

AUTUMN 2008

## Hillside Foundation Leads Barker Into a New Era

With an extraordinary pledge of \$1 million from The Hillside Foundation, Barker parents Allan and Shelley Holt have signaled their strong commitment to Barker's mission and to the importance of securing the agency's future, while also enabling development of critical new initiatives. The Hillside Foundation, which is the family

from traditional sources, thus matching the Hillside Foundation's gift for 2008; and, second, the Agency must recruit and hire a Director of Development in 2008.

In making their contribution, the Holts reflected: "We will be forever indebted to The Barker Foundation for helping us create our family.

Their mission of building families, directly counseling all persons involved in the process of adoption, and their ongoing support and education for all has helped bring adoption to a greater level in the Washington region. We hope our contribution and challenge will secure Barker's future and enable them to continue their mission. We thank all the staff and Board members for their constant dedication to Barker."

Energized by the Holts' pledge, Trustee Gary Rappaport and his Development Committee, are making excellent

progress towards matching the \$200,000, and have already announced the appointment of Judith Gillespie, Ph.D., as Barker's new Director of Development. Summarizing the impact of this remarkable gift, Gary observed: "In these challenging times for all adoption agencies, Shelley and Allan Holt's gift enables The Barker Foundation to hire a new development director, stabilize the present operations of Barker, and implement a plan for a stronger Barker

for the future." Gary is joined in his development efforts by Nonie Akman, John Duff, John Freeman, Maureen Golden, Robert Long, Deborah Kennedy, Linda Adams, and Marilyn Regier. Responding to the Holts' challenge, Eleanor Long and Maureen Golden also organized the Spring Benefit, which raised almost \$40,000 in matching funds.

In acknowledging the Holt family donation, Executive Director, Marilyn Regier, noted that over the years, the Holts have provided The Barker Foundation with leadership and inspiration in many ways. Allan is currently serving as a Trustee on the Friends of Barker Board which oversees and manages the endowment fund, and Shelley previously served as a Trustee of The Barker Foundation and on the auction fund-raising committees. "The Holts have given so generously of their time, expertise, and resources over the years," observed Marilyn. "Always warm and hospitable, Allan and Shelley opened their home in 2004 for a Barker 'Friendsraiser,' which energized and brought together the Barker community at a critical juncture in its history. Now once again, Allan and Shelley have stepped in at a significant moment in Barker's history and in the adoption field as a whole. Their philanthropic spirit will surely move the agency forward in our important work of building and sustaining families. We are profoundly grateful for their generosity of spirit, and we are confident that others will follow their leadership example as Barker moves into a new era of service." ■



During a recent visit and tour of Barker's Bethesda office, Allan and Shelley Holt had the opportunity to meet Board members, staff, and clients. Pictured, left to right, are: Gary Rappaport, Board of Trustees Development Chair; Shelley and Allan Holt; Marilyn Regier, Executive Director; Judith Gillespie, Director of Development.

foundation of Allan, Shelley, and their sons, intends to spread its contributions over a 5-year period, with the first \$200,000 given in calendar year 2008. Robert Long, President of the Board of Trustees, called the gift "transformative for The Barker Foundation and for the children, birth parents, and adoptive families we serve." The Holts' pledge was subject to two conditions: first, the Barker Foundation must raise an additional \$200,000 in 2008 over and above the annual donations



## FROM THE *Executive Director*

The Barker Foundation has experienced a remarkable period of growth in the last five years.

Whether judged by size of budget, placement numbers, fundraising achievements, volunteer spirit, or programmatic growth and innovations in our three major departments – domestic, international, and post-adoption – the trajectory has been one of growth and expansion of critical services. The adoption world, however, has changed dramatically in recent months. With the changing international context and implementation of Hague Convention standards, we see a significant decrease in international placements for political and economic reasons, with some countries now completely closed to international adoption. In the United States, the focus on dealing with the “national shame” of 500,000 children in foster care has assumed a new sense of urgency, and agencies once specializing in infant adoptions are using their core expertise to develop programs that both build and sustain families choosing to adopt older children.

