Russell Begaye
Navajo Nation’s New Leader
YOUR CONNECTIONS TO NAVAJO MINISTRIES

Keep connected to what’s happening at Navajo Ministries, the Four Corners Home for Children and KNMI Vertical Radio electronically through the following:

Navajo Ministries
www.NavajoMinistries.org
Facebook

Join our E-mail Club for consistent updates through our electronic newsletter, Navajo Ministries Notes.

Four Corners Home for Children
www.FourCornersHomeForChildren.org
Facebook

KNMI Vertical Radio
www.VerticalRadio.org
Facebook
Pinterest
Twitter

NAVAJO MINISTRIES – A FOUR-STAR CHARITY

Navajo Ministries is a Four-Star Charity as rated by Charity Navigator, America’s largest and most utilized independent evaluator of charities. A full report on this Four-Star rating can be found at www.charitynavigator.org and searching for “Navajo Ministries.”

Charity Navigator uses a variety of methods to evaluate more than 7,000 charities on financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency. Navajo Ministries scored a 90.2 out of a possible 100 points.

We are pleased to receive this coveted rating and continue to THANK everyone involved with Navajo Ministries!
Welcome to the Fall 2015 edition of Navajo Neighbors magazine. This issue is filled with interesting, relevant stories of how God is working both through Navajo Ministries, and the Navajo Nation.

Our cover story this issue is on new Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye, who served on the Navajo Ministries Board of Directors from 2009-2011. President Begaye has been a good friend to Navajo Ministries and fully credits God for placing him in this important leadership position. It was our pleasure to spend some time with the new President this summer and talk about his vision and hopes for the Navajo people.

Also inside this issue:

- Navajo Ministries also has a new leader as I was named just the third President in the history of this amazing organization earlier this year.
- We have a new Director of Development, Diana Lang, who brings a wealth of experience and energy.
- A recap of the Jim and Kay Baker Roast, held in April to honor the Bakers’ 40 years of service.
- Updates from the Four Corners Home for Children, Navajo Ministries School, KNMI Vertical Radio and Navajo Nation Outreach programs.

There’s even more to read in the pages that follow. We hope you enjoy this latest edition of Navajo Neighbors, and stop by and see us any time if you’re in the area.

God Bless,
Eric Fisher
Editor and President
A Smooth Transition to New President

By Jim Baker and Eric Fisher

It was just after I finished hosting my daily radio show “The Four Corners Spotlight” in August of 2008 when Eric Fisher entered my office. I had known Eric casually over the years. His mother was an elementary school teacher for many of our children when Kay and I were houseparents. Eric, a veteran of the newspaper business, had been on my show in the past when he was working for San Juan Regional Medical Center. I remembered him mostly from having a wonderful, deep “radio voice.”

We were looking for a new Director of Development who would be able to connect the ministry to new donors who would join us in reaching many in our region with a message of hope. After reviewing his past accomplishments and hearing of his desire to be used of God through this ministry, we welcomed him to our staff. He hit the ground running on September 8th, having only one week to get his office in order before joining us for our annual Navajoland Tour.

With his journalism degree it was only natural for Eric to quickly become editor of our Navajo Neighbors magazine. He also became immersed in successfully directing our fund-raising activities for the new Education and Activity Center.

Remembering how founder Jack Drake had prayed for someone to come and continue the leadership role of this organization, Kay and I were now doing the same. In the summer of 2012 our board appointed Eric to the position of Vice President. On May 1st of this year, I retired as President of Navajo Ministries after serving in that role for 28 years.

It was a joy to welcome Eric as the third President of Navajo Ministries in our 62-year history. I’ve often said, “When God guides, He provides!” He has done just that with the smooth transition of Eric moving from Vice President to President. Kay and I are delighted to continue on a half-time basis, serving as Co-Directors of Partnership Ministry.

“I want to thank Jim and Kay for their leadership and friendship during my first seven years at Navajo Ministries. This is a wonderful place to serve, with God leading the way in all we do,” Eric added. “I look forward to what He has in store for all of us in the future. It is amazing to realize how Navajo Ministries has grown from a single children’s home in 1953 to an active 16-acre campus with four programs today.”

