



For a Lifetime



THE
BARKER
FOUNDATION INC. 1945

2009
ANNUAL REPORT



From the President and Executive Director

Dear Friends,



As you read the stories and review the data in these pages, we hope you will share our joy and pride at Barker's steadfast commitment to children and families. Thanks to your support, we were able to celebrate the homecoming of 101 children who became cherished members of permanent, loving Barker families.

As with last year, 2009 brought decreases in adoptions worldwide and the closure of many agencies, largely because of the continued slowdown in international adoption; yet Barker held steady. Adoption applications increased, information meetings overflowed, and our modernized website brought a steady stream of visitors seeking adoption-related services of all kinds. The economic downturn remained a reality, but our community continued to provide strong financial backing as well as awe-inspiring volunteer support.

How is it that we can maintain our vigor during such uncertain times? The answer lies in both breadth and depth. During 2009, we extended our reach, especially to underserved children. Our *Project Wait No Longer* program continued to gain strength in finding families for older foster youth. And while Barker has historically been a regional agency placing children in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia, this year our Board of Trustees approved the placement of Waiting Children from China, as well as children from other countries in need of homes, with families working through selected out-of-area agencies.

At the same time, our commitment to a "whole life" approach remains resolute. The photo "album" of one Barker family on the cover of this report poignantly illustrates our *For a Lifetime* theme and the enduring nature of the organization. Adoptive parents welcome a child, she grows and develops, launches into an independent life, and becomes a parent herself. The Barker parents are now devoted grandparents. Through the lifecycle of all our families, Barker is there to provide the support that might be needed, and to welcome succeeding generations to the larger Barker family.

Most of us live with the powerful sense that there is work for us to do and causes for us to support. If one of your core beliefs is that all children have the right to a permanent, stable, and loving home, we invite you to read the following pages recounting Barker's efforts in 2009. Novelist Graham Greene wrote poetically about critical junctures in a child's life. "There is always one moment in childhood when the door opens and lets the future in." Please help us to open more doors for more children, doors that lead to a family and a brighter future.



Marilyn Regier

Marilyn Regier, Ph.D., LCSW-C
Executive Director

John M. Duff, Jr.

John Duff
President, Board of Trustees

IN 2009

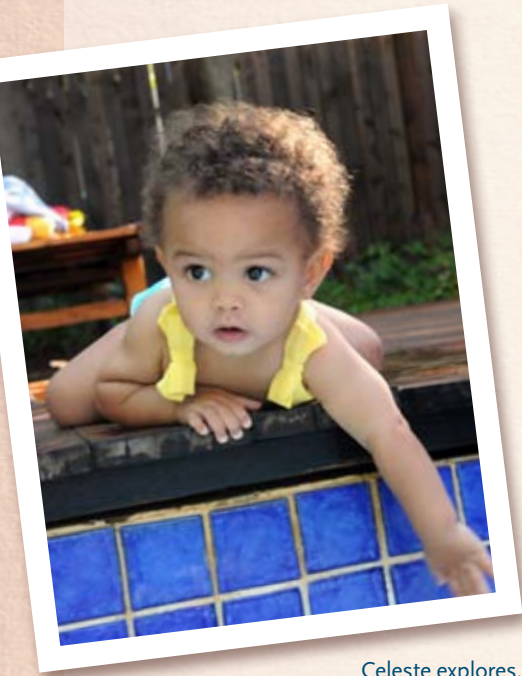
Alberto & Christine welcomed Sophia
Allison & Dave welcomed Lucy
Amy welcomed Tadesse
Amy & David welcomed Sarah, Tala & Aya
Andy & Sue welcomed Marcus
Ann & Michael & welcomed Fiona
Annette & Brian welcomed Camden
Anthony & Lisa welcomed Mason
Aphi & Matt welcomed Colin
Ashleigh & Mickey welcomed Reagan
Barbara & Chris welcomed Landon
Bethany & Michael welcomed Samuel
Bill & Sophia welcomed Melat & Surafel
Brian & Laura welcomed Gabriella
Brooks & Kathy welcomed Patricia
Bryan & Michelle welcomed Andrew
Chris & Jeff welcomed Caroline
Claire & Pete welcomed Andrew
Cynthia & Phillip welcomed Mia
Dani & Scott welcomed Samuel
Danielle & Paul welcomed BeccaHope
David & Laura welcomed Mark
Dervel & Kim welcomed Myles
Don & Suzanne welcomed Sabina
Doug & Grace welcomed Sophia
Ed & Aubrey welcomed Shelby
Erika & Joe welcomed Chaerin
Erin & Jason welcomed Max
Fred & Lindsay welcomed Frederick
Geoff & Carlea welcomed Isabel