In the middle of these and other seismic changes, no agency can remain complacent. Barker has adapted to this new reality by strengthening ties with ethical international partners and by examining opportunities for humanitarian programs in the international arena. Like other well-established agencies, we see ourselves as a child welfare organization that provides adoption services *without* ignoring other critical services that might enable some families to parent their children rather than place them for adoption. For many years this standard of practice has been employed in our domestic program, but family preservation also needs to be part of a continuum of *international* services. On the domestic front, Barker is also adapting to current needs, and our *Project Wait No Longer* is a response to the crisis of vulnerable children and youth currently in the public foster care system, longing for permanency.

Given the changing adoption landscape, a significant number of adoption agencies in the United States have closed their doors this year, unable to adapt to new realities and compelling needs. Generally it is the larger agencies with

deeper financial resources that are able to make important programmatic changes. Our Board of Trustees and our staff are studying ways to meet the challenge and together with our new Director of Development will develop a strategic plan. And in this transitional time, the extraordinary \$1 million donation of the Holt family will increase our financial stability and lead us into a new era.

Barker has been fortunate that at each critical moment in our organizational history, the agency’s mission was sustained by dedicated people willing to commit time, talent, and financial resources, because they wanted nothing to impede the precious gift of a loving home for every child. Now it is *our* time to make such a commitment. In the coming months, you will hear more about how you can contribute in a variety of ways. Ours is a remarkable organization. Let us see the current adoption environment not only as a challenge, but also as a window of opportunity!

*Marilyn Regier*

## Judith Gillespie Joins Barker as Director of Development

Judith Gillespie, Ph.D., joined the Barker staff as Director of Development on August 4, 2008, after an intensive search led by the Board of Trustees’ Development Committee, chaired by Gary Rappaport. Enabled by a challenge grant from the Hillside Foundation, her selection brings strategic vision and a proven track record of fund-raising. Reflecting on her new position, she observed that “I am delighted to be working at Barker. It is a time of enormous opportunity for an organization with such a rich history and excellent programs. I intend to work with as many people as possible to help sustain loving families in true Barker style.”



Dr. Judith Gillespie,  
Barker's new Director of  
Development

Dr. Gillespie brings to the Barker Foundation a decade of experience in non-profit management of major individual and corporate partners/donors in all phases of cultivation from prospecting through stewardship. Her portfolio includes major donors at the executive levels,

their employees, and company-wide partnerships in campaigns, events, legacy gifts, and principal gifts.

Her career has also involved a decade of experience in major campaign development serving social investment and community development causes through her work as Dean and Distinguished Fulbright Scholar at universities. This work involved strategic planning and working with executive management in teams to both plan and implement long and short strategic goals.

It involved writing and advocating dozens of proposals, use of management skills and major presentations of all types. Most of all it focused on communication of ideas and progress to a wide range of types of audiences, including major donors.

Most recently, Judith led a senior team at the Red Cross for the Annual Disaster Giving Campaign to raise endowment funding. Judith brought in over \$20 million in major gifts this past year from both individual and corporate sources. She has a bachelor’s degree from

Northwestern University and a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota in political science. She has five children and is an adoptive parent as well as a proud grandmother of 13.

Judith may be reached by email at [jgillespie@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:jgillespie@barkerfoundation.org) or by telephone at 301-664-9664. ■

### *With Sympathy*

Two Barker Foundation staff members recently lost beloved parents. We extend our deepest sympathy to Linda Adams, Director of Finance and Administration, at the loss of her dear father, David G. Adams. David died in San Francisco, California, on July 20. We also send our heartfelt sympathy to Judith Gillespie, Director of Development, at the loss of her beloved mother, Zelma Irene Newsome, of Bethesda, Maryland, on August 15. The Barker community sends our deepest sympathy also to their extended families.

# Annual Phonathon Provides Opportunity to Support Barker's Mission

For the Barker community, the Annual Phonathon is a very special aspect of the autumn season and provides the opportunity to give back to an organization that has touched so many lives. Now in its 26th year, this year's Phonathon is scheduled for Tuesday, September 23, and Wednesday, September 24, from 7–9 PM. For the third consecutive year, callers will be using the offices and telephones at the **Reznik Group, 7700 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda**, and we are extremely grateful to their firm for hosting the event.

