THE NAVAJO

Code Talkers

THE STORY OF ALFRED K. NEWMAN, SR.

ALSO SEE
EMDR AND
Anxiety Reduction
All of you that support and encourage us at Navajo Ministries are very important to us. We are always praying for you and continually thank God for your love and support.

Over the years we have received many wonderful gifts that have been given through the estates of our faithful supporters. Many years ago we decided to offer our help to provide education and consultations to assist our supporters in establishing an estate plan that avoids probate, reduces taxes, maximizes wealth for the family, and provides for ease of transfer to the family.

We recently received this note from a tax professional in our community that I am glad to share with you.

It is always nice to hear that what we are doing is beneficial to you our supporters.

Mark D. Johnson, CFP® with Fountain Financial Group, Inc. has been helping our supporters for almost 15 years in the area of estate planning and charitable gifting. He utilizes the services of Integrated Trust Services who provide estate planning documents in all fifty states.

If you have an interest in finding out more about establishing an efficient and cost effective estate plan or you would like a review of your current plan, call us. Mark will call you to discuss your family’s estate planning needs and help you determine if changes need to be made.

Jim,

I’m sure you’ve heard the saying “Nothing is for certain, except death and taxes”. Just dropping you a quick note to tell you what a heart service it is to encourage families to care for their loved ones by being prepared for both.

My comments are limited to the tax professional viewpoint. I recently saw a trust document that was prepared over ten years ago by Integrated Trust Systems, Inc. I was impressed when the persons it was prepared for indicated they may not have done it except for your “awareness program”. When families are young and healthy, most are not inclined to think of doing such preparations.

As a tax professional I usually am relieved to hear my clients have a trust document in place. I found this trust document to be concise in its content and presented in a high quality and durable format in an attractive binder. There were aspects of it that allowed some flexibility as their lives change over the years. An exceptional element I observed in the document was the educational narratives in each section stating its purpose.

I usually ask my clients who have trusts how they came to the decision to have a trust prepared for them, because I am interested in their motivations which may be helpful in encouraging others who need this service. I was pleased to hear Jim Baker had encouraged them and recommended Integrated Trust Systems, Inc to them. Over the years I have always respected the work and service you provide to the community and this only served to solidify my respect for you and Navajo Ministries. Thanks Jim.

Sincerely,

Barbara M. Moore, EA
Navajo Neighbors is owned and published by Navajo Ministries Inc., and is published three times a year and distributed approximately every four months.

Periodical postage has been paid at Loveland, Colorado 80537. Postmaster send address changes to Navajo Neighbors, PO Box 1230, Farmington, New Mexico 87499.

CONTACT INFORMATION
Navajo Ministries
2103 West Main Street
PO Box 1230
Farmington, New Mexico 87499

Phone 505.325.0255
Fax 505.325.9035
Email nmi@NavajoMinistries.org
Website www.NavajoMinistries.org

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 88.9 FM; Counseling Center; Navajo Nation Outreach, 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.

Navajo Ministries is a Charter Member in good standing with ECFA (Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability).
Called to Serve

This summer Kay and I were pleasantly surprised when a friend from our past walked in our doors. We first met him in 32 years ago when he and his wife came to serve as houseparents at Navajo Missions.

Al and Marie Sanchez joined Kay and me as we ministered together to the children who came into our care. They worked with us for about 3 ½ years. Marie was a good cook and even prepared our evening meals at the mission for awhile until a new cook arrived. During the day Al worked in our print shop.

Al and I had a few things in common. We both asked Jesus into our hearts in February of 1957. We also heard God speak to our hearts about going to the mission field. And, before we knew it we were serving together in Farmington, New Mexico. As he took over management of the print shop I moved to the other side of the building to assist Jack in management and fund raising. Together, we were blooming where we were planted.

When Al and Marie left houseparenting they stayed in the Farmington area with Al working with the public schools and then with children of dysfunctional families through a New Mexico state program. But, while they were in Farmington, Al kept hearing the word “Guatemala” coming to his mind day and night. Could God be calling him there?

