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Indian Ministries of North America, Inc.

January - March 2011
Volume 10 · Number 1

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Copy Editor
Laura Payne

Covenant Warrior
Intercessory Prayer Coordinator
Pam Sweeden

Photography / Graphic Design
Agape Creations
Cleveland, TN

Office
Indian Ministries of North America, Inc.
P.O. Box 3472
Cleveland, TN 37320
Phone (423) 479-3831
Fax (423) 479-5948
www.indianministries.org
I am extremely excited about what God is doing through and within the ministry of IMNA, Inc. Volunteers continue to come forward to assist with projects and God is expanding our territory into new regions. I am expecting a great harvest of souls this year through our joining forces with several new churches, businesses and individuals to go forward together and advance the Kingdom of God. Three new board members have been added to the ministry and on behalf of all the other board members, I would like to welcome Peggy Harmann, Greg Casto and Rodney LaVallie. Each of these individuals have demonstrated a love and commitment to Indian Ministries of North America, Inc. over the last several years, and I am blessed to call them brothers and sisters of the faith. 

Johnny K. Hughes, President

Peggy Harmann is a 2010 graduate of the Pentecostal Theological Seminary in Cleveland, Tennessee and is a licensed minister with the Church of God. She currently serves as the Children’s Pastor at the East Sparta Church of God (TN). Peggy worked for the Cummins Corporation, a Fortune 500 company, for over 30 years and fulfilled a variety of roles with responsibilities around the world. Some of her positions included customer service, marketing and quality control. Peggy, and her husband, Jeff, have two children and have just celebrated the birth of their first grandchild.

The Harmanns’ were introduced to IMNA in 2008, following a time where they felt God calling them to changes in their longtime corporate jobs. God spoke to them about two specific ministries in which to pour their gifts and talents; a local food ministry and IMNA. They retired in December of that same year in order to fulfill their call into these areas of service. Since retirement, they have begun a feeding program at their local church and have been traveling with IMNA and the youth of RELEASE for the last two years. Peggy shares, “The faces of Native American children who live in extreme poverty will not leave my mind. Remembering the smiles of those who have accepted Jesus Christ encourages me as I have asked God to lead me into how I am to continue making a difference.”

Rev. Greg Casto has been elected to serve on the Board of Directors for IMNA. Rev. Casto was called to minister the Word of God at the age of 13. His love for gospel music, and his signature vocals, was soon recognized throughout the music industry and doors opened for him to sing with several legendary Southern Gospel groups. His voice has won awards such as “Lead Singer of the Year” and “Musician of the Year.”

By the age of 27, God had expanded his vision; God called Greg into pastoral ministry. Over the next 17 years he planted three churches in West Virginia. God then led Greg to Cleveland, TN where he worked along side Dr. T.L. Lowery as the Ministry Director for the T.L. Lowery Global Foundation. While serving in this capacity, Greg began to hear the call of the nations and responded by traveling around the world, preaching to hundreds of thousands of hungry souls.

Prior to accepting his current position as the Pastor for the United Christian Church in Cleveland, Tennessee, Greg served as the Senior Pastor of the Spirit Life Church of God in Pasadena, Texas. It was during these times that a strong bond and relationship was formed between Greg and IMNA. His heart and calling is to take the anointed Word of God to the lost and hurting around the world, with a message of faith so that people may be saved, healed and delivered in Jesus Christ’s name.

Rev. Rodney LaVallie, 43, born on the Turtle Mountain Reservation in Belcourt, ND, grew up with 18 siblings. He had 12 brothers and 6 sisters, all from the same father and mother. Led into a life of alcoholism, because of generational curses, he lived the life of an alcoholic; empty, full of despair and depression. “I lived with absolutely no hope, thinking nothing could ever become of "this little drunken Indian," states Rodney. He accepted the Lord at the age of 26, following visitations from missionaries. From 1992 to 1995, he attended Central Indian Bible, in Mobridge, SD, near the Standing Rock Reservation. During that time he was given an internship at a small native church on the United Tribes College campus, where he pastored for 5 years. Rodney has pastored 3 native churches for 15 of the 17 years he has been ministering. He is currently serving as the pastor for New Life Christian Fellowship in Cohasset, MN.