A critical cornerstone of Barker's fundraising efforts, the Phonathon has continued to grow each year. Just over a quarter of a century ago, the first Phonathon raised \$40,000. Last year's event brought in \$389,000, including workplace giving donations. Acknowledging the strong support of volunteer callers and donors, David Sherman, Phonathon Chair, commented: "Last year's Phonathon fundraising efforts set a new record for The Barker Foundation. In today's challenging economic climate, we will need to work extra hard to repeat last year's success. Thanks to

the hard work from volunteers and the office staff, I am confident we can meet our goals for 2008."

This year's Phonathon promises to be energized by the Hillside Foundation's extraordinary \$1 million gift over 5 years. The pledge is subject to the conditions that Barker must raise an additional \$200,000 in new matching funds above and beyond the usual Phonathon and workplace giving. Through the generous donations of the community, Barker intends to meet our \$200,000 Challenge Grant.

The fundraiser is led by Judith Gillespie, Director of

Development; Gary Rappaport, Board of Trustees Development Chair; David Sherman, Phonathon Chair; and Linda Adams, Director of Finance and Administration. Training begins at 6:30 PM, and volunteers are nourished with sandwiches, beverages, and desserts from Bradley Food and Beverage, courtesy of Barker parents, Tom and Charleen Merkel. If you would like to add your voice and your spirit, please call Judith Gillespie at 301-664-9664, or reach her by email at [ygillespie@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:ygillespie@barkerfoundation.org). ■

## The Barker Foundation Achieves Hague Accreditation

On February 29, 2008, known in the adoption world as the "Uniform Notification Date," the Barker Foundation received official word from the Council on Accreditation in New York that it had granted Barker a 5-year Hague Accreditation pursuant to the Intercountry Adoption Act of 2000 (IAA). The 5-year approval was the highest approval rating possible under the accreditation process. Richard Klarberg, President and CEO of the Council on Accreditation, in a written communication, noted that "Your achievement of Hague Accreditation demonstrates your commitment to the children and families you serve both here and abroad."

The Hague Convention is an international treaty created to ensure that intercountry adoptions are in the best interests of children; the Convention provides a framework that promotes ethical adoption. In 1994 the United States signed this treaty and agreed to develop regulations and a monitoring process for adoption service providers in the U.S. that worked with agencies in countries that were signatories to the Convention.

Responding to news of Barker's approval, Robert Long, President of the Board of Trustees said, "The

Hague process was an enormous challenge requiring the creation of more than 100 documents. Barker's staff, supported by a wonderful group of volunteers, rose to the challenge. The efforts paid off: the Council on Accreditation certified Barker as Hague-compliant through 2/28/2013 – an exceptionally gratifying achievement."

Congress passed the implementing legislation (the IAA) in October 2000. The U.S. Department of State is the Central Authority for the United States and is the federal agency responsible for implementing the Convention. Agencies wishing to continue adoption services in cases involving Convention countries were required to be accredited or discontinue their adoption services in all Convention countries. Over 75 countries have joined the Hague Convention, including most of the countries where Barker's international department is active. The State Department named Council on Accreditation (COA) as the only national accreditor for U.S. agencies under the Hague Convention, and Barker's Board of Trustees and staff began organizing to seek accreditation.

During the spring and summer months of 2007, many of the staff were involved in an intensive self-

study phase, assisted by the Board members. Consultant Tracy Stanton served as the able and organized Project Coordinator, and Marilyn Regier, Tina Ji, Carolina Kenrick, Sue Hollar, Linda Adams, and Beth Kirby prepared over 1000 pages of policies and procedures, with vital support from the rest of Barker's staff. Evaluators from the Council on Accreditation conducted a two-day onsite inspection on October 25-26, 2007, and interviewed Board officers Robert Long and Jay Meriwether, as well as key staff members, and four adoptive families who had used Barker's services. The evaluators also reviewed case files, personnel files, and numerous policies and procedures addressing areas such as ethical practice, financial management, service delivery, staff training, and parent preparation.

With the Hague Convention in full force in the United States as of April 1, 2008, adopting parents have the assurance that their primary adoption service providers have undergone a rigorous approval process and are working with foreign service providers equally committed to the standards of the Hague Convention.

