Anthony Emerson
A Painter Following God’s Path
We appreciate everyone who supports Navajo Ministries. Without current giving we could not continue to provide hope and restoration to our Navajo neighbors.

Some of our supporters, in addition to their current giving, have made commitments to deferred giving. These are donors who would like to give more to help in our outreach to children and families but they have limited resources. They cannot afford to increase their current giving or it could jeopardize their own needs. An alternative is to give a future gift when they pass on, no longer needing their resources to sustain themselves.

Some of those deferred gifts can include any of the following:

**BEQUEST:** Naming Navajo Ministries in your will or trust would be a much appreciated donation that could go a long way to continue the outreach of the ministry. This is a way to endow your monthly gift by giving a percentage of your estate to the ministry.

**LIFE INSURANCE:** There are two ways this can be done. One is to take an existing paid up insurance policy that you feel you no longer need and change the beneficiary to Navajo Ministries. If you are still paying on it then you can change the ownership and the beneficiary to Navajo Ministries and receive charitable tax deductions for each premium paid. The second way is to take out a new policy with Navajo Ministries as the owner and beneficiary and again the premiums receive a charitable deduction.

**CHARITABLE REMAINDER TRUST:** With this deferred gift you create an irrevocable trust with Navajo Ministries as the beneficiary. You are the income beneficiary of the trust and will receive a lifetime income for you and your spouse if married. It is best to fund the trust with appreciated assets such as stocks or real estate property. Once you transfer the asset into the trust the assets can be sold and you avoid the capital gains on the sale of the asset, thus saving income taxes. You also receive an income tax deduction that is adjusted for the income payments that you will receive.

If you have estate tax concerns, the life insurance owned by the ministry, gift annuity, bequest and the charitable trust assets may decrease your estate tax liability. Please consider contacting Navajo Ministries today (505.325.0255) to talk to one of our deferred giving specialists to see if one of these charitable giving strategies will benefit you and Navajo Ministries.
Welcome to the Fall 2013 edition of Navajo Neighbors, a magazine that focuses on what God is doing here at Navajo Ministries. We’re also able to share stories each time about Navajo people who are making a difference in their communities, and beyond.

Anthony Emerson, a well-known Navajo painter whose colorful work can be seen in galleries and museums across America, is featured in this latest issue of Navajo Neighbors. Anthony’s Christian faith has led him throughout life, from a young boy at Rehoboth Christian School all the way through today’s journeys. We hope you enjoy reading his story of following God’s path.

Other stories in this issue of Navajo Neighbors include:

- A trip to Cross Bar X Christian camp in southern Colorado, where a number of the children at the Four Corners Home for Children spent a week having fun and growing in their faith.
- The Navajo Ministries School welcomed new teacher, Cheryl Sanders, who is looking forward to the proven and unique school setting at the new Education and Activity Center.
- Teams from Florida, Ohio, Virginia and Colorado visited us this summer to volunteer their time on work projects and lead Vacation Bible School programs throughout the Navajo Nation.

That is just a quick glance of what awaits you inside the pages of this issue of Navajo Neighbors. Enjoy, and remember to stop by and see us any time. God is doing great work here!

God Bless,
Eric Fisher
Editor and Vice President
As Navajo Ministries celebrates 60 years of service in our community, Kay and I are blessed to have been here for 38 of those life-changing years. Our move here from Pennsylvania in 1975 certainly brought a life change to us as we heard God’s call to come and serve as houseparents. While we prayed that God would enable us to spend many years here, I didn’t know then that would include serving the past 26 years as the President.

We have so many great memories of our years here. As a matter of fact we have begun putting our adventures on paper, which we hope will eventually become a book that will highlight how God has moved through our lives and those that we have ministered with over the years. It’s really not our story but rather “His story” that has included many faithful friends who have made their way onto these grounds at Navajo Ministries.

Our Ministries sign by the highway invites interested friends to come in for a visit of our campus. We always enjoy sharing with folks what God is doing behind the sign here at 2103 West Main Street. It is not unusual for us to welcome visitors from across the nation and around the world as they come through Farmington on their way to see the beautiful area we call Navajoland.

