



**Executive Director's Report**  
**Alaska Field Director's Report**  
**InterAct Ministries, Inc.**

August 3, 2014

Palmer, AK

*Therefore, since through Gods mercy we have this ministry,  
we do not lose heart.*

II Corinthians 4:1. NIV.

People love reports that show the amazing things God has done. Tales of plodding along are not so exciting. Stories of discouragement are never uplifting. Jeremiah would have been great fun in a board report! In North America we expect everyone to be up UP UP all the time. Fortunately, God allows room for being tired and heavyhearted without condemning us as sinful or backslidden. Living under a heavy weight of life and ministry was nothing new to Paul. It is nothing new to most of our field staff. It is pretty close to where I am in my own journey right now. Am I tired? Yes. Am I discouraged? Not a chance. In spite of personally trying to wear too many hats, having staff with major crises in their lives and many who are in various stages of recovery from overload, God is moving InterAct forward. We know what He has called us to do and we are doing it. Even though results are really His domain, we are being blessed by seeing His favor on all our fields. The reports from the fields and the offices make it clear that God is advancing His purposes among us. Read the reports and be encouraged – while recognizing that the advances being made are not without challenge or pain. Perspective is critical. I love the way Paul ends the fourth chapter of Corinthians that was begun at the top of this report.

*Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we*

*fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.*

II Corinthians 4:16-18. NIV.

Now, having said that I need to insert some balance and perspective. Over the last six months InterAct has been doing very well. The overall trajectory of the organization and my life have both been positive. God is using His servants in InterAct to further His heart across our area of responsibility. Many times a month I am asked, "How are you doing?" The response I consistently give is a true response from my heart. "Really well. I am encouraged by what God is doing. I am encouraged by the heart, passion and faithfulness of those with whom I serve and I am enjoying the privilege of being in the role in which He has placed me." Still, I am weary. Trying to do too many jobs does wear one down. So like Paul, I am far from losing heart. It is normal to be tired. I am just thrilled that inwardly He renews me day by day!

Thank you for your sensitivity to our needs in gifting Carol and me with a week to "just stop." We spent the week at a very slow pace, did not discuss ministry and had a needed time of restoration.

Many good things are happening across InterAct. Lucas Orner has had quite a number of summer workers with which to engage. That has brought fresh hope to the Russia team as they envision the possibilities of new team members in the future. Our prayer is that this trend will continue and that out of these summer workers, the ones God has prepared will find their way back for long-term ministry in Siberia – hopefully with InterAct. This is in God's hands but we do pray toward that end. In the meantime, I pray that both Lucas and Jaimie will have the ability to manage the rigors of cross-cultural ministry with a growing family and the challenges of serving in a ministry while handling increasing amounts of administrative responsibility.

InterAct's ministry in Canada is developing steadily. Dan, Greg and Wes are continuing to build a good foundation for long-term ministry. Both Greg and Wes are proving to be incredible assets as they graciously take much of the load off Dan (and me) so he can do the job of oversight to which he has been assigned. Their reports tell the tale and it is one of God's obvious hand of favor. Relational connections are a key component to the health of this field.

Alaska. As you know, I continue to wear the hat of the "sorta/kinda" Alaska Field Director. It has been over a year since David has stepped away from field leadership responsibilities. The good news is that Alaska continues to rebuild. New vision and new staff are bringing fresh hope. At the field conference this year there were over a dozen kids running around campus. It felt good. Since responsibility for the Alaska field conference fell to me this year, one of the things I did was to bring input from the broader organization rather than just from

Alaska. Lucas Skyped in from Russia with a report. Dan Mayerle and Greg Hamilton both gave reports about Canada and the ministries there. The US office had a significant presence with Jerry and Beth Crosby, Karen and spouse Todd Schweitz and Diane and spouse Dewayne Page. Having the three “home office” couples present had a surprisingly positive effect. Several of the Alaskan team were amazed to discover that the Boring staff not only knew them by name and the details of their lives (from their prayer letters), but regularly prayed for them. The result was a much stronger bond between office and field. Overall the conference was very good. Many of the staff expressed their appreciation for the conference. One missionary wrote after conference and said it was the best conference she had ever attended. Kudos to Carol Smith, Steve & Jill Horsman and George & Judy Richardson!

