

GuatesUP?



Recycled Lives Board of Directors

Shawn Johnson

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Board Vice-Chair & Secretary

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Liz Cheney Board member

Dave Wichman Board member

Kelly Wichman Board member

Julie Tooker Board member

Joe Showalter Board member

Save/Plan the dates for 2020:

Friday February 21: Annual Sweet on Guatemala Event

January & February: Missionaries Shawn & Brad are available to come speak at small groups, churches, family gatherings. Email us if you would like to set up a date to have them come share about living on mission through Recycled Lives.

April through August: We have spaces available to accept mission teams or family/small groups that want to come serve in Guatemala. Email us if you are feeling called to serve!

Connect with us:

Recycled Lives

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Praise & Prayer

- Praise God for food distribution sponsorships being met for the year!
- Praise God for the blessing of a new board member and new members on our fundraising committee.
- Praise God for the leadership He has blessed Recycled Lives with: Dennis Troff to lead the BOD, Kelly & Chris to lead the fundraising committee, Eloisa to lead the vacation school classes for 30 students, Luis helping to coordinate projects in his own community of San Gabriel, Saul & Perlita leading the food distribution logistics & messages and Brad & Shawn carrying out God's calling in Guatemala.
- Pray for God's continued guidance in developing & carrying out a long-term plan for ministering in Guatemala.
- Pray for God financial blessings to cover the ministry budget and the abundance of needs for the poor

~~Losing~~ Finding my Marbles

By: Shawn Johnson

Ever hear the saying “you’ve lost your marbles!”? This is a saying used to “kindly” say someone seems to be doing something crazy or what others may view as irrational. I am sure you may have already established, I lost my marbles many years ago...haven’t we all? Well, I am here to tell you that I am finding my marbles, one by one, with the help of a lot of beautiful people God places in my life each day.



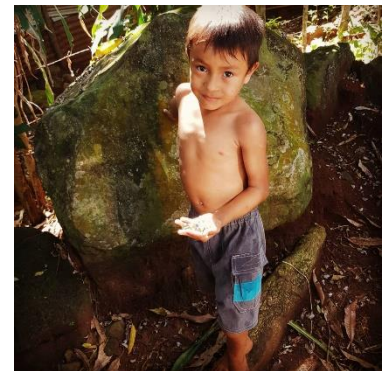
I really didn’t know why but about 10 years ago I started encountering marbles at construction sites as we dug to build a home. I felt compelled to pick them up, put them in my pocket and when I got home, place them in a jar. They were just a little reminder of my trip to Guatemala and the hard work and relationships that were built with each trip. As I began serving regularly in the village of San Gabriel, each visit, I would seem to encounter a marble along my path at some point throughout the day. No, I wasn’t searching for them, they seemed to be finding me. Soon, my marble jar was full and as I needed to start another jar I really stopped to think a bit more about the significance of these marbles.

One can suppose it can be likened to the phenomenon when you buy a car that no one else seems to have but now suddenly, you notice that 100’s of others now appear to own one too. Perhaps it’s our complex brains subliminally navigating our eyes toward something. Regardless of any good psychological reason, I believe God uses “things” to get our attention, to teach us, to help us make sense of and to feel His perfect love and constant presence.

Marbles have become a tangible reminder to me of God’s instructions through His Son Jesus’ living example. Instructions to live a life of selfless purpose, to give & share freely our blessings, kindness & provision, and to do so with open hands and hearts filled with great love and compassion. Marbles represent seeds and serve as a reminder that my everyday actions, thoughts and words can either plant a good or bad seed in the lives of those around me. That my words and actions can water seeds that I and others have planted. Marbles remind me to pray for the hands that once touched that marble and the impact they will have on the people in their lives....to plant good seeds and be water to them.

There have been a few kiddos that have noticed my marble picking habit and would excitedly bring me marbles they had found. God laid it on my heart to offer a few of these kiddos a “secret mission” of collecting marbles for me and I would pay 1 Quetzal for each found marble. 1 Quetzal is enough to buy a handful of bread or tortillas. One child nearly broke my wallet when I asked if he had found any marbles for me.... he had collected over 30! He said he was using the money to buy food for his family and a Pepsi for himself. I am fairly certain he shared that Pepsi with his whole family too. Every child that I have offered this special mission to has told me, without prompting, that they were going to buy tortillas or bread for their family. These are kids ages 5-10. Imagine that!

