

Kasilof Community Church

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KCC Newsletter

Summer-Fall-Winter 2006

DENVER, Co. — Mr. And Mrs. Claus, formerly known as Randy and Lynda Wandler, recently journeyed from their home in the north pole, or Dubois, Wyoming,

Christmas we were there, which was about 10 years ago. Anyway Randy came to the Christmas service with me and most everyone there had a shoe box



to Denver to volunteer at the **Operation Christmas Child** collection center. Lynda reports the reason they got involved in **OCC** started many years ago at KCC. Lynda says, "It was our first

*and us being new we had no knowledge of it. At any rate, **Babe Hermansen** was sitting next to Randy and me and she had two boxes and she gave us (continued on back page)*

From the Pastor's PC

What a privilege it is to have a Savior in times like these!

While there is much talk of human rights and personal freedom, darkness, dictators and death squads prevail in many areas of the world. Followers of the truth often suffer great persecution. Some of the poorest nations of the world, isolated by harshness, committed to atheism or demonic religions are bent on acquiring weapons of mass destruction. War, famine, disease and pestilence take the lives of millions each year.

Frankly, it was to a world like this that Jesus came the first time. The angel announced His birth by telling the shepherds that a *Savior* was born. Nine months earlier Mary had said, "My soul exalts the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my *Savior*."

Jesus was announced as Savior because none of us can save himself. The fallen creation and fallen human nature absolutely cannot be changed apart from a saving work of God. Without a Savior, we are without hope. But with a Savior, God revealed His righteous love.

During this very special season, the holy gift of God provides the basis for a complete redirecting of priorities. The celebration of Christ's birth changes everything. Certainly, there is concern about the exploitation of Christmas. But those who know Christ as Savior can find ample opportunity to share his life-changing story. All of the rush can actually provide for conversation that will help others find Jesus.

While world news may be bad, we have hope because we possess the Savior. This is good news for those desperately in need of salvation. Please pray that God will use you and me to help others find Him this Christmas.

Excerpts from a letter received from Charles
& Delores Williamson

Nov. 30, 2006

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

I am sure you probably think we have forgotten you, but that's not the case. Charles and I have been very busy. It's been years since we had to fully furnish a house. We have made many trips into Chattanooga to shop for furniture and linens and window dressings.



And, also, waiting for workmen to arrive to do various things, such as install telephones, satellite TV equipment, and make deliveries of goods takes time. Our "stuff" arrived from Alaska just yesterday, so we are busy unpacking and putting away everything.

We signed on the house the 15th. We found a place ideal for the two of us. It's a new house, 3 bedrooms, 2 baths, 2 car garage, a front porch and back deck. It's built in a new subdivision. We were able to buy 0.6 acres between us and the neighbors. Our house sets on a corner lot of the same size. We can sit at our table and look out at a little white church with a bell tower. It's a Presbyterian Church. One of the ladies at the post office (her name is Delores) attends church there and invited us.

We do not have long distance on our phones yet. But, our phone number is 423-658-0058.

Our house has a security system so we hope to have no problems with break-ins when we're away from home.

The lady we purchased our home from is a very nice person. She gave us a years guarantee. All the appliances, except washer and dryer, came with the house. The seller has her father and brother in-law here as soon as we call. Being a new house there are "bugs" to work out. Marie, the seller, told us she's never worked with such nice people, so here she comes one morning with a basket full of treats. We have received gifts from realtors but never from the seller.

If you, any of you, are ever in this area, please stop in and spend some time. The thermometer on our deck, right now at 2:00 p.m. registers 74 degrees in the shade. Come on down.

Love, Delores and Charles too!

2006 KCC Christmas Program

In keeping with past tradition, well at least some years of the past, the 2006 Christmas program at KCC was a spontaneous success. Affably referred to by many as our "Charlie Brown" Christmas program, the theme of the evening was to give glory to our Savior in a "all-comers" welcome format. From the pictures below and on the opposite page, you should be able to see that variety was definitely achieved. Thank -you to all that performed and to those that helped with the Joyful Noise club.





THERE WAS

by Brent Johnson

There was a gnat,
big and fat
who dined on human skin.
For lunch he chose
my own sweet nose.
“Mistake!” said I to him.

But before his meal
I saw him kneel
and earnest was his face.
In husky voice
with eyes all moist
he offered up the grace!

There was a wasp
and he, aghast
was caught in Frank’s old
truck.
Against the glass
he beat, alas!
and thither was he stuck.

But Mrs. Frank
unwound the crank
then wide the window gaped.
When wasp reflw
he went right through
and thus the bee escaped!

There was a mouse
who weighed an ounce
so small it was no bother.
I cupped it in
my hands and then
I showed it to my Mother.

A scream let go!
that scared me so
I dropped my frightened
mouse.
Then sharp he veered
and disappeared
right down my Mother’s
blouse!

There was a frog
who loved to talk
his words although were few.
He spoke all day
in just one way
a tale that tolled so true.

Said, “My voice is bad
it makes me sad
you see I used to smoke.
Once my words
were like the birds’
but now I only croak!”

There was a wren
whose tree would bend
and bounce upon the breeze.
In back and forths
he rocked of course
and whistled melodies.

His music sighed
like love denied
surreal in its kind.
And time, I ‘spose
off marching goes
to leave me far behind.

There was a clam
in golden sand
who grinned from ear to ear.
When tides were high
the little guy
would dance and he wold
cheer.

When tides went out
he peeped about
to eye the peopled beach.
His mouth would snap
like a leg-hold trap
if fingers should him reach!

There was a toad
in small abode
who marveled much the moon.
He’d meditate
the distance great
and plan a visit soon.

O spacious Sea
of Tranquility
for toad to soak his toes.
Just rest those eyes
and the widest skies
could leap right past his nose!

There was a trout
whose width was stout
he leaped high for a bug.
I grabbed my pole
with eager goal
to give this fish a hug!

I hooked a worm
all skewered firm
and gave my line some
lengths.

