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# NAVAJO

NEIGHBORS

2022 Edition





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Photo Cover  
Joe & Gerri Begay

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# FROM THE PRESIDENT



## DEAR READERS,

Welcome to the 2022 edition of the Navajo Neighbors magazine. Inside you will read about the dedication and devotion to God that two couples have shown over the past 47 years. One couple traveled over 2000 miles to answer God's call on their lives, and another struggled to find meaning in the middle of their homeland. Leaving their friends, families, church, and only home they'd known, Jim and Kay Baker came to Farmington, New Mexico, to serve children at "Navajo Missions." Twice divorced (and remarried), Joe and Gerri Begay soon partnered with Jack Drake and Navajo Missions. Inside the pages of this magazine, you will read how the Baker's and Begay's paths crossed and how a beautiful friendship and partnership developed.

You will also read about:

- New faces God is bringing to Four Corners Home for Children
- The inspirational story of Joe & Gerri Begay
- Jim and Kay Baker's retirement

Things are changing on our campus. Familiar faces are leaving after thirty and forty years of dedicated service. These folks have devoted their lives to serving God and His children at FCHC. They have fought the good fight; they have finished the race, and they have kept the faith. Some day they will hear, "Well done, good and faithful servant." It is the end of a beautiful era for FCHC, but the work continues for the need is great. So, we will carry on; we will carry the torch.

*But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God.*  
Acts 20:24 NLT

A handwritten signature in brown ink that reads "Reich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R".

**ANNETTE REICH**

*Editor of Navajo Neighbors Magazine  
Four Corners Home for Children President*

# NAVAJO NEIGHBORS

**EDITOR**  
Annette Reich

**GRAPHIC DESIGNERS**  
Hannah Begay  
Tiffany Kincaid

**WRITERS AND CONTRIBUTORS**  
Annette Reich  
Jeff Hendricks  
Joe & Gerri Begay  
Jim & Kay Baker

## MISSION STATEMENT

Four Corners Home for Children helps the people we serve through programs that instill hope, restoration and Christian values.

## ABOUT FOUR CORNERS HOME FOR CHILDREN

Four Corners Home for Children was established in 1953 for the purpose of caring for dependent children, regardless of race, religion or national origin, and for printing and distributing Navajo tracts and hymnals.

The ministry has expanded over the years to include a program for mothers and children, and Navajo Nation Outreach, providing spiritual, emotional and material encouragement to those living in Navajoland.

When a donor expresses a preference as to the use of donated funds, Four Corners Home for Children will make every effort to honor their request and in most cases this is done in exact compliance with the donor's wishes. However, the Board of Directors, in ensuring that Four Corners Home for Children carries out its exempt purposes required by law and effectively uses available funds, accepts the responsibility of applying funds in accordance with objectives of the ministry.

## PUBLISHER

Navajo Neighbors is owned and published by Four Corners Home for Children Inc., and is published two times a year and distributed approximately every six months.

Postmaster send address changes to Four Corners Home for Children, PO Box 1230, Farmington, New Mexico 87499. Views and opinions expressed in Navajo Neighbors by those interviewed are not necessarily those of Four Corners Home for Children.

Four Corners Home for Children is a Charter Member in good standing with ECFA (Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability).



## CONTACT INFORMATION

Four Corners Home for Children  
2103 West Main Street  
PO Box 1230  
Farmington, New Mexico 87499

**Phone** 505.325.0255  
**Fax** 505.325.9035  
**E-mail** email@4ch4c.org  
**Website** www.4ch4c.org



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SPONSOR  
BRITTNEY

Brittney has called Four Corners Home for Children her home since April 2015. Brittney recently moved into our House of Hope, where her housemom is Shelby Daniele. Brittney is excited about being in a home with fewer children, where she can assume the “big sister” role with the younger children who come for care. Brittney’s birthday is May 11, 2006, and she is in the 9th grade at Four Corners Academy for Excellence for the 2021-2022 school year.

Brittney enjoys history and social studies best. She also enjoys doing crafts of any kind and putting jigsaw puzzles together. Her favorite activity is attending weekly youth services at church and participating in social events with her church friends.

As Brittney’s sponsor, you will receive monthly updates on her progress and activities. This will assist you in knowing how to better pray for her as she continues in our care. You are invited to write to her occasionally and remember her on her birthday and at Christmas. Brittney will be glad to respond to your letters and cards.

If you’d like to sponsor Brittney for \$40 or more a month please go to [4ch4c.org](http://4ch4c.org)







## OUR FUTURE HOME

BY: JEFF HENDRICKS

with Annette Reich

*It's cold, but a quiet cold*, Liz said as we walked from the Hospitality House to the office for our first 8:00 a.m. devotional meeting at Four Corners Home for Children (FCHC). Two days earlier, on Saturday, January 15, we left Iowa behind, including eleven inches of snow and subzero temperatures, for the three-day experience of a lifetime in Farmington, New Mexico.