Eric can be reached at 505.324.5260 or at Fisher@NavajoMinistries.org. He looks forward to continuing to play a vital role in fulfilling Navajo Ministries’ mission of helping the people we serve through programs that instill hope, restoration and Christian values.
Navajo Ministries gives thanks for large gifts

Navajo Ministries thanks Houses with Hope and the “Get Mom Down” event for providing $5,000 for the Four Corners Home for Children earlier this year. Pictured are Ronna and Andy Jordan with Houses with Hope, and Navajo Ministries President Eric Fisher.

The Four Corners Home for Children, the largest of four programs at Navajo Ministries, also received $14,900 from ConocoPhillips and nearly $7,000 from the Charity Crawfish Boil event hosted by Pinon Hills Community Church in recent months. We sincerely thank all of these supporters, along with everyone who helps make a difference for children in need at the Four Corners Home for Children.

Lang, an active member of First United Methodist Church in Farmington, is a 1981 graduate of Farmington High School and holds an Associate of Arts Degree from San Juan College.

She says her greatest accomplishments are her three daughters, Heather, Breanna and Emma Lang. Heather is a PHD candidate at Florida State University, Breanna is a recent Texas Tech graduate and is now the speech therapist at Mesa Verde Elementary School, and Emma is a senior at Colorado State University.

Lang can be reached at 505.324.5241 or at DLang@NavajoMinistries.org.

Navajo Ministries welcomes Diana Lang to our team!

Diana Lang
New Director of Development

Navajo Ministries welcomed Diana Lang as our new Director of Development in June. Diana is largely responsible for fund-raising and public relations for Navajo Ministries.

Lang worked for Farmington-based San Juan College for 27 years, with most of her time there spent as assistant director of the Health and Human Performance Center. Highly active in the community since the 1980s, Lang retired from San Juan College in 2012 and since then has served as president of the board at the Arc of San Juan County, a local non-profit assisting people with disabilities. She has a wide range of marketing, grant writing, communications and community relations experience.

“We are very pleased to welcome Diana as our new Director of Development,” Navajo Ministries President Eric Fisher said. “Diana has been helping to make a positive difference in the San Juan County community for years and we believe she will greatly benefit Navajo Ministries as we look to our future.”

Navajo Ministries, recently rated a four-star charity by the highly regarded Charity Navigator, receives no state, federal or tribal funding, relying primarily on individual, business, church and foundation support to operate its programs.

“Sometimes in life you are lucky enough to have opportunities find you. I believe that is what happened for me with this position at Navajo Ministries,” Lang said. “The mission is one that is close to my heart, and I am excited about my future with these amazing people.”

Lang, an active member of First United Methodist Church in Farmington, is a 1981 graduate of Farmington High School and holds an Associate of Arts Degree from San Juan College.

She says her greatest accomplishments are her three daughters, Heather, Breanna and Emma Lang. Heather is a PhD candidate at Florida State University, Breanna is a recent Texas Tech graduate and is now the speech therapist at Mesa Verde Elementary School, and Emma is a senior at Colorado State University.

Lang can be reached at 505.324.5241 or at DLang@NavajoMinistries.org. Navajo Ministries welcomes Diana Lang to our team!

Letter to the Editor:

Dear Navajo Ministries,

A good many years ago my son told me about Navajo Ministries. He is a pharmacist and worked at the Chinle (Arizona) hospital. My husband, who is now in heaven, and I then sent some donations.

Time went by and we visited Chinle from our hometown of Hagerstown, Maryland. We did some sight-seeing and one day my son asked if there was anything we’d like to do. I said, “yes, I’d like to see the Navajo Ministries.” So, we stopped by and saw loving homes for children, where it seemed like a regular mom and dad and the children were happy together.

Someone showed us the radio station, which was very nice . . . Over the years, I donated to many ministries, but I will always remember how welcoming the staff was, making us feel it was OK to stop and visit.

We left feeling happy about the place, the people and the ministries . . . God bless you all and keep you in His care. The love of God bless you all.