But trout just took
worm from my hook
and left to offer thanks!

There was a rat
who chewed and spat
his fur was full of fleas.
Which bugs, themselves,
like evil elves
were fraught with much dis-
ease.

Nocturnal cur
the rat would stir
when I would only snore.
When scampering through
bugs fell like dew
upon the kitchen floor!

There was a hawk
who wouldn't knock
instead he barged right in.
To so intrude
is very rude
and mad was Mother Hen!

She found a stick
in her bailiwick
and hid it by her bed.
When Hawk returned
then Hen quite stern
played hockey with his head!

There was a cat
who often clapped
with a most raucous pomp.
She threw her paws

in wild applause
and hard her foot would
stomp!

Did she applaud
some kind of God
to worship deity?
No, not a bit,
but adored the wit
of clever poetry!

There was a pup
who couldn't stop
the hiccups, I'm afraid.
We brought a bear
we hoped would scare
those hiccups all away.

The bear went, "Grrr!"
The pup was cured,
but strange how fates become.
The bear got stuck
with that hiccup
and he's afraid of none!

There was a swan
on Walden Pond
who came to ponder things.
To initiate
solutions great
and rest some weary wings.

But no one spot
is best for thought,
just live and love and care.
The wise agree
folks need all three
this, Swan flew on to share.

There was a fox
with amber locks

that shaded toward pastel.
And fox, though small
played basketball
and did it very well.

The ball and fur
became a blur
when fox would dribble
through.
A step, a juke
and in the hoop
that fox was good for two!

There was a mutt,
and d'you know what?
the birds became his friend.
When they flew by
he'd whistle high
and beg them to descend.

If they set down
he ran around
to fetch his doggie dish.
Then he would share
the pickings there
and gossip with his guests.

There was a pig
who was in league
with Tammy-Jo and Ben.
They brought him food
like friends would do
and threw it in his pen.

In gaiety
the colleagues three
enjoyed their little job.
By summer's end
their work gave them
a great big happy hog!

There was a wolf
some city spoof
demanded live near me.
Wolf lunched on half
of moose's calf
and laughed that he was free.

And why are wolves
considered jewels
while rats can't buy a friend?
Well, rats, of course,
are city sorts
where wolves have never been.

There was a deer
who would appear
for children bussing by.
She waved her hands
in a two-step dance
and winked her pretty eye.

The children all
would point and call
to watch her splendid act.
The morrow then
they watched again
to see if she'd be back.

There was a moose
with antlers loose
he took them off at will.
And played a game
when hunting came
with candor and with skill.

He hid his rack
in a burlap sack
before the season dawned.
Then wore a shirt
with matching skirt
and acted like a blonde!

There was a bear
with oily hair
And oh! That wouldn't do.
She made a trek
right up to Brek
and bought their best shampoo.

With an old tin cup
she lathered up.
Then rinsed with subtle glee.
Ah! Wind-fresh dried
she smiled wide!
And went to the ladies tea.

There was a bull
who went to school
though teacher said he shouldn't.
And when he moved
her case was proved.
by stepping on a student.

The poor bull cried
and ran outside
right through the door, ka-blam!
But, friend, "Hello!"
there white as snow
was Mary's little lamb!

There was a whale
a minke male
who loved to play and swim.
He'd leap the seas
and grab his knees
to somersault back in.

He often dove
in Halibut Cove
to ply the bottom there.
And when he skyed
the gulls near died
to see him in mid-air!

THE TROUBLE WITH WINTER

is that all those tiny stars
don't cast a shadow of heat.

If the sky is blue in December
what church does God's sun attend?
The Anglican, and he sits in the back.

Where have all the flowers gone indeed!
when December is chilly?
They are warming up as birdseed
in yon feathered belly.

If turning turtle
put a shelter up,
then would that my world
was a hairy turtle cup.

A mortal took salmon perok with him
on his journey to the sky.
En route he had a paroxysm
of a Heavenly pie!

Does the eye of a needle
squeeze out evil?

If you oversee a business abroad
is that management overseas
or no slight oversight?
How do you know when a growing pain
becomes an old age ache?
When your energy output is down-sizing
while your belly experiences a hostile take-over.

Why does wisdom come with age?
Because it is a compilation of mistakes.

If my script doesn't snag the masses
it ought to amass some snags.

by Brent Johnson

Chili Cook Off 2006

By Karla Hudson

Pat Shields asked if I might possibly provide specifics and maybe even some pictures of the 2006 chili cook off. I didn't have any pictures, but I was loaded with details.

To my close friends and family members, and in the right situation, I am totally the kind of person to rub it in that I won the chili cook off. Even though I have tried to have a more humble persona, I must admit it was a part of my scheme. My secret plot involved getting Jeff and Molly Aley to stay in Kasilof for another year. Just so you all know, it's not in my character to get in the way of what God is doing in someone's life. I was simply just trying to give Jeff and Molly some options. You know, move to Utah or stay and compete in the chili cook off next year. I'll have you know, it was hard to keep my cover. Listening to Jeff speak of the chili cook off in church was extremely difficult. A direct quote from Jeff, "This is my year to win, I know it." The temptation was too much for me not to engage in the opposition's public challenge to enter the chili competition. Let me just say that in the end it was more than I could bear. But I kept silent with my plans. However, there is a time and a place to disclose this kind of information, and I believe this is the time.

Even though we didn't know that Jeff and Molly were going to be moving until this last summer. I had been saving this recipe for a very special occasion. A chili extraordinaire, only to be used against Alaska's toughest competitors. This wasn't just any chili. As a matter of fact, I wasn't sure if this recipe would even classify as chili, but I knew it would be good. But, it had enough of the traditional chili ingredients, such as meat, beans, spices, and "kick" for me to go ahead with my plans. But would it really work?