Next time you are in our area we invite you to make this place part of your travel plans. We will be glad to show you the amazing murals in our headquarters building (The Connection Center), prayer rooms, the Vertical Radio studios, the children’s play therapy room used by the counselors and meet some of our talented and dedicated staff members.

We will also be glad to take you through the Four Corners Home for Children, where you will meet houseparents and some of our precious children. The new Education and Activity Center is amazing and used daily. Our On-Site School, central kitchen, game room and cafeteria are part of this wonderful addition to our campus. Just across the driveway from this building is our small ranch program that includes a variety of animals.

I also invite you to consider coming on our Navajoland Tour next fall, September 14-20, 2014. Kay and I and our Navajo pastors, Joe and Gerri Begay, will be thrilled to show you the beauty of the land and the people. In addition to seeing the sights, you will also experience the opportunity of having a meal with our children and houseparents. You can see all the details on the back cover of this magazine.

Whether your visit with us is just an hour or a week through the tour, we invite you to come and see what the Lord has done over these past 60 years, and what we believe He has planned for the future through the Navajo Heritage Center project. Visitors are welcome!
Roast Event Raises Funds for Children

The Janel Ryan “Celebrity” Roast, held May 9 at the newly remodeled Farmington Civic Center, helped raise more than $15,000 in needed funds for the Four Corners Home for Children at Navajo Ministries.

More than 300 community members turned out for the Roast, which paid tribute to Farmington Municipal Schools’ Superintendent Ryan. Navajo Ministries has had a special partnership with Farmington Schools since 1999, when both organizations teamed to start an On-site School for elementary-aged children at Navajo Ministries. Ryan has served as Superintendent since 2004 and has been a strong advocate of the Navajo Ministries School.

“When they asked me to be involved in the Roast this year, I was more than happy to be the brunt of a few jokes to help out children in need,” Ryan said during the May 9 event. “This was a lot of fun, and I’m pleased that so many people came here tonight to raise funds for the Four Corners Home for Children.”

This was the fourth “Celebrity” Roast held to benefit the Four Corners Home for Children. Next year’s honoree will be selected by a Roast Committee this fall.

Melissa Charles Spends Summer Volunteering

Navajo Ministries was fortunate to have Melissa Charles spend the summer volunteering throughout the campus, mainly helping to take care of children in our three homes and helping guests feel at home in the Bunk House. In her own words, Melissa gave a heartfelt report on her experiences here. Thank you Melissa, and God Bless You!

“I didn’t know what to expect; anxiety filled my heart as I stepped on grounds for the first time at Navajo Ministries. However, I was quickly reminded of the Lord’s goodness and faithfulness as the people here overwhelmed me with His love! The people welcomed me right into the family here, and I gained a glimpse of what true community in Christ looks like.

This summer I was able to help take care of the children in the three different homes, as well as teach children piano lessons. It was a blessing to serve the wonderful staff here, and I grew in many different ways. Whether it was changing diapers, feeding hungry mouths, or playing tag on the playground, I found myself falling in love with the children. Navajo Ministries and all who call this place home have been a tremendous blessing to me this summer.”

Melissa is now back at Lakewood, Colorado, finishing her senior year of college. After graduation, she plans to attend Denver Seminary to work on her Master of Arts in Counseling degree.

“I am very passionate about people and helping others, and want to be actively involved in a good church community. I also plan to use my Associate in Music degree to open up a private piano studio in my home to teach piano lessons. I am confident that wherever God leads me, He will give me the grace to follow, and I am excited to see how He will be glorified!”

Melissa Charles spends Summer Volunteering at Navajo Ministries.
Well-Known Artist
Emerson Credits Faith for Inspiration

By Eric Fisher

Anthony Chee Emerson has made a national name for himself as a painter over three decades of work. His unique artwork can be seen in famous galleries from coast to coast – the Heard Museum in Phoenix to the west, all the way to the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian in New York City to the east. In Farmington, an Emerson original with a “stewardship” theme can be viewed adorning the new Education and Activity Center at Navajo Ministries.

