

# NAVAJO

NEIGHBORS

Spring 2007 • Volume 1, Number 1

HOW ALCOHOLISM

## Impacts Families



MEET NAVAJO NATION'S  
FIRST LADY

Vikki  
Shirley

# WE INVITE YOU TO VISIT US



**Our doors are open for visitors - we would love to show you what God is doing here at Navajo Ministries.**

We are located at 2103 W. Main Street, Farmington, NM. If you are unable to visit us in person, check out our website at [www.NavajoMinistries.org](http://www.NavajoMinistries.org), and learn about how we provide hope and restoration to families in the Four Corners Region through programs that establish self-sufficiency, resilience and Christian values.

We invite you to visit our online Trading Post, where we offer:

- ◇ Secure online transactions
- ◇ Authentic Navajo rugs
- ◇ Prints by renowned Navajo artist, Mark Silversmith

[www.NavajoMinistries.org](http://www.NavajoMinistries.org)

## Join the **ADVENTURE**

**Experience the wonderful sport of fly fishing by entering the Youth Fly Fishing Adventure!**

Entry is free, and open to young people aged from 10-16 years old. Guides and fishing equipment will be provided.

In order to participate in the Adventure you must obtain a total of at least \$10 in per-inch sponsorship pledges for the biggest fish you catch during the tournament. Contact Bob Fitz at Navajo Ministries to pick up your sponsorship forms. Once you've obtained the required minimum sponsorship, return your completed forms to Navajo Ministries. The first 25 participants will have their names entered in a drawing for a special prize valued at over \$100. Also, for each additional \$10 per-inch of sponsorship pledges you will be awarded a \$10 gift certificate to Zia Sporting Goods.

## YOUTH **FLYFISHING** adventure

**BENEFITING  
FOUR CORNERS HOME  
FOR CHILDREN**



**JUNE 22-23 2007**



**CONTACT BOB FITZ PHONE 505.324.5220 EMAIL [FITZ@NAVAJOMINISTRIES.ORG](mailto:FITZ@NAVAJOMINISTRIES.ORG)**



# CONTENTS

## NAVAJO NEIGHBORS

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### PUBLISHER

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### ABOUT NAVAJO MINISTRIES

Navajo Ministries was established in 1953 for the purpose of caring for dependent children, regardless of race, religion or national origin, and for printing and distributing Navajo tracts and hymnals.

The ministry has expanded over the years to include: a non-commercial Christian radio station, KNMI Vertical Radio 88.9FM; Counseling Center; Moms Too Program, providing a home for single moms and their children; Cross-Cultural Ministry, providing spiritual, emotional and material encouragement to those living in Navajoland.

When a donor expresses a preference as to the use of donated funds, Navajo Ministries will make every effort to honor their request and in most cases this is done in exact compliance with the donor's wishes. However, the Board of Directors, in ensuring that Navajo Ministries carries out its exempt purposes required by law and effectively uses available funds, accepts the responsibility of applying funds in accordance with objectives of the ministry.

Views and opinions expressed in Navajo Neighbors by those interviewed are not necessarily those of Navajo Ministries.

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## 4 NEWS AND VIEWS

## 5 FROM THE PRESIDENT

Back in **Circulation**: Welcome back to Navajo Neighbors.

## 6 THE LAST KISS GOODBYE

Meet Vikki Shirley, First Lady of the Navajo Nation.

## 8 NAVAJO CULTURE

**Wisdom** of the Elders: Nina Benally honors her father.

## 9 DISCOVERING NAVAJOLAND

A Place of **Serenity**: The importance of Canyon de Chelly.

## 10 FOUR CORNERS HOME FOR CHILDREN

No Humor in the **Real Home Alone**: Children share their stories about the effect of alcohol abuse within their families.

## 11 ON-SITE SCHOOL

A Teacher's **Joy and Heartache**: Meet the new teacher, Diane Hebbard.

## 12 COUNSELING CENTER

Providing **Hope to the Hurting**: Children in the alcoholic home.

## 13 CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY

A Unique **Country and Culture**: Lisa Holliday shares about her Australian childhood.

## 14 VERTICAL RADIO

Pointing Listeners in the **Right Direction**

## 15 LIVING MEMORIALS



## Christmas Connections

This past Christmas, Navajo Ministries connected gifts provided by donors nationwide to over 250 needy Navajo families living in remote areas of the reservation. Selected Navajo ministry leaders picked up the blankets, food, Bibles, toys, etc. and distributed to families in their areas of the reservation. Many thanks to all who contributed to this meaningful outreach. ◇



## Navajo Nativity

On December 23rd, Navajo Ministries presented the 22nd annual Live Nativity. Around 250 carloads of people drove through the grounds in those two hours to see the children portray the true meaning of Christmas. Some of the new children in our homes had no idea what a "Nativity" was. Now they can say they "experienced" it. ◇



## Promise Keepers

On January 27th the Four Corners Area was honored to have the President of Promise Keepers, Dr. Tom Fortson, come to Farmington to provide the key-note message for an evening Men's Rally. Nearly 800 men attended this exciting event that brought men from diverse cultures together to enjoy the music, messages and fellowship. Pastor Robert Tso of Victory Life Center in Shiprock organized this great event that included greetings from Joe Shirley, Jr., President of the Navajo Nation. He was re-elected in their fall elections to a second term as President of one of the largest Native American tribes in the country. ◇