The trip to Farmington lasted only three days, but the journey had begun long before. Around three years ago, Liz and I both felt we wanted and needed to support a ministry serving Native Americans. I researched and found Navajo

Ministries, now called Four Corners Home for Children. FCHC provides homes for Navajo children and engages in Christian outreach to the Navajo Nation in the Four Corners region. Based on research, we believe Liz is of Navajo heritage and had driven through the Navajo Nation a few times to visit Liz's parents in Arizona. Supporting this ministry felt like a good fit.

In late 2021, I began wrestling with my purpose, asking questions about what God wanted me to do with the second half of my life and where He wanted Liz and me to serve. In December, the desire to visit FCHC grew stronger. On Sunday, December 5, our pastor delivered a sermon on mission work titled, "Just Go!" On the way home from church, I told Liz I believed God wanted us to visit the Four Corners soon.

The following day, I met with our pastor,

Ben. After listening to me ramble on for several minutes, he took a piece of paper and wrote, "just go." On Tuesday, I called and spoke with the FCHC President, Annette Reich. I explained that we believed God wanted us to see the ministry in person. We did not know why we felt led to visit or what God wanted us to experience. It may sound strange, but we felt God wanted us to visit soon.

Annette assured me it was not a strange request and felt she knew why God wanted us to visit. Eager for an answer, I immediately asked her why. Her response was, "I'll tell you when you get here." We were scared. What does God have planned for us, and why would Annette not tell us what she thought the reason might be? She informed me they had a place for us to stay on campus and suggested that I talk to Liz about the timing of the trip.

We targeted a few days in mid-January



for our trip. A few days later, I contacted Annette again and let her know we would arrive at the campus on January 16. With our plans set, we put thoughts of the trip aside over the holidays. As the time for our trip approached, we began to have a nervous excitement, still not knowing quite what to expect.

*One beautiful December day, while working at my desk, my phone rang. I answered to find Jeff Hendricks on the other end. I had not met Jeff, but I knew he and his wife, Liz, had supported FCHC for a few years. Jeff began telling me how strange this conversation was for him and that he wasn't quite sure why he was calling. He shared that God was working in his heart to prepare him for something, but he was unsure of the specifics. As Jeff described the process God was taking him through and the uncertainty surrounding it, I was reminded of my own journey to New Mexico and Four Corners Home for Children. I knew God had something specific in mind for me, but it was as if His plan was being carried out without my knowledge! It seemed this is what Jeff and Liz were going through as well. I knew that God had something specific in mind for them. I was eager to meet Jeff and Liz and discover what God was up to. Could He have a place for them here at FCHC?*

A major snowstorm blew through Iowa and the Midwest the day before our flight. We questioned whether we would be able to get to the airport on Saturday and if our flight would be canceled. Thankfully, we were able to clear our driveway and get to the airport. Finally arriving at our gate, awaiting our departure from Des Moines, we felt a sense of peace and excitement about the trip. Our daughter, Maria, sent us a text message with a beautiful prayer asking God to bless our journey and reveal His plans for us:

*Dear God, thank You so much for being a breath of fresh air every day. I pray that You bless my parents as they travel to New Mexico. As they feel called to be there right*



*now, I just want to thank You for giving them this journey. I know what You have in store for them in the future, and this trip will provide the answers they are seeking. Lord, I pray you help them keep their eyes and hearts open throughout this experience. Give them the courage to ask questions and be a helpful hand to those in need. Being a daughter of two mighty and faithful parents is a blessing. Seeing them grow and honor your will constantly is so inspirational. I can't wait to see how You bless this trip and them. You are the Almighty, Alpha, and Omega.*

*God, if something is to be placed into their hands, let them be humble. Lord, I thank You for these amazing humans. God, I give You the trip they are about to go on; for now, it is in Your hands. They are there in honor of what You have placed in my dad's heart. A heart that is hungry to serve and bless others. They are true examples of what You have called us to be on earth. I pray this all in Your name, amen.*

—Maria Hendricks

The flights to Dallas and Albuquerque were turbulent, resulting in severe motion sickness for Liz. Nonetheless, we made it to our Albuquerque hotel with our rental car. We settled in for a night of rest before beginning the three-hour drive to Farmington the next day.

We arrived at the ministry around noon

and were greeted at the Hospitality House by Annette, and Rick and Paula Terpsma. I can imagine what they thought when they saw Liz still suffering from motion sickness. Annette helped us settle into our home away from home for the next three nights, then pointed out the Walmart just down the road, thinking the pharmacy should have what Liz needed.

