Hope for First Nations

In Loving Memory

of

Carolyn Rackard

Poarch Band of Creek Indians
Indian Ministries of North America, Inc.

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On May 17, 2021, Carolyn McGhee Rackard met her Savior face to face. She was a member of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, Atmore, Alabama. She was preceded in death by her husband, Lonnie Rackard, also a member of the Poarch Creek Tribe. She is survived by her sons and grandchildren, Jason and Mary with Kinzie and Dallon, Jeremy and Jasmine with Destiny, Khalia, Jackson and Macey, two sisters, Mary Gibbs and Betty Shepherd, along with a host of nieces and nephews.

Carolyn, as well as Lonnie, served as volunteer members of the Native American Advisory Council for Indian Ministries of North America. We had the honor of meeting her many years ago through our mutual friends, LeRoy and Kathi Littlejohn from Cherokee, North Carolina. Throughout the years, she became very close to our family, and treated us just like her own family.

At our first meeting, we agreed to assist them in remodeling their former church, the United Pentecostal Church of Atmore. Through this project, IMNA became close to all of the families, and was soon assisting in various projects on the Reservation. During the landfall of Hurricane Ivan, much of the Poarch area was devastated. IMNA was on the scene for clean-up and delivery of crucial items for the residents. Carolyn arranged for the tribe to present a Poarch Creek tribal flag to IMNA for our work during the hurricane relief.

Through the years, she served in various areas of the tribal government and agencies. She had a special place in her heart for the work and calling that IMNA has, especially our work with the Native children and youth. Anytime we visited, she always wanted us to share the latest updates with her and her church family, and she was instrumental in the tribe sowing into the ministry to help purchase our new ministry truck and trailer.

Our favorite memory of Lonnie and Carolyn is how they always color coordinated their clothing. At Lonnie’s passing, Carolyn’s clothing at the visitation and funeral matched Lonnie’s. Their love for one another was so evident, even in the smallest of details. Another sweet memory is how she taught her fur baby Zoey to pray before she ate her food. Carolyn was very well respected by all who knew her. A true example of a Godly woman. A proud and doting Mother and Maw Maw, what a legacy.

Carolyn never met a stranger, she considered everyone a friend and a brother or sister in Christ. Her faith, dedication, and commitment to her Lord and Savior was evident to everyone she met. She was a true friend to Indian Ministries of North America and to the Hughes family. She was truly a wonderful lady and she will be greatly missed, but her legacy will continue through her immediate family, and through her spiritual family across this land. Carolyn Rackard, we love you and will see you again soon.
The IMNA team just completed a Summer full of work, mentoring, and Bible studies at our Grace Point Ministry Center in Hammon, Oklahoma. The Summer was completed with our annual Vacation Bible School. This year, the Summit Church from Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, once again returned to conduct the activities. We enjoy the opportunity to sow the seeds of the Gospel into the lives of these children all throughout the year, and seeing their faces light up during VBS is a special joy.

Pastor Tim Burton, Summit Church, “This is our third year to conduct a VBS at Grace Point with the Hammon children. This year, we saw kids receive salvation, physical and emotional healings, and freedom from being abandoned by their parents. This was just a few of the victories that we witnessed. We also were able to do worship services with some of the youth, and we witnessed their lives change as they encountered the living God.”

It is an honor for IMNA to be partnered with Summit Church for this annual VBS and we look forward to many more years of seeing a move of God in the Cheyenne / Arapaho people. Thank you to the entire Summit team!
I want to express appreciation to pastor Tim Melton, Cherokee Pentecostal Holiness Church, and Tim Love, The Mission, Life Christian Center, for opening the door for us to conduct VBS for their children in Cherokee, North Carolina. It was a wonderful experience for not only the children, but especially the teachers and workers from Alabama. Working as one, a total of six different churches were represented on our team. It just shows how we can work across denominational lines when we seek to bring glory to God and not man.

Also, I must express appreciation to Johnny Hughes, of Indian Ministries of North America, Inc. I knew nothing about this ministry until a few months ago. I reached out to Brother Johnny and shared my heart about conducting a VBS on one of the reservations. This set the stage for us to plan the Cherokee VBS. I would highly encourage you to look for ways your church can partner with Indian Ministries of North America.

4G Ministries plans to continue to work with IMNA regarding VBS on the Indian reservations in the U.S. We’ve been working in Belize conducting VBSs in the Maya and Ket’chi churches in the mountains of Southern Belize for 14 years. We have trained many churches so they could conduct their own VBS without the help of the Americans. That’s always our goal on International soil. 4G Ministries is also involved in pastoral training, discipleship, mentoring leaders, teaching at GSEF College in the Philippines, and church planting (4gministries.com). Please remember us in prayer as we seek other ways to help build God’s Kingdom.