*Robert Tso (above left) prepares to lead the men in prayer for Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley and Promise Keepers' President, Tom Fortson. Both men are wearing special vests that were presented to them earlier.*



## Hope on a Rope

On January 13th our children were invited by the Health and Human Performance Center at San Juan College to spend a couple of hours using their indoor climbing wall. This experience was a great physical and mental challenge for both the children and houseparents. For some, this was the first time to trust their lives to the hands of their "anchor" person holding the rope nearly 30 feet below. ◇

## Fishing for Fun and Funds

Last summer, the world class waters of the San Juan River just east of Farmington became a gathering place for young people and adults who arrived for both

fun and fund-raising for the Four Corners Home for Children. This year the Youth Fly Fishing Adventure will be held June 23rd and the Bi-Fly Tournament, August 24th-25th. For more information contact Bob Fitz at 888-325-0255 or [Fitz@NavajoMinistries.org](mailto:Fitz@NavajoMinistries.org). ◇

## Navajoland Tour

Last September sixteen guests arrived in Farmington for the annual Navajoland Tour. Joe and Gerri Begay along with our new Director of Communications, Amy Dickson, provided valuable insight into the Navajo culture as they accompanied the tour as hosts. This year's tour will be held September 16th-22nd. See back cover ad for more information. ◇



# Back in Circulation

**I hope you enjoy our “new and improved” Navajo Neighbors publication, which will be published three times a year.**

When we changed our name from Navajo Missions to Navajo Ministries in January of 2006, we soon realized there was a lot more involved than putting up a new sign at the front of our property. One of the changes you have already noticed is that our regular newsletter mailings have taken on a new look and often feature information about the Navajo culture along with opportunities to participate in our various ministries.

Thanks to advancements in printing technology, we have upgraded this magazine with better paper, and added color, without a substantial cost increase. This enables us to better present to you the colorful beauty that is so prevalent here in Navajoland.

In addition to regular features that will highlight a particular area of ministry, we will bring you stories from our Navajo neighbors. Sometimes you will hear from Navajo government leaders. Other times you may read the story of how God has impacted the life of a Navajo Christian. It is our desire to introduce you to the Diné, the Navajo people, whose reservation is the largest in the United States.

In this first revised edition we are delighted to introduce you to Vikki Shirley, First Lady of the Navajo Nation. I interviewed her last December on my radio show, Four Corners Spotlight, which is broadcast weekday mornings at 9:30am on Vertical Radio. She spoke passionately about her support for the organization, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD).

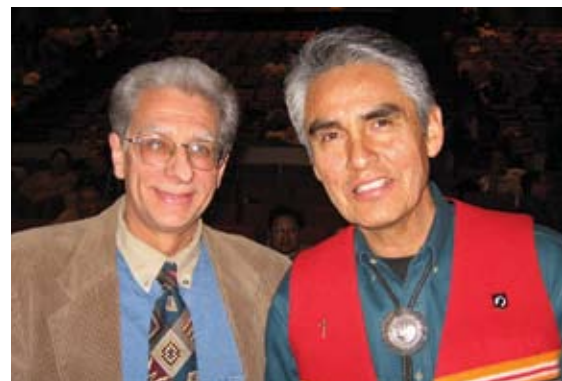
Mrs Shirley was quite impressed with the many outreaches provided through Navajo Ministries, and especially enjoyed visiting

with the children as she toured the school and homes. Her husband, Joe Shirley, Jr., was re-elected last November to a second consecutive term as President of the Navajo Nation. This is the first time in 28 years that an existing leader of the Navajo Nation was re-elected.

It was my pleasure to get to meet President Joe Shirley at the recent Promise Keepers Rally in Farmington. Being the MC for the evening I was able to spend a little time with him prior to his speech. He talked about his decision to not make promises in his position that he may not be able to keep. But, he said, “I do promise to do the best job I can in leading the Navajo Nation.” It was great to see over two dozen pastors come on stage that evening and gather in prayer around both President Shirley and President Fortson of Promise Keepers.

I encourage you to read through each page of this magazine. Let me know what you think of our new look and what you would like to see us feature in upcoming issues.

If you desire extra copies to pass on to friends or distribute at your church, please contact us by email at



*The two presidents: Jim Baker and Navajo Nation President, Joe Shirley Jr.*

**NMI@NavajoMinistries.org** or call **1.888.325.0255**. It is my prayer that the articles in this issue will both bless and inspire you.