With notoriety, however, have come times of adversity and struggle for this highly regarded Navajo artist. A downturn in the local Four Corners and national economies in recent years, for example, has forced Emerson to move on to another stage in his life. It’s a welcomed change, though, as he is looking forward to focusing fully on God, family, and art – in that order.

Throughout his life, Emerson’s Christian faith has guided his path, whether it was during his early school years, opening a gallery in downtown Farmington, or finding inspiration for one of his colorful, engaging paintings.

“God has given me a bit of talent and He wants to know ‘what did you do with it?’ I’ve taken it as far as I could these first 30 years. It’s now enough to make a living – not more, not less. It’s just what I need … Throughout the years, when some type of adversity comes at you, it really challenges you to rely back on God to help you through. I always want to go by what God says. To have that kind of foundation sometimes feels like taking a step up and two steps back, but you’ve got to remember that it’s in God’s plan.”

Emerson recently closed the Emerson Gallery, which had been in business in downtown Farmington since 1999. Following 14 years of having customers often come to him, he is looking forward to traveling the country and meeting new art buyers.

“God wanted me to be in this business and now that I’m known I can go to different parts of the country and get back out there and meet people,” he said. “Christians can be very secure. We like our little bubbles and comfort zones, especially as we get older. I was in that comfort
zone … then the economy changed in 2008. People are not traveling as much and their discretionary funds have changed. Sometimes you can ask, ‘God, why are you doing this to us?’ When we read back in the Bible, adversities are part of this world and we as individuals have no control. We have to put it all back in God’s hands.”

Today, Anthony Chee Emerson is married to wife Michele, an accountant for a medical office in Farmington. They have two adult children: Zachary, a University of New Mexico Biology graduate and a budding artist in his own right, and Cheyenne, who is now attending Taft College in California on a softball scholarship.

“My life is becoming much more simplified,” Emerson added. “It’s a good transition for me and my family.”

**An Early Draw to Painting**

Emerson spent the first nine years of his life living in Southern California while his parents worked in the Los Angeles area. He always enjoyed traveling to the Navajo Nation, where his family would visit grandmother Lydia Begay, a Two Grey Hills weaver.

“I can remember as a young boy, at 3 or 4, seeing this amazing tradition of paintings and rugs. That really started to influence me as I saw the culture, and arts and crafts. I liked going to the trading posts and seeing other arts and crafts there. At an early age, I knew I liked drawing things.”

At age 9, the family moved back to the Navajo Nation and Emerson later began attending Rehoboth Christian
School, where he would graduate high school in 1980. He remembers having plenty of spare time to practice his love of drawing. Was he the best in the school? No way, Emerson recalled.

“When I went there, everybody was a good artist in the fifth and sixth grade. They could sculpt and draw. There was really great talent there,” he said. “Rehoboth really didn’t have an art program until I got into high school. Elmer Yazzie, who graduated in 1972 from Rehoboth, came back in 1976 and we started having an art curriculum in place.”

He remembers the program operated on a shoestring budget, using the back sides of test papers to work on art projects. Elmer Yazzie is also well known by Navajo Ministries. He painted the large mural in the Connection Center at Navajo Ministries back in the early 1980s, and was featured in an issue of Navajo Neighbors in 2008.

“We still keep in touch today,” Emerson said of Yazzie. “I saw him at Tucson during a recent show.”

Emerson continued to grow in his painting skills throughout high school and into college.

“During that time, I was learning more about the principles of art and the composition of art at the early stage. I also started working with acrylic and oil-based painting. Something that takes me a week to do now would take me two months back then,” he said with a smile.

After graduating from Rehoboth High School, Emerson attended Dordt College in Iowa and then the University of New Mexico. He continued to discover new influences and freedoms in his painting work. In 1982, he began his professional career, selling his first painting through the Rosebrough Gallery in Farmington. A short time later, he participated in the Santa Fe Indian Market and Gallup Intertribal Ceremonials, winning awards at both events.

“I began to realize that I could make a career out of my art. Raising a family and being focused on God really inspired me to do a whole series of work about family in a folk art style. We were members of Living Word Church in Farmington for 25 years … The lessons about marriage, family and work all influenced me,
especially Paul and his teachings.”