Giovanna & Jimmy welcomed Laura
Helen & Mark welcomed Patricia
Hennessey & Karen welcomed Hayden
Jackie & Nicholas welcomed Sawyer
Janel & Mike welcomed Lyla
Janet & John welcomed Joshua
Jason & Susanna welcomed Chase
Jeff & Laurie welcomed Julian
Jennifer & Rock welcomed Andrew
Jessica & Mark welcomed Elena
Jo Ann & Patrick welcomed Chloe
Joe & Beth welcomed Samuel
Joe & Julie welcomed Nathaniel
John & Sue welcomed Max
Jon & Megan welcomed Hope
Joseph & Stacy welcomed Ari
Julie & Joseph welcomed Josie
Karen & Matthew welcomed Jaxson
Karen & Scott welcomed Mia
Karla & Dave welcomed Matthew
Kathleen & Phillip welcomed Addison
Kelly & Jon welcomed Elijah
Kelly & Matt welcomed Gretchen
Kevin & Lauren welcomed Eloise
Kim & Mark welcomed Maxwell
Kristie & David welcomed Daysie
Kurt & Jackie welcomed Ryan
Lâle & Dae Sung welcomed See-Eun

Larry & Casey welcomed Leah
Laura & Richard welcomed Andrew
Leslie & Richard welcomed Phillip
Lisa & Leslie welcomed Connor
Loree & Branson welcomed Aubrey
Mark & Barbara welcomed Grace
Mary Anne & Matthew welcomed Shane
Matt & Erin welcomed Anna
Matt & Lauren welcomed Caroline
Michael & Jennifer welcomed Michael
Michelle & Clay welcomed Amelia
Mike & Sharon welcomed Frenice
Morgan & John welcomed Andrew
Nancy & William welcomed Caleb
Natascha & Scott welcomed David
Nicole & Robert welcomed Ashley
Patrice & Fulmer welcomed Cameron
Paul & Becky welcomed Lindee
Raj & Nicole welcomed Rocco
Reese & Mary Ann welcomed Lacey
Regina & Eric welcomed Ewan
Richard & Kelly welcomed Nathan
Richelle & Steve welcomed Cohen
Robin & Kurt welcomed Jordan
Rodney & Sharon welcomed Taylor
Scott & Kerri welcomed Casey
Sharon welcomed Ted
Shauna & Joel welcomed Keller
Sheri & Patrick welcomed Samuel
Sophia & Brian welcomed Daniel
Stefano & Elena welcomed Celeste
Stephanie & Ted welcomed Jacob
Steve & Nora welcomed Jamie
Suneeta & Nripendra welcomed Renuka
Susan & Patrick welcomed Olivia
Ted & Jessica welcomed Beatrice
Tiffany & Andrew welcomed Christian
Tony & Jennifer welcomed Lily
Trena & John welcomed Lila
Vickie & Wayne welcomed Faith



From the first moments of life...



Celeste explores.

On a hot July morning, in the “couch room” at Barker’s offices, Stefano Bertuzzi and Elena Bisagni met for the first time the pregnant high school student who had chosen them, among all the families whose scrapbooks she had reviewed, to be parents to her baby girl. For Dijon, this family was “it” from the first moment. The self-possessed teenager saw in the face of their four-and-a-half-year-old son Davide a happiness and stability missing from her own childhood. That was what she wanted for her daughter. For herself, she wanted a chance at a future.

Stefano and Elena felt immediately connected to Dijon. Then they discovered one of the coincidences that seem to occur in adoption: Dijon was planning to name her baby Sky; Stefano and Elena had selected the name Celeste, which means “heavenly” in Italian. Dijon

invited the couple to come to the hospital when labor would be induced that evening. Within 24 hours after meeting, Stefano and Elena were holding Dijon’s hand in the delivery room while they watched Celeste Sky enter the world.

