



## Lake Atitlan Libraries (LAL) News

December, 2014

We would like to remember Flavia Robinson Derossi who died suddenly this fall. Flavia was instrumental in focusing the Daniele Agostino Derossi Foundation, named after her Italian father, on the development of women and children in Guatemala. Grants to LAL from the Agostino Derossi Foundation began in about 2006. They provided many opportunities to enhance literacy for children in Guatemala through books and libraries.

This year two additional members of our LAL Board members visited the Libraries and villages involved in our work in Guatemala. In March, Rory Cameron, LAL Board President, joined me in spending a day with the youth and staff of Reading Village, seeing them in action reading to the kids in Concepcion. In the summer, Charlotte Cameron, also visited Concepcion with Reading Village staff to meet the scholars and see the community library they have developed along with her cousin and our founder, Ann Cameron.

But the best news of all comes from a 2014 grant report recently sent by Linda Smith, Founder and Executive Director of Reading Village:

*LAL funding for 2014 ensured that our Master List of storybooks was complete in each of the two communities with libraries, and we had enough to spare to have extra copies "out in the field." By "out in the field" I not only mean they are being used by our teen reading promoters in their Reading Village story hour activities (as we had planned). But, in addition, we have discovered that the teens have been lending books from their collections to children in their "neighborhoods." The teens have found the answer to our quest for a way to support the children in developing a daily reading habit. So thanks to the initiative of the teens, in 2015 we will provide each teen with a durable tub and log book to loan books and keep track of information to not only monitor the lending process but also to provide us data about how many kids are reading how often and which books they are choosing. It's the start of another important program for us that we are calling the Independent Reading Program.*

*And we now have some preliminary data to prove we are having a positive impact. We evaluated the reading ability and issues surrounding enjoyment of reading of all the sixth graders in all four communities. The sixth graders in Concepcion have had a reading promoter in their classroom every year during their elementary school education (the other communities which entered the program later have had less exposure). The results showed that the sixth-graders in Concepcion enjoyed reading more, are reading more for pleasure and had higher comprehension rates. We consider this a great success and are pleased to share in this success with you!*

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Because of their success, LAL will target your 2015 donations to **Reading Village** ([www.readingvillage.org](http://www.readingvillage.org)). Over the course of the next year, Reading Village plans to provide high school scholarships and leadership development training to 53 teenagers who in turn will provide innovative literacy programs to more than 3,500 indigenous children. Your investment in books is an important part of our collaboration. Please continue your generous support of developing literacy in Guatemala.

**The Lake Atitlán Libraries Board thanks you for your support!**

Rory Cameron, President;  
Teresa Cameron, Treasurer;  
Louise Eidsmoe, Secretary (Newsletter Editor)  
Members: Howard Cameron, Charlotte Cameron, and Mary Hambidge.

Learn more about our work at: [www.lakeatitlanlibraries.org](http://www.lakeatitlanlibraries.org)

Mail tax-deductible donations to:

**Lake Atitlán Libraries, 515 Spruce Drive, Hudson, WI 54016 ( new address)**