His passion is learning, teaching, and preaching the Gospel of Christ and reaching the lost. Rodney states, “I believe God has called us all to be evangelists, and I feel we must get out of the church walls and minister to those outside. I believe God has strategically placed me in the path of IMNA. My wife felt the Lord tell her that one day I would be working with IMNA, and God is now opening the door for that prophesy from 9 years ago to come together. God is calling me to “GO” and I love the fact that IMNA has taken up that vision and command and they are "going" as God enables them.”
“Our children are dying!” This is the cry of the parents, elders and leaders of the Native American and First Nations People of the United States and Canada. The suicide rate is three times the National average for ages 15-24, and exceeds that in many areas, such as Alaska, where it soars to 12 times the National average. For ages 10-14, the rate is an alarming four times that of the general population. The Native American youth are killing themselves in record numbers. Filled with despair, confusion and hopelessness, they see suicide as the only answer to the hurt inside of them. These feelings are brought on by all of the introduced behaviors, physical abuse, mental abuse, sexual abuse, etc. In addition to those, there is extreme poverty, alcoholism and drug addictions that lead to a life of loneliness and a feeling of absolutely no self-worth. A generation that feels so unloved, mislaced and rejected by society is searching desperately for an answer to the pain in their inner being.

“Where is the church?” That is the cry ringing out from the ministries that are passionately attempting to reach this generation and this population with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. America, we are part of the world, and it is time that the Church starts turning some her attention and resources toward our own homeland. The First Americans are in desperate need of the truth and the hope that a relationship with Christ will bring. It is time for the church to arise, with the fire of the Holy Spirit and sacrificially lay ourselves over a forgotten people like Paul did over the deceased boy in Acts 20. It is time that the resurrection power of Christ is manifested in a group of people that hold the key to America’s spiritual future. Numerous prophetic words have been spoken that if America is to see a true end-time revival, it will come through those who possess the authority over the land. Billy Graham called the Native Americans the “sleeping giant.” I say it is time for the giant to awake! “These dry bones shall live!”

As an ambassador for Christ, Indian Ministries of North America, Inc., is reaching into the hearts of the Native youth across America. For the last few years, our goal and vision has become focused on igniting a fire into a generation of bold warriors. We have made a commitment to teach, train, and release Covenant Warriors into the footprints of Christ. Therefore, a group of young leaders, who are passionate about their relationship with Christ, is rising up and storming the gates of Hell to rescue their families and peers. Many of these have experienced the spirit of suicide first hand. They have had family members and close friends fall prey to this demonic beast that is prowling the earth. Evident through their personal testimonies, most have had to confront this spiritual attack in their own lives.

Testimony by a young Navajo teen:

“My home life was always a continual argument, no one got along with each other and the split was coming. I began to cut, to show my parents the pain they were causing me and it became easier each time. The demonic oppression became so heavy that I couldn’t take it anymore! I tied a rope around my neck and over the closet rod. I jumped from a chair, and as I was gasping for my last breath, something cut the cord. I lay face down, passed out on the floor for some time, but when I awoke, there was an overwhelming presence of God in my room. He spoke to me and said, “‘You cannot end it this way. I have a purpose for your life!’ God cut the cord!”
In contrast, this summer I stood at the casket of a 12-year-old Lakota boy on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. He had been enjoying the fellowship of Christian youth at a day camp. However, he didn’t have the strength to combat the devouring attack of the enemy that was waiting to ambush him at home. His grandmother found him with a rope around his neck. God gave us favor as this traditional family asked our Christian youth to sing at the wake. With tears streaming down their faces, the Navajo youth stood beside his casket and sang about the love, joy and hope that comes through Christ. It is impossible to know what walls were chipped away as Lakota families were open to see the love of Christ in the caring faces of the Navajo teens. There were four other teen suicides this same week and another seven after we left the Pine Ridge area. We are receiving calls about the increase in suicides in other reservations as Satan tries to destroy a chosen generation.

Areas of the Native American land have the highest poverty rate in our nation and life expectancy is many times lower than anywhere in the western hemisphere except for Haiti......hope must arise. These are the stories that are a part of every day life for Native American youth. Some are joyful interventions of God’s grace and mercy and of the resurrection power of the Holy Spirit, and some are full of desperation questions for lost loved ones.

