



Winter 2020

WEAVING A TAPESTRY OF OPPORTUNITY

From the US Director, Diane Nesselhuf

Twenty-five years ago I took a trip to Guatemala. Ed and I had adopted our daughter Ana from there 10 years prior, and we had worked with her orphanage over the years. It had always bothered me that some parents didn't have the finances to take care of their children. I decided to go to Guatemala to see what I could do to help. I spent a month there traveling around. I spoke very little Spanish and the civil war was still going on. I look back now and think... Wow, what was I thinking?

I met with a lot of different women and with women's cooperatives. I saw the beautiful things they made for which they received very little pay. Again and again, they told me, "If we could sell our products we could feed and educate our children." This left a lasting impression on me.

I spent a week in a mountain village with a family that only spoke Mam. I didn't speak that language either, but hand gestures and smiles helped us communicate. One night, overwhelmed by everything I was seeing, I prayed, "God, what would you like for me to do." Then, I thought it would be buying a few hand-crafted items, taking them back to the States and selling them, but now, I think God had a different plan.

Twenty-five years later, I look back and see how far Sharing the Dream in Guatemala has come. I think of my family, my friends, and all the donors who have made our dream come true.

Now it is time to step back and let our dream carry on. These last 8 months have been very difficult. Not only here in the States for Sharing the Dream, but also for the artisans we work with in Guatemala and all of our projects. Our Guatemalan director, Lauren Vaske, has been in South Dakota, as she needed to leave Guatemala due to COVID-19. Through her help I've been able to keep sane. I've realized these last few months that I have neither the energy nor the expertise to continue in my role as director. The organization needs young, enthusiastic leadership. For this reason, I will be retiring as of January 1, and the Board has hired Lauren to be the new director and store manager.

I have seen many nonprofits fold after the founder/director leaves. This is mostly due to not having a new director with the expertise and passion to lead the organization. But Sharing the Dream is lucky. Having been our director in Guatemala for the past 4 years, Lauren has not only the knowledge, but the experience after working for us here in the States for the past 8 months, to further expand our Dream. Over and over, I have seen her passion for our mission, and I know I am leaving our organization in very capable hands.

I don't plan on disappearing. I told Lauren I will work during February as she needs to spend that month in Guatemala. I also will do some volunteering, but Lauren will be the director. I think she will relish the thought of bossing me around a bit as I have bossed her for the past several years.

Again I would like to thank everyone who has walked with me on this dream. My husband, children and friends helped mark, haul and sell crafts, especially in the beginning. I have had wonderful board members who have supported the Sharing the Dream mission, and all of you who have bought products, donated money and supported our programs in Guatemala. I would especially like to thank all of our hundreds of volunteers, who worked at the stores, had sales and have been my support system.

To all of you I say *Muchas Gracias!*

Your friend, Diane

Elder Center Update



When the first case of COVID-19 arrived in Guatemala in mid-March, we closed the Elder Center to visits and sent the elders home. We have been delivering food baskets to them since then. With the rising cost of food, the elders are relying more than ever before on the food packets in order to survive. We will continue the food deliveries until it is safe to reopen the Elder

Center. Time will tell when that will be, but we hope to be able to reopen in some capacity within the next few months.

It's important that the elders know that they are cared

about and don't feel alone during these trying times, so the staff at the Elder Center have been doing home visits. The visits give the elders something to look forward to. The staff changes the activities that they do on the visits—sometimes they play a game; they may read a book together; or have a nice chat. These past few weeks they've been busy helping the elders to plant home gardens, which the elders have loved.

Although this has been a challenging and unconventional year, it's also been a year filled with pleasant surprises. The Elder Advisory Committee has stepped up to the plate and provided wonderful guidance for the Center. The staff members have truly become leaders and have learned to think outside the box. We've been able to spend quality time with the elders and provide each of them with individualized attention.

You can help to remind the elders that they aren't alone by sponsoring an elder or providing food bags for the elders. **You can sponsor an elder for \$300/ year. For \$100, you can provide food for all 60 elders for one day, or for \$25 you can provide one elder with food for a month.**

Elder Center Construction

In January, we received the formal title to our land in Chukmuk. We previously had the right to possession, which lists us as the owners of the property, but the land title is a more formal declaration of ownership. Things in Guatemala move more slowly than they do in the US, and after four years of work, we have finally received the land title.