Rob DeLucia, President of the Board of Trustees of the Friends of Barker, upon hearing news of



In preparation for the October 2007 site visit by the evaluators, the Barker staff wrote, organized, and reviewed over 1000 pages of policies and procedures. Pictured working on the myriad of documents during the Self-Study assessment phase are (left to right) Tina Ji, Director of International Programs; Marilyn Regier, Executive Director; and Sue Hollar, Korea Program Director.

Barker's approval, expressed the sentiments of many in the Barker community: "This is wonderful, vital, and most deserved news. I know how hard the staff and the Barker Board worked to achieve this. Of course, the biggest beneficiaries of this approval are all the waiting children and parents." ■

# Colombia Homeland Tour Is Trip of a Lifetime

Participating in the Barker Annual Colombia Homeland Tour proved to be an unforgettable experience for many who made the emotional journey. Twenty-one participants – including nine teenagers adopted from Colombia as infants – spent a week in August touring the Bogotá area and visiting the orphanage from which most of them were adopted. At the end of the week, half the

The tour provided a unique opportunity for families who adopted children from Colombia and was entirely geared toward adoptive families. For parents the tour provided a chance to return to the special place where they became parents, visit the orphanage where their children spent their first weeks or months, introduce their children to the wonderful and caring staff of FANA, and expose them to the fascinating culture of their birth country. “I cannot imagine a more enriching experience for my Colombian-born son than to bring him to his birth country to explore his land and life,” observed Barker parent, Betsy Biben-Seligman.

For the teenagers, the homeland tour provided the opportunity to experience Colombian culture, visit the orphanage, and meet (together with their parents) with one of their social workers to learn about their personal histories. Cristobal Slobodzian gave voice to what many adoptees in the group felt: “Sometimes it takes a lifetime to fully understand ourselves,” he reflected. “Now, upon my return to the United States, it feels as though I am almost halfway there. Never have I so clearly understood my identity, my

heritage, and my appreciation for the adoption process and its integral part in my life. Visiting FANA and the Hogar gave me a raw and honest perspective on adoption from others, and allowed me to be even more grateful to FANA and the choice that my birth mother made by placing me for adoption. The Homeland Tour allowed me to become more informed on how I am living the life I have been so blessed to have.”

The group had a unique opportunity to visit the Hogar Marguerita d’Youville, also called “Hogar Margarita,” to meet with a group of pregnant women who were considering placing their infants for adoption. This emotional meeting, facilitated by Maria Lucia Martinez, provided teen participants with the opportunity to better understand the complexities and circumstances surrounding birth parent decisions to place a child. The meeting also provided the prospective birth mothers with a glimpse toward the future. They said it was heartening for them – especially at this critical point in their lives – to see Colombian-born children who had been placed for adoption as infants, now thriving, happy and flourishing with their adoptive families.

The group spent a wonderful day and a half visiting FANA (Fundación para la Asistencia de la Niñez Abandonada), the orphanage in which nearly all of Barker’s Colombian-born children of adoption started their lives. Participants had the chance to tour the orphanage and learn about its current work. One of the highlights of the entire trip for all – kids and adults alike – were the hours spent with the older children currently living at FANA. Tour participants played with them and shared some fun art projects with the kids, using supplies especially brought along on the trip. In addition, before the tour each family was provided with the first name, age and gender of one or more children currently living at FANA and asked to purchase a gift. Upon arrival at FANA the group presented every single child over the age

of one with a special gift. Everyone vicariously experienced the joy on the children’s faces as they happily unwrapped and saw their new toys! Tour participants also provided a special gift to the institution itself: Barker and the tour group purchased five new computers; three for FANA and two for the Hogar. On behalf of the tour group, teen participant Rocio Slobodzian made the presentation to Elena Martinez Pineda Lopez and Flor Angela Rojas.

