

Navajo News



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Bringing the Gospel of Jesus to the Navajo

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BROKEN ARROW APPEAL FROM LA VIDA MISSION

"Broken Arrow" is a rare military term, a code phrase used to indicate that a U.S. military unit is in danger of being overrun by an enemy and requires immediate assistance. It is an urgent and dire appeal for help. It is a call to mobilize all available air, ground and sea support, reinforcements, supplies and medical aid if needed.

La Vida Mission is a small Seventh-day Adventist self-supporting mission located 55 miles south of Farmington, New Mexico (NM) along NM State Road-371 and 30 miles north of Crownpoint, NM along the same two-lane paved road.

The desert environment is dry, hot and barren except for the occasional native home and isolated small settlements. There are no standing waters, only dry riverbeds that sit silently most of the year. The summer heat is unforgiving and profane, while the winter cold can be unusually harsh for the unprepared. Spring brings sweet relief separating the waring seasons but speaks itself with fierce sandstorms and winds over 60 mph at times.

Turning off NM state road-371, the pavement ends. The uneven dirt road winding its way to La Vida Mission is chiseled with potholes, drop-offs and gorges left by rain, flood and wind. Thorny weeds and small bushes provide shade for rattlesnakes, lizards, spiders and mice.

The Mission sits on a small rocky plateau with cratered and hazardous dirt and stone approaches. La Vida Mission is comprised of a small church, three small school buildings, including cafeteria, gym, health education building, four student boarding cottages, eight staff homes, a guest house, three maintenance buildings and a small RV hook-up area.

The Mission is deeply involved with the local Navajo (Dine) community for over 60 years providing free natural water sources in the harsh desert basin, food, clothing, propane giveaways, mail delivery, health fairs, basic medical care, tuition free education and truth filled Bible teachings.

La Vida Mission is not the location, not the isolation and hardships, neither the buildings, nor even the charitable works of community services. There is nothing glamorous or elegant that begs one to live or even to visit such a faraway place. Yet it is home for the people, the staff, and the volunteers who serve here. La Vida Mission is an oasis of hope in a desert of despair. It is their love for a wonderful, merciful God and His dear children of the desert that makes them give up lives of ease and endure daunting daily challenges of the Mission.

Over the years many generous organizations and individuals have physically or monetarily supported this tiny mission candle. Its flame has almost gone out many times in the blustery winds of trial and stormy nights of uncertainty, yet steel dedication mingled with hard work, lonely nights, stressful days, absence of comfort, longing for consolation, hours of prayer and unwavering faith in the promises of God has shielded the work and allowed the storms to pass.

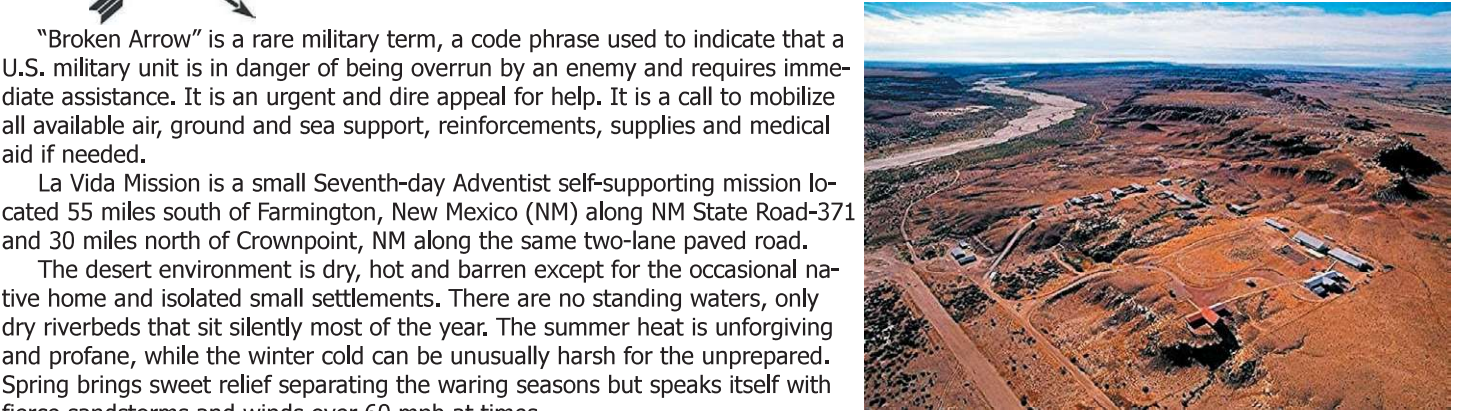
La Vida Mission operates always with shortages. The greatest of which is people to serve. Those that have borne the battle for so many years, with so little resources and so little personal comfort are tired. Recent years have magnified the extreme of challenges reflecting changes in this sinful world. Legal surprises and new educational requirements, building codes, sickness, staff frictions, financial droughts, retirements, exhaustion and deaths have taken their toll.