That afternoon we had an opportunity to visit with Annette. I was pleasantly surprised to find that she had the NFL playoff game on between the Bucs and Eagles. The game provided the perfect icebreaker for Annette to learn about us and for us to learn more about FCHC. We continued our great conversation at dinner that night in a local restaurant. Annette chose a restaurant with a television, so I could catch the game between the 49ers and Cowboys. The football games foreshadowed the next few days, as God used our passion for sports to connect our two families, providing the backdrop to share personal stories with perfect strangers. After only twelve hours, FCHC was already starting to feel like home.

We went to bed exhausted that night yet still excited to see the rest of the campus on Monday. Around 3:00 a.m., I woke from a deep sleep with a clear image of my friend, Brandon, preaching to the Navajo people. I also had a clear message that Liz and I needed to take an active role at Four



Corners Home for Children. I immediately texted Brandon to pray for the Navajo Nation and how God might use him there. Imagine my surprise when I immediately received Brandon's response at that hour! God had also awakened him in the night, but he didn't know why.

I jumped out of bed, grabbed some paper, and wrote down all my thoughts. It became clear there were things Liz and I could do right now to help the FCHC ministry. Still, we needed to prepare ourselves for something significant in the future.

Later that morning, I told Liz about my 3:00 a.m. experience, and we both hoped we would have a chance to share it with Annette during our stay. We made our way to the Monday morning devotions and were blessed with the opportunity to meet many of the staff members. We sat near Roger and Carol Kittle and felt an immediate connection. Carol asked if we had slept well and if we had started to understand why God brought us here. That was the open door I needed to share my early morning conversation with God. I shared a few details, and we agreed to talk more at lunch.

We made our way to Annette's office to continue our conversation about the ministry. Annette seemed deep in thought as I shared more details about my early morning conversation with God. She explained that during our first telephone contact, she was delighted to hear that God was pulling our hearts toward FCHC. What I thought was a strange story was familiar to her as it paralleled many other stories of people God had brought to FCHC over the years. We all agreed that Liz and I were called to the ministry of FCHC, although there was still some uncertainty about why God wanted us there. Contrary to my nature, I felt complete peace regarding the entire situation.

As planned, we went to lunch with Roger and Carol at a local restaurant serving Navajo tacos. We were joined by Jim and Kay Baker and had the pleasure of hearing their incredible story of being called to Farmington in 1975. The Bakers served as house parents for thirteen years, and Jim was FCHC president for twenty-eight years. Liz and I were struck by how obedient Jim and Kay were at such a young age.

After lunch, Roger and Carol shared their story with us. What a story! That Monday afternoon at their kitchen table, Roger

and Carol shared the miracles God used to guide them from Georgia to New Mexico. Almost two hours passed in what seemed like mere minutes, and we felt like we had known the Kittles for years.

Later that afternoon, we toured the House of Faith and visited with the house mom, Charity. Getting to know Charity was a blessing. She has a huge heart for the kids in her house. Liz and I had dinner with Charity and the children in the Activity Center that evening. Liz connected with the kids immediately, and we enjoyed a night of games and laughter.

Annette had asked me to look over some strategic plans for the ministry. As I looked over the plans, I was struck by how well the spiritual gifts and abilities God had given me aligned with the work that went into these plans.

Tuesday brought the opportunity to tour the Four Corners Academy for Excellence, administrated by Hope Humbles, Director of Education. It was another fantastic experience for Liz, who was in her element helping the kids with their schoolwork. Earlier in the day, we had the opportunity to meet with Bob Fitz and learn about his role as Vice President and his love for fly fishing! Bob and I discovered that we are alike in our skills, abilities, and interests. We are looking forward to uncovering more similarities!

That afternoon, I shared some thoughts and questions on the strategic plans with Annette. As we were chatting, I asked more specific questions about the organization's structure, leadership, and daily operations. I noticed her many areas of responsibility and wondered if she could use some help.

As we continued to talk, it became clear that God was calling Liz and me to be involved in the ministry. Annette shared that FCHC needed to fill a key leadership position that had been vacant for several years, and my skill set lined up well with the job description. The next eighteen months would be a time of preparation.

Our last night in Farmington included dinner with Bob and his wife, Leslie. It was another blessing to learn about their journey to Farmington and FCHC. At the end of the evening, Liz and I knew that this place would one day be our home and that God was calling us to get ready.

Before January, New Mexico was not in our plans for the second half of our lives.

