MISSION STATEMENT
Navajo Ministries helps the people we serve through programs that instill hope, restoration and Christian values.

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ABOUT NAVAJO MINISTRIES
Navajo Ministries was established in 1953 for the purpose of caring for dependent children, regardless of race, religion or national origin, and for printing and distributing Navajo tracts and hymnals.
The ministry has expanded over the years to include: a non-commercial Christian radio station, KNMI Vertical Radio 88.9 FM and 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).
Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children.” … Then He took the children in His arms and placed His hands on their heads and blessed them. - Mark 10:14b&16 (NLT)

Ya’át’ée! (Thank you)

Bóhóníhítis mishik’iijidi doo (The LORD bless you).

Celebrating our 65th year of Ministry with a reunion that included some of our former children and house parents was a powerfully moving experience! In this special issue of Navajo Neighbors we will be sharing that exceptional event with you.

God always uses people of vision to accomplish His will – taking the ordinary to do the extraordinary. Our Founder, Jack Drake, was the man of vision that God used nearly seven decades ago to establish a ministry that would provide hope and restoration to Diné (Navajo) families. Throughout Dinétah (the Navajo reservation) Jack was called “Ed’e neihooditsa Siid (the big missionary). A lot of changes have taken place throughout the history of this fantastic ministry; however, our mission and vision have never been lost!

It’s our desire to share with you, through our words and photos, the very heart of what we are all about. It’s our prayer that you will be able to envision and capture the precious souls that are represented in each story recounted. Believe your heart will be touched as you read the comments from our former children. Leslie Fitz had an opportunity to talk with many of them during the Reunion and was able to record their fond memories. And, we are pleased to introduce to you our current house parents who exemplify the love of our Abba-Father on a daily basis with our children. You will be impressed as you read the update regarding “Jennifer’s Journey,” our high school graduate who has begun her freshman year at Eastern New Mexico University – “Go Greyhounds!” I’m convinced you’ll be inspired while you read about our ranch program as our ranch manager, Paula Terpema, tells of the great impact God’s creatures have on our children. I know you will be encouraged to learn from Alisha Hawthorne-Martinez, LCSW, regarding the mental health needs being met by her stellar Second Chance Counseling team. I believe you will have a greater understanding of why I am so honored and proud to be serving as the Naat’łanii (President) of this life-changing ministry!

Sponsors have played a significant role in meeting the tremendous needs of the Four Corners Home for Children. We are blessed to have these individuals, couples, and families join us in our efforts to serve these children … we could not do it without their generosity. Perhaps you would prayerfully consider becoming a sponsor? Please join us in making a practical, yet eternal, difference!

Be sure to check out our back cover – we are offering a 65th Anniversary Give-A-Way! This one-time offer includes a copy of our founder’s book, The Big Missionary and a copy of The Baker’s Dozen. You will definitely want to take advantage of this timely offer. You will get a play-by-play account of Jack Drake’s faith in action, AND read one endearing story after another from Jim and Kay Baker’s book, spanning 40 years at Navajo Ministries. Please follow the details, and these two priceless treasures are yours!

“Let the children come to me (Jesus).”

Ya’át’ée!

Serving together,

Raymond M. Dunton
President
Brilliant sunshine and southwest heat welcomed about 110 people to the 65th Anniversary & Reunion Celebration of Navajo Ministries at our campus in Farmington, New Mexico.

In the shade of the tall cottonwood trees, playing children clowned around in the “bouncy house” while a carriage pulled by a prancing white horse circled the driveway – providing rides for young and old. Yard games, face-painting, a popcorn machine and door prizes completed the activities followed by a Navajo taco and mutton stew buffet.

In the balloon decorated gazebo, adults gathered to reminisce. Later, Navajo Code Talker and former Navajo Nation Chairman, Peter McDonald, offered words of encouragement.

Who came to the 65th Anniversary & Reunion Celebration? Adults who spent some or all of their childhood at the Four Corners Home for Children. Present and former house parents and staff – as well as their children and grandchildren.

Wouldn’t you love to listen in on those reminiscences? I had a chance to do just that as I went around asking questions such as: What is your favorite memory at the “Mission”? What was most difficult for you? As you look back, how did living at the “Mission” impact your life? Each adult who spent all of or some of their childhood at the “Mission” gave me permission to share their thoughts and I invite you to listen in:

Marian and Sonny and Sonny’s sister-in-law, Amy, were talking together. Sonny said, “One of the nicest things that happened to me was when my house dad built me a doll house of my own and my house mom and I decorated it – we used a watch face for the clock on the wall.” Marian added: “My favorite memory is our family vacation to Disneyland in California. I was about nine and it was so much fun! My house parents were funny and you could tell they really liked us kids.”