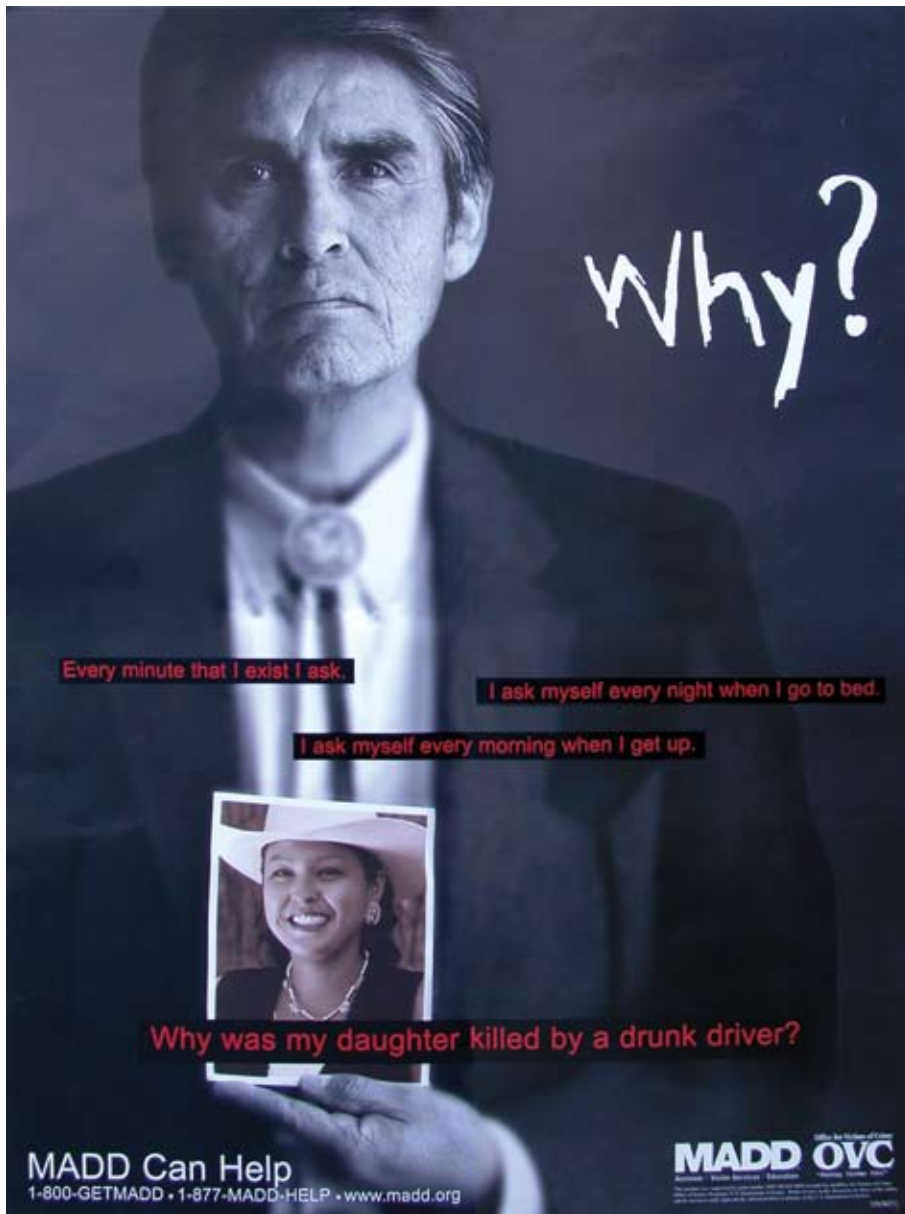
Joyfully in Jesus,

JAMES D. BAKER  
PRESIDENT



*First Lady, Vikki Shirley, poses for a picture while touring Navajo Ministries.*

# The Last Kiss Goodbye



**When Tona kissed her father goodbye that Thanksgiving weekend in 2001, her father had no idea it would be the last kiss he would ever receive from his daughter.**

A short time later, Tona's parents, Joe and Vikki Shirley, received the call that would impact them forever. At the time of Tona's death, Joe Shirley, Jr., was in the midst of a successful run for the presidency of the Navajo Nation.

In a radio interview with Jim Baker, First

Lady Vikki Shirley somberly recounted the events of that tragic day.

"It was Thanksgiving weekend, November 24, 2001, when our late daughter was on her way to Tuba City, AZ, with her family. They did not make it. About fifty miles outside of Tuba City they were hit by a drunk driver head on. We received the call about noon... telling us that we needed to get to the hospital in Tuba City right away, that our daughter was in critical condition. She passed on before we could make it there to see her."

Tona and Denny, her husband of seven days, and four of their six children were driving to her in-laws to celebrate the holiday. Tona pulled off the road and parked, to avoid an oncoming drunk driver. However, the drunk still collided with their vehicle, killing Tona and injuring the rest of the family.

"At Christmas time, our grandson always tells us, 'I would rather have my mother back than get Christmas presents.'"

## **Mothers Against Drink Driving**

Following their loss, the Shirleys learned to cope with the tragedy by becoming volunteers for Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and starting the Navajo Nation's first MADD group in 2003. Vikki Shirley now works as the Navajo Nation Chapter Coordinator for MADD, and travels all over the reservation and the Four Corners educating people about the dangers of drinking and driving.

Founded in 1980, MADD boasts more than two million members nationwide. MADD's mission is to stop drunk driving, support the victims of this violent crime and prevent underage drinking. Native Americans face a greater risk of dying in alcohol-related crashes than any other group in the country. About 75% of the highway fatalities are alcohol-related among Native Americans compared with only 49% of deaths for non-Natives, according to MADD statistics. In a recent three-year period, the Navajo authorities blamed alcohol for 33 traffic fatalities and the injuries of 396 people.

## **Close to The Heart**

Mrs Shirley shared about another matter that is close to their hearts... trying to prevent the loss of Navajo language and culture amongst the younger generations.

"President Shirley holds this issue really close to his heart. He believes that we need to retain our language and our culture as much as we can. The Navajo



Nation is working on having Navajo language and culture components included in the school curriculum, so that we will be able to retain our language and stories.

“My children (one is in second grade, one is in third grade and one is in Junior High) go to a school in Fort Defiance called Diné Ba Altó. They teach 100% Navajo there - the curriculum is in Navajo. My third grade son can write stories, and sings songs, all in Navajo. I think it’s an exemplary school. When you visit the school they tell you that you can’t speak any English language there, you have to switch totally into Navajo. It’s a totally different atmosphere. Even the posters on the walls are all in Navajo.”

