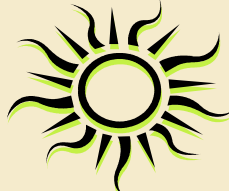




# Native Sons



Equipping Native Leaders; Empowering Native Christians

**DID YOU KNOW?**

- Ancient Romans left graffiti on Egyptian pyramids that says, "I didn't like anything but the sarcophagus," and "I can't read the hieroglyphs."
- Termites chew through wood twice as quickly when they are exposed to rock music.
- Male lobster's bladders are in their heads, and when they fight, they squirt each other with urine.
- Ancient pagan cultures, such as the Celts, believed that benevolent and helpful spirits lived in trees. Knocking on tree trunks roused a spirit for protection, which led to the saying "knock on wood."
- The Muppet vampire, Count von Count on Sesame Street, is based on actual vampire myth. One way to supposedly deter a vampire is to throw seeds outside the door. Vampires are compelled to count the seeds, delaying them until morning.

From: [www.factretriever.com/interesting-facts](http://www.factretriever.com/interesting-facts).

**PRAYER REQUESTS**

- Healing for Janet Scott from cancer.
- Peace for the Native School of Ministry (NSM) students as they prepare to take their credentialing exams.
- Guidance & favor in further developing the NSM on the Apache Rez.

**John & Theresa Flood**  
US Missionaries to Native Americans

4820 W. Kristal Way,  
Glendale, AZ 85308  
Phone: (623) 518-6775  
Cell: 623-824-2053  
b4theflood@me.com  
[www.nativesonsministry.com](http://www.nativesonsministry.com)

**Field Address:**  
US Missions  
1445 N. Booneville Ave.  
Springfield, MO 65802  
Offering Acct. # 2570281

**FIRST CLASS GRADUATION**

I am pleased to announce that the Native School of Ministry on the White Mountain Apache Reservation graduated its first class on February 23, 2025!

It's been a 2-year journey for us with various challenges. We started with 19 students, but dwindled to 12, six from each of the two churches involved. The students completed 20 courses. 18 were Global University's Christian Service Series courses. These meet the educational requirements for the certified minister's level of credentialing in the AG. I added two additional courses to address specific needs on the reservations. The first was a course on abuse issues and the second addressed spiritual warfare. The final two courses were the toughest primarily because they "touched the wound." What I mean by this is that the issues addressed touched things in the lives of each of the students.

The abuse course was probably the toughest. Every student had either experienced some form of abuse or has a family member who has. Multiple students asked why these issues were not talked about from the pulpit or taught about in church. I have no answer to this

question, but encouraged each of them to make such a discussion a part of their ministries. Touching the wound gave permission for many to speak about their experiences or the experiences of friends and loved ones. It was unfortunate that we had so little time to



**Native School of Ministry  
Feb. 23, 2025 Graduation**

From left to right: DeJean Rodriguez, Darlene Walker, Tara Vataha, Ervina Lavender, Joyce Francis, Carma Lavender, Lavenia (Sue) Harvey, John Flood, Janice Scott, Helen Fall, Delbert Altaha, Ruby Altaha, Adaleen (Ada) Greyeyes

spend talking about the hurts and path to healing. However, at least the discussion was begun. We used the book *Mending the Soul* by Steven & Celestia Tracy. I highly recommend it as an introduction to abuse issues.

The second course on spiritual warfare

focused on dealing with strongholds in our lives (Eph. 4:27). On the reservation the open presence of demonic activity is not uncommon and ranges from demons showing up visibly to a palpable sense of darkness and despair over an area, from suicidal thoughts, to uncontrollable desires, to an individual speaking with a demonic voice not their own. The book we used was *The Bondage Breaker* by Neil Anderson. Rather than focusing on "power-encounters" and casting demons out, Anderson advocates confessing and renouncing areas where demonic openings have occurred in a person's life. For those who don't know Jesus and are manifesting, the first step is to silence the demon, speak to the person, and encourage them to invite Jesus into their lives. Anderson is a trained psychologist and is the most balanced author on spiritual warfare that I have encountered. The material was again eye-opening and helpful for the students.

As for the actual Graduation Celebration, I had expected a modest turnout. However, extended family is a big

**ON A PERSONAL NOTE**

Theresa and I are well. We celebrated our 44th anniversary back on January. We went to a slightly upscale Italian restaurant to celebrate and then spent a quiet evening together. The food was all original family recipe, with homemade pasta and bread, and everything made fresh. The food was delicious and the service outstanding.

Theresa has just returned from just shy of a week visiting Caleb and Erin in Georgia. They flew Theresa and Erin's mother out for a time of celebrating their mothers. Theresa thoroughly enjoyed herself. She continues to enjoy work at the preschool. She loves being the new "Reading Specialist." This job includes one-on-one sessions with children who need extra help, writing assessment reports for every student, and creating a reading curriculum focused on developing student literacy.

I am currently setting up an itineration schedule for Northern New England for late

August through late September. After just three days of calls, I nearly have my schedule filled!

Levi and the boys are well. Dillon is now 14 and Torrin will soon be 12. We thought our children grew fast, but time is really flying as we watch our grandchildren grow. Levi remains extremely successful as an online sales personality selling trading cards and works extremely hard. He is so good at his work that his boss is having trouble keeping up with stock and actually wants Levi to slow down. That has to be a nice problem to have!

