

# Williamson Herald

THE VOICE OF AMERICA'S GREATEST COUNTY

## God's tap on the shoulder sends man to found award-winning organization



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A mission trip in May 1998 changed Steve Moore, president of the Board of Directors of the Country Music Association, forever.

He went on to found The Shalom Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving children and their families living in extreme poverty in Guatemala, and is changing lives so that people everywhere can pay it forward. In November, Moore was named Humanitarian of the Year by International Entertainment Buyers Association. Kix Brooks of the Brooks & Dunn presented the award.

To be named the Humanitarian of the Year, Moore said is “humbling,” “a surprise,” and an honor. Moore lives with his wife, Charmione, in Arrington and attends Brentwood Baptist Church, where he plays the trumpet.

The Foundation, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing funding, medical, physical assistance to underprivileged children and their families in Guatemala, consists of wellness programs that include education, nutrition and medical support. Right now, the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt, Belmont University and local churches are helping to support the Foundation and its mission.

Moore and his foundation are building a surgery center for the children and families in Guatemala City, Guatemala.

The organization has flown two children to the United States to have operations performed. The last child was 2-year-old Joseline Vasquez who suffered from a life-threatening mass on her neck.

In September, she was treated at Vanderbilt Children's Hospital to have the mass removed. She is now back in Guatemala City with her mother, and two siblings and doing very well.

However, with the new surgery center, cases like that of Vasquez can be resolved there in Guatemala, which reduces time and money to help save and improve lives.

The surgery center, which was purchased in June, will be a modern medical facility with surgical teams from

across the country coming to serve hundreds of impoverished individuals. It has been a bit challenging, Moore said. The efforts to build the surgery center have taken about two years to finalize, including finding property, finalizing agreements. “There’s a lot to do still.”

“You didn’t think about your own day-to-day plights which in comparison were inconsequential to these kids and these families and the challenges they face just on a day-to-day basis,” Moore said.

### **Why**

The Shalom Foundation grew from a passion that developed within Moore.

“You can’t really feel it until you go experience it,” Moore said.

“You feel the presence of God in these efforts because you know no one is interested in helping these kids particular in that environment. They have no support services. There’s no government. There are no agencies to help these families like in our country. It gives you a perspective that faith is a driver. God is in the equation,” Moore said.

Moore said sometimes people may feel that the need is too great or is overwhelming. He said some people become emotionally distraught and feel helpless or discouraged when face-to-face with abject poverty, “but at the same time as they work through the week, they realize their involvement can change a life...If we can help one family at a time or one child at a time, then that’s worth the price of admission.”

Moore is constantly being asked, “Why Guatemala?”

“I didn’t pick Guatemala...God picked Guatemala for me,” Moore said. He was sitting in a church service and they were asking for volunteers to be part of a mission trip to help with a construction project in Guatemala...I didn’t have any plans to go. In that moment, I felt God tap me on the shoulder and say, ‘Hey, you need to do something.’”

He, along with the others on that trip in May 1998, helped build the church and school there with their hands and on subsequent trips, their wallets and pocketbooks also helped bolster the “sweat equity” they put in.

Allison Bender, executive director of The Shalom Foundation, has noticed “people quickly grow a great passion for what we’re doing once they’re exposed to the project.”

Bender said people are asking, “What more can I do?”

### **Professional Life/ Second Occupation**

Moore is finding that people are traveling on a “path of significance,” pursuing it like a second career.

“My days, like most businesspeople, were filled with ‘What can we get? How much money can we make?’ I don’t think I was a bad guy but I didn’t help anybody. I think any time you can be involved in something greater than yourself, it does something to you.”

It humbles him, Moore said, to have people in another country praying for him. He said he loves them like his own family.

“I enjoy my profession but it has nowhere near the reward and satisfaction and fulfillment that I get out of being involved in something like this,” said Moore who is also senior vice president of AEG Live!, the second largest concert promotions in the world.

Moore said he hopes that the Foundation changed Joseline’s life forever. “How can you possibly have that kind of reward in a [business] transaction?”

“We’re looking for people that are interested in that path of significance and can make changes in people’s

lives just by their presence, resources and participation,” Moore said.

The Shalom Foundation will be holding informational sessions for its summer construction mission trips to Guatemala.

The trips will be held from June 26-July 4 and July 24-Aug.1.

The Shalom Foundation has been taking mission trips to Guatemala for more than a decade.

Construction team members fund and build new homes and improve existing dwellings in order to provide a healthy living environment that might not have been possible without that help.

The informational sessions will be held:

-Sunday, Feb. 8 from 3-4 p.m. at Thompson Station Baptist Church in Thompson’s Station

-Sunday, Feb. 15 from 2-3 p.m. at Grassland Heights Baptist Church in Franklin

-Sunday, Feb. 22 from 4-5 p.m. at West Franklin Baptist Church in Franklin.

To register for an informational session or to get more information about The Shalom Foundation

Construction Program, please contact Cindy Bhavsar at 595-5811 or at [cbhavsar@theshalomfoundation.org](mailto:cbhavsar@theshalomfoundation.org).

You can also visit: [www.theshalomfoundation.org](http://www.theshalomfoundation.org).