It wasn't long before self doubt and faithlessness started to set in. I looked to God and prayed. Can I pull this off God? Are you on my side? Do you want Jeff and Molly to stay or not? What do I do? Do I use this special recipe or do I use my original style (which is pretty darn good too....*in fact, If you ask me either one is a winner.....but back on track*). This was a difficult choice. But over the course of a couple weeks God revealed himself once again. He wanted me to use my special recipe that I'd been saving. Did I feel like I was taking a risk? Absolutely! This recipe didn't look anything like chili. Then I had to go back and ask

God if He was sure. He said yes. I said Ok! I told God that I trust him. We are trying to make a powerful statement to Jeff and Molly. This chili was in God's hands.

So I made the chili. However, right up to the moment before we left for the competition I still had questions as to whether I should take it or not. I came very close to leaving it at home. I had serious doubts that it would not stand out. But, on the way out the door I just decided to take it anyway. We arrived at the chili cook off and had a good time playing the games. My kids had fun and loaded up on the candy. Then, Mike Hicks said it was time to find out who the winner was. He first named off all the people that had tied with each other. Then he announced that the winner of this year's chili cook off is Karla Hudson. I looked at Josh and said "*What?*" Josh repeated, "You won!" I asked him, "*How did that happen?*" I thought it was a mistake. I was afraid to stand up. I feared that the moment I stood up Mike would say "Oh, sorry, I made a mistake. It's Jeff Aley that won." But it wasn't! It was me! I won the apron. So that settles it. Jeff and Molly will just have to stay in Kasilof for one more year.

[**Note from Karla:** The parts of this story regarding Jeff and Molly are only fictional; it really was just a passing thought and intended only to be amusing.]

Recipe for White Chili

(You need to measure out ingredients depending on the size of your family and how much kick you like).

1 pound boneless skinless chicken. Diced or cubed
About 2 Tablespoons oil
3 Tablespoons flour
1 or 2 little cans diced green chilies
1 Medium onion, diced
1 or 2 Tablespoons cumin (or as much as you like)
2 cans chicken broth.
4 can of butter beans. Or what I used for the cook off was lima beans.

Cook lima bean in a crock pot until soft. Drain water and add chicken broth. (Like I said you may need more of an ingredient depending on how much you're making. I used a 32 oz can of chicken broth for the cook off). Just add enough to top the beans. Sauté onion, green chilies, flour, and cumin in oil. Boil your chicken. After your chicken is cooked, drain the water and add chicken to the beans along with your sauté mixture.

Every May, KCC honors our high school graduates with a gift, one that will remain with them the rest of their lives. It is a gift that will remind them of how much they are loved by their church family, but even more importantly, by their Heavenly Father. For some in our congregation, this is one of the most special services of the year.

To help make the event even more unique, our very own poet laureate, Brent Johnson, mixes a few words together to amuse and bless our graduates. Here is his 2006 rendition, titled 2006 Five.

2006 Five

High school
is a whirlpool
spinning around;
a hole in a river
where children can drown.
But God is the shepherd
of the 23rd Psalm
and the water He leads to
is exceedingly calm.

Church is a compass
with the needle on north.
By which souls are directed
regarding God's course.
Quilts are big blankets
with personal squares.
Each is a memo
From someone who cares.

Diplomas are a passport
for going somewhere.
And honor is a status
for achievements quite rare.
For 2006 we have five
very fine youths.
Blessed with accomplishment
& you'll hear proofs.



Front: Ely Hutchison, Kelsey Shields, & Elliot Gauthier
Back: Jeff Dolifka & Brian Blossom

What is orange, round, hot & grand?
A basketball in Blossom's hand.
He fakes a step in a sudden juke
and all at once scores through the hoop.

He's the 4th generation in a setnet line
& he's been hunting since he was nine.
Brian is sailing soon from his home slip
off to college on a scholarship.

Eli Hutchison of wrestling fame
in Alaska, there's not a loss to his name.
Mike and Mary, what have you done
to give the world such a wonderful son?

Competitive, Eli's that kind of guy
with 9 siblings, he had to get tough or die.
12 credits earned from KPC
not bad for a home-school trainee.

May I present Elliot Gauthier
who lives up Anchorage way.
He grew up in Kasilof, attended Skyview
became friends with Jeff and Kelsey, too.

But went to Grace Christian in the big
town, took the 130 weight state wrestling
crown.
My sources say Elliot is super nice
and the girl who said so, never lies!

Jeff Dolifka from a local farm
he's debonair with social charm.
Quick-witted lad who knows how to talk;
started a protest called, "Let Eli Walk!"

Athlete of the Year and here's why
—four sport boy for Skyview High.
Now Jeff follows his accomplished Pa
off to college to study pre-law.

Kelsey Shields, last kid in the nest
whom God rejoiced at birth to bless.
Debate team brain, what do you know
her GPA is 4.0

In God's dreams this Kelsey thing sings
and the rainbows all spread their wings.
Yet far away in a cracker-box house
her Papa calls Kels, "Motor Mouth."

Raising children is a process
whence seldom is a parent an expert.
Yet here we have five kids
who have outdone the textbook.
"Jesus is helpful,"
some say, "He makes all the difference."
And I've heard that's all hooey
and just plain coincidence.

A coincidence is something
occurring by chance.
Our church in a decade
has some at first glance.
7 valedictorians, 2 salutatorians
and athletic stars; it's seems to me,
calling this coincidence
is pure hyperbole!



Brian Blossom shows off his beautiful quilt

Vicky Gee Becomes U.S. Citizen

Vicky Castro (no relation to Fidel), now Vicky Gee, was born and raised in Bogota, Columbia. She attended Javeriana University, a catholic school, where she earned a bachelors degree in medical technology. Her mother and father are now deceased, but her father was a professional photographer. Vicky has one brother and sister. Her brother works as a professional photographer, like his Dad, in Atlanta. Her sister lives in Bogota and works as a medical technologist; in fact, she has her own laboratory there.