Caleb and Erin are well. Caleb has started working part-time as an exercise coach. He recently competed in his first power-lifting competition since COVID hit. He won first place in squats in his weight class and second place overall

in the competition. Way to go Caleb! Erin is also into powerlifting now and continues to enjoy her work as a specialty welder.

As always, thanks for all your prayers and support!





**Delbert Altaha**

part of Native cultures and many of the students are well connected with the tribal offices. As a guestimate, I think nearly 300 people showed up including a representative from the Tribal Council.

Additionally, the graduation was announced on the local Apache radio station. The Arizona Network Pastor, Jeff Peterson, was our keynote speaker. Pastor Marty Paxson from Whiteriver AG and Pastor Ron Burnette from Cedar Creek AG also spoke and participated in the Graduation Celebration.

When we first started classes, only a handful of students were interested in obtaining ministry credentials. I did an anonymous survey towards the



**Ruby Altaha**

end of our classes and all indicated that they intended to apply for credentials. One of the students, Janet Scott, has been struggling with cancer. She later stated she did not intend to apply for credentials, but then



**Helen Fall**

turned around and began the process anyway! As an aside, please keep Janet and her family in prayer that the Lord would completely heal her and strengthen her and her family as she continues to undergo chemotherapy.



**Joyce Francis**



**Lavenia Harvey**

The survey asked several other questions including: Would you like to teach the courses after receiving your credentials? Would you like ongoing training to move to the second level of credentialing? Would you like me to continue to

come and teach courses. Some indicated they were willing to teach in the future or be involved in other forms to establish the school on their Rez. All indicated they wanted further training, desired to obtain the second level of credentialing, and wanted me to keep teaching them.



**Adaleen Greyeyes**



**Carma Lavender**

As I write, many of the students have started the credential application process. It is an online application and apparently it can be a bit confusing and intimidating. However, the students are figuring it out. For my part, I have been investigating curriculum and avenues

to continue the training on the Rez. My desire and hope is that a Native School of Ministry be established that is recognized by the AG national office, is taught and run by Native people, and provides training on the reservations. At this point, I



**Ervina Lavender**



**DeJean Rodriguez**

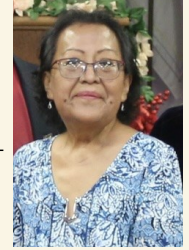
have begun the application process with the Association of the District Schools of Ministry (ADSOM) to birth such an organization. I have some curves to navigate with this, so please also keep me and the task of creating and inde-

pendently recognized Native School of Ministry in prayer. Please pray also that the Lord would lead me to others who are willing to become part of this ministry so that it can grow, be strengthened, and become a powerful training tool meeting the need to raise up trained ministers locally in Native country.

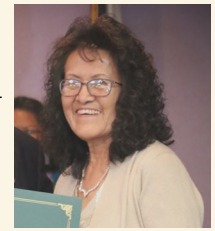


**Tara Vataha**

Our two years went by quickly. Only two weeks have passed since I was last on the White Mountain Apache Rez, but it feels longer. As I left after the Graduation Celebration dinner held at Cedar



**Janet Scott**



**Darlene Walker**

Creek AG, my students gathered around and prayer over me. It was tough hugging each goodbye. Those who I did not know and whose names I struggled to remember had all become friends who are dear to my heart.

## The Story of Apache Leap



**Superior, AZ & Pinal Mountains**

The Pinal Mountains and Apache Leap are located just south of Superior Arizona, part of my drive to and from the White Mountain Apache Rez. I have often admired the mountains surrounding this town, but until recently was unaware of the story that follows which finds its origin in real history.

In the summer of 1870, Gen. George Stoneman led a company of soldiers through the Pinal Mountains seeking to find a route east of what is now today as Apache Leap. He had already established troops on the flat top of Picket Post Mountain in order to spy on the desert trails below to determine the movements of the Apache.

The military knew that these mountains were sacred to the Apache. Why Stoneman and his soldiers decided to climb the area where Apache were known to gather is unknown,

though there is speculation that indicators of the Apache presence could be observed from Picket Post Mountain nearly 12 miles to the west.



**Apache Leap**

Stoneman and company B of the Arizona militia followed cattle up a cow path to the top of Apache Leap. There they engaged the Apache and quickly killed 75 warriors. The remaining Apache recognized they could not continue to fight and were unwilling to surrender in fear of torture and execution. The warriors chose warriors leapt off the 800 foot cliff to their deaths.

When the Apache women and children heard of the deaths of their husbands, fathers, brothers and sons they went to the cliff bottom and began to weep. They wept buckets of tears and as their tears hit the ground black obsidian



**Apache Tears**

stones formed on the white sandy ground. Today these stones are known as Apache Tears. It is said that the many tears shed guaranteed the Apache would never cry over such sadness again. Legend claims that whoever has an Apache Tear should never need to cry again because the Apache women cried enough tears for all who mourn.

Apache Tears are rounded obsidian volcanic marble-like pebbles and stones. Often these pieces of oval glass are embedded in perlite, which is another type of volcanic glass that is grey to white in color. Often, the perlite is an embedded part of Apache Tears.

Information from <https://nativehistorymagazine.blogspot.com/2013/02/the-legend-of-apache-tears.html> and <https://owlcation.com/humanities/apache-leap-the-legend-of-apache-tears>



**Apache Tears with perlite**