What will the next story be?

Where will it come from?

What Native youth will hear the Word and find the hope of a redeemed life?

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Enough is enough! Arise and stir the “sleeping giant.”

It is time to put this spirit of suicide under our feet!

---

We need the church NOW! Arise and join together with IMNA and our Native youth team to storm the gates of Hell and take these youth from the mouth of the devourer. We are looking for 250 churches over the next 6 months to stand with us and commit to prayer and a financial investment for the next 3 years. We are tying together a net, with each knot representing a coming together of this ministry and a local church. As we join together and cast this net into a world of darkness, we will see an abundant harvest. This eternal investment will allow us to cast the net into some of the most desperate areas and give them HOPE.
As we look around this country, in the 21st century, we still find a people group who feel they have little hope of a better tomorrow. Their lives have been torn apart by neglect, heartache, despair, fear and hunger. Alcoholism and drug abuse brutally reigns in many of these areas. Incest, child abuse, and suicide are on the increase. These are the First Americans, the original people of this land. Yet, as you look into the faces of many, you can see the horrors of poverty and a people seemingly destitute. However, there is hope for them, and that hope is found in the Word of God. That hope is Jesus Christ.

There is a heart cry heard among many Native People across the land today, and that heart cry is for a deliverer. One who can set them free from the pain, the hurt, the heartache and misery, and the hardships of sin. You can hear the sorrowful cries of a weeping heart that longs for someone to love them where they are, care for them for who they are, and tell them about Jesus. They need a Deliverer and that Deliverer is none other than Jesus Christ:

Isaiah 19:20 “...for they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and He shall send them a Savior, and a Great One, and He shall deliver them.”

Over the last century, the Church has stressed reaching the foreign lands. Although this is extremely important for the Kingdom, it has come at the cost of neglecting some of the unreached and unchurched people groups in America. Only 1-5% of America’s original people profess Christianity. The battle will be lost on the home front if the Church of America does not hear the cries of a broken people.

Where is your heart?

As we focus on the children, we see the pain and the hurt on their faces; yet so many times we turn our backs to them, and in effect, say to them, “We don’t really care.” Can we say that we are followers of Christ, if we continue to hide our faces to the reality of the hurting souls of Native America. We must reach the children while they are young, and set a generation on a path after Jesus Christ. They are valuable jewels and a masterpiece in the eyes of God, not to be judged and sentenced to a life of despair, hopelessness and no self-worth. When God’s people see the need and come to the rescue through prayers and resources, despair is changed to hope...emptiness filled with inspiration...warm friendships are made that last a lifetime, and the Gospel is delivered to a hungry people.
God wants each individual to have a victorious life through prayer and communications with Him. Prayer can come directly from the heart of a believer, and it can be effective. But to have confidence in prayer, based on knowledge of the Word of God, the effectiveness is greatly increase. This book and the scriptures found in it are written or selected to bring understanding and confidence in prayer. It is also hoped that the believer will lose any feeling of awkwardness in prayer and will learn to let the prayers “flow” to God’s Throne with full confidence and assurance that He hears and answers.

Pam Sweeden joined the IMNA mission team in January of this year. She was raised in Hazen, Arkansas and later moved to Little Rock to pursue a career in cosmetology. She continued in this career for over 36 years, retiring in the summer of 2010. “I was the owner of my own salon for over 20 years, and because of the close relationships with my clients, I was blessed to use it as a ministry tool, not just a business,” states Sweeden. “We were like family, sharing both the joys and the heartaches of life, and taking time to pray together,” she continued. While in Little Rock, Pam was the Prayer Coordinator for the Markham Street Baptist Church for 6 years and has now authored a book on the subject of prayer, “Glory Be I’m on My Knees.”

God had been speaking to Pam about moving to Tennessee for about two years prior to her retirement. He had been having her to intercede in prayer for a ministry. She did not know the name of the ministry or it’s exact location. In September 2010, she felt led to travel to Cleveland, Tennessee and through a series of events, had the opportunity to speak with Johnny Hughes. During their conversation the Lord revealed that IMNA was the ministry that she had been praying for and she agreed to join the team. Pam is now working in the IMNA offices in Cleveland, and has been given the responsibility of establishing and coordinating an intercessory prayer team for the ministry. We are excited to have her on board and if you are interested in joining the team of intercessors, please call the IMNA office at 423.479.3831.