Our plans to begin construction this past spring were temporarily put on hold due to the pandemic, but we hope to begin construction soon. We would like the new Elder Center in Chukmuk to be a source of employment for the community both during construction and afterwards. We plan

to hire most of the construction workers from the community, and to purchase the building materials locally. With the economy slowing down, we hope that by spending money locally and providing work for community members we can help with the recovery process.

By supporting the construction of the new Elder Center, you will not only help with economic recovery efforts in Guatemala, you will also help to fulfill the elders' dream of having a space of their own. A generous donor has agreed to match all donations up to \$100,000. There are still funds available to be matched. **Please consider making a donation to the Elder Center Construction project.**

Thank you, Volunteers!

Volunteers are the backbone of Sharing the Dream in Guatemala. We want to send our sincerest thanks to our store volunteers, both in our Vermillion store and the Sioux Falls Fair Trade Marketplace, and to all of our volunteers who help with outside sales. We are so grateful for all of the time and talent that they donate.

New Ways to Donate

Friends of Sharing the Dream in Guatemala now

has an Ameriprise Financial account, creating new ways for you to donate. It's possible to make tax-favored charitable gifts from traditional and Roth IRA accounts. You can now make a donation directly to Friends of Sharing the Dream in Guatemala from your IRA account. Talk to your financial advisor for options and more information. Call Lauren at 605-624-6895 for the Ameriprise account information.

Did you know? As part of the COVID-19 Stimulus package, deduct from income up to \$300 for charitable giving in 2020 (\$600 per couple), in addition to the standard deduction.

Elder Center Bead Group Update



Each year, we try to build sustainability in our Guatemalan organization and projects, and the Elder Center Bead Group is one way that we do so. The group employs six artisans who earn a fair wage for their work and have stable employment. The profits from the sales of their jewelry support the Elder Center and help

to cover the administrative costs of the project. The jewelry group works on both a wholesale and retail level, with retail products being sold primarily to visiting groups to the Elder Center in Guatemala. However, the majority of the income for the bead group is generated through wholesale orders from clients. Sharing the Dream is only one of the group's clients. They have clients from around the world.

The pandemic has affected sales everywhere, including at Sharing the Dream. Retail sales of the products in Guatemala are non-existent due to the decline in tourism. Wholesale orders are also extremely low, as sales are down for everyone. "We've spoken with all of our clients, but they haven't been able to help us either. All their sales are down, and many had to close their stores at the start of the pandemic and still haven't recovered from the blow," says Juan, the Elder Center and Bead Group Coordinator.

Up until recently, the Elder Center Bead Group was able to continue to provide work to the artisans, but without orders, those possibilities have been exhausted. The artisans have been put on leave until we have more orders again. Juan says, "We hope to be able to sell the products that we have on hand or receive product orders so that we can provide work to the artisans and make the project self-sustainable again."

You can help the Elder Center Bead Group by purchasing fair trade products from Sharing the Dream in one of our stores, online at www.sharingthedream.org, or by donating to the inventory fund.

Scholarship Student Update

The school year in Guatemala is wrapping up, and the STDG tutors and scholarship students have been working extra hard to finish final projects and provide support for those projects. This year has been truly unprecedented, and everyone has had to adapt. When the first confirmed positive case of COVID-19 arrived in Guatemala back in March, the schools moved to distance learning. The actual rollout of that has looked different for each school based on factors such as the age of the students and access to technology.

We've always strived to provide individualized attention to each student, which is why we limit the number of scholarships given out each year. This year, our small numbers have allowed us to adapt quickly and to make sure that each student is receiving the support and has access to the technology they need in order to be successful in their schooling. In many cases, that requires the tutors to check in frequently with the students to ensure that they are completing assignments on time and understanding the class content. Most of the scholars don't have anyone at home who can help them with schoolwork, and with more

of the learning being self-guided this year, we know that we have to play a larger role than ever before in order to help the students to achieve academic success.

In addition to the tutoring, we've continued supplementary activities, such as our reading circle. The students have been virtually participating in the reading circle by reading the same book, completing an activity designed to improve their reading, writing, and critical thinking skills, and then participating in online discussions based on their reading with their fellow scholars.