Betty Diggins
Hagerstown, Maryland
Just six short years ago, Russell Begaye was a new member of the Navajo Ministries Board of Directors. At the time, he was also the director of the San Juan Baptist Association in Farmington. Today, following just one term as a delegate on the Navajo Nation Council, Russell Begaye is the President of the Navajo Nation.

President Begaye, who left the Navajo Ministries Board in 2011 when he decided to run for the Shiprock Chapter position, fully credits his strong Christian faith for an amazingly quick rise to the top leadership position of the Navajo Nation.

“I never thought I would be here today, but the only way it could happen was if God was in it … God was orchestrating this whole situation, and He is in control of the Navajo Nation,” President Begaye said during a dinner meeting near Farmington in July.

He and running mate Jonathan Nez, also a devout Christian, won the election by more than 10,000 votes over former Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley in April. Putting God first is key to the leadership strategy for both men.

“Praying for guidance and wisdom is foremost for us. When my office makes a decision we ask if this is something God wants. We want to honor the Lord in all we do,” President Begaye said.

The Navajo Nation’s President fondly remembers his time serving on the Navajo Ministries Board. He said the connection with Navajo Ministries is one he was pleased to be a part of, adding the following comments about some of this organization’s programs:

Four Corners Home for Children: “Children are being abused and are...
hurting in the Navajo Nation. They have nowhere to turn, and the ones they trust the most are oftentimes the ones who hurt them the most. To have a place where our children can go to have a really good, healthy environment where they feel safe, protected and loved is very much appreciated. The children’s homes are something the Navajo Nation should support and Navajo Ministries is the only one I know of in the area that is doing this for our children.”

Navajo Language: “Something that has always been really impressive to me, even from the time I was little, was the Navajo language materials you all produced. Even today, our people can go find Navajo Bibles and songbooks there at Navajo Ministries.

President Begaye said unity is a vital theme for his administration. Since the election he has been busy filling important leadership roles in an effort to move the Navajo Nation forward.

“Unity is the key to a strong Navajo Nation. We haven’t worked well together in the past and that is first on our agenda. We have important areas of the Navajo Nation that don’t talk to each other. Whatever we are doing, we need to bring everybody together.”

The President added there are nine priority areas the Navajo Nation needs to focus on, including water rights, economic development, infrastructure, housing, education, human services, governance, public safety and natural resources.

In addition to coming alongside Navajo Ministries, he said the Navajo Nation will be pursuing more faith-based partnerships.

“Faith-based groups can build houses and do a lot of other projects, providing services like medical, dental and mental health services. Using
biblically-based approaches have worked for centuries and they are powerful,” President Begaye said.

Russell Begaye grew up in Shiprock and attended First Baptist Church, becoming a Christian at a young age. He also grew up with current Navajo Ministries Board member Betty Ojaye, who is the Executive Director of Navajo Preparatory School in Farmington. She was featured in the Summer 2009 edition of Navajo Neighbors (available on-line at www.navajominisries.org).

“Betty and I went to church and school together. She is doing a great job at Navajo Preparatory School, where some of our finest Navajo students get an outstanding education that prepares them for college.”

Russell Begaye has an extensive career background, including graduating from UCLA and serving as a faculty member there in the Department of Linguistics. Through a unique ability to bring people together to solve problems, he helped develop a worldwide consultation network with tribal leaders and indigenous people that benefitted communities and businesses.

His career was also highlighted by a leadership role through the United Nations and Homeland Security to aid refugees who have moved to the United States. And, he worked closely with Native American youth to create an annual youth conference for Native students across the U.S. and Canada.

President Begaye said he and his new leadership team have been well received both in the Navajo Nation and throughout the United States. “We’ve been to New York, Washington D.C., all throughout the Southwest working on moving the Navajo Nation forward … We’re putting people in positions who are highly skilled at what they do. They are professional people who are Harvard graduates, Ivy League doctorates and others. They have taken salary cuts to come back to the Navajo Nation to make a difference. These are our people,” President Begaye said.