**Taking Time Away**

During his 30-year professional career, Emerson thinks back on a time when he took a long break from his painting – shortly after his son Zachary was born.

“I had gone into house painting, which is something I still do today, to help pay the bills. That really enabled me to make a living and feed my family. I worked on the reservation for four years just doing exterior and interior painting jobs. I worked on schools, hospitals, homes, commercial buildings … everything.”

His wife Michele started to wonder if Anthony would ever get back into painting as an art.

“She asked if I would finish a painting for her. I found myself asking if I was ever going to paint anymore. I then started back in, and in about two months, I grinded through it and got one done. I realized how much I missed it. I then started working a full day, and would come home and work on paintings at night and on the weekends,” Emerson said.

He has never taken a lengthy break from his art ever since. His original paintings today sell for anywhere from $100 to $7,500.

“I prefer to do originals that are priced to sell. Once I sell one, I’ll do another one. I take my time at it now. I’m not as rushed now to prove anything. My life is dedicated to painting – whether it’s painting as an art or painting houses.”

Many of his paintings take months to complete due to the intricacies of his craft. The background must be done, followed by the colorful layers of paint that tell a unique story of life in Navajoland.

During the late summer and fall, Emerson said he planned to attend shows in Flagstaff, Arizona, Santa Fe, Farmington, Tulsa, Oklahoma, and California. In the winter, he plans to attend festivals in the warmer climates of Phoenix, Tucson and Palm Springs.

“God has taught me many lessons in my life, and I want to continue to follow Him. Being a Christian has always been the foundation of who I am, and being an artist is what God has put me here to do,” Emerson added.

For more on Anthony Chee Emerson and his paintings, go to [www.emersongallery.com](http://www.emersongallery.com), or call him directly at 505-860-8040.
Faith and Fun at Cross Bar X Youth Camp

For 30 years, Cross Bar X Youth Camp near Durango, Colorado, has been introducing campers to Jesus Christ and seeing lives transformed each summer. The camp’s motto is to be intentional about pointing campers to Christ in everything they do, from eating breakfast to white-water rafting. Cross Bar X’s desire is to see every camper form and deepen in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Four Corners Home for Children sent eight of our children to Cross Bar X this year. They had a wonderful time, growing in their faith and having some summer fun.

Shakira, one of our 10-year-old girls, wrote: What I enjoy about Cross Bar X is everything. I love the food, rec time, lake and zip line. The thing I like most is my counselor. My counselor taught us a lot of things like how to forgive. Sometimes we asked her hard questions and she couldn’t answer them. That’s what I like about Cross Bar X.

Marilann, who just graduated high school, shared this experience with us: I really enjoyed the backpacking trip at Cross Bar X. It was my favorite because we were able to be in the middle of His wonderful creation. Every morning and evening we campers would be taught a lesson on God. This year’s theme was “alive.” We were taught how we are dead in sin but in Christ we have life. "But if Christ is in you, although the body is
dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” Romans 8:10.

Cassius, who is 8, had a lot of fun! He wrote: Thank you for sending me to camp. I had all the fun. The giant swing was super fun. Everything was fun, the people were fun and my counselor was fun.

Counselors at Cross Bar X also shared some comments about some of our campers:

Connor: “Connor had a great sense of humor at the right times and was able to be serious. He asked great questions.”

Cassius: “Cassius was a great kid who had so much fun and loved camp! He was really nice to everyone and loved God, which is awesome!”

Shakira: “Shakira is such a loving girl who gave her best at everything. She desires to be around people and has a heart full of love for others.”

Trista: “Trista has an adventurous spirit and a great love for the Lord. It’s exciting to think about what God has in store for her.”

Marilann: “Marilann may be one of the most selfless people I’ve met. She has a great desire to know the Lord and a huge heart to love others.”

Kelly Hargrove is the Director of Children’s Services for the Four Corners Home for Children at Navajo Ministries.
Cheryl Sanders, the new teacher at the Navajo Ministries School, credits her love of teaching to her great-aunts. All three taught in one-room school houses in New Mexico – a similar setting to what Cheryl is now seeing on a daily basis.