One of the best parts about the Colombia Homeland Tour was the chance for all – parents and adopted teens alike – to visit and experience Colombia in the company of peers. The teen adoptees bonded and very quickly became close. Unique bonds were formed because the teens realized they shared so much in common and were “revisiting” the country together. Despite their range of ages from 13-20, the teens all got along very well, and the older kids made sure the younger ones felt included. Each night before and after visits to key places such as FANA and the Hogar Margarita, a Barker social worker met with the teens as a group to explore sensitive issues, process their feelings, and talk about the experience; there was a simultaneous discussion group for parents. The parents also very much enjoyed the companionship of their peers. While traveling on the bus, the parents spent significant time reminiscing about the days spent in Colombia at the time of their children’s adoptions and also marveling at the changes in Colombia during the intervening years. The group became so close-knit that they have already enjoyed their first post-tour reunion. Barker anticipates with joy a visit this fall from FANA’s Founder and President, Mercedes Rosario de Martinez, and from FANA’s Second Legal Representative, Flor Angela Rojas Ferro.

If you are interested in learning about future Colombia Homeland Tours, please contact Varda Makovsky, Director of Family and Post-Adoption Services, at [vmakovsky@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:vmakovsky@barkerfoundation.org), or at 301-664-9664, extension 201. ■

– Varda Makovsky, Director of Family & Post-Adoption Services



Parents and youth gather on the FANA steps to visit the orphanage that played such a critical role in their lives.

group continued on to the resort area of Cartagena for an optional trip extension and spent several more days touring, enjoying the beach, and experiencing the warmth of the Colombian people. Accompanying the parents and teens were three Barker staff: Meg Herman, Carolina Kenrick, and Varda Makovsky.

## Upcoming Events Sponsored by The Department of Family and Post-Adoption Services

September 25, 7:00 to 9:00 PM – **Workshop: “Telling the Adoption Story in the Early Years,”** presented by Diana W. Hopkins, M.E.

November 8, 22 and December 6 – **Kids’ Groups** for 1st–5th Graders

November 11, 18, 25 and December 2 – **New Parent Group**, 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM

November 18, 7:00 to 9:00 PM – **Workshop: “Embracing the Culture of your Child’s Birth Country,”** presented by Margie Perscheid

February 3, 10, 17, 24 – **New Parent Group** 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM

April 18–19 – **Teen Weekend** – Save the date!

**Ongoing monthly support group meetings** (no pre-registration required; new participants always welcome!):

**Parents of Adopted Teenagers** – Second Tuesday of every month

**Birth Parent Support Group** – Second Thursday of each month

Pre-registration is required for workshops and groups except as noted. Please contact Varda Makovsky, Director of Family and Post-Adoption Services at 301-664-9664, or by email at [vmakovsky@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:vmakovsky@barkerfoundation.org) for more information on any of the above workshops or support groups.

# Images from the 2008 Annual Meeting



The Annual Meeting held on May 6 drew a large crowd of Barker parents, Board, and staff.

(left to right) Beth Kirby, Foster Care Coordinator; Linda Adams, Director of Finance and Administration; and Kimberly Glass, 1st Vice-President, Barker Board of Trustees, listen with interest to reports from Barker Foundation and Friends of Barker officers.



A highlight of the Annual Meeting is always the presentation of The Richard B. Barker Award. This year's recipient was Trustee Jay Meriwether who has served Barker in many capacities, but most notably in recent years as Board Treasurer. Shown here after the awards ceremony are Jay, his wife Diane, and Board President, Robert Long. The Award plaque reads: "The Richard B. Barker Award presented to James A. Meriwether in recognition of his unfailing commitment to Barker's mission, keen attention to detail, and dedication to excellence in financial management, which have enabled Barker to thrive and grow."

Panelists Julie Natanson (left) and Suzi Bass (right) speak to Annual Meeting audience about their experiences utilizing Barker's services. Julie shared her experience as a birth mother who counseled with Barker staff and placed her son with a loving Barker family last year before entering the Navy. Suzi spoke movingly of the life-changing Barker Colombia Homeland Tour and about identity issues faced by international adoptees.



Panelists Greg and Veda Russ explain to the audience the factors that led them to adopt through Project Wait No Longer, Barker's older child adoption program.