Once again, the new Navajo Nation President said “unity” will be the most important factor for improving life for the Navajo people, many who live well below the federal poverty level. “We must all work together – the Navajo Nation Council, the Navajo Nation President and all 110 chapters,” he said.

Major decisions must all be something that God would bless, President Begaye said.

“When you’re talking about providing jobs, protecting the health of the people and the land, or anything else, we need to be asking ‘what kind of decision will best honor the Lord?’ In the end, that’s how you make your decision.”
Navajo Ministries’ sixth annual “Celebrity” Roast featured our very own Jim and Kay Baker on April 16, with more than $45,000 raised for the Four Corners Home for Children. About 350 people attended the event held at the Farmington Civic Center in a celebration filled with fun, food and plenty of laughs.

Jim and Kay arrived at what was then called Navajo Missions in April 1975 to serve as houseparents – positions they would hold for 12 years. Jim became President of Navajo Missions in 1987 and Kay served with him in a variety of leadership roles. They both continue serving today as Co-Directors of Partnership Ministry, with Jim also holding the title of Past President (1987-2015).

Roasters included their daughter Lisa Chavez, Jim’s sister Mary Greiner, long-time friends Joe and Gerri Begay, Bob and Leslie Fitz, Randy and Debbie Joslin and Annette Reich. Robert Tso of Shiprock’s Victory Life Church and San Juan County CEO Kim Carpenter rounded out the roasting lineup.

The Roast was an ideal way to pay tribute to Jim and Kay for their 40 years of service to Navajo Ministries. Congratulations to our dear friends Jim and Kay Baker. ♦
Active Summer of Fun, Faith and Fellowship

By Diana Lang

Like most families, summer is a busy time at the Four Corners Home for Children. We do all of the same things that any family does – vacation, visit family, and our kids age 10 and up have a wonderful opportunity to attend Cross Bar X Camp.

Cross Bar X is located in Durango, Colorado, and hosted its first campers in 1977. The inaugural camp consisted of three campers in a borrowed Army tent. Today, more than 200 kids attend camp each summer. The camp has changed a lot over the years but still includes the essentials; backpacking, horseback riding, crafts, music, Bible lessons, and ranch animals. What our kids enjoyed most are the newer activities like the climbing wall, giant swing, zip line and rafting. The most important aspect that will never change at Cross Bar X is the passion to share Christ’s love in a small, personalized camp setting.

The activities at camp are great, but what the kids looked forward to the most was seeing old friends, and having an opportunity to make new friends, too. All campers said that the best part of camp was the friends. For many of our teens, this is not their first experience at Cross Bar X. They stay in touch throughout the year and build bonds that will last a lifetime.

The Youngs and the Weavers took their large families on wonderful vacations this summer. The Weavers left in June for California, and the Youngs in July for Oregon. The majority of the children at the Four Corners Home for Children have never been on a family vacation. The family trips are a time when powerful bonding occurs as our children realize a new need for dependency on the adults who care for them. The new environment brings everyone closer and creates memories that last a lifetime. The highlight for both groups was the visit to the ocean. Like most families, we travel economically, usually camping, creating experiences that can’t be measured in dollars.

Day-to-day life on the Navajo Ministries campus brings a lot of joy during the summer months as well. The kids spent a lot of time outside swimming in the portable pool, slip and sliding, and hanging out at the ranch. The kids enjoy their time with the animals, especially the horses. In order to ride, each child must first learn to properly saddle, lead, and groom the horses. A lot of emotional healing takes place at the ranch, too.

It was a wonderful summer at Navajo Ministries, full of fun, excitement, and many opportunities to build community and for the children to grow in their Christian faith.
Students Find Educational Success at School

By Diana Lang

Education is very important at Navajo Ministries, and the On-Site School offers individual attention and a strong sense of community. The school is available for our children grades first through fifth, and they can often advance two grade levels in one school year.

Cheryl Sanders is the teacher again this year. One of the things that she loves about teaching at the Navajo Ministries School is having the ability to teach what the child needs. When new children come to the Four Corners Home for Children they are way behind academically and almost all come from homes where education is not a priority.