In 1998 Vicky responded to an Internet post from someone named Bill Gee, from Alaska. As Vicky relates the story, she was the only one to respond to his ad. They communicated back and forth for approximately four months, with Bill sending as many as five letters in one day. This process was not as straight forward as you might expect though. You see, Vicky did not speak English and Bill did not understand Spanish. When asked how this worked, Vicky said it really was kind of comical. Her daughter, Adry, who was fluent in English, attempted to help her mom, but after awhile she told Vicky, “Mom, this relationship is between two people, not three.”



Well, whatever Bill and Vicky said to each other was clear enough that they agreed to meet in Oregon, where some of Bill's family lived. During this 10-day meeting, Bill had his "English to Spanish" dictionary and Vicky her "Spanish to English" dictionary, and love must have been the translator. Afterwards Vicky traveled back to Columbia where she took an English class so that she could hopefully communicate with Bill more clearly. Their initial meeting had taken place during Easter of 1998. That November Bill traveled to Columbia to further court Vicky. He stayed for about a month, came back to Alaska to work and then returned the following March. Vicky says that he fell in love with Columbia and really would have liked to locate there, but at the time the political climate in Columbia was not very favorable towards Americans.

Bill had known from the get-go that Vicky was the woman for him, even proposing to her not long after they met. Vicky, however, was not yet sure he was the right guy until after his second visit to Columbia. It was at this time that she realized he was the man she wanted to spend her life with. They started making plans for her to come to Alaska, which she did in October of 1999. They were married in Kasilof on December 31, 1999 by Vicky's daughter in the house that Bill's father had built.

It was about this time that the KCC express gets involved in the story. One Sharon Knowlton, who was Vicky's neighbor, called the rock-wall climbing Jane Misner to ask her to pray for someone to be found that could help Vicky with her English skills. Having a heart to help, Jane answered the prayer and began tutoring Vicky so that she might be able to pass an English certification test that was required by Central Peninsula General Hospital. Vicky had applied for a position there and CPGH needed to know that she was capable of speaking and understanding English so that she could handle the responsibilities of the position she was seeking. When I spoke with Miss Jane, she expressed her astonishment at how difficult the certification test was. In her opinion, the coursework was easily at the 10th to 12th grade level, and would be quite a challenge to many folks in and out of high school. For example, there were passages that

had to be read dealing with Archaeology or new technologies in science. Vicky had to be able to understand these and correctly answer questions dealing with what she had read. Needless to say, this was a very difficult certification process, but with Jane's help, Vicky was successful in passing the test.

An interesting side-bar to Vicky coming to Alaska involves her daughter, Adry. Adry had come to visit her mom and also to be involved in her wedding. Vicky was working at the Kenai Peninsula blood bank at the time and a colleague of hers introduced Adry to a man named Ernie Ramos. Well, a relationship blossomed from this meeting and in 2001 Ernie and Adry were married. They now live in Soldotna where Adry works for Mike Tauriainen at Northern Test Labs. Vicky is very happy to have her daughter with her here in Alaska.

Another significant event in Vicky's life occurred this past April. Vicky had spent so much time studying for the English certification test that she didn't have time to prepare for the test that is required to become a U.S. citizen. So, once the English certification process was complete, she began studying again, this time on the facts dealing with U.S. history and constitutional matters. One more time she had to prove herself by passing an exam that tested not only her skills in English, but on important details about the U.S. Again, she was successful! On the day that she was sworn in as a U.S. citizen, her husband, Bill, could not make it because of work obligations, so Jane Misner accompanied her to the ceremony that was held in Anchorage. Vicky said it was one of the most memorable events in her life.

Vicky was successful in landing a position as a medical technologist at CPGH. She enjoys her job very much, but admits that at times it has been hard to convince people that she is a good worker. Because of her difficulty in mastering the English language, some folks were unsure that she was a capable employee. This has changed though after people get to know her; in fact, they soon realize that she is indeed a very capable employee. Now, they are happy to have her working there. Vicky, we're happy that you are here too, and we wish you and Bill the very best in your life together.

Weird Things You Would Never Need to Know!"

Remember, you only need two tools: WD-40 and Duct Tape. If it doesn't move and should, use the WD-40. If it shouldn't move and does, use the duct tape.

Butterflies taste with their feet.

A duck's quack doesn't echo, and no one knows why.

On average, 100 people choke to death on ball point pens every year.

On average, people fear spiders more than they do death.

Elephants are the only animals that can't jump.

It's possible to lead a cow upstairs, but not downstairs.

Women blink nearly twice as much as men.

It's physically impossible for you to lick your elbow.

No word in the English language rhymes with "MONTH."

Average life span of a major league baseball: 7 pitches.

Our eyes are always the same size from birth, but our nose and ears never stop growing. SCARY!

The electric chair was invented by a dentist.

An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.

"Go," is the shortest complete sentence in the English language.

The cigarette lighter was invented before the match.

Americans on average eat 18 acres of pizza every day.

You tried to lick your elbow, didn't you? :]

ADVANCED DARWINISM

by Brent Johnson

Long time ago when the earth was new
amoeba climbed right out of the dew.
Said, "Rebat, rebat; kick your leg and jump!
gonna' make a frog before the sun come up."

Froggy restin in the garden grass
dream away and let the morning pass.
Snake is coiled and wow! he springs.
Off goes frog on brand new wings!

Bird's a bat his eyes are limp
he caves in to become a chimp.
Grab your vine and swing with me
ain't nothin' like the rhyme of a blind monkey!

Zenith sun and the land is hot
primate brains all grow in thought.
Out steps man with a great big grin
time to work and let the planet spin.

Day! Day! The shadows all grow,
where in the world did our time go?
Couching low the sun was brief,
but oh! My goodness here comes Eve!

pixie dust messiah

by Molly Aley

tonight i sit and wait for it,
that magic bullet (push or pull it)
to wave the wand and make the dawn
come now.

no more pain, just lauded gain
and banished fears, wiped-up tears,
lions, lambs and party plans
right now.

so take that wood (as if I could
to nails submit, or any part of it).
i want no cross, i want no cost -
i did not ask for this.