In 1984 a friend made it possible for them to go to Guatemala to investigate what God might have him do there. It was the children – hungry, dirty, sick, begging – many living in cardboard boxes on the streets that touched their hearts. Al and Marie felt God was calling them to open a children’s home there. They returned home to prepare for their new calling to children.

Their trip to Guatemala was long and tedious as they pulled the loaded trailer behind their van up and down the mountainous roads. After 5,000 miles, they rounded a curve descending to the site of their new work. They were just one mile away when a tragic accident occurred. Marie was killed instantly. Their van and trailer were demolished with their personal belongings scattered along the highway. Al was of course devastated and felt he could not continue. Shortly thereafter he returned to the states to be with his children and church family.

Before long God reminded Al that His calling was irrevocable [Rom. 11:29] and that he had to go back. Al returned in 1986 to begin the work that God had called him to do. Helpers came from the states. Funds arrived. The Guatemalan government granted their approvals and the home for girls was established. Over the next 22 years homes were built, an office building, workshop, apartments for staff, school building and a medical and dental clinic. Over 300 girls have found a place of safety off the streets since he began the work.

Al now retired and living in Florida, was in Farmington to visit his daughter and came by to share what God had done in and through his life. As he talked about the progress and accomplishments of the girls home in Guatemala, he reflected on his time here at Navajo Ministries. He said, “Everything I did in Guatemala I learned from founder, Jack Drake, and how he trusted God to meet the needs in building homes, raising funds and securing staff. He was my mentor!”

Yes, besides Al Sanchez and me sharing the same month and year of our salvation, we both have had the privilege of calling Jack Drake our mentor. It’s my prayer that we will all live our lives in such a way that others will want to follow our example. “Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” [John 13:35] ✝

James D. Baker, President
**Comcast Cares**

This past spring the local Comcast Cable Company chose Navajo Ministries to be the recipient of their day of caring and serving. Over forty of their staff and friends spent Saturday morning May 3, painting, planting, weeding and even painting our flag pole. We’re very thankful for their assistance.

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**Mini-Van Cuts Fuel Costs**

Through the financial support of our friends we were able to purchase a good used mini-van. This will help keep the large 12 passenger vans off the highway when the houseparents are transporting just a few children at a time. Thank you friends.

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**School Prayer Meeting**

At the annual Back to School prayer meeting, August 17, the staff and houseparents gathered with the children and prayed for them as they began a new school year.

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**Notes from Neighbors Readers**

My goodness what a wonderful job you guys do on the Navajo Neighbors magazine. I enjoyed it so much that I took it to my church to show my friends. I enjoyed the feature about Navajo artist, Elmer Yazzie. I cut one of the pictures out and framed it. I enjoy reading what God has done in the lives of my Native brothers and sisters.

L. M., Kentucky

Your summer Navajo Neighbors was not only beautifully done, but informative.

H. S., Minnesota

Everything stops around here when the Navajo Neighbors arrives! We read it from cover to cover.

B. W., New Jersey

I like the format of the Navajo Neighbors that describes, page by page, what is happening within the various outreaches.

M. G., Pennsylvania
The Navajo Code Talkers, whose ranks exceeded 400 during the course of World War II in the Pacific Theater, have been credited with saving countless lives and hastening the end of the war.

The Code Talker’s primary job was to talk and transmit information on tactics, troop movements, orders and other vital battlefield information via telegraphs and radios in their native dialect. A major advantage of the Code Talker system was its speed. The method of using Morse code often took hours where as, the Navajos handled a message in minutes.

It has been said that if it were not for the Navajo Code Talkers, the Marines would have never taken Iwo Jima.

The Navajo’s unwritten language was understood by fewer than 30 non-Navajos at the time of WWII. The size and complexity of the language made the code extremely difficult to comprehend, much less decipher. Recently one of these Navajo heroes came to Navajo Ministries for an interview. Here’s his story.

Alfred K. Newman, Sr. was born on July 21, 1924 at Rehoboth Hospital east of Gallup, New Mexico where there was also a Boarding School Mission which is still in operation today. His family lived in Coolidge not far from the hospital where his father worked as a silversmith and his mother wove rugs for the trader who sold their crafts in the Trading Post to the many tourists who traveled by on historic Route 66.

