

Short-term Returns – Long-term Impact

by Shawn Strannigan

Several dozen ordinary folks embarked upon extraordinary adventures in the North Pacific Crescent last summer. From leading Vacation Bible School in remote Alaskan villages to counseling teens at a Native youth camp in British Columbia to finishing building projects at InterAct’s Alaska ministry center in Palmer, everyone returned home with fresh God-stories to tell.



Lisa Michael [middle row, 2nd from right] led a team from Alabama to Alaska in June, and the team split up once they got to the Great Land. No, they weren’t experiencing conflict—one team landed at the Alaska Ministry Center on Lazy Mountain to hammer out work projects while the other group headed for the tiny Athabascan fly-in-only village of McGrath for cross-cultural ministry.

Many of the team members Lisa took to McGrath had been there the previous summer.



“I was excited to renew the friendships we’d begun last year,” said Kayla Boyd. “I was anxious to see if the children remembered us—but we were welcomed with open arms.”

An average of 26 children came to McGrath’s VBS each day—which is amazing since only 36 kids are registered at the school!

Another team, from the Portland, Oregon, area, served in the Athabascan village of Nulato in July. Some of those members were returning for the fourth time!

“I’ve really seen the difference it makes to keep going back,” commented Greg Strannigan, who co-led the team. “The trust levels of the villagers go up each time we show up.”

This year, the Nulato team provided VBS lessons and activities for the younger children, a Wii and lots of water fights for the older kids, and a carnival for the whole village.



Clara Peters [right] and InterAct’s Shawn Strannigan serve together.

Karissa Piche, a young Native woman from Saskatchewan, spent her summer working alongside InterAct missionaries in western Canada. She experienced a wide range of ministry activities, from counseling at two Native youth camps to helping InterAct's Marlene Nelson with outreach to Muslims in Calgary.

How did her summer ministry impact Karissa's life?

"It was very eye-opening," said Karissa, "and it made me realize that I want to be a missionary someday."

Karissa is now helping to recruit workers for Canada Quest 2010!