(left to right) Trustee, Sarah Mejac; Birth Parent Support Group facilitator, Kate Coopersmith; and former Trustee, Rosalie Daelemons. Both Sarah and Rosalie have been active participants in the Barker Birth Parent Support Group and shared with the audience the tremendous contributions made by Kate during her two decades of service. After the October Birth Parent Support Group, Kate's formal staff role will shift to one of consultant to Barker. At the Annual Meeting, she gave a moving speech in which she shared reflections about her years with Barker, after which Sarah and Rosalie presented a special recognition award inscribed: "Your courage has opened doors sealed by fear and secrecy. Your grace and humor have built bonds of understanding. Your insight has illuminated countless lives. The Barker Foundation, birth parents, adoptive parents, adopted person and professionals will be forever in your debt." Thank you, Kate!



Accompanied by her father, Ebony Russ shows her delight at receiving a gift from the Barker staff.



Dr. Andrea Brenner of American University, a Barker Foundation Trustee, received the Barker Staff Appreciation Award for encouraging her students to intern or volunteer at Barker. Her award read: "To Andrea M. Brenner, whose dual commitments to education and adoption have enriched so many. While providing young people with the opportunity to contribute to the mission of adoption, she has provided Barker with resources to reach wider, work deeper, and service more children and families." Pictured from left to right are: Jen Ustynoski, an A.U. student who interned at Barker; Marilyn Regier, Executive Director; Dr. Brenner; and Robert Long, Board President.

We bid a fond farewell to our long-time Receptionist and Administrative Assistant, **Sue Culver**. For almost eight years, Sue was the “first voice and face” of Barker to our community. Her dedication was inspirational, and her contributions to special events like Annual Conference, Phonathon, and Pre-Adoption Groups are legendary. Sue and her husband, Glen, have relocated to Las Vegas, Nevada, where their two adult sons reside, and where they are expecting their first grandchild. Our best wishes always, Sue!

Now filling this vital role at our front desk is **Kathleen Porter**. Many of you have already had the pleasure of meeting her. Welcome, Kathleen!

We also say goodbye to **Anjali Singh**, Korea Program Assistant, who provided outstanding support to families in our largest international program. Anjali is now

enrolled as a graduate student in Public Administration at NYU. We send her our best wishes for a truly satisfying academic experience.

Our new Korea Program Assistant is **Kathie Lehner**. In addition to supporting the Korea program, Kathie will provide support to our growing Department of Family and Post-Adoption Services. Welcome, Kathie!

We welcome **Tabitha Kelly, LCSW-C, LICSW**, as the first full-time Director of *Project Wait No Longer: Permanency for Foster Youth*, Barker’s important initiative to take older waiting children out of the public foster care system and help them achieve permanency. Tabitha brings ten years of professional experience to the position. We also thank **Carol Huttar** for her vital contributions to the design and implementation of the program and are delighted that Carol will remain in a consultant role.

**Sonya Ali**, Barker parent and Trustee, chaired the August Anniversary events celebrating 50 years as a Washington landmark for **Ben’s Chili Bowl**. The August 21st opening Gala was emceed by Bill Cosby and included a special performance by Roberta Flack. Congratulations to Sonya, Kamal, and the entire Ali family, especially to Ben and Virginia!

Congratulations to Barker parent, **Monika M. Walters, M.D.**, named as one of the “2008 *Washingtonian* Top Pediatrics Doctors.” She was also featured on NPR and Channel 9 News’ “Living Well” section during Autism Awareness Week. Moe is well-known to many Barker families, not only for her general pediatric skills, but also for her specific knowledge of medical issues in adoption.

**Mark Simone**, Barker parent and member of the Board of Trustees for the Friends of Barker, was honored with the 2008 Greater Washington Technology Community Service

Award, which is presented to “a financial executive or technology organization that raises the bar for philanthropy, or otherwise helped improve the quality of life in the Greater Washington region.” Mark is the Chief Financial Officer for Noblis and received his award at the Hilton McLean on June 3 in the presence of nearly 800 technology executives from the region. Congratulations, Mark!

At the Annual Meeting, **John Freeman** was elected to the Friends of Barker Board of Trustees. He joins Rob DeLucia, Allan Holt, and Mark Simione on the board which manages Barker’s endowment fund.

Would you like to serve as a volunteer for Barker? Opportunities abound, including mentoring a waiting family, helping with major events (Phonathon, Conference, Picnic); and helping with mailings. Please email Beth Kirby at [bkirby@barkerfoundation.org](mailto:bkirby@barkerfoundation.org).