Salem's Birth Story

Kasilof, Alaska

March 15, 2006

By Christopher Krosschell with help from Jon & Brandi Little

This is a story about belief and unbelief: Faith in the Spirit on the one hand; and, on the other, stubborn distrust in what your own senses tell you must be true. It also happens to be a story about how a healthy baby was born naturally at home.

My name is Christopher Krosschell, and I was staying with my sister, Brandi Little, while her husband, Jon, was away from home, reporting on the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. Brandi was eight months pregnant and Jon was due home in less than a week. We assumed we had plenty of time for the two of them to finish getting ready for the birth of their first child.

From early pregnancy, Jon and Brandi felt God was leading them to have this baby at home. They remained faithful to what they heard; but the labor and birth unfolded far quicker than they imagined, before they had all their plans in place. God has His timing, and His reasons.

At approximately 0315 in the morning of March 15, Brandi woke me up saying her water may have broken, but she wasn't sure. She asked me to pray that the birth would be delayed

for Jon to be here. My feeling was that this was a false alarm; we would pray and see what God had for us. I felt we would quickly be calmed and go back to bed.

She called Jon at his hotel in Nome and asked him to wake up and pray. I lay in a chair and began



praying. After the call, Brandi and I discussed the possibilities of what was happening.

Approximately 0430 she had a very light (hardly noticeable) contraction. We thought maybe it was a Braxton-Hicks contraction but did acknowledge it could be the start of the birth. These continued until about 0500 when she said she was nauseous. The contractions lightly increased. She thought that we should get and prepare (sterilize) the birthing supplies. I agreed.

At 0530 Brandi began to feel sick to her stomach and had flu-like symptoms. I didn't feel there was much I could do and we both still believed this was a false alarm. I stayed in the chair and prayed. Brandi was pacing as she worked through each contraction.

Brandi was very disappointed that Jon wasn't present. He had just called to find out the status and she told him she was sick and having contractions. The contractions were strong enough that I took the phone to help. With difficulty she said, "Just tell him to come home" right before a hefty contraction started. This was my first notice that the contractions were strong enough that she couldn't talk during them. I relayed the message to Jon and he seemed to understand what was happening. He said he would call back soon.

Fifteen minutes later (about 0630) Brandi said, "I've got to relax and go with [what God is doing in] my body." When she said this, I knew then she was ready for God's will should the birth come early. However, we were still not convinced it was.

We considered calling a friend who has helped women deliver. After discussing it, we got her number and called at about 0700. The friend said they (her and her husband) were thinking of calling the day before. Brandi talked to her and we tried to get a feel for Brandi's status. Brandi was humble in asking. Our friend was happy to help. Brandi had a contraction and gave me the phone. Our friend told me of something God laid on her heart the Sunday before. She had been at a meeting when her minister discussed a common tragedy (that I believe is acute in America). Sometimes people work their whole life to obtain personal dreams. They fulfill their goal but are not really fulfilled. They are empty because they have missed God by focusing on their dreams. She said

something about this message made her immediately think of Jon and Brandi. Here they were, feeling led by God to a home birth from the onset of pregnancy; suddenly, Brandi went into labor early and the “dream” was shaken. We felt that God’s Word in Hebrews 12:25-29 might be pertinent to us in this situation. Had this been God’s will after all? Did we understand His will completely? Believers have a way of hearing God’s message then, they seize the dream by letting their own will take over and execute it in their power. Was God shaking us? We felt that He was. We believe we had been hearing Him correctly but yet He humbled us so that we would not covet any aspect of what He was doing or allow it to raise pride up in us. We wanted to submit and listen to Him that we would *continue* maturing into His power that is unshakeable. May it be that every moment not our will but His be done.

We considered asking Angie Mustain, a Kasilof neighbor, for help. Another friend, whom we called shortly after calling the woman who has experience in child birth, cautioned me that this was a great responsibility and this responsibility was not mine but Jon’s. The two conversations with friends clarified the *ongoing* need to know God’s leading for the details of this birth. At this point I was unable to connect with Jon (he was on his way to the airport). After praying, considering Jon, our relationship and his previous leading, I approached Brandi. Our talk confirmed God was still leading us to home birth. I could see her faith was strong in that leading. We felt anything else would necessitate us giving up on what God was clearly doing despite the fact that the circumstances were not what we envisioned (as discussed in the previous paragraph). We believed it would have been a lack of faith to not continue and wanted to submit to God’s work.

Brandi walked around for awhile bearing the contractions. It helped to walk around during hard contractions, raising her hands as they hit. It was like she was communicating with God.

The contractions were now intense and consuming. Brandi and I were still in disbelief, but reality was catching up to us quickly. Brandi later said, “I think we were in denial because this wasn’t the way we expected it to go: Jon not home, four weeks early.” Due to my disbelief, my mind was a few steps behind

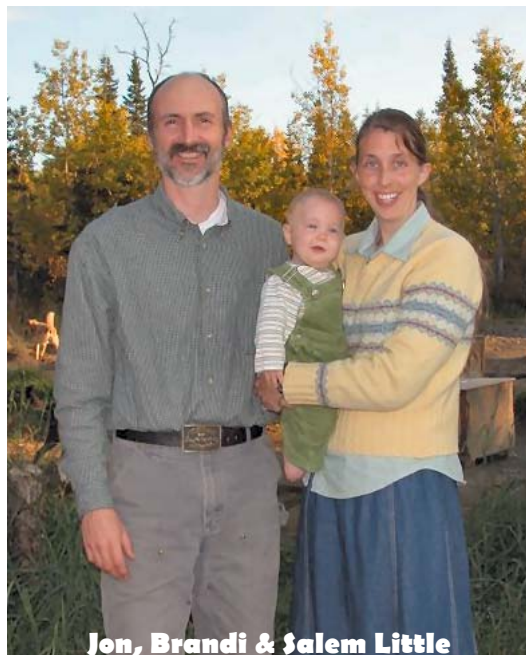
what was happening. Thankfully though, all physical aspects had been taken care of and were in place.