We had talked about eventually moving to Arizona or Texas to be close to family. On January 18, it became clear that God's plan involved New Mexico and the Four Corners Home for Children. We left campus early Wednesday, excited for the future and already discussing a return trip! The trip to FCHC provided much-needed clarity regarding God's purpose for my life. That alone would have made it a life-changing experience. However, I now understand God had an additional purpose for the trip. I struggle at times with a scarcity mindset and am concerned about finances. The first-hand stories we heard from Annette, the Bakers, Kittles, and Fitz's were encouraging for me. Meeting these people of faith and hearing their stories in person has helped me to completely trust God, His plan, and provision.

*Jeff and Liz were a delight to have on campus and were comfortable with the staff and children. Jeff was full of questions, and Liz was full of heart, so it was natural that Liz was drawn to the children while Jeff was all business. Their gifts and talents would fill a need the ministry has. Jeff seems tailor-made for a development role and Liz is willing to serve wherever there is a need.*

*Jeff and Liz's time here was filled with deep, meaningful conversations, soul-searching prayer, light-hearted stories, and much laughter. To us at FCHC, they felt like family. As they left campus, Iowa bound, I hoped that God would call them to a new home, Four Corners Home for Children. It sounds like my hopes may soon be realized...*

Liz and I are so thankful for the opportunity to visit, but also the willingness of the staff who shared their personal stories with us. Through that process, we have gone from perfect strangers to good friends, and we now anticipate being ministry partners! We are excited to say that Four Corners Home for Children is our future home.

**What I thought was a strange story was familiar to her as it paralleled many other stories of people God had brought to FCHC over the years.**



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SPONSOR  
SONNY

Sonny has called Four Corners Home for Children his home since February 2014. He lives in the House of Faith and his housemom is Charity Humbles. Sonny's birthday is February 19, 2005, and he is a junior at Farmington High School for the 2021-22 school year.

Sonny is glad to be back in school this year and he is especially excited about his Introduction to Film Making classes, and also his Psychology class. In his free time, Sonny enjoys playing the guitar and piano, being with his friends, skateboarding, and watching his favorite football team– the Pittsburgh Steelers.

As Sonny's sponsor, you will receive monthly updates on his progress and activities. This will assist you in knowing how to better pray for him as he continues in our care. You are invited to remember him on his birthday and at Christmas.

If you'd like to sponsor Sonny for \$40 or more a month please go to [4ch4c.org](http://4ch4c.org)





# JOE & GERRI BEGAY

## Home Missionaries

BY: ANNETTE REICH  
*with Joe & Gerri Begay*



Joe and Gerri Begay are considered spiritual giants to us at Four Corners Home for Children. Their story is truly incredible and truly of God, but it was not always that way. Joe and Gerri's story began in 1959, in Chinle, Arizona, when Joe was twenty years old and Gerri was sixteen. They met through friends who were out joyriding and ran into each other again at the Chinle Chapter House a few weeks later. Gerri's mother was not supportive of her daughter's choice.

Gerri explains,

*I didn't know about Joe's alcohol addiction then, but I think my mom knew. People tried to keep us apart for two years, but we decided to marry out of rebellion.*

Joe and Gerri were married in 1961 at the local Tribal Census Office. They came from different backgrounds. Gerri had a strong family upbringing; her mother and seven siblings rode in their wagon to church each week and sat on the front row. Gerri's father was gone much of the time, working off the reservation. Joe, on the other hand, carried a lot of emotional baggage, and a dependency on alcohol:

*I spent five years in a boarding school in Utah, about 500 miles away from home. I was gone each year from August to May and spent a lot of time away from my family. This is how you come to feel abandoned and rejected. It was not a good experience. I was thirteen years old when I took my first drink. Later, I became an alcoholic. — Joe Begay*

The Begays had their first child in 1962. They had four children within five years, but the marriage was troubled. Gerri wanted to get out and get away. In 1967, Gerri left because of the "nightmare of Joe's

drinking." Gerri and the children moved to Cleveland, Ohio, for several years, after being accepted as part of a federal job training program. The government paid for all her training and living expenses. The young family still struggled in the big city, and the children continued to miss their father. Joe certainly missed them. In 1970, Gerri decided to move back to Navajoland and try again with Joe.

*I got a good job, and we remarried in 1970. We thought maybe if we had another baby, everything would work out. Our fifth child was born that same year, but our marriage was no better. Joe was still drinking, and there was a lot of jealousy after being separated for three years. There was a lot of bitterness and hatred. — Gerri Begay*

Joe and Gerri divorced for a second time. Relatives and community leaders tried to help, but there seemed no hope for reconciliation. At that point, Gerri turned to alcohol, neglecting her children in the process.

*I was hurt and angry and thought that Joe was out there free while I was left home with all the kids. I started drinking because of my anger and retaliation. Things would soon begin to fall apart for me. — Gerri Begay*

Meanwhile, Joe was drinking anything that had alcohol in it. His addiction took him to different towns and as far away as Oregon and Idaho.