## Staff Exchanges Enrich Barker Connection with Social Welfare Society

The Barker Foundation was privileged to be chosen by Social Welfare Society, our partner agency in Korea, to host the first of what we plan to be many professional staff exchanges with our agency. Ms. PARK, Hei Jung and Mrs. LIM, Sun Hee, SWS social workers, were our guests during the week-long event at Barker that included briefings with our international, domestic, and post-adoption program staff. Additionally, our guests participated in meetings and visits with Barker adoptive families and foster families. These meetings provided them with the opportunity to learn about families’ first hand adoption-related experiences and to visit with some of the children they helped to place with Barker families.

One of the highlights of the week was a special presentation by Margie

Persheid, representing Korean Focus, who led a workshop for families in our Korea program awaiting placement of a child. The workshop focused on “Maintaining Your Child’s Korean Culture.” Mrs. Lim and Ms. Park were surprised and delighted to learn that Barker families place significant emphasis on preserving



Sandra Fulton, Director of Domestic Programs, and Beth Kirby, Foster Parent Coordinator, provide an overview of Barker’s work with birth parents and domestic adoptive families.

and celebrating Korean culture and plan to share this information with birth parents considering adoption in Korea. They were also very moved by the openness of many of Barker’s adoptions and the efforts of Barker staff and adoptive families to support birth parents.

Our guests also had the opportunity to do some sightseeing and shopping while visiting Washington, which they thoroughly enjoyed. Thank you to the Bergman, Buswell, Butler, Brzostowski-Shugart, Chenoweth, and Yi families for their participation in this very successful and meaningful event. A very special thank you goes out to Shelley Hutchins for her willingness to host our guests at her lovely home. We could not have held the event without her critical support. Following the event, Shelley expressed her appreciation for the



Ms. Park and Mrs. Lim visit with Caitlyn and Jae Yi at their Maryland home. Parents, Dae and Doreen Yi, prepared a delicious Korean meal for our guests.

opportunity to be involved by saying that “Mrs. Lim and Ms. Park are so friendly and open that we made an instant connection. Mrs. Lim also has a four-year-old son, so we talked a lot about our boys! Making these kinds of meaningful connections to our son August’s culture and heritage enriches our entire family.” The Barker Foundation looks forward to our staff traveling to Korea for another staff exchange in the near future. ■

– Sue Hollar, LCSW-C, LICSW, Korea Program Coordinator

# Food and Fun at the Annual Family Picnic

On a spectacular Sunday afternoon in June, the Barker Foundation's annual family picnic offered fun for all and a chance to see old friends and make new ones. The estimated 200 people who gathered at Cabin John Regional Park included Board members, Barker staff, families of all ages, as well as grandparents and close friends. Everyone enjoyed the hamburgers and hot dogs flipped by Ken Kirkpatrick, cole slaw and beans, plus an assortment of beautifully decorated desserts.

Face painting was popular, and there were many smiles on children's faces as they returned from the playground and from the train, which once again proved to be the favorite activity of the afternoon. The day was filled with much fun and laughter, with many new families joining the more seasoned ones. Watch for next year's flyer and join us for an afternoon of food and fun! ■

– Beth Kirby



Enjoying the Barker picnic are (left to right) Jelani Freeman, Winfred Harris, Betty Pyles-Harris, and Mishaela Duran.



Karen Reddick-Little and daughter Kelsye catch up with old friends and make new ones.



"Just one more, please?" Lizzie and Cate, twin daughters of Joe and Meredith Nahra, are tantalized by the beautifully decorated cupcakes.



On a picture-perfect day, Jaxon Yeagy and Ava Kuppens enjoy playing on the grounds of Cabin John Regional Park.