Of the 6,000 teachers and administrators in the schools on or near the Navajo reservation, approximately 85 percent are non-Native American.

“There are a lot more Native American teachers than there used to be. We’re trying to reinforce what the past leadership, under Dr. Peterson Zah, put into place. Thanks to the Navajo Teacher Education Program more and more Navajos are graduating from colleges and universities, and becoming teachers.”

The Navajo Teacher Education Initiative was begun in 1991 by Zah, then president of the Navajo Nation, to improve the quality of Navajo education through the recruitment and training of prospective Navajo educators.

Zah and other Navajo leaders were deeply concerned about the high dropout rate of Navajo students, which soars above 60 percent in many areas, and the persistence of such problems as alcoholism and drug abuse among young people. They were convinced that qualified, bilingual Navajo teachers could make a difference in the lives of these children.

Navajo tribal wisdom teaches the

interrelationship and interdependence of all things and the importance of achieving hozho, or balance and harmony in life. The aim of Navajo education is to give children the tools they need to succeed on or off the reservation.

### Learning by Distance

For those Navajos who live off the reservation, Mrs Shirley suggested ways they can retain their language, and pass it onto their children.

*Mrs Shirley visits with students from Navajo Ministries' on-site school.*

“They should try to come home as much as they can, and visit their parents, grandparents, and elders. For those who live too far away to do that, there are Navajo language and culture courses that they can take online. Otherwise the best thing they can do is to talk to their children, friends and relatives in Navajo as much as they can.” ◇



# Wisdom of the Elders

**“My children, life is like a river – clean, clear and inviting. But it is also deep, and the current is swift. As you are crossing this river, remember to hang on to each other, because if you ever let go of each other, the strong current will sweep you away to death.**

“So hang on to each other through love, through talking, listening, understanding and forgiveness. When someone falls behind, help them. If someone takes a wrong path, turn them back to the right path. If someone is ill, stop and help and pray. Don’t forget each other. Take care of each other because the river is deep and wide, and the current is swift. Don’t let go of each other... make sure you all reach the other bank safely.”

This was my father’s last teaching to us, just weeks before his death in November 1979. My father, Daniel Benally, was a generous man, with

wisdom, compassion and understanding. He loved people, and was willing to share his knowledge and material goods with all who were in need. He taught us that life is about respecting and loving one another, so that peace, beauty, harmony and trust can surround you like a mother’s arms. That is why a female hogan is built interwoven like a mother’s fingers and cupped together like folded hands protecting a child.

My father told us that when he was young, he would sit with the elders and listen to their wisdom and teachings. They would stay up to the early hours of the morning, talking about what is most important in life. When a child is born they know nothing about life, so children need to be taught how to live well.

One of the most important things to learn was self-discipline. An undisciplined person will never learn self-respect, or how to respect others. They will move through life like a blind person.

Each man was to teach his sons about how to live - that is why they have the male hogan.

Young men learned endurance, hunting skills, and how to tend livestock.

Mothers likewise were to teach and discipline their daughters in the female hogan. Girls learned weaving, basket-making, pottery, cooking, and how to butcher sheep.

Neighbors would visit with each other and help provide each other with the necessities of life. The women would work together gathering berries and herbs, spinning wool and weaving. Men would go hunting together, and provide meat for their families. At harvest time there was lots of fun and laughter.

The elders used to teach us that if we ever lost our way of life, our language and spirituality, chaos would come and destroy us. We are now facing that chaos. Many of our elders are dying of loneliness in nursing homes... and that wisdom is dying along with them.

It’s not just our elders who are dying... too many of our people are living without purpose and keep falling into destruction. Where has our children’s joy and laughter gone? Our children do not know who they are anymore... we do not teach them to be proud of being Navajo.

I believe that by working together once again, we can bring order to the chaos. I believe that together we can overcome... by embracing respect and discipline so that peace, beauty, harmony and trust can surround us like a mother’s arms. ◆

*Nina Benally was born to the Táchii ’nii (Red Running into Water) clan, and her father, Daniel Benally Sr., was born to the Ute tribe, and for the ’Áshííhi (Salt) clan. Nina serves as a supervisor with the Moms Too Program.*

**The Navajo Nation**, Dinétah (land of the Navajo), is situated in three states; Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. The surrounding beauty of the Navajo Nation extends to 27,000 square miles. The total population of the Navajo people is nearly 300,000, of which almost 180,000 reside within the Navajo Nation.

*Nina’s parents: Daniel Benally Sr. and Louise D. Benally.*



# A Place of Serenity

**Located near the center of the Navajo Nation just outside of Chinle, AZ, is found a series of winding passages etched into the Defiance Plateau. Canyon de Chelly (pronounced d'SHAY) is actually a series of canyons which includes Canyon del Muerto.**

Entering the mouth of the canyon from the west, the rock walls are only 30 feet high. As the canyon progresses to the east, the walls begin to rise higher and higher until they reach over 1000 feet above the canyon floor. These dramatic cliffs rise straight up casting deep shadows onto the streams and cottonwoods that meander through the homeland of Navajo families who have raised their children and crops there for generations.