The couple credits Barker with helping make the experience so moving. Elena says, “We were able to focus on Celeste and Dijon because Barker took care of everything else.” She recalls that birth parent counselor Meg Dawson continually made sure that all three of them were comfortable with each arrangement.

Nevertheless, Dijon, Elena and Stefano still have the rest of Celeste’s life to consider. “We’d already had a child,” says Stefano. “But we had never had a birth mother before.” Since Celeste’s birth, the family of four has gotten together with Dijon several times. They all believe they are “family” but expect the specifics of their relationship to unfold over time.

Meanwhile, the Bertuzzi/Bisagni household is warm with the pulse of young children. Davide is demonstrably fond of his little sister. He had yearned intensely for a sibling, and her arrival has not apparently caused him to rethink the desire. Celeste, a smiling bundle of crawling, climbing energy, accepts his adulation as her natural due.

Dijon is still working through the pain of parting with her daughter. “Especially when I go to sleep,” she says, “I miss her.” Nevertheless, she does well in school and plans to become a Spanish teacher. Increasingly, the future looks inviting. And in one form or another, Celeste, Davide, Elena, and Stefano will be a part of that future.



Davide, Stefano, Celeste, and Elena with Judge Savage on Finalization Day.

...over challenging obstacles...

The events of Hurricane Katrina proved a landmark for Rebekah and John Breckenridge of Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Witnessing such intensity of need moved them to act on something they had casually considered while rearing their two daughters: adopting an older child from China. In 2006, they adopted Daniel, a five-year-old with cleft lip and palate, through Holt International. The transition was not easy, but eventually Daniel was thriving.

The Breckenridges began thinking maybe Daniel should have a brother. Their daughters had launched into independent lives. Maybe a brother would be good for him. Maybe they could do it again. Looking at a list of waiting children in China, Rebekah “spotted a little guy who captured my heart,” she says. “He had the biggest smile.” He also had cleft lip and palate. When deciding to adopt Daniel, Rebekah and John had carefully concluded that they could handle a child with these conditions. Although not life-threatening, cleft lip and palate require surgery, orthodontia,



John, Joshua, Rebekah, and Daniel Breckenridge.

and speech therapy. “I have the personality to keep plugging away,” Rebekah says.

Bringing home a brother for Daniel proved unexpectedly challenging. The first agency they chose for this adoption went out of business. The second abruptly closed their China Waiting Child program. Rebekah felt at the limits of frustration by the time they were transferred to The Barker Foundation. But from then on, she says, “everything went smoothly.”

The Breckenridges are among the first group of Barker parents who live outside the Washington DC region. When waiting children need families, Rebekah thinks, such reaching out only makes sense. “Everyone is just a phone call or email away. Barker has always been very

quick in responding. The world is big but small.”

They brought home eight-year-old Joshua in November 2009. He is a sunny, loving child who focuses on fun. Unlike Daniel, Joshua was not inclined to sit for long periods while Rebekah read to him, so his command of English has come mostly through play with his brother. The two boys light up with energy and excitement for everything they experience. “We’re a little more tired than we were when we were raising our daughters,” Rebekah admits, “but it’s so fulfilling to watch them learn. I have great hopes for our boys. Daniel can speak and communicate well now, and Joshua will, too, eventually. It has all worked out wonderfully. We were older, they were waiting.”



Joshua in China shortly before coming home.

...to unexpected attachments...

The thirteen-year-old girl sits tucked into the corner of the sofa. She alternately bubbles with laughter, covers her face with a sofa pillow, and shoots her father venomous looks. Just like any thirteen-year-old.

Beneath her sprightly surface, however, Frenice Rollins is different from other young adolescents. While other eighth graders are flexing their independence, Frenice is learning how to feel safe, how to let others care for her, set rules for her, and make decisions in her best interest. In the 14 temporary homes in which Frenice spent the first twelve years of her life, she didn't get much practice in those areas.

When Mike and Sharon Rollins drove up the winding mountainous road in Colorado to meet the young girl they thought they might adopt, Sharon's heart was pounding violently. Mike was trying to slow down time so that he could

savor the moment that might turn out to be momentous. But for Frenice? The Rollinses were "just another family." She had been through this before. She was willing to give it another shot, though, because "I had to if I wanted to belong."