The years between 1971 and 1973 were dark and difficult. In looking back, Joe and Gerri realize that God was with them, leading them back to Him. Following their second divorce, Gerri, wanting to have a nice Christmas with her children,

took time off work and went shopping in Albuquerque with her sister:

*On our way home, we stopped in Gallup for a drink. That one drink turned into a month of drinking in Gallup. During that time, I was fired from the good job I had. When I returned home, no one was there. I realized how long I had been gone. My mother and mother-in-law had taken the children, it was freezing cold, and the water pipes had frozen. There was no water and the electricity had been turned off. I noticed the Christmas tree still standing in the living room corner with no decorations other than a card the children had made for me. They had drawn on it and written, "We love you, Mom." It was the saddest moment of my life. I had no kids, everything was shut off, and this was no longer a home. — Gerri Begay*

Discouraged, Gerri continued to drink, often leaving her children alone, many times during weekends. Everything changed for Gerri in July 1973 when she hitchhiked to Gallup for what she thought would be just another weekend of drinking.

I stayed there four or five days, just hanging around. One morning I woke up in an alley somewhere, and it hit me. I remembered that I came from a decent family, and I never dreamed I would end up where I was. I started walking down that alley and thought about my kids. God showed me my childhood and how I was raised in church. I began to weep. I started singing the song "Pass Me Not, O Gentle Savior."

*Not knowing where to go, I went back to the bar and started drinking again. I had more than I could take, and when I suddenly came to my senses, I started thinking about my life*







*and Jesus. I remembered what my mother taught me about Jesus helping in times of need. At that moment, a spotlight seemed to shine upon me in that dark place. The woman I saw made me sick. Mine was a life not pleasing to God. As I sat there, I wanted to follow Him and give Him my life. He worked a miracle in me and took away my desire to drink. All I wanted was to get home to my children. — Gerri Begay*

Gerri was still more than 90 miles from Chinle and did not have a ride home. Someone Gerri now calls an “angel” rescued her and drove her home. This person bought some groceries for her children at a trading post on the way home. Gerri never saw that person again.

After returning home, Gerri went to her mom’s place. She had been praying for her daughter’s return and was not ready to report her to the police for leaving her children. When they saw each other, they embraced and wept together. Her mother forgave her, and she said, “Mom, you will not have to worry about me anymore; I have come home.” It took some time for her children to welcome her home, but they soon realized there was a change in their mom. Gerri had put her faith in God.

Around the time Gerri returned home, Joe had been drinking for an extended period and had developed a bad hangover. He was in desperate need of help.

*I had been in Gallup and went up near my home. I sat there thinking about my ex-wife and children. I even remembered going to church in the past and what I heard about God at the boarding school - that He created man in His own image. If that was the case, I thought, what is wrong with me? — Joe Begay*

*About three weeks after they got back together, Joe and Gerri decided to go to an evangelistic meeting for prayer. Instead, the preacher instructed them to pray and invite Jesus into their hearts. Joe and Gerri gave their lives to the Lord in August 1973. The night I got saved, I sensed a light, and my eyes opened to new things. When God said, “Behold, everything becomes new, and you are a new creation,” that is how I felt. — Joe Begay*

This time, with God in their lives, everything made sense. The alcohol was gone, they forgave one another, and the bitterness and hatred disappeared.

Following ten years of faithfully obeying God’s call in their lives, Navajo Missions (now Four Corners Home for Children) Founder Jack Drake offered Joe a job as a full-time missionary. Jack and Joe ventured to other parts of the United States to tell the story of Navajo Missions and the plight of the Navajo people. Gerri joined the staff as a missionary in 1987. A year later, the Begays began traveling with Navajo Missions President Jim Baker and his wife, Kay, as guides on Navajoland tours.

In 1980, God called the Begays to Fruitland, New Mexico, to pastor a church of only six people. Gerri describes their struggles and God’s faithfulness:

*We didn’t have much income and had no vehicle. During this time, God taught us to trust Him. He was faithful, providing a vehicle and other things we needed to raise five children. At times we found groceries at our doorstep. Another time, we found money on a tree by the church entryway. At times we cried out to God in the dark of the night because our children had special needs. Each time we sought Him, He provided. God’s promises are true, and He will take care of us if we trust Him.*

In 2001, after pastoring for five years in Hardrock, Arizona, God brought the Begays home to Chinle. They faithfully attended Grace Fellowship Community Church (GFCC) for four years, then stepped into an interim pastor role, then the lead pastor role in 2005. The church blessed them by sending them to the Holy Land in 2016. This was one of their greatest blessings, and this experience made the Bible come alive to them. Over





twenty years later, Joe and Gerri are still home in Chinle, pastoring GFCC.