GLORY BE
I’m On
MY KNEES

God wants each individual to have a victorious life through prayer and communications with Him. Prayer can come directly from the heart of a believer, and it can be effective. But to have confidence in prayer, based on knowledge of the Word of God, the effectiveness is greatly increase. This book and the scriptures found in it are written or selected to bring understanding and confidence in prayer. It is also hoped that the believer will lose any feeling of awkwardness in prayer and will learn to let the prayers “flow” to God’s Throne with full confidence and assurance that He hears and answers.

Written by Pamela Sweeden

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The leadership of Indian Ministries of North America, Inc. recently received an invitation to visit the international headquarters for World Vision in Seattle, Washington.

Johnny Hughes, President of IMNA, accompanied by his wife Becky and Bridgitt Johnson, a Navajo teenager and member of IMNA’s youth leadership from Gallup, New Mexico. Bridgitt was asked to address the World Vision chapel service on behalf of Native American youth and their struggles with oppression and suicide. IMNA is truly honored to have had the opportunity to meet with the leadership of this great organization and thank God for the doors that have been opened for future work together for the Kingdom of God. The following is Bridgitt Johnson’s account of her experience at World Vision:

Arriving at the airport in Seattle was when the shock and realization settled in that I would be speaking to the employees and leadership of World Vision. However, my pounding heart was comforted by the fact that I was not alone. Johnny and Becky were there. We met Ruston Seaman, a coordinator for USA Projects, and he began to explain his involvement with World Vision.

Following a time of rest at our motel, we took a tour of the World Vision headquarters. It was amazing to me how laid back everyone was and at how intent they were on helping people in need. I felt so much love when I walked into the building and I felt the sincerity of everyone with respect to their job. As we made our way through the “mouse maze” of office cubicles, Ruston shared about the involvement of World Vision with a new skate park on my Reservation in New Mexico. The people I met were so willing to let God lead them and trusted in His will as they expressed their brokenness and willingness to help the less fortunate in third world countries.

That evening, we accompanied the USA projects leadership to dinner, where I had the opportunity to share more about myself. I shared my Hope Story. While sharing, everyone grew extremely quiet and as I looked around, some had their heads down. This truly humbled me, and I continued to share what my life has been like and all that I have gone through. I shared how my amazing God had always been there for me, even when I turned my back on Him. Through their encouragement, I realized the opportunity that God have given me to make a difference in the lives of Native youth. I forgot how nervous I was about the next day, and a sense of relief settled over me. That night I kept thinking, “Am I truly the voice to bring the change that will help Native youth on reservations throughout the United States?”

That night there was little rest, I kept thinking about the next morning, then the next hour. As time ticked ever closer to the morning chapel service, I started thinking, “I can’t do this!” Then, I had so many encouraging World Vision employees reassuring me that it would be fine and then ask if they could pray for me. I politely responded “yes, thank you,” but inside I was screaming, “Yes! Please pray for me! I need it!” Just before the chapel, we met with the Vice-President of World Vision. He was interested in Johnny and Becky’s ministry, Indian Ministries of North America, and now that I am part of this ministry, I consider it as our ministry. I began to share with him how hard it was for me and others being raised on the reservation. I began to share about Pine Ridge, South Dakota, and I as I did, my heart was broken once again. I started to tear up as I tried to explain the reality of that life, but I knew I could never explain the heaviness that I felt while ministering in Pine Ridge. It was
One of my responsibilities for the IMNA Christmas outreaches was to contact the Hogan Hozhoni Children's home in Window Rock, Arizona, to coordinate our distribution. This was the home where I lived for most of my childhood and it was intimidating to make the initial call. I was worried that I would not get permission to give out the Christmas gifts to the children, but I was relieved when the "Papa of the house" gave us the O.K., and it gave me a sense of accomplishment.