Mike and Sharon had also experienced disappointments as they waited to adopt an older child. Sharon was almost ready to believe it wasn't meant to be when Tabitha Kelly, director of Barker's *Project Wait No Longer*, assured them that there was a child for them and she would find that child. Within a few months, she called to tell them about Frenice.

Now, more than a year-and-a-half later, they are a family, legally and emotionally. They have been through adjustments, and tears, and packed suitcases. "Now we're settled," says Sharon. Not because they think all the challenges are over, but because "whatever life throws at us, we will work through it together." Mike and Sharon are committed to helping their daughter fulfill her deep longing to eventually reunite with the little sister from whom she was separated when Frenice was six years old. A smiling photograph of the then-toddler sits in a place of honor. "She is a part of our family," Mike affirms.

In the meantime, Frenice balances with impressive grace her complex past with her lively present: school, track, and cheerleading; church youth group, fashion camp, and debate camp. Mike starts pillow fights, Sharon leads shopping trips, and their daughter makes them laugh. Frenice admits that she can be a challenge, but her mother is undaunted. "I only wish I had her sooner."



Frenice celebrates her 13th birthday with a luau party.



Mike, Frenice, and Sharon Rollins on Finalization Day. Frenice is wearing an outfit she designed and made herself.

...and through the continuous journey of self-discovery

You can know that you have the best family in the world...and still feel as if you don't fit in. Jeff Eggers says that all through his time growing up, he never knew anyone who was like him—who looked like him, thought like him, or had a sense of humor quite like his. Jeff's mother Anne Eggers agrees; it wasn't her son's imagination. "Jeff was always great fun, but he was unlike any person we had ever had in our lives."

When Jeff, a project manager with a biotech firm, decided in his late twenties that he was ready to make contact with his birth family, he asked Anne to be his partner in that process. Some months later, Barker director of post adoption services Varda Makovsky gently informed Jeff that she had learned that both his birth parents were deceased. Jeff was glad that his mother was with him at that sad moment. And a few minutes later, when Anne absorbed the fact that she would never meet the woman who gave birth to Jeff, "never be able to show her that he's alive, happy, and such a good person," Jeff was the one comforting her.

That blow, fortunately, wasn't the end of the news. Jeff had a birth sister—Erin, a full biological sister two years younger than Jeff.

As the siblings sit together at Jeff's kitchen table two years later, there is no doubt that Jeff has found someone "like him." Their two bright faces mirror almost identical features; a similar combination of mischief and sarcasm sparks their interactions. Each is protective of the other, aware of what the other has lost: Jeff worries about Erin because she experienced an often difficult and disrupted childhood while he was raised in a stable and comfortable home; Erin,

meanwhile, worries that Jeff feels hurt because he was placed for adoption while she was raised knowing their parents.

Neither of them can imagine the search and reunion process without Barker's help and support. "The intermediary is crucial," Jeff says, "to make the situation as comfortable as possible. *Someone* has to know what they're doing—the searchers sure don't!"

The Eggers family and Jeff's wife Stephanie have opened their familial arms to encompass Erin and her young son. Jeff and Erin agree, all of them are basking now in "an unimaginable amount of love."

Jeff Eggers and his sister Erin.



Back row: Jeff's father, Paul Eggers, Jeff; front row: Jeff's sister Judy, mother Anne, wife Stephanie, and brother Steven.

Highlights 2009



The 2009 Annual Conference “In Our Own Voices: Adoptees and Foster Youth Speak Out” featured author and performer Alison Larkin (here autographing copies of her best-selling novel *The English American*) as well as adoptee and foster youth panelists who enthralled overflowing audiences.



Teen Weekend in April once again provided adolescents with a chance to eat, play, and share their stories with a group of peers who automatically understood each other.

The 2009 Colombia Homeland Tour participants gather on the steps of FANA, ready to begin a life-changing week of exploring the country and culture of their birth, as well as their individual adoption stories.



The October launch of Barker's new website, which gives center stage to our critical child welfare mission, was made possible with a generous challenge grant from the Jim and Carol Trawick Foundation and a matching gift from the Lois and Richard England Foundation.