Although it is challenging, we're trying to plan for next year. The school year will likely start off again with distance learning. The academic support that the scholarships and our tutors provide will continue to be of the utmost importance. The price of everything in Guatemala has skyrocketed, and employment is down. Sending their children to school will be harder for families, and having a scholarship will make a difference as to whether a child can go to school or not. Having someone who can support them in their schooling will be critical to their success. **Please provide a child with the opportunity to succeed in school. Consider sponsoring a student or supporting tutoring or the reading program.**

Casa Guatemala Health Promoter

Sharing the Dream sponsors the salary for Amelia, the health promoter at Casa Guatemala. The medical care that she provides for the children at Casa Guatemala and the surrounding communities is invaluable.

The health care system in Guatemala is overwhelmed due to the COVID-19 crisis, and the Rio Dulce area where Casa Guatemala is located has been hit hard by Hurricanes Eta and Iota. Flooding in the region continues, and many people have had to evacuate their houses and move to temporary shelters. Casa Guatemala is also flooded, and the staff has had to take shelter in the upper levels of their buildings. All of these crises mean that Amelia's medical care is in high demand right now, and will continue to be.

The recovery efforts will be immense, and Casa Guatemala will need many extra resources in order to rebuild and continue to provide support to the local communities devastated by the disasters. Sharing the Dream has pledged to continue our support for Amelia's salary again this year so that she can continue to provide life-saving health care to the children at Casa Guatemala and the surrounding communities. **Please help us to support this life-saving work by making a donation to Sharing the Dream for Amelia's salary.** For \$400 you can sponsor a full month of health care, or for \$20, you can sponsor a day of Amelia's important work. Sponsoring the medical care in someone's honor makes a great gift for a health care professional.

Hurricane Update

The past few months have been difficult for the majority of our artisan groups, and now, several of them have been dramatically affected by the back to back hurricanes. As of November 24, flooding and landslides caused by Eta and Iota had directly affected one million Guatemalans, and 53 people had died. These hurricanes have caused wide-spread flooding, and it continues to rain. People have had to leave their homes and move to temporary shelters, which puts them at high risk of contracting COVID-19. Homes have been damaged and crops have been lost. Luckily, all of our artisans have been able to stay safe so far, but these blows from the hurricanes coupled with the crippling of the economy from the pandemic have made life extremely difficult for the artisans.

As we checked in with the artisans, we continued to hear the same thing from each group: "We're safe, but we have no way to rebuild our lives. We have no work."

Sharing the Dream has continued to place orders with the artisan groups up until recently, but we have completed our ordering for the Holidays. We would like to be able to provide orders to the artisans to help them through these difficult times, but we are unable to do so due to the quantity of merchandise that we already have and our sluggish sales.

We have always strived to create sustainable fair trade, and one of the things that makes us different from many other organizations is that we don't give handouts. The artisans have asked us to buy products, not give them handouts. That sentiment reflects the work we do as an organization that respects the artisans and promotes their dignity by allowing them to work and support themselves. **You can help the artisans to rebuild their lives by purchasing a fair trade product in one of our stores or by making a donation to our inventory fund.**

Donations Received

Donations received from August 21, 2020– November 22, 2020. Please let us know if your name is incorrectly spelled, or if you have been omitted from the list. We appreciate all these donations, as this is giving so many people in Guatemala opportunities that they would not have without your help. Thank you!

Mary Batinich	Grace United Methodist Church- Piedmont	Dana & Michelle Loseke	Donald Pryce
Marilyn Boese	Marlys Graettinger	Marcy Lund	Kwen Sanderson
David & Cathy Brechtelsbauer	Vivian Harvey	Jean & Bob Miller	Carol & Ron Schatz
Bob & Mary Brown	Charles & Kaona Hazlett	Diane Nesselhuf	Deborah Smith
Georgie Cline	Marvin & Shirley Huber	Nuun and Company	Trinity Lutheran Church- Vermillion
Coupon Birds Charity Program	Bergetta & Michael Indihar	Our Savior's Lutheran Church-Spearfish	Trinity Men's Group
Karleen & John Dagit	Ronald Johnson	Paypal Giving Fund	Trinity Women's Group
Chuck & Lorna Dibley	Kara Johnston	Enid & Steve Peterson	Shelby & Steve Vaske
Fredy Rosenbaum Foundation	Elaine Knudson	Prince of Peace and Grace Churches	Lanny & Vicki Walker
Carolyn & Albert Goldammer	Steve Langenfeld		Kristin Zerse

Donation and Alternative Gift Ideas

Please consider making a donation to Friends of Sharing the Dream in Guatemala. 100% of your donation goes to programming. By donating, you will be changing the lives of elders, children, and artisans in Guatemala, and you're helping to enable Guatemalans to provide for themselves and create a better lifestyle. Fill out the form below, call 605-624-6895, email info@sharingthedream.org, or stop by the Vermillion store.