The day finally came for the outreach, and we had the gifts packed and ready for the children. My heart began to race as we turned up the driveway. Suddenly, my mind was flooded with all the memories of my childhood spent there. As I rang the door bell, I remembered the times we used to yell "my mom" or "my dad!"

As I walked up on stage, I realized how many people there were in attendance. I took a deep breath and introduced myself in English and then in Navajo. Telling my Hope Story was very hard, because I was opening up to so many people that I didn’t even know. While I was trying to choke out my words and hold back the tears, I began to share how I had grown up in an alcoholic family. I looked over the crowd and thought how thankful I was to have the opportunity to share the craziness of my life and how I have gotten through it, even if that means crying in front of five hundred people. As I finished, the employees stood with an ovation, and I was moved, never thinking I could impact so many people with my story. People began to congratulate and encourage me, telling me how brave I had been. I felt invigorated when one lady told me how encouraged she was by my Hope Story.

The chapel service was followed by more interviews and discussions, and I really felt reassured that World Vision might truly help with the plights of the First Nations people. Many of the encouraging comments that I received will stick with me for a long time, especially words like, “Just be yourself and don’t try to be someone else, because if you try to be someone you are not, you won’t reach the people that God intends.” I am so thankful to of had this experience and to have been the mouthpiece for my people. Thank you World Vision for the opportunity to tell you my Hope Story. My hope is to keep moving forward with God and walk it out. I would not be who I am or where I am today without the influence of the people in my life, even those who sometimes hurt me.
Indian Fry Bread

Mix 2 cups of flour, 2 tsp. of baking powder, 1/2 tsp. salt, 1/2 cup powdered milk. Some cooks add a small amount of shortening, not necessary.

Add warm water to form dough. Knead until dough is soft, but not sticky. Cover with a cloth and allow to stand for about 2 hours. Shape into balls about 2 inches across, then flatten by patting with the hands until a circle about 8 inches in diameter is formed. (This may also be done by using a rolling pin).

Have about 1/2 inch of lard or commercial shortening heated in a large frying pan. Test the temperature of the grease by dropping in a pinch of dough, and if it browns quickly, but does not burn, the grease is hot enough.

Some women make a small hole in the center of the round before frying. The dough is fried brown on one side, then turned and browned on the other. The thinner the dough circles, the crispier the fry bread.

Cherokee Fry Bread

2 Cups self rising flour
1/2 can yellow cream corn
1/3 cup milk or 1/4 cup powdered milk

Enough oil in pan to make 1 inch deep. Do not burn oil. Keep heat on medium, once oil is hot

Mix enough water to make thick ball of dough. Knead in dry flour to keep dough from being sticky. Hand cut golf ball size dough, pat our until thin and about 6 to 8 inches across. Drop flat piece of dough into oil, turn occasionally until light brown on each side. Remove from oil and drain. Serve hot. Fry bread can be served with honey, powdered sugar or jam.

Smother with spiced ground beef, pinto beans, lettuce, chopped tomatoes, shredded cheese and diced onions to make an Indian Taco.

Creek Indian Meal Soup

1 quart water
1 cup of milk
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. of black pepper
1 14-1/2 ounce can of chicken stock
1/2 chicken breast (chopped)
1/2 cup corn meal

Bring water, milk and chicken stock to boiling. Add salt, pepper, chicken and lower to medium heat.

Add corn meal slowly and stirring vigorously to prevent lumping. Continue to stir until soup begins to thicken slightly. Be careful that it does not boil over.

Should lumping occur, use hand mixer to remove lumps. Cook for about 10 minutes. Remove from heat and serve.
“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.”

Luke 4:18,19 KJV

Together We Can

THE MISSION OF INDIAN MINISTRIES OF NORTH AMERICA, INC. IS TO ENCOURAGE, EMPOWER AND EQUIP OUR NATIVE AMERICAN BROTHERS AND SISTERS THROUGH RELATIONSHIP, DISCIPLESHIP AND CHRIST’S LOVE.

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There are many ways to get involved with the ministry of IMNA:

Your prayers, skills / talents, mission trips and financial resources

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Together We Can make a difference for the Kingdom of God

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Indian Ministries of North America, Inc.
P.O. Box  3472
Cleveland, TN 37320-3472

423.479.3831    1.800.664.IMNA
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