The Catalogue for Philanthropy honored Barker in 2009 by naming it “one of the best small charities in the Greater Washington region.”

Barker Groups flourished all year long, including this lively group of 1st and 2nd grade adoptees, who enjoyed talking about adoption with each other and sharing with their families.

An Evening With the *English American* at Roundhouse Theatre in November brought Alison Larkin back for a return performance and a highly successful benefit.



Financial Overview



In spite of a national economy under severe stress in 2009, Barker's financial picture held relatively steady even while the agency served more birth parents, children and adoptive families.

Fees for services were up nearly 8% over 2008, reflecting increased applications from prospective families for all of our programs, including a revitalized India Program. Individual contributions were down by a slight 2%; foundation grants were down 4%, still less than the average decrease reported by the Foundation Center and Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers. We were again grateful to the Hillside Foundation for the second installment of a one-million dollar gift over five years.

With careful management of expenditures, administrative costs were kept at 8% of the overall budget, and fundraising expenses at only 3%. The bulk of Barker's 2009 monies, 89%, went to programs and services.

Just as the children, women in crisis, and families dreaming of raising a child depend on Barker, the agency relies on contributions from individuals, foundations and businesses in our community. Please recognize our deep appreciation of every gift The Barker Foundation received in 2009.

Foundation Grants

We gratefully acknowledge the following foundations for grants awarded in 2009 in response to our submitted proposals:

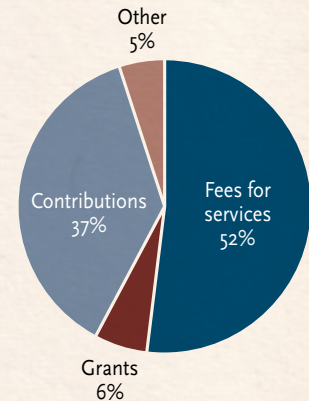
- Dorothy G. Bender Foundation
- Clark-Winchcole Foundation
- CSG Foundation, Inc.
- Lois & Richard England Family Foundation
- Freddie Mac Foundation
- Corina Higginson Trust

Consolidated Statement of Activities

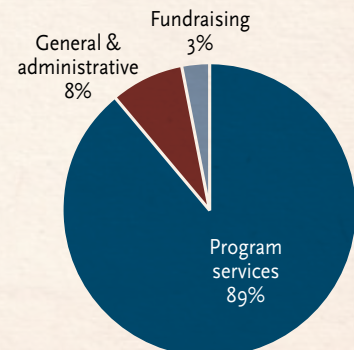
Year Ended
December 31, 2009
unaudited

	The Barker Foundation	Friends of Barker, Inc.	Total
Support and Revenue			
Fees for services	\$ 991,512		\$ 991,512
Grants	106,000		106,000
Contributions	705,547	4,445	709,992
Other	95,218		95,218
Revenue	1,898,277	4,445	1,902,722
Investment income net of fees		2,867	2,867
Unrealized investment depreciation/gain		591,519	591,519
Transfer of allowed investment income	135,631	(135,631)	-
Total Revenue	2,033,908	463,200	2,497,108
Expenses			
Program services	1,787,114		1,787,114
General & administrative	158,283	2,387	160,670
Fundraising	67,918		67,918
Total Expenses	2,013,315	2,387	2,015,702
Change in Net Assets	20,593	460,813	481,406
Net Assets—beginning of year	(112,675)	2,276,838	2,164,163
Net Assets—end of year	\$ (92,082)	\$ 2,737,651	\$ 2,645,569

UNRESTRICTED REVENUE



UNRESTRICTED EXPENSES



With gratitude to every one of our 2009 donors.

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Robin Bishop Allen

MARCH 29, 1944 – JULY 17, 2010

The Barker Foundation profoundly feels the loss of its inspirational leader, wise colleague, and cherished friend of 22 years. She was a professional of uncommon intelligence, commitment, and vision, as she served as Executive Director from 1986 to 2000 and navigated the issues of adoption both internationally and in the United States.

As we celebrate her life, we re-dedicate ourselves to the Barker mission about which she cared so deeply.

*If your plan is for one year, plant rice;
for ten years, plant trees;
for a hundred years, nurture children.*

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Photo by Carl Hyatt

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