Since time and distance limitations require me to be more detached than is ideal for a field director, I greatly appreciate having a good leadership team on the ground who are keeping the right balls in the air. Horsmans are doing a stellar job of advancing our use of the Lazy Mountain Campus. As you will see from their reports they are heavily invested in both the new LEaD Alaska program and the first year of our EnGage! Alaska program. These guys can make for some untidiness in the barn stall, but this is necessary if one is going to get done all they get done. (*Without oxen a stall is clean, And great is the increase by the power of the ox.* Prov. 14:4. NLT.) I can live with shoveling a little manure if I have the privilege of working with some folks who work like Trojans and get so much done! George and Judy Richardson are not technically in a leadership role, but rather in a coaching/mentoring role with field staff that are **not** part of the Lazy Mountain Campus. Because they do not want to compromise their “member care” role they are doing their coaching and mentoring from a position without authority. The good news is that they have the “pulse” of the field staff and they are giving wise counsel, encouragement and indirect direction. The bad news is that their decision to operate without authority makes it necessary for me to be involved at a much greater level – since I am wearing the “sorta/kinda” field director hat. Bottom line - Horsmans speed of movement and Richardsons leading without authority both point out the imminent need for an Alaskan Field Director. Lest it appear that the Alaska responsibility has been a negative experience, I have delighted in the opportunity to influence and lead in several of my hopes and plans for this field. We are far more prepared to welcome a new field director than we were a year ago.

On that note let me bring you up to speed on my deliberations with the strongest prospect for Alaskan field leadership – Darris Arnold. According to recent conversations, it is clear that Darris continues to be very interested in serving with InterAct in the role. He is an InterAct missionary kid who comes to us with forty years of pastoral and denominational experience in Alaska and Oregon. A fifty year resident of Alaska, he understands both the culture of Alaska and the culture

of InterAct (at least the old InterAct). He comes with some downsides. At first, he wants to come part-time while continuing halftime with his church in Bend, OR (the church is amenable to this). Obviously, this means he wants to continue living in Oregon and do the job by itineration to Alaska. I would require him to spend 3-4 months each year on the ground in Alaska – or the equivalent if part-time. An upside to this is that his salary will be partly funded by his church, allowing time to raise support. As you have seen in the agenda, I am asking for an additional \$25,000 be budgeted to subsidize a salary and travel expenses for Darris. This will help as we move toward greater dependency on Darris's salary coming from personal fundraising.

Another down side is that he asked that word not go out about this possibility until we are more certain that it is likely to come to pass. It is a bit of a conundrum since the field really needs a relationship of trust before they will be ready to endorse or follow him. I believe the way we can achieve a win-win situation is if we bring Darris in as the Interim Alaska Field Director first. The field needs to feel significant “buy-in” if his appointment is to be well-received.

All things considered, I think Darris has the experience, the gifting and the leadership needed to win the field and lead it well. Although you would not have to officially act to appoint Darris during an interim field director role, I would like to seek your blessing on continued pursuit of this man for an interim position that will be moving toward a permanent appointment.

This portion of the report would not be complete without mention of two other co-workers who are doing excellent work. Be sure to read Diane Schoming's report to the Finance and Audit Committee. Among many other benefits she brings to this organization, God has used her this year to raise a very large grant for operational ministry.

God is using our resident Public Relations Director, Thomas Slawson, to take our public image to a whole new level. Be sure to read his report as well. It will encourage your hearts.

#### Strategy, Oversight, Policy (SOP)

I will not hit these three areas of governance with much detail in this report. Little has changed. This board has delineated the broad strokes of **Strategy** when you approved our new Mission/ Vision/ Values. This provides the requisite fences around our strategic decisions on the fields and in our offices. As you will see from the reports that we are staying well within the parameters set out for us in these new defining statements.

**Oversight** is the second key board responsibility identified by Michael Batts, in his pivotal book, Board Member Orientation. Boards should monitor six key areas:

- 1. Adherence to the organization's mission/purpose.** I believe we are clearly aligned with our recent revision of our Mission/Vision/Values. I believe the reports should demonstrate this adequately.
- 2. Evaluating effectiveness.** I have wrestled with this quite a bit since our last meeting. I know the pressure we all feel to demonstrate our effectiveness and justify our existence. Rather than grapple with this responsibility at this meeting, I am encouraging each of you to read a book I will give you titled, The Choice: The Christ-Centered Pursuit of Kingdom Outcomes, by Rodin, Hoag and Willmer. This is a new book by the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability and brings a very good perspective and balance to this discussion.
- 3. Evaluation of and compensation for the CEO.** Inc. is off the hook on this one. Canada can wrestle with this all they want. May I recommend you look to Franklin Graham's compensation package for a model? ☺
- 4. Confirming compliance with governing documents and legal requirements.** As reported in my last report, we continue to be well served in our two organizations by excellent administrators, Roy Martin and Karen Schweitz for InterAct Ministries, Inc. and Wes Schellenberg for InterAct Ministries Canada. Along with our respective financial/administrative accountability organizations, the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) and the Canadian Council of Christian Charities (CCCC), we are well covered. Jerry Crosby (U.S.) and Greg Hamilton (Canada) are keeping abreast of appropriate and applicable human resource laws assuring that we remain above reproach in the HR realm.
- 5. Evaluating organizational financial health.** As you will see from our financial reports, we are in very good financial health – in both Inc. and Canada. 'Nuff said.
- 6. Ensuring appropriate risk management.** InterAct's risk exposure is minimal. Financial risk is largely mitigated by good financial staff, oversight by the Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (Inc.) and the Canadian Council of Christian Charities (Canada) and keen-eyed auditors. We continue to have good insurance to cover surprises within either organization.

## **Policy**

InterAct Ministries, Inc.'s Board Policy Handbook is serving the board well by capturing key board policies of the Inc. board. As the agenda shows, occasional updates are being made. This handbook is available online at the board-site for perusal anytime you choose.

InterAct Canada is largely through the process of a complete rewrite of its policies. This has been mandated by the Canadian government for all not-for-

profits in Canada and will be receiving board action at the Canada board meeting in August.

### **Summary**

InterAct Ministries is the composite of a host of missionaries across the U.S., Canada and Siberia. We have feet of clay. We all have sin natures. As a whole, we have a heart to serve our Master and bring glory to Him by faithfully evangelizing and discipling least reached peoples across the North Pacific Crescent. Some places we are seeing a level of success. Some places we wonder if we are making any impact at all. Hindsight shows that we have left a wake behind us as we have passed through. In Alaska, for a time we felt like we were insignificant. Looking backward, we can see the host of Native Alaskans who have come to Christ, are walking with Him and many of whom are in ministry. Day to day it can feel pretty bleak at times. Over the course of a lifetime, it adds up. God is building His Church.

Yesterday I saw pictures of 20 Native people being baptized in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, by a Native man who grew up with our kids. He is the son of the man I spent seven years discipling and mentoring, a man who I am sure impacted my life as much as I impacted his. Now his 37 year old son has started a Native church on his reserve and is a spiritual leader in his community. The Native church we started faded and disappeared a few years after our departure. The spiritual seeds sown in lives have come back after our departure to bring fruit. To God be the glory!

Our efforts in this ministry may be hard to measure at times. I want to assure you that the people serving with InterAct Ministries are serving because of His calling and are faithful in living out His mandate for their lives. Although human metrics will struggle to measure the immediate impact of their ministries, I can assure you there is eternal fruit and I am proud to serve beside them.

Thank you for your service to the Lord by faithfully serving on this board. Together we are following His call and I am proud to serve beside each of you as well!

Dale Smith  
Executive Director  
InterAct Ministries