



Special Issue

“Committed to sharing God’s gifts among all peoples of the world”

Native America 2018

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For more info visit:
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243 Buttercup Drive
New Providence, PA
17560

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*"And now these
three remain:
faith, hope and
love.*

*But the greatest of
these is love."*

~ 1 Corinthians 13:13

From the President

Dear Friends,

I was once again privileged to visit Cheyenne River Reservation in South Dakota with a small team of dedicated workers. While we had scheduled five free Vision Clinics in three locations, our main goals were to build trust and strengthen relationships with those we met in 2017.

At the Cheyenne River Youth Project (CRYP) in Eagle Butte we offered Vision Clinics for two days. We were assisted by three interns from CRYP who were ready to help while earning money for their future education. We were delighted to witness the many ways the group brings hope and dignity to the residents and most especially the youth. They offer a safe place for children and teens to gather, eat, learn and play. They are doing their best to combat the high rate of youth suicide.

Over in La Plant we again spent two days offering vision exams and prescription eyewear with the help of Simply Smiles, a local organization that offers summer camp for the youth of the area. The staff actually drive a bus long distances to pick up children who otherwise having nothing to do on long, hot summer days. Volunteers from all over the country stay one week at a time at the Simply Smiles facility and offer games, crafts, sports and other fun activities along with a nutritious meal. We were able to perform vision exams on all of the children who participated those two days.

Our last day brought us way out “in the middle of nowhere” to a small tribal run prairie school in Takini offering classes K-12. The dedicated teachers sleep in dorm like houses during the week and only make the long drive home on the weekends. On the day we visited we were quite busy as the superintendent scheduled a free clothing give-away on the same day. Transportation is very difficult as homesteads are so far apart and there is no public transportation. By working together we made life just a little easier for those living on this beautiful but harsh land.

We came back with a renewed dedication to help those in need who are our fellow US citizens. We truly feel the Spirit’s leading to come along-side local groups that are working hard to make a change from within the reservation. That is our role – to support those organizations that are working to change old attitudes and habits in a positive way – one child at a time.

I am grateful for the opportunity to get to know some of these gentle, unassuming people. Their strong family ties are evident and I will not forget the smiles on their beautiful faces.

In His Peace,

Carol Fanelli
Carol Fanelli

Carol (R) with Diane Garreau,
Director of Youth Services
on the Reservation



WELL WORTH IT - Tom Fanelli



While this was not my first mission trip to South Dakota it was my first visit to Cheyenne River Reservation. The people there were very welcoming and it was obvious to me changes for the better are taking place.

The highlight of my week was our visit to Takini School. When we arrived volunteers were ready and waiting to help. By combining our Vision Clinic with a clothing give-away it really gave the people incentive to come. You could see the staff were really interested in helping the students and their families. Members of the Tribal Council also visited to learn more about our organization and distribute literature on healthy eating.

I think if anyone is interested in working here in the US, Cheyenne River Reservation is a good place to do it. Your efforts will be well worth it.

HOW FAR WOULD YOU GO TO REACH SOMEONE WHO IS LOST? - Karen Moore

That is a troubling question for most of us. I would go to the ends of the earth for my family and friends, but what about a stranger? How far would I go? Well, to be honest I don't really know the answer personally, but I do know how far Jesus would have gone, all the way to the cross.

In John 4 we are given an account of how Jesus was going to Galilee but the scripture says He HAD to go through Samaria. One translation says it was necessary for him to go... He was going one place but had to go another way. Around 36 miles out of His way. Why?

There was someone He had to meet, a woman... a woman who was lost. Lost in her sin, her pain, her hurt, her loneliness and fear. She was going to a well during the hottest time of day, which was unusual, but that was the only time she was able due to her sinful lifestyle. But this woman was thirsty and she was going to meet someone who would quench her thirst forever.

Waiting for their turn at the Vision Clinic



What has this to do with a mission trip to Cheyenne River Indian Reservation? Everything! My husband Ken and I traveled a total of 4,000 miles across country to bring the supplies for the vision clinic. Along the way we met several people who we were able to minister to. A young man at a gas station in the early morning hours in Indiana, an older lady in Iowa who needed encouragement, a couple who used to do mission trips who were encouraged to know that there were still people who were going to the Native Americans.

Once in Eagle Butte, we met so many who not only needed clearer vision, but needed hope and the love of Jesus. At one stop at Simply Smiles in La Plant, I was helping an elderly lady with the eye chart when she laid her head on my shoulder and began to whisper that she had just lost her 16 year old granddaughter in a car accident and was grieving. I met a young mother whose husband had just died due to an illness that was incurable who was grief stricken and dealing with a suicidal daughter. We met a young man who had been in foster care and group homes on and off all his life. He had been living with an aunt for several years and she had recently died. He was back in the group home. He asked me many questions about the Lord and why bad things have to come into kids' lives. I had the opportunity to pray with him and we are keeping in contact with him. I know all of these were divine appointments that the Lord had for us. They were ways for us to show the love of God to those who are lost, hurting broken and thirsty.

The fellowship all along the way with our team was wonderful. Each day we started with a short team meeting, devotion and prayer. We had times of laughter, sharing, and some tears, but it was an adventure, and we enjoyed every moment.

It was physically demanding at times, heartbreaking at times, but so worth every moment.

Would I encourage anyone who has a heart for those who are lost to come on a mission trip? Yes! Be open to the Lord's leading, whether in South Dakota, Kenya, Zambia, or the local Walmart. There are those times when, like Jesus, we MUST need to go.... well you fill in the blank!



Karen held a Tea Party for the kids, complete with a costumed story teller!

A BETTER LIFE - Ken Moore

This was my first mission trip and it was a great experience. I met many people who had an impact on my life. One in particular was Genevieve Iron Lightening. She is a young woman of 18 who is quite famous for her dancing. She interned with us for two days and seemed very interested in why we were there and I got to know her and see things from her perspective. Being a young person on the reservation



Tom, Carol, Genevieve, Karen & Ken

with limited resources, she is aiming for a better life! She can also speak the Lakota language which was amazing to hear.

I felt very welcomed by everyone I met. I also developed a compassion for all of the young people I met that I did not have before.

I was impressed by the beauty of the land on the reservation, even though Eagle Butte is more or less dusty and does not have many trees. The Cheyenne River that runs through the Reservation is beautiful and from a distance in some places reminded me of the Grand Canyon.

Working with the team to bring the vision clinics to CRR made me more aware of how hard life is for people on the reservation. I was glad the Lord let me see this.