

Navajo News

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

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LVM First Weekend School for 2024-25 School Year

The campus was buzzing with activities this week on its first weekend school. Everyone was involved in the preparations. Three major programs were lined up from Friday to Sunday.

The first activity was the Pathfinder Induction. The program's highlight was the welcoming of new members to the Pathfinders Club. Ms. Beth will write more about that in next month's newsletter.

Another exciting part was baking banana bread as one of the menu items to be sold on Sunday for the school fundraising event. (See pictures below)



The second program, where all students took part, was the Sabbath worship. The lower grades introduced the lesson review while the higher grades were members of the panel discussion. The experience was memorable since none of them had done it before. One could feel the excitement and anxiousness in the air, but the joy of serving in the church lightened everyone's heart. The songs of praises were very pleasing and appropriate for the church service.

Sunday's big event was the school fundraising. Students went off the campus with the whole workforce of La Vida and set out a canopy across from Tsaya's (Trading Post) in Lake Valley. They waved to every passing car and asked them to buy the siopao (stuffed buns), Asian noodles, banana bread, fry-bread, and lemonade. It was the highlight of the first weekend school. With welcoming smiles, the hardworking students and staff members gave testimony to the love of God to the customers. Lessons in economics, mathematics, human relations, and evangelism were some of the purposes of the fundraising. There were some customers who aside from supporting the campaign, also gave donations. Students were very happy that they now have a little seed money for their field trip.

We are going to do another food sale in the future, if you live close to La Vida and would like to pre-order the food mentioned above to support our fundraiser, please let us know. We don't have a definite date yet, but will announce it on Facebook (La Vida Seventh-day Adventist Church) when it is finalized or you can call or email us. Or, if you prefer, you may send a donation, kindly indicating that it is for the school fundraising.

Your support and prayers are much appreciated.

- Ms. Cielo



Friday: Preparing food items for the fundraising sale.
Sunday: A long but successful day



From the Director's Desk:

Warm Greetings Dear Reader!

The 2024-2025 school year is off to a great start thanks to the dedication and great teamwork of La Vida Mission staff! This really shined through during the last weekend of September, which was filled with special events. The weekend kicked off with our Pathfinders Induction Ceremony on Friday, September 27, followed by a beautiful Sabbath program highlighting our students and special guest speaker, Steve Pester, of Dine Adventist Radio (DAR), and ended with our first School Fund Raiser event of the school year (see Ms. Cielo's article on page 1) Mr. VJ and Ms. Beth and the entire the Pathfinders' leadership team did a wonderful job with the Pathfinders Induction Ceremony and the Inductees! Our students shined under the direction of Ms. Cielo and Ms. Glet who oversaw the Sabbath Service program, and under the loving influence of their Dorm parents, too – Ms. Renita, Ms. Reva and Ms. Emily. As part of our September 28th Sabbath service, La Vida Mission church hosted a Dine Adventist Radio (DAR) Town Hall Meeting which took place after a delicious meal in the Cafeteria prepared by La Vida staff. In preparation for the transition to 24/7 programming expected to begin this October, newly appointed DAR Network Manager, Steve Pester, held the meeting to garner input from the Navajo Community surrounding La Vida Mission. Mr. Steve is holding Town Hall Meetings at many of the SDA churches throughout the Navajo Nation to get feedback and input from the Navajo themselves on what kind of programs will speak to the hearts of their people. Mr. Steve also presented a wonderful Sabbath message during the main church service, with the theme of stepping out of our comfort zone to answer the Lord's call and his own Testimony related to accepting his new position with DAR. It was really Blessing to host Mr. Steve, and a wonderful event of fellowship and hearing from our Navajo neighbors and church members.

Last but definitely not least... two sets of special visitors to La Vida this September: Ouachita Hills Academy and then Ms. Darla.

Ouachita (pronounced "Washeeta") Hills Academy came to serve La Vida Mission the first week of September. During pre-visit coordination, when we suggested sights for them to see on the Labor Day holiday that Monday, they basically said "No – put us to work!" They pulled weeds; helped us repair the steps of our Navajo neighbor, Ms. Helen; repaired the fence by the water tank; dug out and removed much of the remaining debris in the ravine behind the guest house; cleaned out the booster pump house and entry-way of all of the mud run-off from a prior storm, and also removed/demolished the deteriorating roof of this structure in prep for the replacement roof. Not only were they a huge and much needed help with their labor, but the fragrance of their spirit was so refreshing to all of us here at the Mission. Leading the group was Ouachita Girl's Dean, Ms. Jen (Jennifer Raynow) – a former worker here at La Vida – and Boys' Dean, Mr. Damyon Ray. Of course it was

extra special to have Ms. Jen here, and our staff who remembered Ms. Jen were full of joy to see her! The group led out in Worship during their stay, and every bit was a Blessing. The youth had beautiful Testimonies and were an inspiration to all of us. Mr. Damyon's Sabbath message was an absolute Blessing, and the best message I have ever heard on the spiritualism and the state of the dead. Hoping Mr. Damyon will record this message for others to see/hear (no pressure). We hope they will come visit us again, if the Lord is willing.