Alfred reflected on his days as a youngster, “The trader had Navajos build several hogans [dirt floored octagon shaped structures made out of logs and mud] at the rear of the trading post where the tourists would come to see how the Navajos lived. The thing I hated the most was posing for pictures, squinting my eyes as I faced the sun. To this day, I still hate cameras!”

Early school days saw Alfred’s mother walking him to the nearby school that was built for the children of those who worked for the railroad. This area was not on the reservation land so many of the youngsters were Hispanic. After a couple of years in that school, his parents and the trader removed him from that school because he was learning more Spanish than English.

Alfred and Betsy Newman have been married 59 years.
“So, I began the third grade at the Rehoboth Mission School.”

Alfred recalled clearly that dreadful Sunday morning, December 7, 1941 when as an eighth grader he was getting ready to leave the dorm for church. “The Christian program on the radio was interrupted with the news that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor! The missionary teacher had us gather in the library to listen to the news as it was broadcast to the world.

I remained at Rehoboth until after I finished ninth grade. It was then that the Marines came to our school recruiting young Navajo men to serve their country. I figured I better enlist because they’re going to make me go anyway. At that time I really didn’t know why they were so interested in having Navajos serve.”

That summer this young Navajo 9th grade graduate, with the blessings of his parents, hitchhiked his way to Fort Wingate to enlist with the United States Marines. “A week later,” Alfred said, “I was on my way to Santa Fe for a physical examination and indoctrination. Ten days later I was on a train headed for eight weeks of training in San Diego. They prepared us for combat with arms training and then on to Camp Pendleton where we took our communications training.

“We had a platoon of about 60 Navajos from across the reservation. We had to be fluent in both Navajo and English. Four Navajo instructors began with the “first 29” Code Talkers. We had to be fast and accurate. We spent eight hours a day in the classroom going through the alphabet learning the code words for each letter. One word for “A” would be ant, but if there were other “A’s” in that word; we would use a different word. This format would be used for the names of islands and things like that. If we were talking about military equipment we would use the Navajo word for turtle (ch’éezh dígháhí) which would refer to a tank. We couldn’t take notes. Everything was memorized.”

It was a missionary’s son, Phillip Johnston, who grew up on the reservation, fluent in both Navajo and English that suggested to the Marine Corps that he believed the difficult, unwritten Navajo language could be used to transmit messages that couldn’t be deciphered by the Japanese.

Alfred served from 1943 – 1946. As an eighteen year old on the front lines, he witnessed many of his fellow marines die in battle as the bullets flew all around them. As Code Talkers they remained close to the communications specialists. When the Japanese couldn’t break the code they
tried jamming the airwaves. About 400 were trained as Code Talkers, but not all of them served in battle. Some were there in the occupation force, later.

Because of the secrecy, most soldiers weren’t aware of the Code Talkers’ duties. It wasn’t until 1968, that the United States government revealed the secret weapon of World War II, The Navajo Code Talkers. When Alfred was asked if he was relieved that he could finally tell his family and friends that he was a Code Talker, this modest soldier replied, “No, I didn’t talk about it. I’m not a person to say, ‘look at me, I’m a Code Talker’, unless someone would ask. I’m not one who likes to be put on a pedestal. I just did my job.”

Alfred was raised in a Christian family. He said, “I accepted Christ as my Savior at Rehoboth Christian School. When I went to war, I carried my little Bible with me in my vest pocket. I read it often, finding comfort in Psalm 91. Whenever we went off to battle we would offer a prayer. Some of the other Navajo Code Talkers were more traditional in their religious beliefs, carrying their corn pollen with them. There is fear when you’re in a war zone. As a Christian, I left everything up to God. If He wanted me to die there, so be it. If He wanted me to return, then that was His will.”

It was 1947 when Alfred walked off the bus in Coolidge, New Mexico. No one knew he was coming home. His mom had died while he was overseas. His stepfather was working in another place. As he walked the final two miles to his home his eyes were refreshed with the view of the desert brush amid the canyons and mesas. The aroma of the sage and the sounds of the wind were comforting after his years of enduring the smell of gun powder and listening to planes and bullets flying overhead.