## Congratulations to Our New Adoptive Families

### Domestic Placements

Cindy welcomed Jamal  
 Chuck and Suzette welcomed Alexis  
 Sidney and Antoinette welcomed Kyra  
 Paul and Fabiola welcomed Michael  
 Cindy welcomed Marcus  
 Darren and Kelly welcomed Ethan  
 Jim and Kay welcomed Nathan  
 Terry and Mary welcomed Margaret

Jeremy and Ann Marie welcomed Emma  
 Ed and Tracy welcomed Mya  
 Keith and Lauren welcomed Grace  
 Greg welcomed Kyan  
 Frank and Kristi welcomed  
 Grace and Barbara Sue  
 Jon and Tricia welcomed Langston  
 Darren and Kia welcomed Zane  
 Kenneth and Ingrid welcomed Izabella

Dave and Carmelina welcomed Ava  
 Steven and Esther welcomed Sara  
 Tim and Betsy welcomed William  
 Greg and Veda welcomed Ebony  
 Rick and Kathrin welcomed Lillian  
 Bill and Lorraine welcomed Hunter  
 Philios and Theresa welcomed Theodore  
 Dwight and Charlotte welcomed Danielle

### International Placements

Kirk and Brooke welcomed Hannah-Rita  
 Christine welcomed Ava  
 Michael and Carmen welcomed Lorena  
 William and Wendy welcomed Leah  
 Allyson welcomed Alexandra  
 Peter and Cristina welcomed Charlotte  
 Charlotte and John welcomed Kaia  
 Richard and Janet welcomed Julianna  
 John and Sharon welcomed Sandra  
 Douglas and Valerie welcomed Eliora  
 Mark and Mariela welcomed Sophia

Andrew and Elizabeth welcomed  
 Paola, Michael and Daisy  
 Mark and Mary welcomed Mia  
 Jamie and Kirsten welcomed Elsy  
 Kirk and Ellen welcomed Edward  
 Shane and Heather welcomed Ethan  
 Will and Susan welcomed Daniel  
 Ari and Amy welcomed Jacob  
 Dwayne and Erika welcomed Langdon  
 Bill and Maya welcomed Yul  
 Reed and Jennyllen welcomed Ellen  
 Raymond and Cara welcomed Hope

Bernie and Sandy welcomed Mary Claire  
 Don and Leah welcomed Mollie  
 Ken and Chris welcomed Ty  
 Bradley and Jacquelyn welcomed Caleb  
 Jerry and Kristy welcomed Jungmin William  
 Alex and Lauren welcomed James  
 Robert and Holly welcomed Eric  
 Alex and Jakki welcomed Noah  
 Scott and Missy welcomed Mia  
 Bob and Eiko welcomed Sumi  
 Rob and Ellen welcomed Charlie  
 Tracy and Amy welcomed Reece

## Top 10 List of why Barker Adoptive Parents should become Barker Foster parents\*

1. You find yourself wistfully wandering through the baby aisles in department stores.
2. The smell of baby shampoo pleases you more than your teen's "Red Zone" body wash.
3. Think of the storage space you could free up with all that baby furniture out of the attic.
4. Your new car's LATCH system is going to waste.
5. A good night's sleep is over-rated. And being up for those nighttime feedings gives you exclusive control of the remote!
6. You haven't mixed a batch of formula since "lipil" was added.
7. You can't be accused of being a couch potato if you have a baby on your chest.
8. You will automatically be invited to the Barker Foster Parent Christmas Party!
9. This time around your kids are old enough to truly understand what loving foster care is all about.
10. Someone did it for your family. Now it can be your turn.

*\* Thanks to Barker adoptive/foster parents, George and Donna Wolohojian, for this "recruitment tool" offered during our campaign to add more foster parents. It worked!*

# Save the Date

**"Telling the Adoption Story in the Early Years" Workshop** –  
September 25, 7:00 PM

**Baby Basics** – Saturday, October 11, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM

**Kids' 3-Session Workshops for 1st–2nd graders & 3rd–5th graders** –  
Nov. 8, 22, Dec. 6

**New Parent Group** – Nov. 11, 18, 25, Dec. 2 – 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM

**"Embracing the Culture of Your Child's Birth Country" Workshop** –  
Nov. 18, 7:00 PM

**New Parent Group (2009)** – Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24 – 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE** – Saturday, March 21, 2009

**Teen Weekend** – April 18–19, 2009

**Parents of Teens Support Group** – Second Tuesday of each month

**Birth Parent Support Group** – Second Thursday of each month

THE  
**BARKER**  
FOUNDATION since 1945

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