Looking for a gift for the person who has everything? Consider making a donation in someone's name. Just fill out the form below and check the box stating that it's a gift for someone.

Artisans in Guatemala

\$200 Provide one day-long workshop
\$65 Provide support for staff field work
\$20 Scholarship for workshop attendance
Any amount: Helps to support artisans in Guatemala

Elders in Guatemala

\$300 Sponsor an elder for 1 year
\$100 Sponsor 1 day of food for 60 elders
\$25 Provide 1 month of food for an elder
\$10 Hospital visit for an elder
\$5 Home visit by staff

Children in Guatemala

\$100 Stock a classroom with books
\$75 One week of tutoring
\$50 One career skills workshops
\$25 School supplies for one student
\$5 Participation in reading circle

Elder Center Construction Project

\$15 One day's wages for a construction worker
Any Amount: Supports the construction of the new Elder Center and economic recovery in Guatemala

Casa Guatemala

\$400 Sponsor a community health promoter for 1 month
\$20 Sponsor the community health
\$5 Provide a Christmas meal to a child

Scholarships for students

\$500 High School
\$300 Middle School
\$200 Elementary

Donation Form

Please consider making a donation to Friends of Sharing the Dream in Guatemala. By donating, you will be making a difference in the lives of elders, children, and artisans in Guatemala, and you're helping to enable Guatemalans to provide for themselves and create a better life. Fill out the form below, donate online, email info@sharingthedream.org, or stop at the Vermillion or Sioux Falls store.

Looking for a gift for the person who has everything? Consider making a donation in someone's name.

Yes! I want to help Sharing the Dream! Please put my donation toward:

- Where most needed \$ _____
- Elders in Guatemala \$ _____ Specific: _____
- Children in Guatemala \$ _____ Specific: _____
- Artisans in Guatemala \$ _____ Specific: _____
- Elder Center Construction Project \$ _____ Specific: _____
- Casa Guatemala \$ _____ Specific: _____
- Inventory Fund to help with hurricane relief efforts \$ _____

Donor name: _____

Email Address: _____

Address _____

Phone _____

I want this donation to be a gift for someone! Recipient's name: _____

Recipient's email: _____

Ways you can donate

- Make a one-time donation or set up a monthly recurring donation to your favorite program or where most needed either via check, online, or through a bank transfer.
- Donate your birthday or another event by hosting a Facebook fundraiser for Friends of Sharing the Dream in Guatemala.
- Make a donation in honor of someone or give one of our alternative gifts.
- Donate through Thrivent Financial's Thrivent Choice Program. Friends of Sharing the Dream in Guatemala is registered with the program.
- Consider a planned gift to Sharing the Dream in Guatemala when planning your estate.
- Host a home jewelry sale.
- Shop on AmazonSmile instead of Amazon and choose Friends of Sharing the Dream in Guatemala as your charity of choice.
- Make a tax-favorable donation directly from your IRA. Talk to your financial advisor for more information and options.

Donations can be sent either via check made out to Sharing the Dream in Guatemala and sent to our Vermillion, SD office, or online through our website at www.sharingthedream.org.

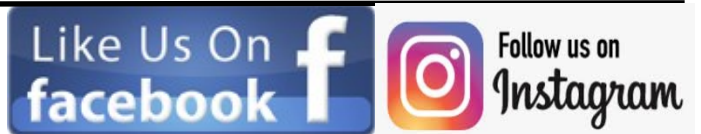
Check address:

Sharing the Dream in Guatemala
10 W. Main Street
Vermillion, SD 57069

Online Store

Support artisans in Guatemala and get beautiful fair trade products while doing so. Shop our online store at:

www.sharingthedream.org/online-store. We have lots of new products that make great gifts for everyone on your list. As always, these unique items are fair trade and quantities are limited, so don't wait to shop.



Like Sharing the Dream in Guatemala and Sharing the Dream Fair Trade Marketplace– Sioux Falls on Facebook! Follow Sharing the Dream on Instagram



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

