

Navajo News



A Publication of La Vida Missions, Inc.
Bringing the Gospel of Jesus to the Navajo

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What is La Vida Mission?



This year we have almost thirty students spread from Kindergarten through High School living in dorms during the week and then are transported back home to their families on weekends. The dorm parents also serve as teachers (academic and vocational), maintenance workers, mechanics, office workers, kitchen help, greenhouse, etc. Everyone fills in where needed in addition to their regular duty. Since we are out here in the desert wilderness (50 miles from Farmington, NM), every service that one expects in a city has to be provided by mission staff.

Our water system supplies not only the mission, but we also have a water station that provides water for people in the community. They come from miles around with jugs, barrels and pickup water tanks for domestic use as well as livestock. In addition to our water system, we operate our own sewage treatment facility, garbage service, and vehicle maintenance. Also, the greenhouses and garden were recently restored thanks to a generous donation from Restore a Child Foundation and the labors of Southern Adventist University students with Todd Johnson and his crew from His Hands and Feet Ministry spearheading and overseeing the whole project. We are in the process of refurbishing the clinic and putting it back in to use as a learning center and health care center, where free dental clinics are provided as well as other medical needs.

We pick up the mail in Farmington and bring it back to the mission, placing it in mailboxes for the mission, staff, students and community where Navajo residents in the area (non-Adventist and Adventist) come to get their mail (no rural mail delivery on the reservation).

Our church is the center of a widespread outreach work. Weekly Bible studies are given in a 30+ mile radius of the mission. We have started a church plant in Crownpoint (30 miles south) and another in the Bisti Wilderness (20 miles north). Our outreach team also conducts a regular jail ministry, and feeds the community both for the Friday evening Vespers and Sabbath noon and lunch is served with the services in Crownpoint. Once each month the church has a Community Service day in collaboration with the office of "Partnership With Native Americans" during which clothes, food, furniture and other supplies are given away to anyone who comes.

All these goods and services are offered free of charge to the Navajo in our area. Neither is there a charge for tuition, room and board at the school.

Some suppose that our expenses end when school is out, but many of these services continue throughout the summer. It is during the summer that we are doing major maintenance on buildings and buying new textbooks for the following year that cost us thousands of dollars. Our only sources of income are the generous gifts made by people like yourselves. We do all the work ourselves that we possibly can to make your donations stretch as far as possible and gratefully welcome mission groups from churches, schools and colleges who come on short term mission trips to assist with projects.

Praise the Lord for our generous donors who keep our doors open so that we can share the love of Jesus to this almost forgotten mission field.

Christ's method alone will give true success in reaching the people. The Saviour mingled with men as one who desired their good. He showed His sympathy for them, ministered to their needs, and won their confidence. Then He bade them, "Follow Me."--The Ministry of Healing, p. 143.

Pastor Steve Gillham



Bulletin Board

Special Thanks to:

- **Our Heavenly Father** for providing our needs.
- **Faithful donors** who support LVM with prayers, financial and other donations (including Box Tops for Education).
- **Student sponsors** and their many contributions, prayers and letters.
- **Jenn Cruz** for knitted hats
- **Marvin & Barbara LaCourt** for hand towels, school supplies and socks
- **Sussie & Mindy Thompson** for clothing, school and dorm supplies, toys, food, shoes and Box Tops for Education.

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La Vida Missions, Inc. is an independent Seventh-day Adventist Mission to the Navajo. It operates a boarding school for Navajo children (pre-K – 10th grade), clinic, water/mail/clothing services and an evangelism outreach for the Navajo community. The mission is located off Highway 371, 55 miles north of I-40 on Exit # 53, or 50 miles south of Farmington, New Mexico.

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HISTORY HIGHLIGHTS by Annette Williams

The Founders - Part One

La Vida Mission was founded by a group of people from the Farmington, New Mexico church, now named Pinon Hills Seventh-day Adventist Church.

God used Lily in the earlier years to open her people's hearts to Christ through education and Bible work. Lily was not part of the direct development of La Vida Mission. As quickly as her dream came to her, God brought others to fulfill that dream. Lily's dream did play an important role in encouraging others to move forward with plans of a mission. There is no doubt that Lily was used by God to plant a seed for His Dine' children.