“These kids have already spent many years feeling like a failure. In our school we can provide the emotional support necessary to show students that they can and will succeed,” she said.

Last school year was a testimony to what our school stands for. Thanks to many generous donations from people around the United States, Box Tops for Education funds helped send our students on a fun and educational trip to Monument Valley and the Grand Canyon. The trip tied in perfectly with our cultural education program, and everyone had a really good time. Keep those Box Tops coming.

This coming school year Cheryl hopes to get more students involved in 4H and other activities outside of Navajo Ministries. She would also like to have guest speakers from the community come in to talk about their careers. “It’s never too early to plant a seed,” she said.

Connor graduated from the Navajo Ministries School last spring and is headed to middle school. He has attended public school and the Navajo Ministries School and said he wholeheartedly likes the Navajo Ministries School best. He appreciates that there are two teachers for about a dozen students and said he made friends much easier in the smaller environment.

Last spring the students completed an assignment called “If I Was President.” Among other things Connor said he would “throw a party to make sure everyone likes me, drink Joe, lower prices on stuff, and make sure children get the knowledge and food they deserve.” When asked about his paper he went to his room and brought it out. He added, “When I finished reading my paper, the class started clapping and I felt really good about myself.” Now isn’t that what quality education is all about?
Bi-Fly Tournament **Reels in $55,000**

The San Juan River Bi-Fly Tournament was again another big success, raising about $55,000 for the Four Corners Home for Children on August 21-22. Anglers gathered pledges for the largest fish they caught, and more funds were raised through sponsorships and a fun event-closing banquet at the Farmington Civic Center.

We thank everyone involved with this amazing fund-raising event, now in its 22nd year of bringing in much-needed funds for our children. Contact us for information on next year's event set for August 19-20, 2016.

---

Grainger Foundation **Giving Back**

The Grainger Foundation provided a financial gift recently toward the Four Corners Home for Children. We sincerely thank Grainger Foundation for giving back to the community and making a difference. Pictured are Bill Jenkins, District Manager, Randy Dailey, Farmington Grainger, Diana Lang, Navajo Ministries Director of Development, and Peter Marabella, Farmington Grainger.

---

**Notes from the Eubank Counseling Center**

**Parents’ Actions Affect **Overall Wellness of Children**

By Linda Eubank

The hardest thing for me to deal with as I counsel with children is the fact that often their parents really don’t seem to care how grown-up actions are affecting the children. This may be true when there is a divorce, a move away from friends and family, or just when parents can’t be bothered with the day-to-day care of their own children. Yes, it is a difficult job.

I remember hearing adults talking when I was a child (and I am in my 60s). They would say things like “children are resilient” or “kids bounce back.” Is that really true? I can tell you, having counseled hundreds of kids in the last 28 years that a lot of the decisions that parents make affect their children for a very long time.

Yes, your children will still love you. Yes, they will always want a relationship with you. But, they may harbor anger for years that will affect their future relationships with significant others and their own children.

People often ask me, “will this hurt my kids?” My best answer is “statistically children talk about the break up of their family unit as the worst thing they have gone through.” Not only is it the breakup of the family but often this involves moving children around to various family members. This can be very upsetting to the attachment that needs to happen for the emotional health of the child.

Now, I don’t want parents to feel guilt for past decisions that can’t be changed. Your kids always have the option to get help for their struggles. Often that comes from other Christians who have been through the same kinds of issues. Or it can come from professional counselors. The important thing for adults to do for their children, no matter what their age, is to tell them you are sorry for past decisions that may have hurt them. Ask for forgiveness and then help them get the help they need.

Linda Eubank is a licensed professional clinical counselor with the Eubank Counseling Center, located on the campus of Navajo Ministries. Two-thirds of her clients are children ranging in age from 3 to 17.
Teams From Across U.S. Lead VBS

Vacation Bible School mission teams from all over the country visit Navajo Ministries to minister to the children at the Four Corners Home for Children and in the Navajo Nation. This year four groups spent a week with us at our Bunkhouse on the Navajo Ministries campus in Farmington, New Mexico. The teams, a mix of youth and adult members, worked one day doing improvement projects on campus at Navajo Ministries and the rest of the week they conducted VBS in the Navajo Nation.

