

Alaska and AK Child & Family



March 30 1867

Russia signs a treaty with the United States for the Alaska Purchase.

1869

William H. Seward visits Alaska.

1884

President Chester Arthur appoints John Kinkead as the first District Governor of Alaska.

September 18, 1889

John and Mary Tuck arrive in Unalaska to open the Jesse Lee School.



September 16, 1890

John and Mary Tuck take custody of 17 orphaned and "half-orphaned" girls. The Jesse Lee Home provides them with room, board, and instruction.

October 8, 1895

Agnes Sowle arrives in Unalaska to run the Jesse Lee Home. The number of children living at the home has expanded to 29 girls and 4 boys ages 4-17.



September 22, 1898

Dr. Albert Newhall arrives in Unalaska after marrying Agnes Sowle in New York.

October 12, 1913

Benny Benson is born in Chignik Alaska to John Benson and Tatiana Sheboline.

1916

After the death of his mother, Benny Benson and his younger brother Carl are placed in the Jesse Lee Home.

August 6, 1917

Agnes "Mama" Newhall dies.



June, 1919

Flu epidemic strikes Unalaska.

February 24, 1925

President Calvin Coolidge appoints George A. Parks as Territorial Governor.

● **September 24-26, 1925**

Jesse Lee Home residents board the freighters the *Bear* and the *Haida* to sail to their new home in Seward.

● **January, 1927**

Governor Parks announces the state flag design contest.

● **May, 1927**

The Territorial Legislature officially adopts Benny Benson's flag design.



● **July 9, 1927**

The first Alaska flag is raised at the Jesse Lee Home in Seward, Alaska. Benny Benson receives a \$1,000 scholarship and a gold watch.

● **Fall 1927**

Marie Drake writes the poem, "Alaska's Flag."

● **July 4, 1928**

16-year-old Jesse Lee Home resident, Ephraim Kalmakoff wins the Mt. Marathon race, setting a new record that stands until 1957. He competes wearing his Boy Scout uniform.

● **July 4, 1929**

Ephraim Kalmakoff wins his second Mt. Marathon race.

● **July 4, 1930**

Ephraim Kalmakoff wins his third consecutive Mt. Marathon race.



● **1932**

Benny Benson graduates from Seward High School and leaves the Jesse Lee Home.

● **1938**

Composer Elinor Dusenbery sets Marie Drake's poem "Alaska's Flag" to music.

● **July, 1941**

The US Army establishes Fort Raymond in Seward. The fort occupies part of the Jesse Lee Home property, and the main buildings are painted in camouflage. The Jesse Lee Home residents are evacuated to other locations from 1942-1944.

● **June 3, 1942**

Japan raids the naval base at Dutch Harbor.

● **March, 1944**

Fort Raymond is dismantled in Seward.



1949

Census shows 100 children and 14 staff members in residence at the Jesse Lee Home in Seward.

1957

Former resident and ordained minister, Peter Gordon Gould, helps establish Alaska Methodist University (now Alaska Pacific University) in Anchorage

June 30, 1958

Congress passes the statehood bill for Alaska.

January 3, 1959

President Dwight D. Eisenhower signs the proclamation admitting Alaska to the Union.

March 27, 1964

The most powerful earthquake recorded in North America strikes South Central Alaska. The Good Friday Earthquake and resulting tsunami heavily damage the town of Seward and the buildings of the Jesse Lee Home. Jesse Lee Home residents are sent to live in other locations.



May 31, 1965

United Methodist Women break ground for a new Jesse Lee Home on 25 acres in south Anchorage.

January 21, 1966

Children move into the newly built Jesse Lee Home.



March 12, 1968

Discovery of oil at Prudhoe Bay.

1970

The United Methodist Jesse Lee Home, the Lutheran Youth Center and the American Baptist Anchorage Christian Children's Home incorporate and form Alaska Children's Services, Inc.

July 2, 1972

Benny Benson dies of a heart attack in Kodiak, Alaska.

1977

Completion of the Trans-Alaska pipeline.

July 23, 1978

Ground is broken for the Benson Recreation Center on the Jesse Lee Campus of Alaska Children's Services.



1980

Alaska Children's Services hosts a 90th anniversary celebration. 100 former residents attend the festivities.



March 24, 1989

The Exxon Valdez runs aground in Prince William Sound.

August 4-5, 1990

Alaska Children's Services marks its centennial with two days of celebration in Anchorage and Seward.

October, 1990

Alaska Children's Services becomes the first behavioral health care organization in the state to become accredited by the Joint Commission.

April 13, 1992

Senator Arliss Sturgulewski introduces a bill to the Alaska State Legislature establishing July 9 as Alaska Flag Day to "honor the creation of the design of the official flag of the state by Benny Benson and its importance as a symbol of the state."

July 9, 1992

Alaska Children's Services hosts its first Alaska Flag Day celebration.



1994

To better meet the needs of the community, Alaska Children's Services launches its community based programs.

May 24, 1998

Locals, friends, church administrators and former residents gather in Unalaska to dedicate a historic marker at the Jesse Lee Home.

July 9, 2013

Alaska Children's Services announces its new name as AK Child & Family. This new name establishes a distinct identity preventing confusion with the state Office of Children's Services and provides a clearer message about the range of services offered.