Amy jumped in: “After we were married, when John brought me here for a tour, he showed me his house and where he played – you could tell he felt good about being here.” (John is currently serving in the military in the Middle East.)

Marian said, “It was difficult to have so many house parents – in ten years, I had eight different house parents. Each of them were nice and all, but it was hard to keep changing. I was shy anyway. Each time I had to change, I felt like I went backwards. But it’s

CELEBRATION OF Hope
worked out okay – I’ve stayed in touch with each of them, which is important to me.” Sonny agreed that she had the same difficulty. Her brown eyes very serious, she emphatically continued: “You wonder about the impact the “Mission” has had on my life: “I’m a Social Worker and working on my Master’s Degree in counseling – I do what I do because of the impact the “Mission” has had on me. If it weren’t for this place here, I’d be one of my clients.”

Behind the girls sat Clayton and Gerri, so I asked them for their story: Clayton said, “I was 8 years old when my mom moved me and my brother from Chicago.” I said, “I’ll pack.” Mom continued, “As a kid who grew up at the “Mission” and went to college because of the “Mission,” it was hard to be here and not with my family. I always wondered about them. I finally met them and we formed a relationship. That led me to understand I was better off at the “Mission” than I would have been with them. I still call my house parents “Mom” and “Dad” and that’s who they are to me!”

As I walked down the driveway, Rachel, child of a former house parent joined me. “At first, I was afraid I’d lose my mom to the other kids, but I soon realized she wasn’t going anywhere! I was happy here because I always had a friend to play with. I remember when the upper grounds were paved. It had been just gravel. We kids all put on our roller skates and the house parents let us stay up late. It was so much fun being outside after dark!”

Pita is raising her three grandchildren and it’s hard. She said, “Sometimes someone in the family will suggest I take them to the “Mission” but I cannot do that. Yet, if the worst ever happened, I know they’d get the best care. I trust the people here.” Phebe nodded in agreement.

As the celebration came to an end, Ron approached me to ask, “Do you remember me?” I had to admit I did not, but I was interested in his story. He told me, “I’ve pursued a lifelong career in Social Services. I came today to encourage the kids to value what they have here at the “Mission.” I came as a three-year-old and graduated from high school. Then I went to college. Here is where I learned discipline and to work hard. I started sweeping the print shop and worked up to managing it. Mr. Baker asked me if I would stay on to manage the print shop, but I said, ‘No, that’s not my dream. I’m going to college.’”

As I ponder the things Marian, Sonny, Amy, Clayton, Gerri, Gina, Rachel, Pita, Phebe, and Ron told me – the things I’m sharing with you – I am overwhelmed with humility that God has given us such a remarkable privilege of being a part of the “Mission.” The “Mission” was here when these youngsters needed care. As a friend of Navajo Ministries, or as a staff member, we are a part of something bigger than ourselves – God’s Plan!
By Paula Terpsma

“I love to come to the barn” is a statement I have heard many times since becoming the Ranch Manager here at Navajo Ministries. “I love Val – She’s my favorite,” one of the girls will say. “This reminds me of working with my grandpa” a boy will say as we clean up the barnyard. Cleaning the water trough and refilling it often erupts into a good soaking for everyone close by.

Currently our Ranch consists of four horses, two miniature horses, two llamas, three goats, two donkeys, assorted chickens, one duck and one goose, and one friendly barn cat. The Navajo children and teens who call NMI home come to the barn as part of their chore time each day. Through their chores they learn many things, such as responsibility and caring for the animals. They learn to sit quietly and nurture the baby chicks. As the children follow the instructions I give them, they experience success in leading the larger animals, such as Buddy, the goat, and Spock, the donkey. The children begin to overcome some of their fears as they interact with one of the 1,500-pound gentle horses we have here at the Ranch; learning to ride these large animals instills confidence in the children. After riding, the children sometimes braid the horse’s mane and tail, and experience the satisfaction of a job well done. They come to understand the importance of routine and schedules with feeding the animals, and recognize the value of responsibility. Learning in this active environment has been a gift to these children we care so much about.

By Alisha Hawthorne-Martinez

Second Chance Counseling, LLC (SCC) is honored to provide competent and holistic mental health services to the youth at Four Corners Home for Children. Second Chance Counseling’s mission is to promote positive change and empowerment among individuals, families, and communities. Two therapists and a mentor/case manager work with the youth at Four Corners Home for Children. Each child is treated with dignity and respect, while also being held to a high standard of behavior and accountability. Treatment is always holistic in nature; the team recognizes that treatment must address the whole person (body, soul and spirit) for healing to occur. This includes a cultural component as well.