Brandi called our friend again just after 0800 and attempted to talk but she was unable due to the strength of her contractions. That was the last time Brandi was to talk to anyone until after the birth. She felt like being in a warm bath might help so she ran some hot water and got in the bathtub. Our friend had me time the contractions in length and spacing for the next hour. I tried to have Brandi call out the contractions. She soon called out six in a row (contractions beginning) but missed calling out three of the lengths (ending).

She later said, "It was very hard to talk and took everything I had to tell him when a contraction started and ended. They were very intense and I needed the breaks in between to rest." The contractions appeared to be inconsistent. Her faith was strong and so was mine. We remained convinced that God still wanted us to do this in the home. We did not want to give up on the realities of God's work. Discerning what was His work was accomplished by the exhortation to *continually* seek it and *continually* be open to it with the humility to change course at any juncture if God so led. Due to this faith; the significance, importance and criticality of the situation did not remotely alter or cause us to waver from what God was leading.

I maintained hot water pots on the stove that we were using to keep her bath water warm, timed contractions and recorded them on a piece of scrap paper, called our friends again and considered calling Angie Mustain. The three things that kept me from calling Angie were (in order):

Lack of full understanding (we did not fully consciously believe what was happening).



Due to 1), we were behind the timeline in our minds with reality of Brandi's progression.

We were both very busy and didn't have much time to make calls (though I checked for the Mustain number on the computer). I also kept getting interrupted (contraction timing, hot water, calls, etc.).

Little did we know (at 0930) that the baby would be born in about 45 minutes. Brandi was now deeply moaning from the labor and asked, "Chris, pray that God will be with us. I know I'm a sinner..." I sat down and started praying. She prayed a little with me but prayed more in her heart and focused on the contractions. I felt the Spirit with us and felt Him say, "I'm with you." I told her so.

We got a helpful phone call from a friend. While I was talking, Brandi told me she was pushing. "If you can call it that," she said. "My body took over and had been since 3:15 a.m. It just started pushing with every contraction." I missed her telling me this because I was on the phone and just heard her say, "...ing'." The next thing I remember was being in the kitchen and hearing Brandi say, "Chris, the head is out." Her voice had faith in it mixed with some excitement but only a little fear. Because I wasn't thinking we were even close to this point, my mind heard, "Chris, it is crowning." This made me think I had more time but I didn't know how much more. Since I expected the labor to be longer I was trying to believe maybe crowning reduced us to only five more hours. I decided I should pray for her again. That and half figuring out what was happening led me to walk into the bathroom and view where we were. I saw the head half way out. I told myself that must be what crowning looked like. I went to do something like check on the hot water in the kitchen or try to find Angie's numbers. Then it hit me. I realized that the baby was being born. Now. I wheeled back into the bathroom and saw the baby's last seconds of birth at 1038.

Brandi let him into the water and was moving to pick up his head and body. She immediately said, "Chris the cord is wrapped around his neck," and it was, loosely. She unwrapped it immediately and then picked him up. I encouraged her to do what was on her heart: to lie back in the tub and put him on her chest.

The cord was vibrant, red and thick. His eyes and mouth were shut. As she laid back she noticed he was a boy and said, "Oh, it's a boy."

Brandi and I cried out to God that he would breathe. As we cried out it seemed that it took a few seconds but then he breathed a breath. He seemed to respond to our prayer. We got excited and happy, looked at each other, quit praying in doing so and he stopped. We realized we had to pray again so we cried out together for him to take another breath. Brandi had her left hand on the child and her right hand in the air. I had my right hand in the air and the other moving between Brandi's shoulder and the child's back behind his lungs. He immediately took a deep breath and then two small ones. We again smiled at each other, got happy and paused the praying. He stopped again and hadn't yet cried. We realized we had to pray through (I felt Hosea 6:3, Philippians 3:12 and Exodus 17:11) to get the baby to cry. We really poured our hearts into a loud prayer for the baby to cry and did so with authority, strength, and endurance. The baby immediately breathed and then cried. We prayed a few more seconds and then thanked God for his Spirit (the breath of life), a successful birth and enjoyed the baby.

Now that he was breathing, I called our friend again to get some post birth advice. I told her we had a boy, he seemed to be doing well, tried to describe his color, his breathing and his cry to her. Noticing that he was crying again, I put the phone receiver next to him so she could listen. When I brought the phone back, she seemed to have a tear in her eye (she may not have) and sang out, "That's a healthy baby!" I immediately told Brandi what she said and I visibly saw Brandi's body language communicate great joy. I then gave Brandi the phone. They discussed breast-feeding and delivering the placenta. The baby's color had really improved now.

We hung up the phone, prayed, and thanked God. I held the baby and Brandi got out of the tub, dried off, put on her pajamas and I handed her the baby. We called JoEllen Fowler (next door neighbor) and our parents. JoEllen came over, cleaned the baby, helped Brandi further with nursing, helped with many things and generally beamed with us.

Jon felt some leading for the name Salem James while flying to Anchorage

about the time of the birth. He called from Anchorage around 1230 to hear the good news from Brandi that they had a son. He joyously arrived about three hours after the birth to a peaceful scene of the three of us attending to a warm, lively baby as God's mid-March sun reflected off the snow and shown in the south and west windows.

Some thoughts from the one who bore the child

God knitted this child together in my womb. He truly was with us through this pregnancy and birth. A friend told us, "It was your faith that carried you through."

How true.

When I woke up in the morning and thought, "My water is breaking; it looks as though we will have this baby early," I just wanted Jon to be here so bad. But I let that go early in the labor. Jon told me many times in the last weeks lead-



ing up to Salem's birth to let my body do the work it is supposed to do. That whole morning was one in which I submitted to the work in my body.

It was a beautiful relationship. I was fully there, engaged in it all yet something deeper within me was at work. Between contractions I would slip into this complete rest mode waiting for the next one.

