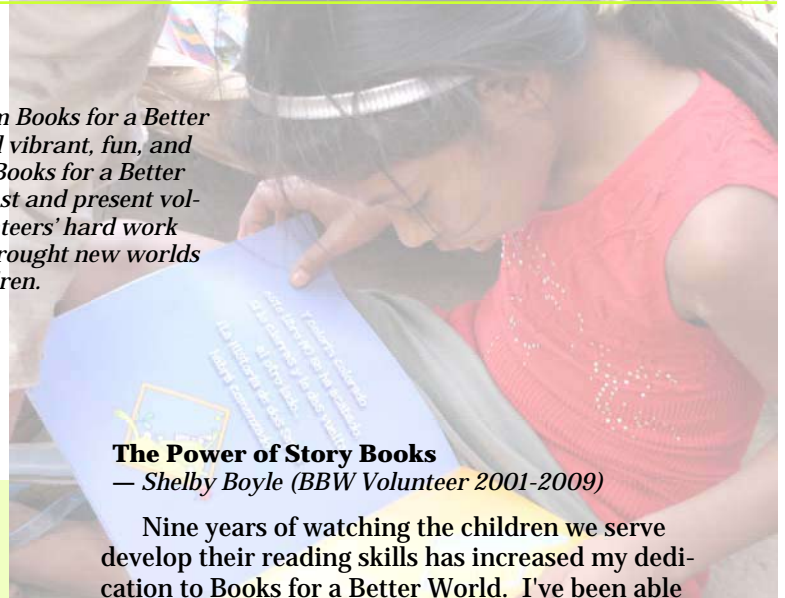


## The Heart of a Volunteer

Each year for the past ten years volunteers from Books for a Better World have traveled to Latin America and delivered vibrant, fun, and educational children's books to rural communities. Books for a Better World dedicates this newsletter to our wonderful past and present volunteers by sharing their stories. Through the volunteers' hard work and your donations, Books for a Better World has brought new worlds of knowledge and imagination to thousands of children.

***"BBW may only be a tiny drop in the bucket, but it's OUR drop in the bucket. We are bringing literacy and the joy of reading to Latin America one little village at a time."***— Alice Finn Gartell, BBW President



### The Power of Story Books

— Shelby Boyle (BBW Volunteer 2001-2009)

Nine years of watching the children we serve develop their reading skills has increased my dedication to Books for a Better World. I've been able to see children who were just beginning to sound out words when we met, become proud and avid readers.

One boy in particular has inspired me. Pedro is a shy, helpful, quick, and loving thirteen-year-old boy from El Salvador. He loves Harry Potter and raises his hand eagerly to answer reading comprehension questions. He also likes to share stories from his own imagination. Pedro has told me about all the stories he reads and about his thirst for more. He has read all of the books brought by Books for a Better World, whether easy or hard, short or long, from poetry to science. Being able to see his mind expand and his interest flourish over the past four years has been a privilege. I am in awe of Books for a Better World's work, but most of all, I am in awe of the children who are the reason we exist as an organization.

## What's New!

Books for a Better World has constantly evolved over the past decade and we are still improving. In the past three months, we have welcomed three new board members: Kira Gartell, Wendy Finlayson, and Jan McLaughlin. Both Kira and Wendy have traveled to Central America as volunteers delivering books. Jan has been a valued donor for years and now is taking a more active role.

Alice Finn Gartell is our new president. Alice, also known affectionately as "La

Reina de los Libros" (Queen of the Books), has served on the board as the Director of Library Services since 2004. Even while taking on the new responsibilities of president, she will continue her tireless efforts to find and buy quality books in Spanish that make children smile and learn. You can see some of the fantastic books that Alice has chosen for our program on the Featured Books section of our website at [www.booksforabetterworld.org](http://www.booksforabetterworld.org)



Volunteer Allen Beach reading to children in Guatemala 2009.

***"A life filled with books is one enriched by the beauty of language and the excitement of ideas."*** — Kae Robb, BBW Founder

***“While reading a book about dinosaurs I asked the kids what they thought dinosaurs sound like...Soon they were all making wild noises and I had a room full of dinosaurs! It was fantastic! It was obvious that the kids at this school were learning to use their imaginations and enjoy reading.” – Kira Gartell, BBW Volunteer***



Volunteer Amanda June reading to children in El Salvador 2006.

### **Facts About Global Literacy:**

- World-wide there are almost 1 billion non-literate adults.
- Women comprise two-thirds of non-literate adults worldwide.
- 98% of all non-literate people live in developing countries.
- In rural schools in Central America as many as 75% of all children are in grades 1 -3.
- In 2010, BBW is on track to deliver 5,000 books to over 70 libraries in El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, and Honduras!

For More Info Visit Us on the Web at:

**[Booksforabetterworld.org](http://Booksforabetterworld.org)**

Or Email Us:

**[Info@booksforabetterworld.org](mailto:Info@booksforabetterworld.org)**

December 2009

**Board of Directors**

Alice Finn Gartell  
*President*

Alex Robb  
*Vice President*

Allen Beach  
*Treasurer*

Shelby Boyle

Wendy Finlayson

Kira Gartell

Stephanie Goins

Amanda June

Jan McLaughlin

**Founder**

Kae Robb

Dear Friends:

As the end of the year approaches, Books for a Better World volunteers reflect on our adventures during the past year. Thanks to supporters like you, we delivered over 5,000 high quality children's books to poor and remote areas of Latin America. Most of these children had never seen a storybook until one of our volunteers came to their village.

Delivering books to these remote villages is hard work. Volunteers, including myself, traveled for hours on bumpy dirt roads, stood on crowded buses, shared seats with chickens, and hiked down (and up!) muddy canyon trails, carrying backpacks filled with books. We met teachers who endure great hardships to teach children under difficult circumstances, often with no books, no supplies, and no electricity.

Each member of the all-volunteer Board of Directors donates time and money to this cause. Our travel volunteers pay their own expenses. We bring the world of books to these children, and they repay us with great joy and excitement. Children giggle at silly Dr. Seuss rhymes, look wide-eyed with wonder at pop-up fairy tale books, and adore reading about dinosaurs and other animals.

We need your help to continue on with our mission. Every \$5 of your donation helps to add one more book to next year's collection. You can pay securely online through our website or send a check in the enclosed envelope.

Thank you very much for your support!

Alice Finn Gartell  
*President, Books for a Better World*

PS: You can share in our excitement by seeing photos and books at our newly updated website: [www.booksforabetterworld.org](http://www.booksforabetterworld.org).