Each staff member brings their own unique experience to the table, but all of them share the same goal: to help those who need it. Alisha Hawthorne-Martinez is the Executive Director of Second Chance Counseling. She is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with a Master’s Degree in Social Work; she specializes in trauma. Melissa Tarazon is a Licensed Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselor, who has a Master’s Degree in Psychology with a focus on marriage and family therapy; she is currently working on her Doctorate Degree in Psychology. John Martinez has received training on the impact that anxiety has on teenage behavior, and he works as a peer mentor for high risk youth.

Cultural competency is one of the core values SCC brings to the table. The SCC team has stated, “We are so proud to be a part of the Four Corners Home for Children, and for the opportunity to help some of our community’s most vulnerable youth succeed.”

Alisha & John Martinez. Above: Melissa Tarazon working with one of our children at the Four Corners Home for Children.
Charley and Karissa Jones are houseparents for the House of Faith, our boys’ home. Charley is from Pennsylvania and Karissa is from Wyoming. They have been married for a little over 2 years and have a beautiful baby daughter, Lorelai, who will be 1 in October! They met online in 2014, and then started dating. In 2015 Charley led Karissa to Christ, after having a relationship with Christ himself for many years. Charley was raised in an adoptive Christian home. Karissa did not grow up in the same type of home; she was unaware of what it meant to have a personal relationship with Jesus. From the beginning of their relationship, Charley was able to share the love of Christ with her and lead her into an understanding of what that relationship truly means.

Charley and Karissa maintained a long-distance relationship before getting married and settling in St. George, Utah, where they began their family, and started to realize that what they wanted to do with their lives was full time ministry. “As we prayed through that process, the Holy Spirit led us to think of full time ministry that was serving children but we had no idea what that looked like. Our first thought was for us to become foster parents and bring children into our home through the foster care system. During that process we found ‘houseparent’ positions. After much prayer and petition we were led to pursue the path of becoming houseparents!” From the moment we said, ‘YES’ to this idea, we knew we were in for a ride!”

They started applying for houseparent jobs but everything was put on hold when their daughter Lorelai was born 9 weeks premature. They spent 45 days in the NICU with Lorelai, until she got healthier and strong enough to go home. After they were able to bring her home, they continued their search and God brought them to Navajo Ministries.

Charley and Karissa Jones came into our boys’ home at a time when there was a great need for high support and high structure. They were able to provide both. We have seen a great change in the home and are so excited to partner with them to see what God has in store for the children He brings to us.

Darien and Senovia Johnson are houseparents for the House of Love, our girls’ home. They have a son by the name of Righteous Naat’iin Johnson who is 2-years-old, and a new born daughter, Beloved Bliss Johnson. Darien describes how they met like this: “I, Darien Johnson, am a country boy from Eufaula, Alabama and my beautiful wife, Senovia Johnson, is a ‘Rez Girl’ from Smith Lake, New Mexico. We met during our enlistment into the United States Air Force Reserve. After months of intense training we both had to report back to our duty stations. Senovia would be stationed in Anchorage, Alaska and I would be stationed in Montgomery, Alabama. I thought it would be a good idea to keep in contact. A year later, June 15, 2013, we were in Gallup, New Mexico for our wedding. Yep, I proposed in Anchorage, Alaska and she said ‘Yes!’ Miles and miles apart and somehow God bridged this huge gap to bring us together.”

Senovia felt that God was calling them to live in New Mexico but Darien was not persuaded. He had a job lined up in Alabama and told Senovia “maybe one day.” They lived in Alabama for 5 years, all the while Senovia felt the Holy Spirit moving her that they would return to New Mexico.

Darien tells us, “In January 2018, Senovia brings the conversation back up about us moving to New Mexico. For the first time in five years I prayed and asked God what He thought about New Mexico and what He thought about us moving there.” From that moment on, God began to work. Many things happened and God quickly answered Darien’s prayer. They had no idea what they were getting into, but confirmation from God was all they needed to make it across the New Mexico state line.

In March of 2018, Darien and Senovia stopped in at Navajo Ministries. They walked into the President’s office and introduced themselves and began the process of applying. They had obeyed God’s call and are now a vital part of our staff.