They grew stronger. How I wanted something to grab onto but my hands searched the air with no satisfaction. From there, each contraction that hit, there was more and more pushing. I just submitted my body to this incredible work of God.

Oh, Lord how you delivered this child. May I never forget and may I learn to submit to your work and not my own.

THOUGHTS OF A JUROR

Starting out it all seemed like such a simple process. The facts all seemed so strait forward. Making the right choice, just a procedure in the logical deduction of the facts.

We were instructed to keep our minds open. Do not let ourselves be influenced by the information floating around out there in our community. Keep an open mind to the evidence and testimony given to us. This I tried to do, and this I did. How the days ran on though!

For seven days we had listened and listened some more. So far in the process, we had listened to 23 witnesses' testimony. Seen hundreds of exhibits. Watched and listened to much original footage of the events that soon followed, THE EVENT, that we had all been called together for.

After such a long time of listening, viewing, and wondering, the moment came to deliberate. There had been 14 of us up till this point. Of the original 14, two of us had been randomly selected as the alternates who would not get to make a decision in the verdict. At that point, I thought this would have been more difficult than having had to make a final decision in THE CASE.

There is a bonding that can go on with people that you are cast together with. You can come from different ends of things, and yet, when you spend those hours in between listening to testimony, listening to each other, there is a small-scale community that at least can transpire.

We had chosen our foreperson and had begun the deliberation process before I realized that I didn't know what I should do. I really hadn't thought about having to make my final decision up till that moment. If that reflects on a well hatched process by our government, then so be it. Maybe it was the nature of the evidence that had been presented that left me in limbo. Maybe I am one of the "Not smart enough to get out of jury duty" status. Sure makes you wonder about your judgment though.

It is as though I could already expect the comments from those outside our little deliberation room. You know he did it, right? I mean, come on, the man had a knife and had lain in wait for his mom, RIGHT?

The jurors whom I served with were honest people. I am convinced that they kept their minds open. We together respected the law, the evidence, and the whole procedure. I respected them. We must all agree on the outcome, RIGHT?

Well, tonight I stand at the crossroads. Tomorrow is our second day of deliberation and as of this point in the process, I stand with the minority group. What if I have let some spin-doctor cloud my mind of the obvious? What If Adam planned the whole thing for a long time? Or, what if more importantly to the case, when he picked up his knife he intended to kill his own mother? What if I am wrong?

OH, GOD, may I make the right decision!
A juror

EXPECTATIONS

by Pat Shields

In the November 2, 2006 issue of the *Anchorage Daily News*, Haines columnist Heather Lende shares a joke that her neighbor had told her. The setting of the humorous tale is the all familiar meeting of a recently deceased individual and St. Peter. In this case, St. Peter is questioning Forest Gump prior to his passing the pearly gates. Forest must correctly answer three questions to gain entry into heaven. The first question is, "What days of the week begin with "T"?" Forest responds, "Today and Tomorrow." Not exactly the answer that St. Peter is looking for, but he has to admit the response is technically correct.

The next question is a little bit harder. "How many seconds are there in a year?" Forest thinks a bit before replying, "Twelve – January 2nd, February 2nd, March 2nd" Again, St. Peter has to admit that Forest is, in the technical sense, correct.

The final question though is one that Peter is sure will trip up Forest. "What is God's first name?" Surprisingly, Forest is very quick with his reply. "Why, his name is Andy." Before St. Peter can ask for clarification, Forest provides the following evidence. "It says so right in the hymn about visiting Him in the garden." Then Forest begins singing, "Andy walks with me, Andy talks with me, Andy tells me I am His own....."

Heather Lende asserts that things aren't always what they seem. How true this is! I've recently been spending a lot of time thinking about that very premise. St. Peter had a specific answer in mind when he posed his questions, but he was forced to look at the situation from a different angle by the simplicity of Forest's responses. Like the oft-used quote (at least by me) from Yogi Berra, "when you come to a fork in the road, take it," I think too many of us are not well-prepared when things don't turn out like we planned them to.

This past May I felt a lump in one of my armpits, and when it didn't go away, I made an appointment with a local PA. Most of you can recite the rest of this story from memory, so let's skip ahead a few chapters. On the day I was informed by my docs that I most likely had lymphoma, I was at an event designed to remember and benefit those with cancer (the annual cancer walk at Skyview High School, where Kelsey was singing). While there, I ran into Greg Rozak and we had a nice chat. He was in a jovial mood, and it wasn't long before he was sitting next to someone having an animated conversation. I have a hunch that Greg was probably telling this individual that life is not always what we expect it to be. A few days later I got the results from the official biopsy; my

cancer now had a specific name, but no known cure. No, life is not always what we expect it to be. Next came a phone call I didn't look forward to making. My mother had already experienced the death of two children, as well as two husbands. When I called to tell her of my condition, she and the rest of my family were devastated. It was not the kind of news they expected to hear.

Before too long, news of my challenge got out and people began expressing unbelievable words of kindness and extending the sincerest offers of help. Many laid hands on me and prayed, powerful prayers I might add, let me share how. Although I do not know exactly what God's plans are for me regarding healing of the cancer, I do know this, He has assured me I won't be alone. When God's people pray over you, there is a tremendous amount of healing that immediately takes place. I am convinced this is something that far too few people expect or experience out of life. How unfortunate that is. How blessed I am to have experienced the difference! Oh, but the story doesn't end there, not even close. It just so happens that some colleagues of mine decided to have a small raffle to help with the costs of impending treatment. *Headline: Small Raffle Turns Into Major Event.* One day I walk into work and hanging there is a quilt with a sign identifying it as having been crafted by KCC. I continually fail to comprehend the love that was and is represented in that quilt. Hundreds of other items were donated and a dinner/auction was held. People sacrificially gave and gave and gave; even our wood pile got a roof so it could keep dry and warm and many other gifts were given to our family. In the days and weeks after the benefit, I have attempted to mentally absorb all of this. I can not do it. When people do something like this for you, it goes beyond your ability to understand it. How could anyone in their lifetime ever expect something to play out like this? Why do these things happen? Where does goodness like this come from? How can you ever properly thank people for loving you?