The Navajo Ministries School, located on the 16-acre campus of Navajo Ministries, includes about a dozen students from first through fifth grades, all in one thriving classroom. The unique, one-to-one teaching model has seen many successes since the school was started in 1999. Today, the school is located in the new Education and Activity Center, which opened in October 2012.

“I believe that learning is a lifetime adventure and that all children can learn given the opportunity. I am looking forward to guiding the students to a lifetime love of learning,” Cheryl said. “Like B.B. King once said, ‘The beautiful thing about learning is that nobody can take it away from you.’ I want to give the children I teach something that no one can take from them, both in education and in the Lord.”

Cheryl was born and raised in Cuba, New Mexico, and began teaching in 2004. She started her education career teaching kindergarten with the Bloomfield School District, located near Farmington. After three years there, she moved to Kirtland Elementary School, where she taught third grade for three years and fifth grade for two years.

She also home-schooled her two children before teaching in the public school setting, and taught English to a home-school group that ranged from first through sixth grade.

“I am excited about working at the Navajo Ministries School,” Cheryl said. “It will take me back to my roots. I see it as a combination of the one-room school house and home-schooling. I know it will be both challenging, as well as rewarding, as I will get to see the students grow in knowledge and a love for the Lord.

“This job has given me the opportunity to combine my two passions in life - sharing the love of God with others and teaching. My family and I feel that this is the position that God has been preparing me for.”

Everyone involved with Navajo Ministries sincerely welcomes Cheryl Sanders as our new teacher. She is our fifth teacher since 1999, and we have been blessed to have such a dedicated group of educators work with our children. We also thank Tawnya Vollmert, who faithfully served as our full-time teacher for the past two years. She has returned to another elementary school in Farmington.
Zia Sporting Goods Helps with New Field

The Sports Inc. industry selected Farmington-based Zia Sporting Goods for its prestigious “Sporting Chance Award,” which is helping nine local organizations with sports-related projects.

Navajo Ministries and the Four Corners Home for Children were awarded $3,000 last spring from the overall grant to help put in a small sports field near the long-term homes.

The new field was expected to be put in during late summer-early fall for the children to enjoy.

Thanks to Zia Sporting Goods for giving our kids a “sporting chance!”

San Juan River Bi-Fly Raises More Than $50,000

The 19th annual San Juan River Bi-Fly Tournament, held August 16-17, raised more than $50,000 for the Four Corners Home for Children.

More than 60 anglers competed in the tournament, which is considered the premier fly-fishing event in the Southwest.

Most of the funds are raised by anglers, who gather pledges for the largest fish caught during the tournament. Other funds were “reeled in” during a tournament banquet held August 17 at the Farmington Civic Center.

Navajo Ministries thanks everyone involved in this amazing fund-raising event. Major sponsors this year were Citizens Bank, San Juan Regional Medical Center, San Juan Rotary Club and Outback Steakhouse.

The 20th annual Bi-Fly is scheduled for August 22-23 next year. See you on the river!

Take Time to Make Celebrations Count

By Bill and Linda Eubank

As a society, we love to celebrate. Birthdays. Anniversaries. Arrival of a new baby. Graduation. We especially celebrate with reverence those things that represent longevity. A 50th Wedding Anniversary. That 50th birthday. Or 70th. Or 90th!

We celebrate the ability to survive. The flip side of this is that we are anguished by lack of a longer life, broken marriages and the failure to attain a right of passage.

This fall, Navajo Ministries celebrates 60 years in ministry and Linda is also celebrating 60 years of life. Milestones. These are celebrations that should reflect lessons learned and situations handled.

For some, are we now losing the capacity to celebrate? Are we worried too much about the future? We all see our nation changing and the moral standards of the past being brought into question. I think we all have to stop and reflect on how we can establish more traditions of celebration into our lives, despite our sometimes negative environment and popular culture.

Our time with family and friends is important. Connections are what make life all worth it, after all. The best thing is that we don’t have to spend a lot of money to connect and create lasting celebrations.

We can establish weekly bike rides, daily walks, times at the park, getting together for meals. Things that we do or should do all the time can become times of connection.