In 1959 an Adventist physician named Wetzel Williams, with his wife Doris and their family, moved back to Wetzel's home state of New Mexico. It was with a passion that he came to serve the Navajo Indian people, the Dine'. Dr. Williams grew up during the time of the depression and knew first hand what it was like to be a child living on the reservation. At one time he and his brother and father lived in a designated tent area near the town of Shiprock, New Mexico, just one hour north west of the mission. His best friend was a native boy who taught him some natural medicine with the local flowers and shrubs.

The young Dr. Wetzel Williams had a passion for community service and for the conference in which he served. That conference is now named the Rocky Mountain Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Excited about serving his community, he quickly found a small group of people within the local church who were already serving the Dine'. This group will be listed in next month's "Part Two" as members of the future first board of directors to the mission. Others from the church made quilts and brought food to help in their service. The local native population was unemployed by 60% at that time. Dr. Williams jumped in to give Bible studies, free medical care and helped bring food and clothing to those who needed attention. The Dine' community came to know the local Adventist church as their friends and a group that they trusted. Many others came to help through the years as they moved to the area. The conference continued in support. I am grateful to say that we still have a conference leader serving on the current board of directors. Pastor Eric Nelson from the Rocky Mountain Conference has served our mission faithfully for many years and we appreciate his continued support, along with Pastor Polly and Pastor Gayton. We also have support that continues from all around our nation. God continues to show His love through the Seventh-day Adventist church organization for His Dine' children.

The story continues next month with part two.



Meet Our Students

Meet our two high school girls. Tisha is a Senior this year and we're all so excited that soon she'll be graduating from the La Vida Mission Academy High School. You may remember her from other years, as this will be her fourth year studying and learning here. She doesn't live far, but adds her smile and help to the dorm during the week. Her goal is to work hard and finish up this year ahead of schedule and go on to college in education. We hope she'll come back to La Vida some day as a teacher.



Our other female high schooler this year is Leandra. She's Freshman and a new friend to La Vida. We're so glad she's here. Her smile and sweet spirit brings joy to many. All the little girl's flock to her for hugs. She has two older siblings but since they are about ten years older, she doesn't talk to them very often. She's wanting to be a coach and maybe a teacher some day. Her favorite part about La Vida is all the nice people.

Please pray for these two amazing girl's as they strive in a hard world, to reach their dreams and to draw closer in their walk with Jesus.

April Wright



What are Those Little Girls Doing?

What fun little girls have! They're so full of giggles and laughter and pink. Eight girls join us this year in the little girl's dorm. The youngest just turned six and the oldest is twelve. Over the summer the rooms and bathrooms were decorated to bring joy and inspiration. One room is the Jewels for Jesus room with a bathroom full of jeweled pictures to match. The other room is the flower room where the wall reminds little princesses to grow and bloom as Jesus' girls. We have an art spot with easels to work at and frames to display the masterpieces. The pretend area is a favorite where each month is a new theme. We've enjoyed the L.G. Cuisine Restaurant and the Tea



Party Place thus far. Little chef's and waitresses create and imagine while learning all kinds of things in their free play time.

Another new thing this year is reading time. Several eager little new readers can't wait for the time they get to choose from shelves full of books and read to their reading partners.

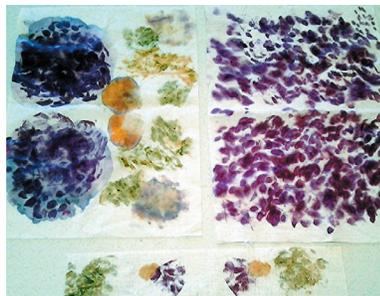
Outside we're again enjoying the nice weather with a few days warm enough to splash in the little pool, bike riding, worship walks, playground play, and sandy cake making. One time we even took an adventure to the wash nearby and splashed and giggled and came back all mud covered.