By the time this is published, I will have completed three of six scheduled chemotherapy sessions. Some refer to this treatment regime simply as therapy, well.....call it what you will, but know this, it's kind of brutal. In the days after my "therapy," my mind tends to wanders off to that place where a guy named delirium must live. I occasionally open my eyes and hear Lea asking me if there is anything she can do. There isn't. The drugs are doing what they are designed to do, that is, indiscriminately killing cells, and the results of their work are called side effects. But even in this there is good, as I have learned that I am never alone, even in the long hours before dawn.

Abraham Lincoln once said, "The best thing about the future is that it only comes one day at a time," which sounds a lot like Mt 6:34, which says: "So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today."

DON'T MESS WITH MOM

author unknown

My son came home from school one day,
with a smirk upon his face.
He decided he was smart enough,
to put me in my place.

"Guess what I learned in Civics Two,
that's taught by Mr. Wright?
It's all about the laws today,
The 'Children's Bill of Rights.'

It says I need not clean my room,
don't have to cut my hair
No one can tell me what to think,
or speak, or what to wear.

I have freedom from religion,
and regardless what you say,
I don't have to bow my head,
and I sure don't have to pray.

I can wear earrings if I want,
and pierce my tongue & nose
I can read & watch just what I like,
get tattoos from head to toe.

And if you ever spank me,
I'll charge you with a crime.
I'll back up all my charges,
with the marks on my behind.

Don't you ever touch me,
my body's only for my use,
not for your hugs and kisses,
that's just more child abuse.

Don't preach about your morals,
like your Mama did to you.
That's nothing more than mind control,
And it's illegal too!

Mom, I have these children's rights,
so you can't influence me,
or I'll call Children's Services Division,
better known as C.S.D."

Of course my first instinct was
to toss him out the door!
But the chance to teach him a lesson
made me think a little more.

I mulled it over carefully,
I couldn't let this go.
A smile crept upon my face,
he's messing with a pro.

Next day I took him shopping
at the local Goodwill Store.
I told him, "Pick out all you want,
there's shirts & pants galore.

I've called and checked with C.S.D.
who said they didn't care
if I bought you K-Mart shoes instead
of those Nike Airs.

I've cancelled that appointment
to take your driver's test.
The C.S.D. is unconcerned
so I'll decide what's best."

I said "No time to stop and eat,
or pick up stuff to munch.
And tomorrow you can start to learn
to make your own sack lunch.

Just save the raging appetite,
and wait till dinner time.
We're having liver and onions,
a favorite dish of mine."

He asked "Can I please rent a movie,
to watch on my VCR?"
"Sorry, but I sold your TV,
for new tires on my car.

I also rented out your room,
you'll take the couch instead.
The C.S.D. requires
just a roof over your head.

Your clothing won't be trendy now,
I'll choose what we eat.
That allowance that you used to get,
will buy me something neat.

I'm selling off your jet ski,
dirt-bike & roller blades.
Check out the 'Parents Bill of Rights',
It's in effect today!

Hey hot shot, are you crying,
Why are you on your knees?
Are you asking God to help you out,
instead of C.S.D..?"

Holiday Medley

by Brent Johnson

Why do ducks need Chap Stick?
Because their lips tend to quack quick.

A nose can't run
nor hide, but they do drool.
Especially if the world is cold or cruel.

Alaska:
A white-out at night there
is an outright nightmare!

If you hurry a turkey
it ain't gonna fly.
So play the holiday
and inch your food by.

On winter's path, dear
air bites through our clothes.
Its white teeth are after
our fingers and toes!

The dog days of summer
ran off in the rain.
And wooly mammoth winter
has stomped on my brain!

If we take giving thanks
to very great lengths
it may distract from dinner,
and Friday would be —thankfully thinner!

one to bring to the altar. That so touched Randy's heart that he has had a love for that ministry ever since."

The Wilderness Baptist where the Wandlers attend also does the shoe boxes and the reason they decided to go and work in the distribution center is that they have some good friends in Atlanta, GA - Bill and Louise Hungerpiller (they visited KCC years ago and Lynda thinks Bill spoke here.) Randy and Lynda thought they could go visit the Hungerpiller's and work at the distribution center as well. However, when Lynda called about the cost of airline tickets, it was way too spendy so she checked around and found that **OCC** had a center in Denver.

According to Lynda, approximately 400 to 600 thousand boxes are processed at Denver, and it is the smallest of the six collection sites. Randy and Lynda worked on the assembly line that checked the boxes to make sure that another group of people had taken all the monies out. They also checked to see if there were items enclosed that were not supposed to be in there. Many items had to be taken out, but there were many filler items that **OCC** furnished that had been donated by other organizations that the removed items could be replaced with. The removed items included all liquids such as shampoo, cream rinse, etc. All perishable food items such as cookies crackers and the like also were removed. Nothing that could melt like chocolate and various kinds of candy, war toys, snakes or used items were not allowed either. All items that were taken out of the shoe boxes were put into buckets and then distributed to various organizations in Denver (nothing was wasted). Lynda said last year **OCC** sent out 7.6 million shoe boxes to 90 countries throughout the world.

Randy and Lynda are hoping to go again next year, even though they did find that about 3 days working on the assembly line was enough, as it is quite hard on their old bodies (her words). Lynda said that once you get there, you can take as many breaks as you like, but it is hard to tear yourself away form the task at hand. They did break every morning though and had corporate prayer.

"Randy and I were so overwhelmed at the generosity of everyone involved form those who sent boxes to all the workers who gave of their time. We were so blessed. We would urge everyone to get involved however possible," said Lynda.

KCC is proud to have participated in this worthy cause, including sending our very own emissaries, Randy and Lynda Wandler.