Joe Begay and his wife Gerri have been on staff with Navajo Ministries for over 20 years. Each fall they serve as co-hosts on our annual week-long Navajoland Tour, and provide a wealth of information and insight to the guests as together they explore Navajo country. Canyon de Chelly is one of the attractions of the tour.

Joe Begay was born in Canyon de Chelly. From the first lookout point on the South Rim he points to a small farm 400 feet below, to the red roof of an old hogan partially hidden in the trees - "That's where I was born!" Then he shares some childhood stories with the tour guests, about herding sheep in the canyon, and what it was like to live in the traditional octagon shaped home called a hogan.



The Navajo people treasured this place of serenity, beauty and provision: the canyon was a fertile area to grow crops, and was famous for its peach tree orchards.

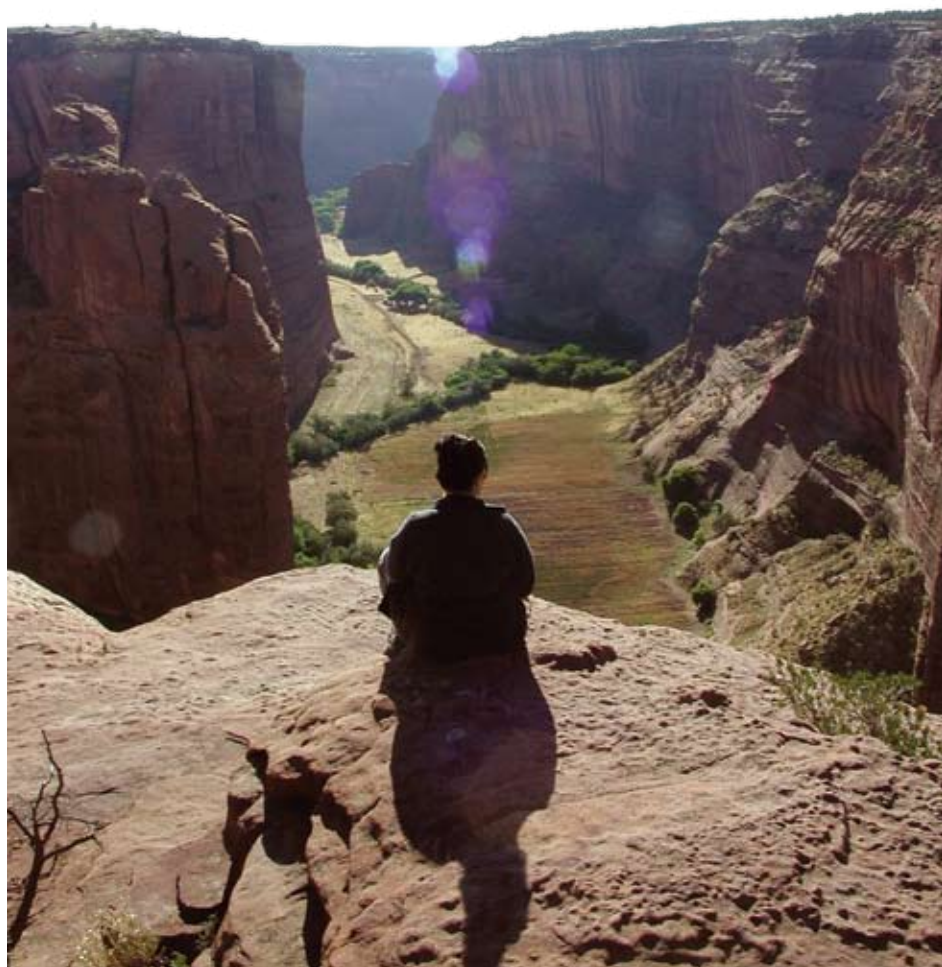
However, in 1864 Colonel Kit Carson and his troops began a brutal campaign against the Navajo that led to the tragic Long Walk. Carson destroyed the cornfields, homes, and peach orchards in the beautiful, steep-walled canyon. Left without food or shelter, the Navajos surrendered, and were forced from their homeland and made to walk over 300 miles to Fort Sumner, New Mexico. When the survivors were allowed to return four years later, they once again embraced Canyon de Chelly as their home.

The Canyon de Chelly National Monument was established in 1931 to

preserve the archeological ruins within these canyons. While the National Park Service administers the monument, these sandstone rock canyons belong to the Navajo people. There are still families living in this tranquil landscape, although the mode of transportation to their homes has changed from horseback to four-wheel drive pick-up trucks.

Visitors from across the nation are drawn to Navajoland with its canyons, mesas, deserts and valleys. The Navajo still carry on many of the traditions that have been part of their rich cultural history. You are invited to come experience Navajoland for yourself on our next Navajoland Tour. As a recent tour guest shared, "We've been on many tours around the world, but this one was the best of all!" ◇

*This year's tour will be held September 16-22, 2007. Sign up now for the Earlybird Special - see back page.*



# No Humor in the Real Home Alone

During one of our Christmas visits to the reservation a few years ago, I was shocked to find two small children, aged two and four, home alone.

Their situation was not humorous, as portrayed in the popular movie *"Home Alone."* Their one-room home was cold and bare of the necessities of life. The small wood-burning stove in the center of the room had grown cold from lack of wood. These children were bare-footed, and the two-year-old wearing only a T-shirt and diaper.

The children had not seen their mother in a couple of days. Her addiction to alcohol had lured her from her family responsibilities, which caused her to forget her little ones at home and allowed her to momentarily escape from the guilt of neglecting her children.