The mission groups represented this year included: iWorship Center, Springfield, Illinois; Tropical Farms Baptist Church, Stuart, Florida; Mt. Pleasant Community Church, Lyndon, Kansas; and Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Nekoosa, Wisconsin. What a blessing it was to watch these young people minister to children. We hope to see them all again very soon. ♡
By Diana Lang

The past several months at Vertical Radio have been busy and exciting. The station won two state awards, had a visit from the first Vertical Radio general manager, and broadcasted 23 Connie Mack World Series games.

In early June, KNMI Vertical Radio received two New Mexico Broadcasters Association awards. The Four Corners Spotlight received the award for best Talk Show or Interview. Emmet Fowler received the award for best Sports Play by Play for the Shiprock versus Sandia Prep girls State Basketball tournament game of the week. We are very proud and honored to have received this recognition for the second consecutive year.

Mark Frederick stopped by Vertical

for a visit in June. Frederick was the very first general manager of Vertical Radio. He came to Navajo Ministries in 1978 with his wife Karen to become houseparents. It was then common for the houseparents to have multiple duties, and soon Mark was the general manager and they were both DJs. A lot has changed on campus since those days, and it was good to see the Fredericks again.

Vertical Radio is a listener-supported Christian radio station. Our Fall Pledge Drive will be held September 30 through October 2, 2015. We appreciate everyone who participated last spring, and look forward to providing the Four Corners with the best Christian radio broadcast for many years to come! ☀
As I was looking through some old photos the other day, I found one from my childhood days. I was all dressed up for church holding my Bible. My mom had written on the back of the photo, “The Little Missionary.” Little did she know then that those words would be prophetic. About 20 years later Kay and I would be missionaries, serving as houseparents here at Navajo Ministries. And, it’s interesting to note that founder Jack Drake wrote his autobiography titled, “The Big Missionary.”

Kay and I continue to serve today as Co-Directors of Partnership Ministry. Occasionally we hear of the home-going of one of our faithful Ministry friends and supporters. Some will designate Navajo Ministries as a recipient of Memorial Gifts in memory of their departed loved one who may have supported the ministry over the years. Some will give a donation in “honor of” a friend or loved one.

These donations designated as Memorials or Honorariums will benefit the Four Corners Home for Children. Through this part of our ministry we are able to provide a stable environment to boys and girls who have suffered hardship and devastation in their natural homes. Upon receipt of your tax-deductible donation, an attractive card will be sent to the family of the one you are memorializing or honoring. No amounts are ever mentioned. You may use the envelope that is attached to this magazine to indicate your wishes.

Thank you for your consideration of support through this unique program. We have included a listing of these folks who have blessed the childcare program in this way.

Jim Baker,
Co-Director of Partnership Ministry
Check out our NEWLY UPDATED WEBSITE at: www.NavajoMinistries.org

JIM & KAY BAKER’S BOOK
NOW AVAILABLE!

“The Bakers’ Dozen – and Then Some” highlights four decades of adventures in Navajoland, and is now available for purchase. Jim and Kay arrived at what was then Navajo Missions in 1975, moving from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania to become houseparents. They followed God’s call then, and continue to do so today.

To get your copy please go to www.NavajoMinistries.org or Call: 505.325.0255 Toll Free: 888.325.0255

$800** per person  EARLY BIRD SPECIAL* $750** per person
CALL NOW! 1.888.325.0255  EMAIL Vickie@NavajoMinistries.org

* Registration Deadline: May 31, 2016  ** Double Occupancy

MONUMENT VALLEY  PAINTED DESERT
CANYON DE CHELLY  AZTEC RUINS
GRAND CANYON  FOUR CORNERS NATIONAL MONUMENT
PETRIFIED FOREST  PLUS MUCH MORE!

SEPTEMBER 18–24, 2016

Navajo Ministries
Providing Hope and Restoration to Families since 1953
2103 W. Main Street  PO Box 1230  Farmington, NM 87499
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED