

## **Alaska Field Report February 2012**

What a year this has been! Two surgeries for me personally, a father-in-law that passed away, most recently three deaths in the immediate family, one recent death of a good friend in a car accident, four flying trips back and forth out of Alaska, one trip back by car, and my wife outside of Alaska since August taking care of her mother with Alzheimer's. The Lord promises that He will never put more on us that we will be able to endure, and though we feel like breaking at times, God must still be building some enduring qualities in our lives. Needless to say, trying to function as the Field Director has been more than a challenge. I am sure as far as the field's expectations for me, I have let them down as a leader, but as long the Lord gives me the strength and motivation I will press on in spite of what seems to be overwhelming odds both on the field and off.

Where do we go from here? Back to the MAP in a "facilitator era" of missions.

The big perspective and historical picture is as follows. Many years ago the MAP recognized some mandates that surfaced out of a field strategy. Then in the last board meeting an appeal was made for this new "facilitator era" of missions and where InterAct stands in the scheme of missions. Meanwhile Alaska Freedom Journey is birthed out of a Native Strategy and Planning group sponsored by InterAct. In the big picture it seems that God is doing something special in bringing all of these together at one time to make a bigger impact across Alaska.

There were 5 directives for ministry in Alaska that were developed out of the MAP strategy,

1. Partnering with indigenous leaders.
2. Training for new missionaries and native leaders
3. Recruiting new Missionaries
4. Critical Concerns for wounded hearts
5. Youth Ministry

My how things have NOT changed after several years has past! Every one of these directives for strategy for our field is as viable today as they were back then.

### **Regarding #1 –Partnering with indigenous leaders**

On April 20-22, 2012, InterAct Ministries, Alaska Freedom Journey, Victory Ministries, and the Fairbanks Native Bible Church will sponsor and hold a "Networking Summit" at Victory Bible Camp. We are intentionally staying away from the word "partnering" for various reasons. At the Summit para-church ministries, Native ministries and local churches will explore possibilities of how we can enhance our collective efforts to win Alaska for Christ. To determine some of the greatest needs in our state and to work side-by-side in the coming days and months. Time will be given to forming Strategy and Planning Groups (SPG's) to begin formal networking, communication and infrastructure for future planning purposes to address and be proactive in meeting some of these greatest needs.

Some will say we tried this once before at a meeting several years ago in Anchorage. That meeting was entirely different in its purpose and scope. I have enclosed in this report for the board many details such as the purpose, the principles on which we stand for and the brochure for registration.

Some observations are in order as there are only 3 months until the Summit.

- a. The work of relationship building between me as an InterAct leader and other organizations is absolutely all time consuming. The calls, the visits, the info trail, the planning are just enormous. I am so thankful to Sandy Anderson as an administrative assistant in this project. I do believe all of this ground work will do more than anything to put InterAct, who was once declared dead in Alaska, back on the map again.
- b. The potential of this Summit to effect Alaska will marshal the armies of hell against it and therefore it must be covered in prayer by the board, InterAct family, and beyond for God's blessing and favor to rest on these efforts.

## **Regarding #2 – Training new missionaries and Native leaders**

We believe that one the greatest needs that will be mentioned and grow out of the Summit is a training model for new missionaries and Native leaders. Rather than that training model falling on InterAct as if it is our responsibility for this ministry, I believe it should fall on a number of organizations working together to make it happen. For example, InterAct can provide facilities (Lazy Mountain) for in-town training as well as wisdom, Genesis Process training and some worldview training. SEND can bring their SMP program to the table. The Covenants and Alaska Freedom Journey may bring Native instructors. In short, we can work together to create a training model that works for Alaska.

I will be visiting CHIEF's headquarters before the board meeting to observe the "Schools Without Walls" concept and meet with Huron Claus and Dave Hopkins. We may have to adapt the concept for Alaska such as doing some of the training at Kako Retreat Center and in hub villages, but we must also have a model that takes the training to those who need it. We can do more together than we can apart. It has been territorial boundaries that Satan has set up to defeat us in so many ways over the years, and I believe it is God's strategy to defeat the enemy at his own game by breaking down those boundaries by working together as the Body of Christ.

## **Regarding #3- Recruiting New Missionaries**

We are grateful for our new missionaries John and Jen Tramm and Sandy Anderson. As a young couple John and Jen are raising funds and making their way to the field. We will bring them to the Fairbanks Native Bible Church to be mentored in Native ministry. We will also send them to different locations around the state for experience in other ministries. Sandy Anderson comes back to InterAct with a wealth of experience as the office manager for Victory Ministries and a long-time InterAct missionary herself. She is assuming the hospitality ministry on Lazy Mountain and is assisting me in administrative duties. We would challenge everyone to make an appeal to the Lord to send forth more workers into this harvest field of Alaska. In every

opportunity I am challenging and encouraging people to carefully consider mission opportunities in Alaska and hope everyone else is doing the same.

#### **Regarding #4-Critical Concerns for Wounded Hearts**

I believe with all of my heart we have the right tools to bring people out of their wounded heart conditions. Hearts Going Toward Wellness (HGTW) and the Genesis Process are great tools for abuses and issues of all kinds. Linda Ross is using both tools now. Lance Kramer in Kotzebue is using these tools in ministry with success. Rebecca Bell, who is working on her Masters in Counseling at Liberty University, is convinced that these programs are effective and would like to come back to Alaska to use them. Alaska Freedom Journey will use these programs to address the Native concerns of Alaska. We are approaching a crisis as Alan and Linda Ross approach retirement age with no real prospects in view for taking over HGTW. This is a ministry that may be lost. We really need to recruit missionaries to specialize in this area.

#### **Regarding #5- Youth Ministry**

In the “Facilitator Era” of missions by Tom Steffen, it is stressed that without a youth movement of some kind among a people group there is a good chance that the baton will be dropped and whatever was gained by missionaries may be lost in the dust of the next generation. There may not be a youth movement within our own ranks but we are happy to report that among the Covenant Church and some pockets of the Moravians, there is a youth movement of upcoming leaders for the future. We need to be supportive of this movement and will be looking for ways in which we can further the impact being made.

#### **ACCOUNTABILITY ON THE FIELD**

One hard task has been how to maintain accountability on the field. Jerry Crosby has produced some tools that we are using in Fairbanks among the missionaries as a trail run for the entire field. If this goes well and seems beneficial to the missionary then we will introduce these tools to the field at the annual conference.

#### **ANNUAL MISSION CONFERENCE FOR ALASKA**

We have moved our annual conference this year from August to May 4-7<sup>th</sup>. We will have to make some adjustments but we can manage the change. Since the conference will come only a few weeks after the Summit we will have our future partners in ministry come as our guests and speakers for the conference. In the last two years our speakers have all been Native, but this year we will have others come that we will network with on a larger scale.

### **MISSIONARY REPORTS**

#### **Tim & Larissa Zook**

Tim and Larissa are working with 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders at the Fairbanks Native Bible Church by meeting each week for youth group. They often have sleepovers and minister to teens one-on-one as they face life issues and need guidance. Larissa is working one day a week, and is mentoring Melissa (their new teen leader) through a Bible study once a week. She helps with

music at church and raising two little boys, Merrick and Elliot. Tim works full-time and does the van route each Sunday, picking up elders and those who cannot drive. Tim is a “jack of all trades” around the church.

### **Brian & Missie Deshane**

Brian and Missie Deshane surprised the Native Church and InterAct with their resignation without notice of any kind. They have already joined an Independent Baptist organization on the east coast where they will have little to no accountability as they stay in Fairbanks and start a ministry of an in-home Bible study to their apartment complex.

### **Dave & Kay Henry**

Dave and Kay are steadfast members of the Native Bible Church and involved in a variety of ministries that support the church. They regularly visit the hospital, attend all the Native funerals and weddings and continue to build strong relationships with the Native community. They give rides to people so they can attend church, counsel people with their godly and scriptural wisdom, and do anything asked of them. They recently made their second trip to Israel and gave an informative presentation to the Native church.

### **David & Marci Joseph**

David is in the transition phase of handing the Fairbanks Native Bible Church into the capable hands of Harry Hafford and his wife, Heather. Harry’s ordination will be this coming fall in Fairbanks and he will continue to be mentored by David for the role as Native pastor. As the field director he is planning a “Networking Summit” in April at Victory Bible Camp for state wide ministries and churches to walk and work together in ministry. David will also be traveling to the board meeting in Canada and Phoenix to the CHIEF organization to look carefully at the “Schools Without Walls” model for Alaska. They have recently had three deaths in their family and a good friend who died in a car accident. Marci has been in Indiana taking care of her mother with Alzheimer’s after her dad’s death until a good facility opens up for her care.

### **John & Norma Hammond**

*I am still going into New Life every Monday evening, as is Phil. We are still sending out over a hundred DVD's of the meetings - I send out about 20 of every meeting and Phil sends out over 80 of two meetings each month. New Life is holding its own, though attendance has been running a little lower than in the past - generally between 30 and 40 each night. They are working on getting Skype set up so the villages can tune in and attend and even a few take part in the meetings. This should be a good thing. They were on the Internet last week for part of the meeting. They are still looking for a good home for it streaming on the Internet. Health wise, we are doing OK. Norma is getting stronger each day in her recovery from the broken leg, but the long downtime in bed made her back problems worse, so she can't do much that requires sitting up or walking. She can get around OK in the stores, but one or two stores at a time are all she can handle.*

### **Phil & Margie Cobb**

The first Anchorage Native New Life meeting in December was a bit different – the entire meeting was filled with Christmas carols and praises to God for the birth of the Savior. This meeting was edited and mailed out earlier than the ‘usual’ mailing so that the monthly recipients

could enjoy it and share it with other before Christmas. Testing of various Internet sites for live streaming is ongoing; with a few “testers” coming on-line from their homes to help determine the best solution (one tester was as far away as Washington State). Utilizing this technology to reach out to the remote areas of Alaska is an exciting opportunity. Please continue to keep the progress of this outreach in your prayers, as well as Anchorage Native New Life Fellowship (ANNLF) leadership. Jerry Crosby did a great amount of work to help Margie and Phil in their decision and agreement for and upcoming secondment to ANNLF but at the last moment Phil reversed his decision because the agreement was not to his liking.

### **Dennis & Celesta Richardson**

Dennis and Celesta continue to minister in the Mountain View Community of Anchorage in partnership with Mountain View Baptist Church (MVBC) and Anchorage Grace Church. Dennis has served as the senior pastor of MVBC for over seven years and Celesta assists in the Sunday morning outreach, oversees the women’s ministries, and provides secretarial support for the elder board. Their Sunday morning outreach, which includes two services and a hot meal, has grown dramatically over the past year as have the other programs of the church. MVBC is a multi-cultural church body and ministers to the local community through a bi-monthly food shelf which provides food staples for an average of 120 families per month, a mid-week Kids for Christ Club for elementary-age children, men’s and women’s ministries, and a mid-week adult Bible study. Dennis completed his Master’s in Biblical Counseling this past year and has an increased counseling load. Celesta is a fulltime employee of the University of Alaska and is beginning work on an MBA through the University. They have three children: Seth is working full-time and going to the University of Alaska Anchorage part-time, Elizabeth is a junior at LeTourneau University, and Sara is a senior at Grace Christian School.

### **Lisa Michael**

*After my medical issues while on my last trip to AK, I believe I need to figure out what I can do to "work" with InterAct from Alabama. Effective Feb. 1st, I will no longer be with Alaska Bible College. We will be working through the transition and all in the next several weeks. Right now, I'm living with [daughter] Amber, working some with her in her business, but mainly trying to recover and get healthy again. I know God isn't through with me yet, because, I'm still alive. Very gratefully alive, mind you. I will be working to get my clothes, household goods, and personal items which are in storage in Glennallen, back south as soon as it warms up and I can get enough money for shipping. I will be sending my financial supporters notification these next few days. I'm still praying as to what if anything I can do with InterAct now and in the future. There are several things I'm looking into, but until I can get "healthy" again.... not sure what God's timing is in all of this.*

### **Shirley Morgan**

*I was gone part of September and all of October and was able to make contact with a number of supporters while I was in northern and southern, California. I was also able to help a family donor that was going through a critical time. I enjoy discipling ladies and directing their lives in a positive direction. A number of these ladies are connected to their church and are serving the Lord in some capacity. I am looking forward the Native Musicale and being involved in all the preparations for this big event in Alaska.*

### **John & Jen Tramm**

*We are actively working in partnership development to raise prayer and financial support in order to begin our ministry in Fairbanks, Alaska. Our goal is to raise the full support we will need by June, 2012. To date we have commitments from our supporters at 8% of our total support needed. We are meeting weekly with a coach for accountability and support through Kingdom Come Training, and this has been a great help. Our vision is to minister among Native Alaskans so they may know God, and experience healing and freedom through His power. John desires to focus on men's discipleship as well as to reach out to homeless and the poor, and Jen plans to use her gifts in music with the Native Bible Church.*

### **Doug & Marlin Prins**

Doug continues to maintain the InterAct properties in Alaska. There are plans in the works to upgrade the water lines on the InterAct Lazy Mountain campus this coming summer to get the water line up to State specifications. Both Doug and Marlin are involved in ministry with Lazy Mountain Bible Church. Doug is on the elder board, leads the men's ministry and also leads a men's Bible study. Marlin is involved with the worship team, leading ladies Bible studies and mentoring young ladies.

### **Ed White**

*InterAct Ministries have been named "partners in ministry" by Native New Life's board at their last January's board meeting in 2011. This was very important and it will allow us to share links on each other's web sites and they agree to participate with us in the webcam Bible video ministry. On Monday nights, as my health allows, I have been videotaping the meetings in Anchorage. I also was able to help them during their annual "Howling' Huskies" concert by operating the sound board.*

*Our Bible study webcam ministry now has someone on the ground at Tanalian Bible Camp. They are opening a vocational school for people who live in Southwestern Alaska. Andrew Roland has just graduated from Multnomah University and just left for Lake Clark on December 28, 2011. He has requested that InterAct help him by providing some of our parenting classes and family ministry curriculum and other Bible subjects. We can teach these by using the webcam and Internet. As we complete the testing of our cameras, we hope to see them put to good use.*

“Ed’s health is continuing to deteriorate and George and Judy Richardson are talking with Ed’s wife about his future in ministry with InterAct. She is concerned and approached the Richardson’s for their help” (comments from David J.)

### **Alan & Linda Ross**

Alan and Linda recently finished their annual crusade in Kodiak and surrounding villages with the help of Kene and Millie Jackson. Linda is planning for an HGTW event and has been raising funds for the event. She is also using the Genesis Process in small groups to help people overcome their wounded hearts. It has been interesting to observe how both HGTW and Genesis are being worked in conjunction with each other to disciple and finish the healing process in people’s lives. Linda serves on the Alaska Team Ministries team (ATM) with me and other missionaries. She is also on the board of Alaska Freedom Journey. Alan leads Native New Life meetings in Kodiak and they work in close fellowship with the Kodiak Bible Chapel.

**Rhaylene Abbey**

Rhaylene continues to lead two Bible studies for women in Kodiak. She is working in conjunction with the Kodiak Bible Chapel and pastor Mark Nymeyer to work with other missionaries and ministries to more effectively reach Kodiak and the surrounding areas for Christ.

**Julia McDonald**

Julia has had more than her share of heartaches and troubles. She recently had a heart attack and had two stints inserted for the future health of her heart. She has high blood pressure and diabetes that she has to watch carefully and keep under control. She has been caring for Chuck and Vicki Mackey (Vicki is first cousin) in their poor health and Vicki recently died from a possible massive stroke. Julia is helping the family with local funeral arrangements and going to her memorial service in Michigan. The problem exists still as to what to do with 85 year old Chuck. A nursing care facility is in his near future. Her ministry has been on hold as far as editing Bible studies and bringing them up to date. She is also leaving for a month of rest in Florida from Feb14-March 27<sup>th</sup>.

**George & Judy Richardson**

George and Judy continue to exercise their gifts in member care and interaction with people who need their help and mentoring. They have been very concerned with their son Joel who has been in very poor health. Joel is gradually getting better and it may take a couple of years for his health to turn around. They did a wonderful job mentoring Lance and Corina Kramer until they had to leave for Kotzebue. George serves on the ATM. They are going on special assignment soon and will be doing some recruiting for InterAct on their trip outside.

**Dave & Sally Hill**

Dave and Sally are church planters on the Aleutian chain. They have been Outside all of last winter in South Carolina involved in a custody battle for their little grandson, Eli. They were finally able to bring him to Alaska. Sally now has a big responsibility of raising this little guy and restructuring his life. Dave is a great witness and Bible teacher in his ministry. In the winter things really slow down in Chignik and in the summer the fishing industry consumes Chignik again. Sally has many vacation Bible schools over the summer.

**Barney Furman**

Barney is plugging along working on the history of InterAct Ministries. One day we will look back with great appreciation for the man who worked diligently to record many details of our ministry as an organization.

**Rich & Kathy Voran**

Rich and Kathy continue to debate and are in flux about retiring from InterAct. Rich is a truck driver and makes long hauls and Kathy is a nurse with the Palmer Middle School. Kathy is in a lot of pain with her neck and back and receives shots to deaden the pain. Another possible surgery is in her future. Kathy is on the board for the Crisis Pregnancy Center and Rich has been assisting Lazy Mountain Bible Church in filling out all their federal tax forms. Rich and Kathy

need more opportunities for ministry in order to be fair to their support team and as the field director I discussed these matters with Rich.

### **Win & Gracia Stiefel**

Gracia works well with a group of Athabascan women and is developing materials for worldview studies. Win is driving a school bus for added income and was helping SEND until their move to Palmer. Gracia is excited about the prospect of 3 Russian families coming to learn to fly with Kingdom Air (Dwayne King) and the possibility of having a ministry to these families. It is motivating her to finish some of her worldview studies.

### **Virginia Maillelle**

Virginia still is getting rides to work at the Food Bank in Anchorage. She is certainly ready for full retirement but benefits from the small amount she is getting from supporters helps her a great deal. With the several people that are living in her house it is always a financial struggle. She is supportive of Native New Life and attends when the weather and health cooperate.

### **Rebecca Bell**

Rebecca's status as a missionary with InterAct is on hold at the moment. She is finishing up her Masters Degree in Counseling at Liberty University. She is having a wonderful school year and finishing up faster than expected. Her health is still holding. We talk, dream, and pray about the possibility of starting a counseling center in Alaska using the Genesis Process as one effective tool in our tool belt.

David Joseph  
Alaska Field Director