I may have lost my marbles when we moved here to serve full time in Guatemala. I thank each person that prays for, encourages and supports us in any way...YOU are helping me to find my marbles, one by one.



Recycled Lives’ Faith & Mission: Recycled Lives is rooted and built upon the belief that faith in Jesus Christ renews and transforms broken or lost lives into something beautiful and purposeful - Jesus Recycles our Lives.

Update From the Mission Field

We have settled back in Guatemala after enjoying some time back in beautiful Minnesota/Wisconsin where we were blessed with some vacation time with family & friends as well as some really productive meetings and reunions with our amazing Board of Directors, committee volunteers & donors at fundraisers and planning meetings. We feel blessed & recharged to finish out the ministry year knowing we gave it our all & we are making a difference with our hearts and hands.

With the end of the rainy season upon us, the weather is now most conducive to construction and being able to be out all day safely without worries of heavy rainfalls, flash floods and landslides. However, the ability to get rest in the evenings or get in/out of our city is severely crippled by a few expected frustrations and one unexpected. It is expected that the months of November, December and early January bring the dreaded non-stop "bombas" (fireworks that basically sound like nuclear bombs) going off essentially every hour 24-7. There are near-nightly street dances amped by speakers the size of a minivan, amplifying the music enough that it is not necessary to go into town to partake in the festivities, you can simply dance on your own terrace. Have you ever seen The Grinch movie with Jim Carey? The scene when he sits grumpily in his bed squeezing a pillow over his head to drown out WhoVille's festivities? Well, that's us some nights. Another expected frustration is the "Dance of the 24 Devils" that our city is (in)famous for. This traditional 3 hour long play will begin blocking streets multiple times throughout the day for 3 weeks straight, hindering coming or going within our city of one-way and dead-end streets. There is only one steep & narrow street to our home. On a good day is difficult to navigate, toss in a crowd watching dancing devils and it's a repeated 3 hour nightmare. Needless to say, we can't seem to embrace the tradition of the dancing street devils.

The unexpected: every single street in our city has been dug up to install new water lines. In typical, not-so-well thought out fashion, they slowly and non-methodically dig to Australia, leaving the deep trenches wide open for days on end without any markings, fences or signs to indicate "beware or you are heading into your grave". There are no alternate routes some days to get in or out essentially trapping people that require a vehicle to work, sometimes for a week at a time. As I am sure you can read between the lines, it's been a few frustrating weeks for us and will continue through January. On a positive note, I have gotten fairly good at driving the manual truck in reverse, up hills, around pedestrians that don't like to move and praise God I have managed to not fall into a trench.

Your prayers are appreciated for us to endure the hard months ahead, intensified with missing our family and friends during the holidays. We will keep our minds occupied and hearts full while we serve in the San Gabriel community providing a large Christmas celebration as well as starting a home construction. This will be the 4th annual home that Michelle Lundeen, and her amazing team of supporters have successfully raised the funds for! God willing, we will be blessed to avoid the devil dances and being trapped by torn up streets over the next few weeks that we can complete the home by Christmas! If you have any questions about how you carry out a home fundraiser, don't hesitate to reach out to us or Michelle at Team Lundeen ReMax Results in Cambridge.

We are looking forward to celebrating the close of an amazing year of ministry in Guatemala, that was filled with more growth than we could have dreamed of. God has showered Recycled Lives with many blessings to help us minister to and serve the poor. If it is on your heart to support what we are doing, we could really use your year-end tax-deductible gift to close out the year with a positive balance in the account. Your year-end gift will help us discern how God may be leading us to serve in the 2020 ministry year. Thanks for lifting us up in prayer and supporting Recycled Lives as we continue on the mission: To Go, Love & Serve like Jesus!

In Christ's love, Brad & Shawn Johnson, Missionaries for Recycled Lives

A small act done with great love, positively changes lives in BIG ways!

Looking for the perfect, meaningful Christmas gift?

We do honorary gifts such as a stove, bunk, emergency food package and school sponsorships.

Email us at: info@recycledlives.org for gift ideas that fit any budget!