Over the years, many children from this type of situation have found warmth, comfort and safety within our homes at Four Corners Home for Children. To watch them play on the playground, ride a bike or skateboard, or interact with the animals at the farm, no one would guess the pain and stress they experienced because of their parents' alcohol abuse.

When my dad drinks, he falls down on me. He slaps my mom and me in the face. He threw my big sister against the door. When my dad drinks it makes me sad.

Girl, age 7.



We catch a glimpse of their heartache, though, when they feel safe enough to tell some of their own story:

"My dad drinks too much. The police came and took my dad away. He is in jail now. Now my family doesn't have a home to live in." Boy, age 7.

"My dad and uncle go out drinking. When they get home, my mom yells at them, then my dad hits my mom. Then he hits my brother. Then my dad calls his friends to come over and they drink more. I am sad when my dad drinks." Boy, age 9.

"My dad went to jail a long time ago for drinking and driving. We missed our dad. When he got out of jail we were happy." Girl, age 10.

Depending upon God's strength and wisdom, our childcare staff offers hope and healing to these young lives. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"

As the parents of these little ones make better choices for themselves, God will turn their sorrows into joy. In the meantime, thanks to the faithful support of our friends, we will keep our doors open to welcome these youngsters into our homes until things improve with their natural families. ◇

Kay Baker is the Director of Childcare Administration. Kay and her husband Jim were houseparents from 1975-1987. During that time they had 35 children come through their home. Many of them still keep contact with them today.



Girl, age 9.



Four Corners Home for Children provides care to children through two Extended-Care Homes, one Crisis Home and two Moms Too Homes for single moms and their children. These homes are supervised by loving houseparents, trained to meet the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the children.



# A Teacher's Joy and Heartbreak

**My job as the new teacher at Navajo Ministries school is rewarding, challenging and sometimes heart breaking.**

The Lord has given me the opportunity to follow in my grandmother's footsteps who was a teacher in a "one room school house" in the Oklahoma Territory. Since the beginning of this year we have had twenty some children come through our doors. Each child comes with their own heartaches and fragile personalities from past home experiences along with academic tribulations. Trying to meet each child's needs as well as preparing for the different grade level curriculum keeps me very busy.

When I am not working on curriculum or doing lesson plans, I am home spending time breaking mules and colts. These days I do the ground work only, as I am way too old to climb on their backs anymore. The ground was getting too hard for me to land on, and my body was taking a lot

longer time in healing. I rode my mule, Frankie, for 19 years in the Colorado mountains before she decided to leave me for a better place with hopefully lots of green fields to play in. Now I spend more time with my precious grandbabies, who are one of my biggest joys in life.

As I write this, the tears are streaming down my face, my heart is throbbing and my stomach is aching. A couple of my students have just been moved from Navajo Ministries. Sure, I knew this job as a teacher would be tough watching the children come and go, but sometimes it really gets tougher than I want to deal with. We have seen so much growth in these special little ones over the last three months... it's hard to entrust someone else with their care and growth.

One precious little girl came to the school, not speaking, only pointing at what she wanted. Now she knows her letters, colors, makes complete sentences and carries on a conversation with us.

One young man came with so much anger built up inside that he wouldn't smile, or participate. He would just stare at you with a look that could kill. He is now laughing, helping and learning. He shows up at school every morning with the biggest smile lighting up his face.

When I listen to the children pray out loud, sharing what God has done for them and that God loves them, it lets me know that all the staff at Navajo Ministries have planted their own little seeds. The rest is in God's hands to watch over them and protect them wherever they may go. Saying goodbye to these precious children, no matter how long or short their stay is with us, hurts my heart. However, I have to trust that having done all I could to plant seeds, that God will provide someone else to nurture them.

"[We are] servants who waited on you as you gradually learned to entrust your lives to our mutual Master ... I planted the seed, Apollos watered the plants, but God made you grow." I Corinthians 3:5-6. ◇

*Diane Hebbard taught at Ojo Elementary School, on the Navajo Nation, for 10 years prior to coming to Navajo Ministries in 2006. She taught all grades from second to sixth and became very familiar with the Navajo culture.*



In cooperation with Farmington Municipal Schools, Navajo Ministries operates a school for children in kindergarten through fifth grades. This unique on-site school, with one teacher and a teacher-aide, has proven to be of great benefit to the children who are residents at Four Corners Home for Children.

# Providing Hope to the Hurting

**Are children really affected very much when their parents drink to excess? What kinds of problems do children from alcoholic homes have? What is the mental health community doing to help children from alcoholic homes? These are a few of the questions that individuals or the Christian community ask on a regular basis.**

Yes, children are affected by their parents' drinking. The alcoholic home is very chaotic with few boundaries in place. In other words children never know what kind of behavior to expect from their parents from one day to the next. Parents are often too focused on their addiction to provide appropriate boundaries for their children's behavior, school attendance, responsibilities, etc.

Children from alcoholic homes often have behavioral problems in school and with their peer group. They often suffer with low self esteem. They are often insecure and fearful of the future.

They may be neglected with lack of proper food, clothing or shelter.

The mental health community is beginning to realize that in order for these children to have a better chance of recovering, we need to meet their needs at a younger age and provide a safe and encouraging environment for them. This need can hopefully be met by extended family members. When that is not possible, foster homes and group homes help to provide the necessary safety and structure that these children need to combat the effects of alcoholic parents.