He soon found a job at Fort Wingate where he took inventory of the ordinances and ran a forklift loading and storing bombs. He then became an ammunitions inspector. Later, he began working with the Navajo Nation distributing grain and feed to livestock across the reservation. Then, he spent some time working as a debt collector for an auto company. Finally, he started working at the coal mine, just west of Farmington where he stayed until he retired.

Alfred and his wife Betsy have been married 59 years. They met at the boarding school and married after he returned from the war. They have five children, thirteen grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Alfred says, “The Code Talkers meet once a month in Gallup. When asked what he thought of the Wind Talkers movie that Hollywood produced a few years ago, he shook his head, while smiling, “I saw it and I give it a ‘D’. The guy playing the Code Talker was from Canada and he couldn’t speak Navajo. And, the movie suggested that there was a body guard that stayed with each Code Talker, ready to kill the Code Talker if he was captured. I never found that to be true.”

As the interview ended, Alfred’s wife Betsy requested that the Navajo Neighbors readers pray for their health. As they get older they have needed surgeries. One surgery was called off. They believe God healed them, answering their prayers. They currently live near Farmington where Alfred enjoys spending time with their animals. They are active members of the Maranatha Fellowship [Christian Reformed Church] located in Farmington.

### Navajo Code Words

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<tr>
<th>ALPHABET</th>
<th>NAVAJO WORD</th>
<th>TRANSLATION</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>wóláchii’</td>
<td>ANT</td>
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<td>B</td>
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<td>BEAR</td>
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<td>S</td>
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<td>PLATOON</td>
<td>hashtł’ishnii</td>
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<td>CORPS</td>
<td>dine’é</td>
<td>CLAN</td>
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<td>MAJOR</td>
<td>chéch’il bit’aq’ óola</td>
<td>GOLD OAK LEAF</td>
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<tr>
<td>COLONEL</td>
<td>àsá bééshlígai</td>
<td>SILVER EAGLE</td>
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<td>DIVE BOMBER</td>
<td>gíí</td>
<td>CHICKEN HAWK</td>
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<td>PATROL PLANE</td>
<td>gáagii</td>
<td>CROW</td>
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<td>BATTLESHIP</td>
<td>łóó’tsoh</td>
<td>WHALE</td>
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<tr>
<td>SUBMARINE</td>
<td>béeśh łóó’</td>
<td>IRON FISH</td>
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<tr>
<td>DESTROYER</td>
<td>k’aa’ łóó’</td>
<td>SWORDFISH</td>
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To hear these words spoken, go to www.NavajoMinistries.org and choose The Navajo on side menu.
Pueblitos, a Passport to the Past

The Navajo Nation is a vast land of roughly 27,000 square miles. This rugged terrain spans across the northeast corner of Arizona and the northwest part of New Mexico. Approximately fifty miles east of the Navajo Nation border is a place called Dinétah in the Largo-Gobernador area.

Dinétah is home to Navajo pueblitos (small pueblos). These pueblitos were occupied by Navajo and Pueblo people during the Gobernador Period which began with the Pueblo Revolt in 1680, and ended about 100 years later. In 1692 when the Spanish regained control of the pueblo villages, many fled west to Navajo territory (Dinétah).

The Navajo and the Pueblo people lived together and possibly intermarried. The influence of the Pueblo people is seen in the arts, crafts, and architecture of the Navajo people. The Puebloan construction was utilized as Ute tribes began threatening the survival of Navajo and Pueblo people around 1715 AD. In order to survive, the builders of the pueblitos utilized mesa tops, cliff faces, and large boulders as construction sites. As a defense strategy, these locations had expansive views of on-coming attacks. Increased raids from Ute tribes and drought brought an end to this period, and the Navajo people moved further west by the late 1740’s.

