

## Executive Director's Board Report

February 2016

2015 has been a year of significant ministry for InterAct Ministries. Why do I say that? As the field director reports will reveal, Russia is developing partnerships and moving forward with new vision. Alaska is presently involved with its second LEaD program and discipleship is being advanced in both urban and bush contexts. Canada is seeing advances in ministry among each of the people groups it serves. God is moving His heart forward and we are being blessed to be a part of what He is doing.

This year has also been one of many changes. InterAct Ministries, Inc. in particular has seen several important changes. Long term US Finance Director, Roy Martin, stepped down from his post to enjoy the well-deserved autonomy that comes with retirement. Karen Schweitz, stepped up to the plate to take on most of Roy's former responsibilities. Development Director, Diane Schoming, also stepped back from her seven years of service in her position. At this point there is no immediate plan to replace her. Another major change has been to appoint an office manager for the U.S. office. As you know, my time at this office has been intentionally limited to an average of one week per month. This meant that although there was oversight, there was not a face-to-face supervisor for most of the office staff for most of the month. In order to better serve the needs of the U.S. office I have assigned HR Director, Jerry Crosby, to serve as office manager. Jerry was up for the job and has already begun to bring a new and stronger sense of community to this critical "service center." Being in the office one quickly picks up on the sense of "team" he is developing! Even though he travels, his more regular presence brings continuity and security to those at this office.

InterAct Ministries of Canada has continued to push forward. Dan Mayerle (Canada Field Director), Wes Schellenberg (Canada Field Administrator) and Greg Hamilton (HR) are working well together to care for the administrative and strategic issues related to the Canada organization. Primarily under Dan's leadership this part of InterAct is steadily developing. Although growth is not exponential, there is steady growth. I believe there are two primary reasons for growth on this field: a very effective summer ministry program, "EnGage! Canada," and prayer. Jim Hamilton (Mobilization) has led the charge on Canada's summer EnGage! program, averaging a half dozen summer missionaries for the last several years. Prayer for new field missionaries continues to be a focus of the Canada team and I believe the Lord of the Harvest is honoring these prayers at a rate that the team can assimilate them.

One of the more obvious “God things” to transpire in the last year in Canada has been the approach by Mid-way Christian Leadership (formerly Continental Mission) to become a part of InterAct Ministries of Canada. Pending final approval by InterAct Canada’s board and Mid-way’s boards, we are postured to finalize the “merger” on September 1, 2016. Seeing God’s obvious hand of bringing these folks and this ministry to us reminds me clearly that God is indeed the Lord of the Harvest and the provision of new ministry workers is really His domain.

Lucas Orner continues to lead a team that has very few members. Although we have a rich ministry history in Siberia we presently only have three missionaries serving in Russia. In spite of our very limited on site staff we continue to have ministry that belies our resident staff. In addition to the ministry being done by Orners in Krasnoyarsk and Shawna in Ulan Ude, Ted and Kate Mole are working from behind the scenes to help facilitate the development of a Christian focused rehab center in Yakutia. Lucas’s clearly defined ministry vision has also helped to generate four workers for Russia’s summer EnGage! program. My prayer is that exposure to the people and needs of Russia will be a catalyst that the Lord will use to call a new wave of missionaries to this vast land.

Our work in Alaska continues to be overseen by Darris Arnold. Darris has served part-time as Field Director Appointee since October, 2014, and has been full-time in that role since last summer. Averaging a week a month in Alaska, Darris is building relationships with field staff and with local churches and ministries. When not in Alaska Darris has been busy representing InterAct at local venues while dealing electronically with the day to day oversight required to manage a field as complex as InterAct’s Alaska ministry. In order to get beyond the \$36,000 we are budgeting to subsidize Darris’s income, he will be spending a minimum of four hours each week seeking missionary support. InterAct Alaska has seen three new couples come to the field in the last three years (Horsmans were a transfer). During that same period of time we lost two couples to retirement and one to another ministry. And the future looks even bleaker with the average age of the remaining staff in the state. If we do not recruit, we will be jeopardizing ministry in Alaska. On a positive note, we just completed interviews with a couple who are excited to be heading to the state!

Early in January I asked Jerry Crosby and Greg Hamilton to put together some graphics to show the net loss/gain in personnel over the past ten years. These graphs paint a clear picture of a critical trend that needs to be addressed. Even though the graphs appear self-explanatory I feel they need some annotation. I will verbally walk us through some background that is pertinent.

Prior to coming face to face with the graphic representation of InterAct’s reverse growth represented in the graphics I had planned to share with you some details of the vision I have in several key areas: discipleship (how to advance a cross-

mission vision for discipleship), using Scripture to counsel people through the stuck places in their spiritual growth, developing a heart and practice of member care within the organization, and further development of mission wide implementation of an annual ministry plan and follow-up on its implementation. Although each of these are a part of the vision I have for InterAct, I have come to believe, for the immediate future, my energy needs to be focused on three key areas:

1. Making sure each of our fields has a focused vision of where God would have them go
2. Mobilize prayer for workers to fulfill this vision
3. Maximize efforts to identify and recruit those God has prepared to be part of our team.

InterAct Ministries, Inc. and InterAct Ministries of Canada both continue to be guided by our fairly new purpose, vision and values statements.

*Purpose Statement:* InterAct Ministries exists to make disciples among least reached peoples in cooperation with like-minded churches and organizations.

*Vision Statement:* InterAct Ministries desires to see reproducing disciples impacting communities across the North Pacific Crescent.

*Core Values:*

- Scripture – Authoritative and sufficient for life and ministry
- Relationships – Loving God and loving people
- Cross-cultural ministry – Recognition of worldview and cultural implications in ministry
- Whole-life discipleship – Walking with disciples through all stages of life and growth
- Gathered believers – Recognize the centrality of the local church
- Commitment – High priority on long-term ministries.

Flowing out of these statements are several other statements that guide our strategies and day to day ministries.

*Core Ministries:* evangelism, discipleship, counseling, training, leadership development (From InterAct archives)

*Core Strategies:* determined by the field (From InterAct archives and practice)

*Our Desire:* To see fully developed disciples among each people group we serve who have formed into local bodies of multiplying disciples across the North Pacific Crescent. (OK – this is my own personal addition – but it is my heart for fully trained disciples to gather.)

Both organizations continue to operate fully within the purpose, vision and values that have been established for us by the two boards. The strategies used to accomplish these objectives vary with the field and specific ministry context, but we are well within the parameters given us by the boards.

Managing risk, maintaining organizational financial health and compliance with governing and legal requirements are all being carefully scrutinized and directed largely by Wes Schellenberg in the Canada office and Karen Schweitz in the U.S. office.

Overall, InterAct Ministries is in good organizational health. Both organizations have strong administrative teams and are in healthy financial positions. The challenge ahead is to seek to leverage these strengths into clear vision and new workers to accomplish our God given mandate.

I covet your prayers as I seek to lead us into a new future of ministry.

Blessed to serve,

Dale Smith  
Executive Director  
InterAct Ministries