Dr. Stanley Kilgore, 4G Ministries
SEWING  BEADWORK  
WOODWORKING  PAINTING  ARCHERY
The Impact Warriors Youth Mentoring Program has been in full swing this Spring and Summer. The Choctaw youth in Mississippi and the youth of Hammon, Oklahoma, have been busy with a wide variety of projects. Impact Warriors seeks to identify the gifts and talents of each young person, and begin a concentrated effort to strengthen those gifts. This will enable many of these youth to develop a self-esteem that they do not possess. We truly believe that as these youth begin to feel good about their abilities and accomplishments, much of the negative outlooks that they experience will begin to fade.

Life-skills is a vital part of our training, as well as skills training. We have program mentors working with the youth in woodworking, sewing skills, beadwork, art, health / hygiene, archery skills, and construction basics. In each program we strive to instill the basic Biblical principles of life into each youth, and teach them the importance of a life of service to their family, their church, and their community.

We are currently impacting the lives of over 65 youth, and plans to expand that are in the works. Pray for these Warriors!
This Summer, we had the privilege and honor to host a ribbon skirt workshop at the Grace Point Ministry Center in Hammon, Oklahoma. The event featured a youth class and adult class for four consecutive days.

The workshop was under the direction of Nan Blassingame, a member of the Southern Cheyenne tribe, who was raised in Hammon. Nan has become an accomplished Native American clothing designer and beader. In 2019, she was featured at the New York Fashion Week where she introduced the City to the fashions and innovations of the Native American culture. She also has a permanent display at the Bullock Texas State Museum.

Blassingame has been sewing since she was 14 and uses her fashion creations to educate people about the indigenous community, and to teach these skills to other Native communities. This is an art that is in many places dying out.

This Summer workshop was a huge success. Approximately 18 youth, between 7 and 17 years of age, came and designed and sewed their own traditional ribbon skirt. There were more than 18 women who attended the evening sessions, and at the end of the four days, 43 skirts were created.
The Washita Cowboy Fellowship in Cheyenne, Oklahoma, is sharing Christ in unique ways. Members of our IMNA Summer team were able to assist this year with regular services and with their Monday night youth outreach for the community. The outreach was a night of roping, barrel racing, and other training activities with their horses.

Sharing the Love of Christ on the Range
IMNA had the privilege of once again leading a Global Perspectives class from the Lee University School of Nursing in Cleveland, Tennessee. We were scheduled to spend time in the Cheyenne / Arapaho region of Oklahoma, the Navajo Nation in New Mexico and Arizona, and the Eastern Band of Cherokee in North Carolina. Due to unforeseen circumstances and COVID regulations, much of trip had to be totally revamped. However, God is always in control and has His plan. The following is from two of the nursing students.

I think the other Lee students can all agree with me that this trip was a whirlwind of chaos, adventure, disappointment, lessons, and togetherness. The tears are minuscule when comparing them to the abundance of laughter which could be heard with each passing mile. The Lord taught us to be okay with straying from our plan, though it might have taken some convincing from Pastor Johnny, Pastor Tim, and Bryson Foulks.

We each learned to be patient in the midst of uncertainty and confusion, and these men imprinted the words of the Lord to remind us who was truly in control. A moment which I treasure is the night we spent at Pastor Tim’s church, sitting with his congregation hearing Native stories and eating delicious fry bread. Hearing the emotion in their voice as they shared their heritage with us was so special.

Overall, I feel like we learned to be content in our company. We didn’t have to do big miraculous things to feel the spirit of the Lord in our midst. Growing to know and love my peers, our leaders, and every person we came upon along the way was enough.

By: Paiton Clinard

During my Lee University Global Perspectives trip, I had the opportunity to travel with Indian Ministries of North America. We were able to learn about and be immersed in different Native American cultures.

In Clinton, Oklahoma, we visited the Indian Health Clinic, and learned about the services they provide and some of the difficulties they face in meeting their community’s health needs. One of the biggest impacts from this experience was walking down the trail to the Washita Battlefield, in Cheyenne, Oklahoma, after learning of its history and its effects that still are impacting the community today.

In Cherokee, North Carolina, we were welcomed with traditional foods, dances, stories, and music. Throughout this trip, we were able to serve alongside Indian Ministries and a couple of local churches. Hearing all the stories of the challenges that were overcome, and seeing how God has moved, and continues to move, was incredible. We as students of nursing learned a great deal and had the opportunity to grow together.

By: Marla Broom
A team from the Summit Church in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, made the trip over the Smoky Mountains to spend a few days splitting the final loads of firewood for the elders of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Each year, IMNA takes teams to assist with the Family Support Services, one in the Fall, and one in late Winter. It is a wonderful time of service to the low-income families and the elders, and it is open for anyone over 18 years old, who is interested in participating. We are planning the dates for our Fall 2021 trip now and details will be available by mid September.

Contact the IMNA offices at 423.479.3831 or email BeckyHughes@indianministries.org.
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