The abandoned pueblitos were most likely first discovered by ranchers and Hispanic shepherds. In 1912 the pueblitos were professionally recorded, and in 1915 excavated. Additional recording and excavation was done between 1934 and 1941 by both amateurs and professionals. In the 1950s, the pueblito sites were documented as part of the Navajo Land Claim.

Today, preserving these unique structures is a goal of the Bureau of Land Management. The mesas and canyons are full of juniper, pinon pine, and sagebrush. Bumpy dirt roads will lead you to breathtaking views of canyons, Navajo Lake, and the pueblitos.

Most sites are accessible by car, however in inclement weather, some roads are impassable. For more information about the Dinétah Pueblitos, contact the Bureau of Land Management, 1235 La Plata Hwy, Farmington, NM 87401.
Ask anyone here, they’ll tell you – one thing that never changes around here is the consistent way in which things change around here. That’s a bit confusing so let me say it a different way . . . one thing at Navajo Ministries you can count on to never change is the fact that things always change. Hmm, that’s not much better. One more try . . . one thing that stays the same at NMI is the fact that nothing ever stays the same. Maybe I should give up.

Things change. It is part of life and seems to be an everyday part of life at Navajo Ministries. This has been a summer of change but we clearly see the hand of God at work.

The summer began with one set of house parents, the Moores, leaving us to pursue other employment opportunities. Heather Baker, our house parent assistant, graciously agreed to fill in full-time as interim house parent until our new house parents arrived. That was a real blessing but it also left us without an assistant! Sarah, our teacher’s aide, agreed to fill in as assistant until Heather could return to the post.

Hope Humbles has just recently left our Crisis House program after six years of devoted service as a house mom. She considered taking a roll in our school but feels like God is leading her in another direction. We will miss her and we wish her all of God’s best.

Sonya Rodriquez is filling the position Hope vacated. She is doing a fantastic job. She certainly knows the ropes. She has most recently served alongside Heather, as assistant house parent but her history with Navajo Ministries goes back a long time. Sonya grew up in our children’s homes and she is now ministering to children she shares common ground with. Sonya is a wonderful caretaker to the children here. Her heart reaches out to them and she is able to connect with them on a different level than the rest of us can.

Our new house parents have arrived fresh from the Chicago area. The Hampton family is actually returning to Farmington, having lived here some sixteen years ago. You will read more about them in an upcoming issue of the Navajo Neighbors.

Just as the Hamptons were making their transition from Chicago to New Mexico, the Garveys, house parents for the past nineteen months, told us of their intention to leave house parenting. They have blessed us this past year and a half as well as the children that have been in their home. They intend to stay in the Farmington area and possibly even remain involved with us in other employment areas.

We welcome Brandon and LaDonna Hampton and family.

Article contributed by: Annette Hall, Director of Children and Family Services.
A couple of years ago, I was the teacher at Navajo Ministries School. I loved the three years that I worked there and felt like my students made learning gains, despite their overwhelming circumstances.

Towards the end of my time there, I was working on my masters and my thesis was about teaching Navajo and at-risk students. What I learned was that the school at Navajo Ministries is an ideal placement for these students. Small class sizes, a comfortable and loving space, and attention to cultural differences all help to stabilize the learning environment.

New research is showing that emotional states have a huge impact on learning. Fear and prolonged stress, in particular, can inhibit learning. (Jensen, 2005). The more we can do to make a student feel comfortable, the better chances we have of meeting their needs as learners. (Robertson, 2004) For these students from families in crisis, the small class size is ideal.

First of all, it keeps them on campus with people that they are familiar with. Since Navajo students tend to be shy, this gives them fewer relationships to worry about. (Wise, n.d.) Plus the strong one-on-one role modeling that can take place in small classes make learning more natural since this is the way that the Navajo people have traditionally taught their youngsters.

Another generality of Navajo learners that I learned was that they learn “globally.” This means that they do better when they can visualize the big picture of what is being taught. (Eric Development Team, 1994) With the collaboration of house-parents and other Ministry staff, this is easier to accomplish than if they were in a different, unconnected school.