At Navajo Ministries we do just that. Many children have come to us throughout the years from just this type of environment. Many children have lived here for years because there was no extended family available to care for them.

Some of our former foster children have graduated and gone on to better their own lives with higher education and



*Bill and Linda Eubank in the Play Therapy Room, with two of their grandchildren, Jacob and Jordan.*

more stable marital situations. They have become a more caring parent to their own children and have become an integral part of the working community. Many of them have returned to us as adults, to thank us for giving them a safe place to live and be cared for in a family setting. ◇

*Bill and Linda Eubank have a blended family of three grown children, and have three grandchildren. They live on a farm, and have a menagerie of dogs, cats, chickens and horses. They enjoy the outdoors, and horses are their main form of relaxation and recreation.*

*Bill and Linda lead camping trips for children in residence at Navajo Ministries. This beautiful location is near Pagosa Springs in nearby Colorado.*



**The Counseling Center** is located on-site at Navajo Ministries. The Eubanks are licensed, professional clinical counselors (LPCC). Bill works primarily with men's issues, EMDR therapy and marriage counseling. Linda works primarily with women's and children's issues. For more information, please call 505-327-0264.



# A Unique Country and Culture

**Forget Crocodile Dundee. Australia's most legendary crocodile hunter is a woman. In 1958, Krystina Pawloski shot an 8.63 metre (28 ft, 4 in) crocodile in the Gulf of Carpentaria. It is believed to be the biggest crocodile ever measured.**

Australia has some of the most violent and noxious animals in the world, like man-eating sharks, crocodiles, venomous snakes and the most poisonous spiders on earth. The 10 most venomous snakes in the world are found in Australia. Wow! I'm so glad that I didn't know these statistics when I lived in Australia!

In 2004 I moved to the USA from the beautiful island nation of New Zealand, to work for Navajo Ministries (I'd moved from Australia to New Zealand in 1991). Navajoland's stark desert landscape was a shock to my system, especially after having lived near the sea most of my life. Although two-thirds of Australia is desert, most Australians live along the coastline.

I grew up in a small country community called Mt. Chalmers. It had been a thriving goldmining town until the gold ran out. When the people left they took most of the buildings with them!

We had no electricity or indoor plumbing. My mother cooked on a wood-burning stove and we used kerosene lanterns and candles for light. Our water supply was from the rain, stored in outdoor tanks.

My uncle and aunt visited us shortly after we moved in, and were given a bed on the enclosed verandah. It's a good thing they looked up before climbing into bed... because there was a snake curled in the rafters above them! My uncle spread a protective cover on the bed, then took aim with his gun and splatted that snake.

My mother was a city girl, raised in



*Lisa's mother poses next to the life-size replica of the biggest crocodile, in Normanton, North Queensland.*

Sydney, however she took to country living like a duck to water. With five children under the age of seven, and a husband often out of work, finances were tight. So my mother learned how to snare and butcher wallabies (small kangaroos) to feed the family.

Australia has a very unique culture, which is reflected in its language. Aussie English is a rich dialect, and truly a language of the heart. The following excerpt from the Aussie Bible, published by the Bible Society, retells the fall of mankind using Australian vernacular

"There was this sheila who came across a snake-in-the-grass with all the cunning of a con man. The snake asked her why she didn't just grab lunch off the tree in her garden. God, she said, had told her she'd be dead meat if her fruit salad came from that tree, but the snake told her she wouldn't die. So she took a good squiz and then a bite and passed the fruit on to her bloke. Right then and there, they'd realized what they'd done and felt starters."

Now Navajo people are heading Down Under, aiming to impact Australia and New Zealand for Christ, through the open door of culture. This spring I will lead the first outreach team of three Navajo women... that adventure will be told in the next issue of Navajo Neighbors. ◇

*Lisa Holliday is Program Coordinator for Cross-Cultural Ministry. She is trained as a Graphic Artist and as an Outdoor Recreation Instructor. Lisa also has received training in Youthwork and Cultural Anthropology.*

**Cross- Cultural Ministry** provides spiritual, emotional and material encouragement to those living in Navajoland through the Christmas Connection and Vacation Bible Schools. They also help support seven other ministries in Navajoland, which provide practical support and hope to those who are discouraged.

# Pointing Listeners in the **Right Direction**

**Vertical Radio has some of the most faithful, talented and dedicated staff members you will find anywhere.**

Fourteen months ago, when I became manager of Vertical Radio, we only had four people on staff. Needless to say, the four of us wore many hats in order to keep Vertical Radio on the air. It has been an amazing adventure to watch as God has increased our staff to twelve.

Vertical Radio is all about **“keeping you pointed in the right direction.”** It is not our radio station, but God’s. Our desire is to play great Christian music and reach our community for Christ. Above all, we desire to please Him and be obedient to His Word.

