



Lake Atitlan Libraries (LAL) News

December 2018

Your response to our challenge last year to create micro-libraries for the 65 Reading Village teens who didn't yet have one overwhelmed us. You doubled our previous giving and enabled ALL 65 teens to receive their own micro-libraries (pictured above with the name cards they created in honor of each donor), each containing about 25 books. Not only that, the staff of Reading Village searched for the best books for all reading levels for the children and teens in these indigenous villages. Rather than purchase US books, they searched for Guatemalan and Latin American books that would relate and expand the children's and teens' knowledge of their own country and Mayan culture.

But sadly, Reading Village, as an organization in Guatemala, is closing at the end of December 2018, because of some institutional issues. Plans are in place for another educational nonprofit to continue to oversee the scholarship program for the current teens in the program. Some of the most responsible teens will continue to work with their micro libraries with minimal supervision.

But the best news is that at this time, two of the Reading Village staff, are working with the support of other Guatemalans, to set up a Guatemalan run successor to continue the work of Reading Village. To me, this would be a great outcome to work that we have contributed to. At a recent celebration, the last closing ceremony of the program, about 200 parents and teens from all over the region served by Reading Village came to express their support and appreciation for the program and celebrate the accomplishments of the youth leaders.

Lake Atitlan Libraries has been through transitions like this in the past. We've been promoting literacy in Guatemala for over 20 years through work of different organizations with different models. I will be there in Feb and March 2019, meeting with the potential new leaders of the program, Brenda and Mayra, and monitoring progress.

At this time, we are not asking for donations, but if you do want to give as a vote of confidence for our future work, we will accept that. We have several options where we could direct the funds:

- Reading Village is raising money to cover the remaining 67 teens' high school scholarships for up to 4 years.
- The new organization will have expenses to file papers and establish the organization as a legal entity.

We have faith and hope that a new organization will emerge this next year. The micro-libraries not in use by the teens will be in safekeeping of the nonprofit that is administering the scholarships at this time. As always donations are tax deductible. Our financial records are available for review.

Thank you for your years of loyal support from the Lake Atitlan Board of Officers and Directors:

Rory Cameron, President;

Teresa Cameron, Treasurer;

Louise Eidsmoe, Secretary (Newsletter Editor)

Directors: Howard Cameron, Charlotte Cameron, and Mary Hambidge.

Learn more about our work at: www.lakeatitlanlibraries.org

Mail your tax-exempt donations to:

Lake Atitlan Libraries, 620 Grandview Drive, Hudson, WI 54016