The weekly meetings and collaborative activities that were planned for the students helped students continue their learning seamlessly outside of the school day. Meeting the needs of the “whole child” including basic needs, spiritual needs, educational needs, and emotional needs is truly the key to why these kids at Navajo Ministries can function as well as they do.

They know they are loved and protected and this enables them to focus on what they need to focus on, being a kid!

Funds are now being raised for the “extreme makeover” of the Ministries campus. The new Education/Activity Center will be constructed.

Sources:


Linda Gutierrez, former teacher, poses with one of her classes during her three years serving as teacher.

Jim Baker and architect and Board member George Trosky place stakes where the new Education/Activity Center will be constructed.

On-site school blessings of our On-Site School

Jim Baker and architect and Board member George Trosky place stakes where the new Education/Activity Center will be constructed.
EMDR and **Anxiety Reduction**

When I came home from a tour in Vietnam, I returned with memories of the trauma I experienced in war, both of events as well as the emotions encountered. Thirty-one years later I was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a very common disorder for returning veterans. It was a problem for me until recently when many of my symptoms were minimized through a therapy process called EMDR. [Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing]

No one is sure how EMDR works, neurobiologically or in the brain. But, we do know that when a person experiences a seriously traumatizing event, normal brain processing does not occur as it does ordinarily. The event somehow becomes “frozen” in time and even thinking about this traumatizing event causes the same emotional response as it did during the actual incident. These memories may well interfere with the way we see and enjoy life and others.

I have recently been trained and certified as an EMDR Therapist*. This counseling technique has brought on a completely new and refreshing aspect to my counseling practice. EMDR is quite successful and beneficial for all sorts of phobias, anxiety issues as well as past trauma. Additionally, bringing God into the EMDR session has greatly increased the effectiveness and long-term resolution of the target issues we are working on with the client.

Perhaps the best way to describe the benefits of the EMDR therapy is to hear what some of our clients have to say.

“I’ve been afraid of snakes since I was a little girl. I had heard about Bill’s new EMDR therapy so went to see if he could help me. After just two sessions, I was totally freed from my fear!! That really worked!! I still won’t pick up a snake, but at least now, I don’t freak out when I’m around one!” S. L.

“Having an insatiable appetite for sex, I found myself getting into all sorts of sexual predicaments with other women. I went to Bill for help and after several sessions with EMDR I had a breakthrough. These sessions were quite emotional, but well worth the time spent. My wife has forgiven me and we are working on our relationship. I feel like a new person!” J. R.

“When I was in elementary school, I went to the ocean. I was walking along and stepped off some sort of ledge and went under. Luckily, my brother was nearby and pulled me up. Since then I can’t get into a pool more than waist deep and would never put my face into the water! Using EMDR, Bill was able to relieve my anxiety about water and now, not only can I put my face in the water, but I’m signing up for swimming lessons!” D. T.

It is very encouraging to me to know that through God and the use of EMDR, I am able to help bring a reduction in anxiety and fear for those clients willing to deal with their past issues. For each of these clients quoted above, I feel very fortunate to have been able to take part in their healing and hear them praise God because of it.

*The EMDR International Association (EMDRIA) maintains a list of all EMDR trained therapists in the nation and around the world. Their website is: http://www.emdria.org/
Local Plants are Food

There is a wide variety of local plant life in the southwest that continues to provide sustenance for the Navajo people. Plants such as sumac berries, wild mustard, and goosefoot are just a few examples of wild plants used by Navajo. Deep in the canyons of sandstone you can still find wild potatoes, wild celery, and rhubarb.

One popular dish among Navajo people is chifichin, which is a pudding made from sumac berries. The red berries are cooked with sugar and cornmeal to make the pudding. In addition to the chifichin, baskets such as the Wedding Basket are made from the sumac branches, and a dye is made from the leaves of the sumac.

Goosefoot is another wild plant that was eaten by the Navajo. The goosefoot plant leaves and stem are eaten in early spring, and the seeds are harvested in the fall. The Navajo translation is t'ohdeeii tsoh.

Wild celery is a small plant that is usually dried and used in soup and stews. The Navajo translation is haza'aleeb tsoh.