The legacy of over 60 years and the survival of La Vida Mission today signals a "Broken Arrow". Its future is in God's hands. It always has been. It always will be.

I am reminded of Jesus' counsel to His weary disciples in Mark 6:31-34:
"And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while; for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure"
Sometimes individuals may have to rest...sometimes organizations may have to rest...sometimes God's programs have reached their service end. The faithful ones have served with endurance and valor: they have faithfully done all they can do...and now it's time to rest.

Broken Arrow is a spiritual and physical appeal, a gasping, last breath to keep the fight going at La Vida Mission. The seeking for one more lost soul for Jesus. Fighting on while probation's hours are quickly coming to an end.

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The apostle Paul rallied the early church with these words:

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and HAVING DONE ALL, TO STAND", Eph. 6:13.

What is the urgency of La Vida Mission's "Broken Arrow" call?

Simply, we are about to be "Over-Run" and face the loss of the mission! Unless we can get: Dedicated volunteers serving as staff, teachers, administrators, and skilled workers. Serving long term or short term.

We need sacrificial giving to support stipends for volunteers, repair roads, build better housing, classrooms and fix broken, aged and outdated infrastructure.

Critical to our operational needs now are a knowledgeable and capable maintenance manager, an experienced bookkeeper/office manager and a certified special education teacher.

We thank God for all of you that have kept the flame alive in New Mexico. If the Holy Spirit is speaking to you, please come help us.

The earth is darkening, opportunities for witnessing are dimming. The final agonizing movements will be rapid. Help us to continue being a candlelight on the hilltop so all may see and praise our wonderful and gracious Lord.

Yours faithfully,

Robert Gardner, MD (Ret USAF)
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for the Navajo community. The mission
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Donation Information

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MAP Growth Assessments

Last February 12 and 13, 2025, our students were assessed on their Reading and Math Skills through the MAP Growth Test. MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) Growth Test is a standardized test used to measure a students' academic progress. The results were vital in knowing about their progress, strengths and areas that need improvement.

Over the two days, students took assessments designed to evaluate their reading and math skills. The tests were adaptive, where the questions adjust based on how well students answer them. This ensures that the test is personalized to each students' level, providing a more accurate picture of their strengths and areas where they might need improvement.

Upon knowing the results, it gave us a guide on how we can further help our students and provide instruction that will best support their need for success and effective learning experience.

The next assessment will be on May and we pray that through this test we can track their academic progress and help us, educators, guide our students' learning journey in the years to come.

-Ms. Glet



Sewing Happiness

Every first day of the week we were able to teach the students a variety of different Pathfinder honors. For this month, the highlights of the honors were t-shirt tie-dyeing with Ms. Glet and basic sewing, by yours truly.

Sewing with the students and teachers is a fun and creative way to bond, fostering their fine motor skills and imagination while they learn basic sewing techniques.