Throughout the years, Joe and Gerri have remained involved with Four Corners Home for Children. They have helped coordinate the annual Christmas Connections to people in the Navajo Nation each December. They have traveled extensively with Jim and Kay Baker on development trips throughout the country and appeared on several Christian television stations telling their testimony. A Christian radio station also dramatized their story.

When asked their greatest blessing in marriage, Gerri answers:

*The final time we were pronounced husband and wife, God came between us, took hold of our arms, and started walking with us. We began teaching other couples about marriage, and we learned right along with them! As we obeyed God, He provided the tools we needed to do His work. God is faithful when we are obedient.*

*We want to leave a legacy to our children,*

*grandchildren, and Christian brothers and sisters, of our faithfulness to the Lord and one another. The marriage covenant we made was to stay together until death do us part. We have remained faithful, even during the storms of life. We desire to finish the task God has assigned us and always do His will. We want God to be glorified in our lives. We are thankful that He saved us and called us into ministry.*

Joe adds:

*God has a purpose for everything, including our struggles. It was all part of our journey. God took us out of that life and gave us a new life, and He is still blessing us every day.*

Included in Joe and Gerri's legacy are the many churches they helped start all over the Navajo Nation. They have always had a call to help build marriages and strengthen families, something they are still doing today. How can we as the Body of Christ pray for the Begays?

God has blessed us with so much, and we give Him thanks. Please pray with us for God to call a couple to take our place at

Grace Fellowship Community Church. We may soon retire from our pastoral roles, but the work God called us to do will continue. We need strength, wisdom, good health, and clear direction to do His will. Thank you for your support and standing with us to reach the Navajo Nation.

Joe and Gerri are Godly examples for all of us. No matter how far we have fallen, God can lift us out of the miry clay and set our feet upon a rock (Psalm 40:2). Their marriage and ministry are a beautiful picture of God's transformational love. Thank you, Joe and Gerri, for hearing God's voice, being obedient to Him, and answering His call on your lives.

---

*Just before this magazine was published, Joe Begay was called home by his heavenly Father. Joe's life touched and impacted many people, and he will be greatly missed. Gerri covets our prayers for their family and Grace Fellowship Community Church in Chinle, Arizona. It is our prayer that this article honors the life of Joe Begay.*



We want to leave a legacy to our children, grandchildren, and Christian brothers and sisters, of our faithfulness to the Lord and one another. The marriage covenant we made was to stay together until death do us part. We have remained faithful, even during the storms of life. We desire to finish the task God has assigned us and always do His will. We want God to be glorified in our lives. We are thankful that He saved us and called us into ministry.





*In the fall of 1984, I arranged a speaking trip for Jack that included church services and a banquet in our hometown of Lancaster. I felt it was important for him to connect with our family and friends who supported us in such a generous way. Jack wanted someone to travel with him for this extended four-week trip. Joe agreed to spend the month on the road with Jack. He was the highlight of their visits and presentations. Everybody wanted to meet this Indian man from Navajoland.*

*Joe and Gerri were a delightful Navajo couple who had experienced God's amazing grace in their lives. They willingly shared their miraculous story of God's compassionate mercy and forgiveness. Little did we know then that Joe and Gerri would become our dearest friends and fellow missionaries, travelling with us to nearly every state over the next 30 years. As we traveled thousands of miles together, our hearts connected as we shared joys and sorrows, victories and defeats. We prayed together and sang together. We would often begin our day of travel with a devotion, followed by a prayer for our safety, protection, and divine appointments for the day.*

*Joe and Gerri's love for others was evident as we ministered together in churches, visited in schools and homes, and conducted radio and television interviews. The Begays appeared on "The 700 Club" and had their testimony dramatized on the popular radio show, "Unshackled," produced by Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago. Their testimony is also featured in "The Conquering Indian," a book compiled by Mark Ward, Sr. There is no way to know how many lives have been touched, encouraged, and changed through the testimony and faithfulness of Joe and Gerri – to God be the Glory.*

Excerpt from *The Baker's Dozen*, by Jim and Kay Baker





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# A PLACE TO CALL HOME

BY: JIM AND KAY BAKER



*It has been a joy for us to be part of a wonderful team of staff members over the years. We have become a big family with a vision to see hope arise in the hearts and lives of those who come to us in their time of need.*





When God came knocking on our heart's door in 1974, we were content near our families and friends in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Lancaster had always been our home, and at the time, I was a successful salesman. Our church was the focal point for our spiritual growth and was where we made our professions of faith in Christ as our Lord and Savior when we were young. Kay and I lived in a new home, completed just after our wedding in 1969. We were happy with our new life together as parents to our little girl, Lisa, but then God started "messaging with us."

