend a hand – and they are challenging the community to help as well. BP has offered to continue to match dollars donated through December 2003 to FCA by all *new* donors. For those who have donated in the past, BP will match the

donated amount that *exceeds* your previous donation.

Due to the reduction of federal appropriations to the State of Alaska for grant programs, allocations to non-profits are being severely reduced. The reductions in this revenue, along with the loss of pull-tab revenues amounts to approximately 20% less revenue for FCA for this year. These cuts must be replaced in order to maintain the numbers of youth and their families that we will be able to serve.

If you want to help, just send your donation in the enclosed envelope and write **BP MATCH** on your check. It is our hope that those of you who have never donated to FCA will make a donation and those of you who have donated in the past will increase it. It is our goal that the future of our existence, our children and youth, will not be pushed aside and forgotten, but will be given every opportunity to grow and flourish and learn new and positive ways of existing within their culture and their society.



FCA News

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