Most recently, we had a very unexpected Blessing sent to us by the Lord – our special guest, Ms. Darla Sherman (Sept. 15-18). Ms. Claire writes about her visit on page 4. We were delighted to have the opportunity to get to know her.

Peace & Blessings to You,

Kim

"Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord... that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection..." Philippians 3:8-11

Notes from the Fix-it Shop

Hello Dear Brothers and Sisters!

October will be almost over by the time you receive this newsletter along with cooler temperatures and a promise of winter weather. The maintenance crew continues to "batten down" the hatches by draining swamp coolers, installing new furnace filters and building a new protective, insulated "dog house" for the drain on the new tank. Last week Bob and Junior completed the new roof that protects one of the booster pumps for the water system as well. This coming week, that same small building will get a new cinder block wall to prevent water and mud from flooding the entrance. Our vehicles are slowly being repaired as time and money permits. With the exception of one 2016 van, our vehicles are quite old (1999 and older). These poor roads have shaken the suspensions to pieces and worn down the tires clear into the steel belts. Each one needs a new windshield as well. A newer student transport vehicle is badly needed. **If you have one available, please consider donating it. We can write a tax donation receipt for it.**

Our well water is flowing where it should although there are still some issues with the way the pipes and connections were made. The new tank is wonderful though. Plans are being made to reconnect pipes as they should have been. Mr. Karl will be helping with the project. We have some funds available from the water project to help complete the job.

I pray each of you are well and that God continues to bless and care for you.

- Lee McIntosh



Mr. Bob working on the pump house roof.

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Back to Jail After 4 Years

For about seven years we ministered to our beloved brothers and sisters deprived of liberty at the Navajo Nation Department of Corrections in the Crownpoint District. However, when COVID-19 hit the world in 2020, we were forced to pause, but definitely not to quit, this important ministry. I believe our God, who loves every one dearly and wants all His children to know and hear of His love, has made our "return to the jail" possible. As we were going house to house distributing "Steps to Christ" and "The Great Controversy", who would ever imagine that we would knock at the house of the good Lieutenant who is the head of the NNDC Crownpoint District? From there, we received his personal invitation for us to go back to the correction facility and continue our ministry. Praise the Lord for His divine appointments and leading.

September 11, 2024, the first day we returned to resume our Jail ministry, one of the staff asked us if we are also serving their juveniles as we used to do before and so that was added to our schedule. Indeed, the call is loud and clear to minister to these precious individuals, who may have made poor choices in life, but still qualify for heaven because of God's amazing grace. Yes, they need to be taught deep spiritual lessons of God's great love and forgiveness, of His justice and mercy, of the possibility of reconciliation, salvation and restoration into a new and better life.

As we minister to this special group of people, we ourselves are blessed and refreshed with the great truth of God's unconditional love to erring humans like us and His offer for a new beginning to everyone. While doing this special ministry, we also learn the practical lessons about inclusivity, patient listening, healthy cross-cultural relationships, and a non-threatening way of presenting the gospel.

May we ask you to please include this ministry in your prayers?

— Dorie Panganiban with VJ & Beth



Correction: We are very sorry to have listed an "In Memory Of" as Beverly Wilson when the correct listing was Bill Wilson. Thank you, Mary Wood, for bringing this to our attention.

In Memory of

George & Margaret Armstrong	by Lanny & Barbara Davis
Bern Bliss	by Simon Elloway
Doc Buell	by Bruce Hermsdorfer
Joanne Clifford	by John & Robin Korponay
Mary Cocce	by John & Robin Korponay
James O. Collins, Jr.	by Mary Collins
Pastor Stephen Gillham	by Carol Gillham
Wayne Hyatt	by Lynette Hyatt
Helen Johnston	by David & Elizabeth Johnston
Shirley Kinsman	by Jackie Kinsman
Art & Barry Lizer	by Oradelle Lizer
Jose A. Lopez	by Diane Lopez
Pastor Walter Maier	by Wanda Beck
Larry McCoy	by Nancy McCoy-Wearner
Brenda McDonald	by Pat & Rhonda McDonald
Frank Oldland	by Peg Oldland
Fleta Oliver	by Mr. & Mrs. Jack Wood
Norbert Sammer	by David & Maxine Smith
Emily Smith	by Douglas & Melody Wheeler
Kenneth Smith	by Lola Smith
Bill Wilson	by Mr. & Mrs. Jack Wood
Lydia Wood	by Mr. & Mrs. Jack Wood

In Honor of

Doc Buell	by Bruce Hermsdorfer
Jesus	by Debra Caradonna
Richard Kunare (Happy Birthday)	by Jackie Small
Tonya Sausser	by Elizabeth Willis
The life of William Schulz	by Kimberly Ann Stanley

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, letters and Christmas gifts.
- Echo Food bank, Farmington, NM** for produce and other food items.
- Neal Kelley & Sharing Ministry** for bringing many more pounds of produce to the mission. We are happy to share our abundance with our community.
- Montrose Women's Ministry** for a Micky Mouse Popcorn Maker and rat and mouse killer, cleaning supplies and funds to purchase other needed items.
- Karl Schwinn, Delta Church and MWM** for gathering funds to pay our La Vida ladies Women's Retreat fees in Montrose.

