

Brush to join Chamberlains on Rotary humanitarian trip

EPHRATA — Charlene Brush, a nurse practitioner at Columbia Basin Family Medicine in Ephrata, will join local Rotary club members Glenn and Carolyn Chamberlain on a trip to Guatemala's Western Highlands in February to distribute textbooks to participating Mayan schools through the Cooperative for Education's Rotary Guatemala Literacy Program (GLP).

In this region of Guatemala, only about half the children can read, and the literacy rate for girls is much lower — approximately 30 percent. Textbooks are provided by donation from Rotary members and others program participants around the world. The books are leased for a small fee by the students, helping ensure that funds continue to exist to replace those books when they wear out.



CHARLENE BRUSH, ARNP

Despite the short life expectancy of textbooks in the United States (even hardback copies), these Guatemalan school children maintain their beautiful paper-bound books in good condition for upwards of five years.

Each February, more than 30 Rotarians from several U.S. states, as well as parts of Canada and the Caribbean, converge in Guatemala to head out to the villages and deliver new textbooks. Every year, more schools are inaugurated into the program. This year, three middle schools will receive Spanish-language math, science, social studies and language arts books for the first time. As of today, these children have no textbooks to take home and study. Things are looking up.

In addition, Rotary establishes computer learning centers in larger villages, so that kids who would otherwise never see so much as a smart phone have an opportunity to learn the computer skills necessary to secure better jobs and even go on to college. Rotary also sponsors merit-based scholarships for these children.

"I am really excited to be going on this trip," Brush said. "I expect a life-changing experience, and I know I won't be disappointed."

Brush will be in Guatemala Feb. 6-15.

For more information, visit <http://guatemalaliteracy.org>. The "About the Project" tab has very useful information.