It allows you to make simple repairs and alterations without worrying if you know the basic sewing stitches. We are glad that the students are eager to learn to do their activities and at the same time, they're able to sew their new La Vida Mission choir scarfs.

- Beth Panganiban

(Watch for pictures of the student's wearing their choir scarves at the Piñon Hills Church in Farmington and also of their tie-dye creations in next month's newsletter.)



Computer-aided Design (CAD) and Coding for Beginners



La Vida Mission School is so blessed by Mr. Sherman Mohler's tireless support and the generosity of Bentley Systems. Recently, LVM's school had two powerful computers installed with CAD that will enable our students to make simple bridges and other computer-assisted projects. We are praying to ultimately have a 3-D printer that can print the students' work and inspire them to pursue a career in the world of technology.

In addition to the CAD, our students are learning simple coding. Mr. Mohler introduced the concept of coding by reminding the students the great role of the Code Talkers during the war. Mr. and Mrs. Mohler prepared and organized folders with the Morse code and some Navajo-English words. La Vida Mission supports the preservation of the Navajo language.

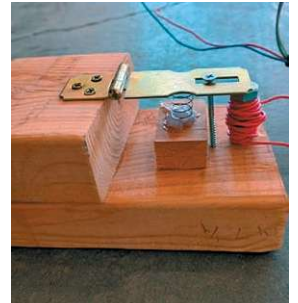
Before lunchtime, the students were able to build Morse code transmitters and receivers and they practiced sending and receiving codes. The students had so much fun that they even forgot how much time passed without them realizing it.

When it comes to computer coding, our students can collaborate on a project that will show a story with some of the famous Bible characters. To start with, they are now exploring how coding works. La Vida Mission School is looking forward to brighter job opportunities for our students in the future.

- Ms. Cielo

In addition, our new IT person is Kyle Cornett. He has completely redone our WiFi network and finally it is all working correctly. He also has repaired/refurbished many of our computers and he actually built the new powerful computers that have the CAD programs on them.

- Ms. Carol



In Memory of

George & Margaret Armstrong
 Pastor Stephen Gillham
 Arlo Goley
 Norma Higgins
 Wayne Hyatt
 Robert and Mary Lee
 Art & Barry Lizer
 Jose A. Lopez
 Walter Maier
 Dr. James Maxwell
 Larry McCoy
 Michael McCurdy
 Pat & Brenda McDonald
 Frank Oldland
 Nobert Sammer
 Emily Smith
 Kenneth Smith
 Bill Taylor

by Lanny & Barbara Davis
 by Carol Gillham
 by Pastor John Goley
 by Robert & Norma Higgins
 by Lynette Hyatt
 by Lynette Hyatt
 by Oradelle Lizer
 by Dianne Lopez
 by Mabel Maier
 by Ann Maxwell
 by Nancy McCoy-Wearner
 by Ramona McCurdy
 by Rhonda McDonald
 by Peg Oldland
 by David & Maxine Smith
 by Patrick J & Marilyn Hickey
 by Lola Smith
 by Mary Lou Peckham

In Honor of

Mary Wood

by Jackie Small

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

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 for their many contributions, prayers and letters.
- Echo Food bank, Farmington, NM for produce and other food items.
- Neal Kelley & Sharing Ministry for donations of produce and supplies.
- Joe Reaves for boxes of groceries, over the counter food supplements, vitamins, and assorted items.
- Sherman Mohler for additional Scratch Book, Navajo Code talker Manual and valuable, priceless hands-on classes and training with students for 2 days.

Middle School 2024-2025

Why I Love La Vida Mission

D'artagnan Smith (8th Grade)

I love La Vida Mission because I can be myself here. I like the Pathfinder program because I can learn many different skills. I love the food they serve at the cafeteria especially the rice and bread. I also like the staff at La Vida Mission because they are funny and helpful most of the time.