Navajo people believe that life moves in circles. Sun and rain bring the plants from the earth. The plant gives life to animals such as sheep, horses, and deer. These animals in turn give life to man, and other animals such as mountain lions and hawks. In the end everything returns to the earth to feed new life.

Navajo people believe that nothing should ever be wasted. Every part of the sheep, plant or other resource should be used. Everything taken from the earth is given back.

Stories of gathering wild plants and the circle of life have been passed down from generation to generation. These stories remain a part of the oral history and story telling of the Navajo people. Today you can still find elders who share the stories and the food of the traditional Navajo.
Most people spend Father’s Day honoring Dad. They probably go to church together and maybe out for breakfast; treat him to a few gifts then round the day off with a backyard BBQ. For my family, this Father’s Day was different. We honored my husband Kelly, but we also honored our veterans and servicemen and most importantly our Heavenly Father. We attended an event like nothing I have ever seen. Nine artists, ten hours and hundreds of people: featuring Mercy Me.

If you’re from the Four Corners region, you know that a huge event like this would typically be out of our grasp. It would cost a family like mine hundreds of dollars to drive to Phoenix or Denver, buy tickets, rent a hotel room and feed everyone in restaurants in order to attend an event of this magnitude. Not this year. I am talking about SpiritFest 2008, the first Christian festival event in the area, hosted by Angel Peak Ministries. Vertical Radio was asked as the promoting station for SpiritFest 2008. We agreed and went on, this concert became a festival event with other singers and ministers including The Afters, Bethany Dillon, Daniel Rodriguez (aka “The Singing Policeman”), Marla Kavanaugh (an opera singer from New Zealand), Dennis “The Swan” Swanberg, Bibleman, Trilby Michel, and two local bands, Loruss and Paradigm joining the headliner band, Mercy Me.

Nestled in a rock formation, 9 miles Southeast of Bloomfield is a hidden treasure called Angel Peak Ranch. There in the middle of the desert was a huge stage for the event. Behind the stage was a modern version of the Old West. Instead of circled wagons were dozens of RV’s lined up in a horse-shoe shape to create a mini-village for the artists to rest and refresh.

The day of the concert proved to be a typical hot, breezy, dusty day in New Mexico. As our family was setting up our area, a van drove up, and a bright-eyed young woman hopped out saying, “Hi! I’m Beth!” It was one of the artists, Bethany Dillon. She was the sweetest, most genuine person I met that day. Mercy Me posed with Darren, Cindy and me (see picture) after their exploring adventures where they found animal bones, lizards, and a snake.

We were treated to a special day of entertainment that the Four Corners region has never seen before. Despite the heat and flying dust, attendees had a great time worshipping the Lord together. As the sun slipped behind the mesas, Mercy Me took the stage. These men have been blessed with a gift from God to entertain and to lead others to praise Him. The crowd became one large family…the Body of Christ, worshipping together as Mercy Me performed and ministered with their songs and testimonies.

This is just a glimpse of SpiritFest 2008. Vertical Radio was blessed to be a small part of this event through planning and promotion. Launie and her team from Angel Peak Ministries are already talking about their plans for the next event and praying for God’s guidance. 

by Wendy Curtin, host of the KNMI Lunch Crunch from 10 AM – 3 PM daily [To read more about Wendy’s experiences at SpiritFest visit www.VerticalRadio.org]
Everybody needs to have at least one good friend. I’m sure there are many reading these words who are blessed with several good friends. I know that’s been true with me. One of my good friends was Vern Roth. Kay and I have had many great times together with Vern and Kay Roth and former staff members Bob and Leslie Fitz over the years. Many meals and picnics were shared in each of our homes. Table games always brought out the fun in all of us. Winning wasn’t really important, but the time spent together was always a blessed time.

This past July Vern lost a courageous battle with cancer that he had fought for over a year. Many of his friends gathered at the funeral to celebrate his life of service to God and others. His wife Kay listed Navajo Ministries as a place for their friends to donate gifts in his memory. You will notice a number of them are shown on this page. We’re always thankful for friends who want their loved ones remembered in this way.