**Darren Nez** is the Production Director and Program Coordinator:

*“Working at, and more importantly, ministering at **Vertical Radio**, has been a tremendous blessing to me spiritually. It is challenging and I am continually learning. I love it. The music is great, but the ministry opportunities here are more amazing.*

*“Our 24 hour, live streaming broadcast has also enabled us to minister to a wide range of people from around the country and around the world. This wouldn’t be possible if it weren’t for the continued support of our listeners.”*

**Annette Bauman** is Co-Host of The Morning Show:

*“Kenny and I try to maintain a balance between lighthearted fun and Godly, encouraging content. It isn’t that our ‘fun’ isn’t Godly, but we don’t want the humor to take over The Morning Show!*


*“I talked recently with a listener who is in a difficult place in her life and she candidly told me that it takes all her effort just to face each new day. However, she shared with me that, ‘Your humor just makes me laugh out loud. The music you play is fabulous and stirs my heart. The Vertical Radio Morning Show is the reason I get out of bed in the mornings.’*

*“That is why we broadcast. As we play great Christian music and enjoy life*

*between the songs, God enables listeners like her to enjoy it along with us, even in the midst of her adversity.”*

**Kenny Montano** co-hosts The Morning Show with Annette:

*“In the middle of a recent Morning Show, I received an unexpected phone call. The young man was calling Vertical Radio from **Iraq!** I was speechless. He told me that he had received one of the Christmas packages that Vertical Radio listeners helped to put together with the Blue Star Mothers. We were honored to have him call us! He expressed his heartfelt thanks for the ‘goodies’ he had received. This story shows the impact that Vertical Radio and its listeners are having for the Kingdom and why I am so proud to serve God here at the station.”*

KNMI Vertical Radio is a non-commercial, community supported station. Thank you for helping us continue to proclaim the name of Christ in the Four Corners, and to the four corners of the world! 

**Wilann Thomas** is General Manager of Vertical Radio. Prior to 1996, Wilann was involved in full-time missionary work, and participated in mission trips to Mississippi, China, Korea, Israel and Mexico.



**KNMI Vertical Radio** offers positive and relevant programming for the whole family! You can find Vertical Radio on the dial at 88.9 FM in Farmington, 90.5 FM in Durango, 90.9 FM in Pagosa Springs, and 100.9 FM in Cortez. Listeners can also tune in by logging onto our website [www.VerticalRadio.org](http://www.VerticalRadio.org).



# Providing Hope through a Living Memorial

Life is full of memories. Remember that first day of school? The first time you rode a bike without training wheels? How about your 16th birthday party? Remember the day you passed the test and got your first driver's license?

Those who are married will remember that special wedding day, complete with the shower of rice. If you're a person of faith you will treasure the day you committed your life to Christ.

Life is precious. Our time on this earth is limited. God is faithful, however, in bringing comfort and peace to those who experience the loss of their loved ones. One of the ways to remember the life of your loved one is through our **Living Memorials** Program.

Through your **Living Memorial** gift you can designate your gift in memory of your departed loved one. Or you may wish to honor a special living friend who has meant much to your life.

Your **Living Memorial** gift will provide hope and stability to Navajo children who reside in our homes here at Navajo Ministries. As you remember your loved ones in this tangible way you are also providing a safe home for boys and girls who have been abused or neglected.

A beautiful card of remembrance will be sent to the family of the one you are memorializing or honoring. No amounts will be mentioned. **Please use the attached envelope to designate your Memorial gift, along with the names of those to be notified.** All gifts are tax deductible and will be receipted. ◇



Below is a partial listing of those who have contributed to Living Memorials in recent months.

## FROM

Audrey Wagner  
Julie D Kurtz  
Margaret Gage  
William J Grimm  
Richard and Mary Silar  
John and Viola DeWees  
Mary Beth Hurley  
John and Linda Gutierrez  
Beth Hurley  
Doris J Dopp  
Ralph Folcarelli  
Ruth Duing  
Pamela Harper  
Ron and Linda Roy  
Carol Adams West  
Carol Adams West  
Richard and Donna Maser  
Geraldine Longenecker  
Kyla Schneyder  
Bonnie Hemperly  
C Allan Rineer  
William Longenecker

## IN MEMORY OF

Charles E Gerdes  
Breann Chavez  
Ike and Mary Lou Gage  
Breann Chavez  
Arline Muehling  
La Vonge Foss  
Jeanne Weekly  
Breann Chavez  
Bruce Wallace  
Joe Dopp  
Frances Zarron  
Breann Chavez  
Breann Chavez  
Andrew (Andy) Roy  
Bill Schwab  
Anna Mae Sutton  
Breann Chavez  
Arline Muehling  
Joseph Conover  
Arline Muehling  
Arline Muehling  
Arline Muehling

## FROM

Beth Wilson  
Beth Wilson  
Beth Wilson  
Peace Makers Sun. Sch. Class  
Alice Sloan  
Alice Sloan  
Alice Sloan  
Alice Sloan  
Jack and Wanda Tubb  
Dawn Dodd  
Douglas and Anna McCoy  
Robert and Lola Powell

## IN HONOR OF

Mr. and Mrs. Greg Ehlert  
Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Wood  
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Wittenbach  
Ken Long  
Treva Duncan  
Louisa Sloan  
Glennie Sloan  
Sarah Sloan  
Lee Fiske  
Don and Virginia Kennett  
Charles McCoy  
Monique Delaney

## Earn Cash for Navajo Ministries School

Our school benefits from Campbell's Labels for Education and Boxtops for Education.



Thanks to supporters like you, our school has earned about \$1,500 this school year through the above programs. We have been able to purchase up-to-date learning materials, sports equipment, science videos and many other learning aids.

Please encourage your family and friends to save Campbell's UPCs and General Mills Boxtops, for Navajo Ministries School. For a total list of participating products, visit [boxtops4education.com](http://boxtops4education.com), and [labelsforeducation.com](http://labelsforeducation.com).

**MAIL TO Kay Baker • Navajo Ministries • PO Box 1230 • Farmington, NM 87499**

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