As I am about to graduate this year, I will miss La Vida Mission because of Music class. I will miss the trips we went on, where we sang at different churches. I will never forget the time that they let me preach in Rio Rancho about the sanctuary. I will also never forget the time that the firefighters came here and taught us how to use a fire extinguisher. Then after that, the firefighters allowed the kids to use the fire hose.

I am grateful for La Vida Mission for teaching me about God and for accepting me. I will miss La Vida Mission, but I will never forget the lessons it taught me.

Drevin (8th Grade)

The things I liked and loved about La Vida Mission are the friends I made and the food I ate. I love making the staff laugh and helping them as well. The food was so, so good that I had to get seconds. My favorites were haystacks and Navajo tacos. I loved the Navajo tacos because I love the combination of the food.

As I'm about to graduate middle school, I'm really, really going to miss the food, the friends, and the staff. I liked it when we went to sell food at Crownpoint and invited people to buy on the side of the road. But the best part was setting the customers' order. Another experience I will never forget is when I did my first sermon with my friends at Rio Rancho SDA Church.

Jasmine (7th Grade)

The reason I like La Vida is because my dorm parents taught me about Jesus. They also taught me about my language. My teacher and dorm parents help me with things I am struggling with, like Math. There are many other things I've been struggling with. My dorm parents took care of me even when I first came here. I was scared because I didn't know anyone except my brother. This was the first time I spoke to a whole class and interacted with the staff. I have never done that before. I usually don't talk unless I need help.

I am in my second year here at La Vida Mission. I'm a much more energetic person now, and I really love it here. This will probably be my last year here because there's a middle school I want to go to. I love it here because of all the fun activities that happen. I remember at the Christmas fiesta, we did fun activities. We also made banana bread for our food sale at Crowpoint Church. I love doing art because it can be colorful when we draw. I also enjoy music and playing the recorder. I love going to different churches. At Rio Rancho, I got to experience being a speaker with my friends, and we took pictures there. After that, we went back to the mission.

In October 2024, we went to the Women's Retreat, where I saw my friend who is already in high school. When we went to Gallup Church for its grand opening, we later went to a playground. It was a big castle. I was wearing a dress, but my dorm parents gave me a shirt and I put on pants, so I could play on the playground. I had fun, but when I went to the restroom, I noticed there were no doors.

I remember last year, we camped in the gym and did fun activities. We made candy sushi, which was too sweet. For Pathfinders, I learned things I had never known before. On my first year here, one night, we walked around the campus.

EJ (6th Grade)

Some of the reasons I like La Vida are the activities, like playing games. The reason I enjoy these activities is that they are fun and allow me to spend time with my friends. Another reason is the staff and students. I like the staff because they are fun, funny, and take care of me. I like the students because they are my friends and they call me EJ Lee.

The first time I came here, I didn't know anyone. The only people I knew were Mr. Charles and Ms. Serly. They were the best because they were nice and fun. Mr. Charles would print us coloring pages with cars, dinosaurs, and anime characters. I also liked their son, Thierry. He was the best because he would share his dinosaur toys.

I'd like to thank La Vida for taking care of me, feeding me, and doing all the things they've done for me.

Josiah (5th Grade)

In La Vida Mission, I know a lot of people here. I grew up here since I've been studying here since I was in kindergarten. I am in 5th Grade now and I'm happy here. It is so fun here. I like doing arts and it's my favorite.

I have to tell you; I have two dorm parents. Their names are Ms. Emily and Ms. Natavia. My brother also goes to school with me and we have fun at La Vida Mission.

Kayanna (5th Grade)

The reason why I like La Vida Mission is the food. One of my favorite is the fake sausage. This is my third and a half year and one thing I will never forget is my dorm parent. They are always in my prayers forever and I know I will be in their prayers too.

Last year, one of my teachers, paid for our field trip but they were closed so we went to Pizza Hut and everyone was talking about their day. We also had a Pathfinder camping in the gym. My friend made candy sushi and said it was full of diabetes in it.