Perhaps you have a good friend like Vern was to me. You can remember him or her through a Living Memorial gift. If your friend is still living, you can show your love and appreciation through a gift in their honor. All of the Memorial Gifts received benefit the Four Corners Home for Children here at the ministry.

After we have received your donation, a lovely remembrance card will be sent to the family of the one you are memorializing or honoring. No amounts will be mentioned.

Vern’s best friend was Jesus and I know he would want our readers to remember the words of Christ as He spoke of His sacrifice on the cross when he said, “Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.” [John 15: 13] By: Jim Baker, a friend to Vern

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**Living Memorials as of July 2008**

**IN MEMORY OF**

- Rev. Martin G. Sierk
- Breeann Chavez
- Breeann Chavez
- Breeann Chavez
- Bernice Kennedy
- Edd Coffey
- Breeann Chavez
- Sharon Chiles
- Sharon Chiles
- Loree Ann Ferrari
- Henry Averett
- Mrs. Terry Maxey
- James Worrell
- Mrs. Barbara Wooter
- Rev. Francis C. Stranton
- Judge Howard Fender
- Rodney Crear
- Marian Jackson
- Wilbur and Grace Pobanz
- Kathy Rice
- Donald Frank
- Miriam Jabloński
- Trevor Kitly
- Bertha Steudler
- Breeann Chavez
- Patricia Stephens
- Bertha Steudler
- Breeann Chavez
- Wilbur and Grace Pobanz
- Bessie Ziegler
- Sharon Atson
- Paul M. Crum
- Vern Roth
- Vern Roth
- Vern Roth
- Vern Roth
- Vern Roth
- Vern Roth
- Vern Roth
- Vern Roth
- Vern Roth
- Vern Roth
- Vern Roth
- Helen Drake
- Vern Roth
- Elaine Rooks
- Elaine Rooks
- Elaine Rooks
- Vern Roth
- Vern Roth
- Jennie Banger
- Vern Roth
- Barbara Waters
- Billy Lee Moore

**FROM**

- Randall Sierk
- Richard and Donna Maser
- Bradley and Andrea Baker
- Terry Baker
- John and Carol Borst
- Thomas and Melissa Baker
- Jan Jarman
- Mayo Clinic – Mr. Peter Carryer, MD
- Allan and Babette Bassing
- Judy Feil
- Rod Hancock Family
- Don and Carol Adams
- Don and Carol Adams
- Don and Carol Adams
- Don and Carol Adams
- Don and Carol Adams
- Mary I. Scranton
- Jim and Kay Baker
- Betty R Morris
- Betty R Morris
- Bethany Church
- Sandra S Pobanz
- David and Amanda Miller
- Marguerite Wissmann
- Jann Gouge
- Jim and Kay Baker
- Donald and Lily Schneider
- Jami and Lisa Chavez
- Sally Fort
- Mary M Buol
- Allan and Babette Bassing
- Sandra Pobanz
- Virginia Chambers
- Caleb and Alice Dickson
- Phyllis Y. Crum
- Rich and Betsy Castle
- Janice E. Micali
- John and Jane Plunkett
- David and Jacque Taylor
- J.P. and Georgia Hayes
- Wynnell B. Tyler
- Schreiber Insurance Agency
- Keith and Loveda Miller
- Kathleen and David John Drake
- Don and Joan Pinkerton
- Ron Cadenhead
- Conrad W. Nelson
- Grant Heilman
- Ed and Loretta Allen
- Harold and Darlene Van Winkle
- Jeff and Marilee Bosma
- Jim and Kay Baker
- Aubrey and Betty Morris
- Aubrey and Betty Morris

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**Living Memorials as of July 2008**

**FROM**

- Jo Ellen Koser
- William and Karen Bockwitz
- Donald and Gay Carlson
- Laura Monetos
- Robert and Maxine Weeks
- Laura Monetos

**IN HONOR OF**

- Marjorie Shoap
- Charlie and Jan Carey
- Dave and Shirley Carlson
- 50th Wedding Anniversary
- Margaret Berthold
- Margaret Berthold
- Lorraine Collins
- Lorraine Collins

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