NaTavia's Experience at the Western Slope Women's Retreat

Last year's experience in Montrose for the Western Woman's Retreat was a blessing and so was this year's. We enjoyed the long five-hour drive. We took some breaks here and there just to enjoy nature and take some good pictures for memories. Nature in the mountains had me at peace, it uplifted my spiritual journey and relaxed me. On the way to Montrose there were a lot of green trees and livestock. It was cold during some nights and mornings but we did not complain because God has a plan for us. I was especially happy to have my sister with me again this year.

We were glad that we made it there safely and right on time to attend the first meeting. When we arrived at our destination we settled in, unpacked, and got comfortable in the same cabin where we stayed last year. Our meeting was in the barn where we come together in prayer to encourage and uplift one another. The ladies were so welcoming to us and were happy to see us again. We sang beautiful songs to worship God, at the start of our meetings. We were well fed by men and women who cooked vegetarian and vegan meals for us. There was a separate little building where we went individually to pray and could leave prayer requests in a locked box. The leaders said they would pray for our requests.

Jennifer Jill Schweitzer was the main speaker. She shared wonderful stories with us about difficult times she went through and told us how God helped by providing strength for her. I learned we can love ourselves as women because we are unique, talented, and different from men. - NaTavia (student at La Vida Mission School)



Western Slope Women's Retreat 2024



Danita Ray Juan, staff member at the mission, began loading the 12 passenger van at 6 a.m. on Friday, September 13, in preparation for the 5 hour drive to Mountaintop Retreat near Montrose, Colorado. At eight o'clock, five staff members, one friend, and three students left the mission on their way to the 10th Western Slope Women's Retreat.

I spoke to Judy Kelly, a longtime women's ministries leader, about the retreat's beginnings. She told me she started it because so many women could either not afford the cost of the annual women's gathering held at Glacier View Ranch or could not travel the distance. She also said that this year was the 10th retreat. It began with a few women but has steadily grown, reaching 70 this year.

We had a beautiful trip into the mountains. The scariest part was coming upon a large group of cyclists. Although they had a special vehicle, warning travelers to be aware, it was still dangerous. We could not avoid coming close to them as we drove up the steep roads. We arrived at Mountaintop Retreat at about three o'clock.

Greeted warmly by the staff, we registered, received a generous goody bag, and went to our cabin. Everyone staked out her sleeping space and prepared for supper. The dining area was bright with yellow tablecloths, sunflower centerpieces that lit up in the evening, and different fall decorations throughout.

"Damsel, Arise!" was the theme of the retreat. Mark 5:42 was the source of the theme. Jesus is on His way to raise the twelve year-old synagogue leader's daughter from the dead. When he arrives he holds out his hand and says, "Talitha, kumi" That is "Damsel, arise". (KJV) or "Little girl, I tell you to stand up". (NASB) Throughout the retreat there were two meetings daily devoted to the theme of how to be healed of the brokenness resulting from sin.

Jennifer Jill Schweitzer, a counselor, with a doctorate from Liberty University in trauma counseling, drew largely on her personal testimony of nominal family religion leading to an experience so common to many who grew up in the '60s and '70s. She experimented with Eastern religions and various Christian groups in a relatively short time before being baptized

into the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Michigan. Gifted in both dance and singing, she had hoped to be a musician. However, like Paul, she experienced an about face which led her to her career as a counselor and speaker.

Darla Sherman of Maryland was another featured speaker. Her personal testimony of being raised in a chaotic, addiction-ridden home was riveting. We had no doubt of the authenticity of her moment of truth, when at 40 years-old, twenty years ago, she was hit by another car. The physicians said that it was amazing that she lived and that she would never walk again. As she had always measured her worth by her ability to accomplish tasks, she felt her life was over. Asking her husband to end her life, she was amazed at his expression of deep love and commitment. Because of that love, Darla entered into a new relationship with Jesus, vowing to stay covered with His righteousness.

We had the privilege of giving Darla a ride to La Vida where she stayed with us until Thursday morning. While here she ministered to us by sharing her seemingly endless trove of stories she called divine appointments. Speaking at each staff worship, she also held worship for the boys' and girls' dorms Tuesday, and was the speaker for the campus wide weekly chapel.

We are so very grateful to Karl and Katie Jo Schwinn for paying for our fees to attend this spiritual feast. Last year's meeting was held to celebrate Katie's life. She died shortly after, leaving a bequest and a request that donations in her honor would be set aside to provide that funds that would allow us to attend this year. We are so thankful to each of you whose sacrifice allows us to share experiences like this with our newly baptized staff and students.

- Ms. Claire