Sit down with your spouse, your children or your grandchildren and talk about establishing simple traditions that will become times of connection for years to come. Celebrate life and the times we have together.
Navajo Ministries welcomed four volunteer church teams from throughout the country this summer as part of our Navajo Nation Outreach program. Each church did a wonderful job in serving us with work projects and spiritual growth, along with providing Vacation Bible School programs at various churches in the Navajo Nation.

We sincerely thank these committed churches for each spending a week with us, staying on grounds at our Bunk House and spreading God’s love to many throughout Navajoland. You are all truly a blessing!

This year’s church teams included two returning groups: Disciple Mission Church, of Denver, Colorado, and Vineyard Church of Knox County, Ohio. We also welcomed two new churches: Trinity United Methodist Church, of Smithfield, Virginia, and Myrtle Lake Baptist Church, from Land O’ Lakes, Florida.

We are amazed each year by the outpouring of love and willingness to simply serve wherever there is a need. We already are looking forward to next summer!
Editor’s Note: Last fall, Navajo Neighbors published an article on a miracle baby born to station DJs Dani and Donnie Edwards. What follows is a wonderful update on Elijah, who was born May 17, 2012, at just 1 pound, 7 ounces. Today, Eli is home following nearly one year in an Albuquerque hospital. God has seen this family through many challenges, but continues to show His unwavering love through this journey.

By Dani Edwards

People often say, “A lot can happen in a year.” In our case, this is more than accurate! When Elijah was born almost 16 weeks early, we had no idea that we would be spending a whole year in the hospital. We had no clue that our family would be spending months apart, as I stayed in Albuquerque full time to care for the baby.

We couldn’t have imagined the emotional toll it would take on us, not understanding how long we would continue to be a divided family, but on May 13, 2013 (361 days after Eli was born) “we” were finally released from the hospital.

I have to admit, we were so nervous bringing home a baby who had gone through so much. He has had tubes down his throat and more medications than we can count. We would have never fathomed the fact that Eli would come home on a ventilator with a tracheotomy.

The day we came home, we were nervous for every second of the three-hour drive, but when we pulled into our driveway, we could breathe a sigh of relief. Several members of our family were at our house and had placed a large banner on the front of our garage that said, “Welcome Home Baby Eli!” We felt so blessed! For the first time ever, our entire family was in the same place; we had never in his life been in the same room together since Eli was born!

It’s crazy to know that after 14 months, our “once tiny” 1-pound prince has become a 20-pound little boy. He is full of smiles and laughter and is a huge joy in our lives. Amazingly, the only issue Eli has been struggling with is his lungs.

Many babies who have gone through all that Eli has been through have an array of physical and mental complications, but we credit God for His unwavering protection of Eli during each moment of his fragile journey. We praise Him now for His continued protection of Eli during each moment of His life and we are expecting to see His continued miracles for years to come! ☃
60 Years of Memories

Whether it be a birthday, an anniversary or any other special celebration, it is good to pause and reflect on the importance of these memorable days or years. This is the year that we celebrate 60 years of ministry at Navajo Ministries. It is a remarkable history of God’s amazing blessings that have stretched over six decades.

If you have never read a copy of founder Jack Drake’s autobiography, “The Big Missionary,” I encourage you to contact us and request a copy (just $8, including postage). It is filled with profound stories of faith and vision as experienced through the life of a country boy from Michigan who heard God’s call and responded by moving to Farmington and beginning a mission that has provided hope and encouragement to countless families over the years.

Perhaps you are reflecting on the memories of a loved one who has gone on to glory. Their passing may have just taken place or maybe it’s been many years since they departed. The memories linger on in our hearts for our loved ones. Or perhaps you have a friend or relative who is still living and you want to honor them in a special way. Then, I would like to suggest a Living Memorial Gift to memorialize or honor your loved one.

All Living Memorial gifts will benefit the needs of the boys and girls who are in our care at the Four Corners Home for Children. It’s a “Win, Win” project. You remember your loved ones and your gift provides a safe place for our boys and girls to call “home” until things improve with their natural families.

To participate, use the envelope in the center of this magazine to indicate your wishes. An attractive card will be sent to your selected friend showing your remembrance. No amounts will be mentioned and gifts are tax-deductible.

Jim Baker, President
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