Of course homework, chores, school, and sleep take up most of our day, but we strive to have some time for fun things, because as you may know, kids learn through play...that's just the way God made them. We're even trying to make worship time more fun with learning games, coloring contests, acting out stories, and a mile long paper we're filling with things we're thankful for.

Not all is fun, however, as we have our share of arguments, trials, tears, and stresses, but through it all we're striving, with God's help, to be thankful for all our blessings, to love our neighbors, to obey and be kind, and to love Jesus above all.



April Wright



The beautiful results of flower pounding in design class.

Design Class Update

Lots of designing has been happening in Design Class. In learning that many different cultures use plants for dyeing materials, the older girls did some flower pounding...pounding flowers and leaves to leave the natural dye behind on the fabric. The little girls created some beautiful Native paintings painted with watercolors made with rose petals, turmeric, red cabbage, cayenne, and red onion. We also have had fun with sun-dyeing fabrics, watercolor and crayon resist printing, and made a few fabric cards from our beautifully printed fabrics.



In Memory of

George & Margaret Armstrong
Anne Gutman
Barry Lizer
Wilma Pillsbury
Frank Putnam
Emily Smith
Leslie Jane Steen

by Lanny & Barbara Davis
by Morris Gutman
by Art & Oradelle Lizer
by Albert Pillsbury
by Clare Putnam
by Ramona Mccurdy
by June E. Benson

In Honor of

Harold & Betty Oliver

by Jim & Judy Culpepper

Thank you to all of the donors who make a difference at La Vida!

THANK YOU for all your help!

Last month we asked for donations for car and booster seats. This month we are so overjoyed to be able to report that this need has been totally filled! We now have enough seats to safely transport our students and to comply with the state laws.

Our next step is to either repair our vans to be in compliance with the New Mexico's Department of Transportation's rules and regulations regarding the transportation of children or to replace those vehicles.

Please pray for us that God will guide us into the wisest decision in this area.

If you would like to donate to this project, please mark your donation "students transport" or if you know of an organization that would consider donating a late model vehicle, please call the office (505-786-5539) for more information.

Donate with Amazon Smile

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support La Vida Mission every time you shop, **at no cost to you.**

On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you need to select a charitable organization to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. They will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation. You can search for La Vida Missions, Inc and, as there are several charities with similar names, please be sure the location is Farmington, NM.

**Every donation helps us
continue our work.
Thank you so much!!**

Rainbows

Most people could agree that sometimes going throughout our daily lives, we forget to see the beauty of God's great earth all around us. Here at La Vida, taking the time to really appreciate this beauty can be just as difficult as if we were living in a big city. It seems the Big Girls dorm is always on the go, with rushing in the morning to get to school on time, rushing to the dorm to get done whatever we can before dinner, rushing home after dinner to get the homework and chores done and then rushing to get ourselves ready for bed so we can have some down time to share with the Lord by having our nightly devotional time and then rushing off to bed.



It's nice to know that God knows when we need a special reminder to take some time and share the beauty of His world with Him. Last week the girls and I started our daily long walk to school (instead of taking the short walk from the dorm straight to the school, we walk around the campus towards the school) and just when I was getting ready to rush them out the door, I noticed something out the kitchen window. When I opened the back door the biggest, brightest rainbow was looking back at me.

The girls and I took a moment to shoot some pictures of God's glorious gift.

The gift that was once given to Noah and his family as a reminder of the promise of God was now shining so brightly right in our very backyard. These simple streaks of colorful beauty were just the reminder I needed, to take some extra time and remember Who we are here for. A reminder to never worry about the little things, to stop rushing so much and take time to enjoy God's creative art work.

Our walk to school was fun and peaceful, it was just the boost we all needed to start off a perfect week.



God must have known we needed an extra reminder because yesterday when we were walking to school (the short way this time due to running out of time) we saw 3 rainbows showering the skies!!

It's somewhat hard to see through a picture but if you look closely to the right of the bright rainbow you can see a faint second rainbow, and there was yet another one a little further up the road!! (Unfortunately that one did not show up in any photos).

Thank you, Lord, for always knowing when we need that extra boost of encouragement.

Emily