We heard about a place called Navajo Missions in Farmington, New Mexico, when a nearby pastor spoke at our church one Sunday night, telling us about his family's two-week visit there. He showed slides and told the story of the mission and how they cared for Navajo children who came from broken families and needed a place to call home. Our contented lives in Pennsylvania became disrupted!

Within a few months, by January of 1975,

we found ourselves at the mission for an interview to serve as houseparents. We prayed that God would show us if this was where He wanted us to invest our lives. Jack Drake, the founder and president, called us two days after our return home, inviting us to become part of the team at the mission. His call confirmed our commitment to step out of our comfort zone, pack our earthly possessions into a U-Haul trailer, and move to New Mexico.

After receiving the blessing and financial commitment of our home church, Lancaster First Church of God, we left Pennsylvania on April 1, stopping along the way to speak in a church, and see some beautiful sites on our route. This was our first time taking a road trip beyond Ohio. On April 10, we spotted the "Welcome to Farmington" sign as we neared our final destination on West Main Street. I must admit we gulped and wondered if we were making the right decision to come to this new life that we "knew not of."

Kay: Within a year of our arrival to Navajo

*Missions, we were blessed with the birth of our son, David. Along with his older sister, Lisa, we opened our home to thirty-five Navajo children who called the mission their home for various lengths of time. Some children spent a couple of weeks or months with us, and others spent their entire childhood in our home. Working with the children and many of their parents enriched our lives and brought spiritual trust and growth we could never have anticipated. We still regularly see and hear from several former children, now adults.*

*As David and Lisa grew into adulthood, our days of houseparenting ended. Stepping into the role of Director of Childcare enabled me to continue working with all the children in our homes and their houseparents, natural parents, social workers, and the many people who participated in our Child Sponsorship program. It still amazes me to see the extent of love poured into the lives of these children.*

*Our children are showered with love from our entire staff and the many donors who*



*help financially provide a safe, warm, and loving environment they can call home.*

As a housedad, I worked in the mission print shop during the day and quickly began to assist Jack with office management. My former days as a salesman certainly helped equip me for some of my daytime duties. I soon became Mission Director and promoter of the ministry which God had called us to serve. On March 16, 1980, with the direction of fellow houseparent, Mark Frederick, we established the first Christian radio station in the Four Corners region, KNMI, located on the campus of the mission. We called it Sonshine 89, which later became Vertical Radio. What a thrill it was to share the love of Christ through the airwaves each day!

I hosted a daily program on the station until May 27, 2021, when we transferred the station ownership to the K-LOVE organization.

In 1987, Jack Drake retired as President to care for his wife Betty, who had developed Alzheimer's Disease. The board of directors asked me to become the next President of Navajo Missions. Navajo pastors, Joe and Gerri Begay, joined our staff and became dear friends. They traveled with us to churches, meetings, and radio and TV appearances in nearly every state in the nation. As they shared their dramatic testimony, Kay and I would provide an update on the expanding ministry.

As the outreach expanded, we needed a new headquarters building for office staff and the radio station. Fundraising began, and construction followed as funds were available. Five years later, on April 10, 1983, exactly eight years after our arrival, we had a dedication service of the new five-level Communication Center! As we began this project, we asked the Lord for a verse of scripture that would encourage us as construction began. He brought Habakkuk 2:3 (NLT) to mind, "But these things I plan won't happen right away. Slowly, steadily, surely, the



time approaches when the vision will be fulfilled. If it seems slow, wait patiently, for it will surely take place. It will not be delayed." This verse would encourage us through many more construction projects over the years that included a new barn after a fire, two new children's homes, and the Education and Activity Center.

Over our forty-seven years of service, we trusted God to lead us into new programs. These programs included Christmas care-a-vans to needy families on the Navajo Nation, live drive-thru Nativities featuring the children and barn animals, and VBS teams from across the nation each summer that would minister at Navajo churches. In 1994, Bob Fitz, staff member,

and avid fly-fisherman, created the Bi-Fly Fishing Tournament to help raise additional funds for Four Corners Home for Children. The bi-fly tournament continues today.

Over the years, it was a joy to participate in and help lead spiritual encounters in the Four Corners area, including the Campus Crusade "I Found It Campaign," a Reconciliation Prayer event at the Four Corners Monument, and Prayer Chairman for the Franklin Graham Festival. We also coordinated the "Return to the Promise Reconciliation Walk" from Ft. Sumner to Canyon De Chelly, retracing the Navajos' Long Walk in reverse. The closing prayer rally was on April 1, 2000, exactly 25 years after we departed our home in Lancaster for our new place to call home in Farmington.