We are so thankful that God has called the Johnsons to be a part of our Four Corners Home for Children family. We trust that God will bring great blessing as the Johnsons strive to make a difference in the lives of our children.
Jennifer’s Journey Continues

You may recall in our last issue of Navajo Neighbors (Spring 2018) Jennifer had decided to take a year off from school in order to “figure out what the ‘real’ world is all about.” She immediately learned that the ‘real world’ is about making decisions and then making adjustments in order to make more decisions! Jennifer did a great job as we sat down and created a worksheet, listing all her options and identifying all the “unknowns.” She was diligent in searching for data, allowing her to begin the process of making informed decisions. She was committed to seriously asking her Heavenly Father for guidance as she pondered the pros and cons. She even sought out some feedback and advice from others who sincerely care for her. That experience reminded me of the verse from Proverbs 1:5 - “A wise man will hear and increase in learning, and a man of understanding will acquire wise counsel” (NASB).

Eastern New Mexico University was her final answer – “Go Greyhounds!” After making that decision, Jennifer was on fast track to get registered … She was able to get the classes she wanted. She is carrying a full load with classes such as Introduction to Psychology and English Composition, plus she is on the marching band color guard! Due to Jennifer’s discipline and gifted intelligence she was able to apply some awarded scholarships towards her college expense, which was an enormous help in making it affordable.

This has been a major adjustment for Jennifer, and she seems to be doing well with each new challenge. This has been a major adjustment for all of us here at Navajo Ministries as well. We have watched Jennifer grow up and now our little girl is a young adult living over 400 miles away! She continues to build her support system there on the ENMU Campus and in the Portales community.

We just learned that the Greyhound Marching Band has been invited by Lord Mayor Nial Ring of Dublin, Ireland to perform in their 2019 St. Patrick’s Day Festival! What an exciting opportunity for Jennifer to experience … That would mean our College Girl would be nearly 5,000 miles away from home!!! “Yaadilah!” (Good Grief!).

Please join us as we celebrate Jennifer Faith Benally and pray for her continued success. Perhaps you would prayerfully consider financially partnering with us in Jennifer’s Journey, or even contributing to her dream of attending Eastern New Mexico University was her final answer – “Go Greyhounds!”

A Lasting Legacy

This 65th anniversary of Navajo Ministries has caused Kay and me to reflect on our involvement with this significant ministry. When we arrived in 1975, 22 years had passed since our founder, Jack Drake, pitched his borrowed tent on these grounds to begin a mission that would provide homes for children in need. We were two of the many staff members who heard God’s call to invest our lives into the lives of Navajo children.

We have been blessed to give of our time, energy and resources over the past 43 years, and to leave a lasting legacy of hope to those God placed in our care when we were houseparents. This page of our magazine is designed to recognize our friends from around the world who are providing gifts in memory of a departed loved one or in honor of one still living. These gifts are helping us provide loving homes for Navajo children who have been placed in our care because of the tragedy and trauma of their dysfunctional natural families.

You have the opportunity, through your memorial gift, to partner with us as we continue to invest in the lives of these children. When we receive your tax-deductible donation, we will send an attractive remembrance card to the family of the individual you are memorializing or honoring; no amounts are ever mentioned. You may use the envelope that is attached in this magazine to respond with your legacy gift. Thank you so much for considering this unique form of supporting our children.

Jim Baker, President Emeritus

FROM IN MEMORY OF

Bonnie K. Suazo John Throp
Jennifer McNamaras Rev. Daniel Schoriemer
Betty Morris Rev. Daniel Schoriemer
Betty Morris Eric Fisher
First Presbyterian Church - Farmington
T. Greg and Susan Merton Eric Fisher
Iris Greer Gene and Carol Champion
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FROM IN HONOR OF

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Betty Morris Our Three Grandchildren
Amy Leary Tes Morris D.D.S.
Colin S. Stewart Sharon Davis
Applied Geotechnical Services Rich Mullins
Richard and Eileen Garding Raymond S. Clark
Raymond Barrows Bernard Ricks
Ron James Bernard Ricks
Zion United Methodist Church/ Our Three Grandchildren
The Builders Class
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OWN A PART OF NAVAJO MINISTRIES HISTORY!

THIS ONE-TIME OFFER INCLUDES A COPY OF OUR FOUNDER’S BOOK, THE BIG MISSIONARY AND A COPY OF THE BAKERS’ DOZEN WHICH PICKS UP WHERE JACK DRAKE’S BOOK LEFT OFF. JUST INCLUDE THE COUPON BELOW WITH YOUR DONATION OF ANY AMOUNT.

Please send me a copy of The Big Missionary and The Bakers’ Dozen

Place COUPON in the included envelope with donation

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