It has been a joy for us to be part of a wonderful team of staff members over the years. We have become a big family with a vision to see hope arise in the hearts and lives of those who come to us in their time of need. Now, in our semi-retired lives, we have decided that April 15, Good Friday, would be a good time for us to step aside and officially retire. We will continue to live in our home in Farmington, just a few miles from this wonderful place we have called home. Perhaps as you read this article, God is encouraging you to think about this ministry as a place to call home. We are delighted to have Annette Reich now serving as President. I know she would be glad to share with you the positions that need to be filled at the Four Corners Home for Children.

*If you would like to read more about the Bakers' adventures, please request a copy of their 2015 book, "The Bakers' Dozen, and then some."*



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SPONSOR  
DANIELLE

Danielle came to Four Corners Home for Children in April of 2022. She lives in the House of Faith, and her house mom is Charity Humbles. Danielle's birthday is June 13, 2006, and she will be asophomore at Farmington High School for the 2022-23 school year.

Danielle is a fun-loving, artistic young lady who enjoys working on crafts. In her free time, she can usually be found giggling with another 16-year-old girl who lives in the House of Faith with her. Danielle loves rooting for the Denver Broncos football team and Golden State Warriors basketball team, and she is fiercely loyal to both!

As Danielle's sponsor, you will receive monthly updates on her progress and activities. This will assist you in knowing how to better pray for her as she continues in our care. You are invited to remember Danielle on her birthday and at Christmas.

If you'd like to sponsor Danielle for \$40 or more a month please go to [4ch4c.org](http://4ch4c.org)





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# FLY ROD BASS CHALLENGE

By: Bob Fitz

The San Juan River Bi-Fly Tournament has been the primary fundraiser for the Four Corners Home for Children for nearly three decades. It has raised over one and one-half million dollars for the care of children in the Four Corners region. It has been a successful fundraising event due to its uniqueness and the support of the flyfishing community.

It is also a lot of work to put together each year. So, imagine my surprise when two men approached me with the idea of holding another tournament. Karl Garling, an accomplished trout fisherman and supporter of the Bi-Fly, and John Parks, an accomplished bass fisherman who has fished the Bi-Fly, "Whoa," I thought, "these guys are crazy."

I had to ask, "What kind of tournament? We can't do another trout tournament on the San Juan. It would overwhelm it, and the

tournament must be unique enough to draw anglers."

They were thinking of a bass-fishing tournament on Navajo Lake. My concern was the number of bass tournaments held yearly, many of which are high-dollar events. How would we draw anglers for a fundraiser?

Karl had already talked to several trout fishermen who wanted to try fishing for bass and pike. John indicated that numerous local bass fishermen were willing to donate their time and boats for such an event. The result was a Navajo Lake tournament for any species - smallmouth, largemouth, northern pike, carp, etc. Navajo Lake abounds with all these fish.

We decided to make the event unique in that all fish must be caught with a fly rod and fly only. The event became the Flyrod Bass Challenge.

Many people pitched in, and the event took place on June 7. A total of ten teams took to the water for a day of flinging flies up to seven inches long. We had bass fishermen who had never fly fished before and wanted a new experience and fly fishermen who had always wanted the thrill of landing a 36-inch pike on a fly rod. Big fish can be caught on a fly rod. I know;

the largest I have ever caught was a 44-inch northern pike. There are even bigger than that in Navajo Lake!

The day ushered in blue skies, little wind, and brutal heat. A record-breaker for so early in the year - 99 degrees. Not many fish were caught, but each species was landed. Truthfully, I expected to find little enthusiasm from the anglers for continuing the event. Boy, was I wrong!

The guys and gals caught a real vision for what it could look like next year. Our 2023 Flyrod Bass Challenge will be held on May 20. Fishing will begin at 6:00 AM instead of 8:00 AM, and we plan for fifteen teams to participate and lots of fish to be caught. Several people who heard about the Challenge have indicated they will participate next year.

The Lord blessed us with a net of \$4300 for the Four Corners Home for Children from the one-day event. We were also able to introduce many people to the work of Four Corners Home for Children. Not a bad day for a new event; not a bad day at all.

*Come join us  
next year!*







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We help the people we serve through programs that instill hope, restoration and Christian values. Four Corners Home for Children was founded in 1953 with a single children's home to care for disadvantaged Navajo children. Today, Four Corners Home for Children operates five programs on our beautiful 16-acre campus in Farmington, New Mexico.

Those programs include the House of Faith, a long-term children's home, the House of Hope, a short-term children's home, Four Corners Families for mothers and children, Four Corners Academy for Excellence and Navajo Nation Outreach. You are welcome to stop in for a personal tour if you are in the area, we would love to show you what God is doing here at Four Corners Home for Children.

**Donate today at  
4ch4c.org**

follow us on social media at  
fourcornershomeforchildren

