

The Marshan Chronicles

For regular supporters of BALM Ministries.



Valentine's day 16 years ago. (Happy Valentine's to all of you, too!)

February 2019, Volume 23, Number 2

So, I have to tell you, like it's a big surprise, that I am very into romance and Valentine's Day. Therefore, I am happy for another February. I used to dress up, and get made up, and do my hair, and put shine on it. But I SOO thought that ultimately, I would grow old gracefully. In fact, I was determined to do that. You've watched my hair grow out gray, or gray...ish. My youngest grandson kindly pointed this out when he hadn't seen me in a few months and said, "Hey GraMarsha. You have three different colors of hair!"

Then I had to give up my heels. Shoot. I *loved* my heels, and I used to be able to tell you in all honesty, that they were comfortable for me to wear. I wore them on one of the LGBTQ Marches on Washington, for heaven's sake! But first they became uncomfortable. And then they became painful. And then, they became *dangerous*. My sweet friend, Peggy Campolo called me just for the purpose of telling me never ever ever to do anything that might cause me to break a hip.

Anyway, you get the idea. Happy just that I have hair at all. Glad that most of my wrinkles are smile crinkles. Grateful that I can walk in my funny funky flat shoes with five toes. Overjoyed that I can still sing. But I forgot one thing about getting older. Pain. All those things that end in "itis" and "algia," you know? I really struggled with those last month. I was in and out of the hospital a couple of times and generally miserable. I have a hard time going into details – even Cindy tells me that "some things just don't go into the newsletter, honey." But in the end, it was bad enough that I had to miss the trip to Chicago. Everyone was very kind about it. I

was still deeply disappointed to miss both groups and all the people who mean so much to me.

On a happier note, several of you opted to support Cindy's mission trip to Haiti. This time she went with some of our friends from our church in Florida to build a home for a teacher and her daughters. The group setting up the build is called "Be Like Brit," which some of you may have heard of. The orphanage was built by a professional contractor whose daughter, Brit, was on a youth group mission trip in Haiti in 2010. She had told her parents what a great, life-changing time she was having – how she wanted to return after college and build an orphanage for all the children she was meeting there. Days later, she was killed in the 2010 Haiti earthquake. So this orphanage, and lots of things attached to it, are being done now by her father and others inspired by her story.

The building program was set up so well that the one group Cindy worked with, and 3 or 4 local builders, were able to build the entire house in the week they were there – they laid the foundation, put up hurricane-proofed walls, finished the roof, and provided a bed and cooking equipment. The house for this teacher who works at the orphanage, is right outside the property. The orphanage itself has a special water retention area where the water is cleaned with nano-technology, so they have water for the kids there. In the afternoon they open up the facility for local people, like this teacher, to come in to get water to take home. As difficult as it sounds, the neighbors are incredibly grateful for clean water. Makes you remember to bet thankful, doesn't it?



Cindy's group and the house they built – and you helped!

Love and Gratitude, Marsha & Cindy

IMPORTANT!! YEAR END info

Receipts for 2018 went out January 31st. Let us know if you find any problems with your statement.

Cindy's Mission Work

Many thanks for those of you who have chosen to support Cindy on her mission trips. Haiti was a wonderful success. In June she will head back to Uganda. Keep her in prayer. Any gifts to BALM noted to Cindy (continue to be tax deductible) will be used for her mission trips. She has gotten her employer, HCA, to donate 20 computers & appropriate software to the school in Uganda, Raise the Roof Academy. She has some pictures posted on her Facebook page and you can link to video of her most recent trip on BalmMinistries.net or by going to the link on YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I89AAhnZ4R0&feature=share>

In June she will be continuing to teach the computer labs. She is also working on ways to make the computer programs she uses available to all the missions she travels to. The programs track everything from school attendance and performance to health and vaccination status to who is sponsoring that child or teacher and whether they are up to date on their donations.

You can support BALM when you shop online

(You can read the instructions online but the simple thing is this: when you want to shop online at a major store, you go first to www.igive.com/BALM. You put your info in & then it gives you a list of most stores you've ever heard of.

So, for instance, you go to igive.com/BALM & pick BestBuy, it takes you to that site & you order whatever you want to online. All your coupons & 'special deals' still apply. There's no extra charge to you at all, but that way, they automatically donate part of their profit to BALM Ministries.)

(I forget myself sometimes, but it makes a big difference if you can remember.)

Prayer List & Ministry Opportunities

- ‡ *Praises for my healing and that I could return to work two days a week with no problems – hallelujah.*
- ‡ *Gratitude for your prayers for Cindy on all her mission trips & the teaching she does to help them.*
- ‡ *Praises for our church home in Brentwood United Methodist, & MANY prayers for the United Methodist conference on a Way Forward coming the end of this month. Don't forget to pray for this. It's important to so many people.*
- ‡ *Prayers that we may all keep on sharing the Good News with the least, the lost and the hungry – to give as we've been given to; to love because Jesus first loved us and we have SO much to give away.*
- ‡ *Prayers for upBeat! artists, especially Justin Ryan. He and his husband have moved to Kentucky to be closer to their birth families.*
- ‡ *Please keep Mark Moseley in your prayers. He was able to get back in the studio last month.*
- ‡ *Praises for the songs I finished writing & the ones in progress. I did finish recording 4 of them you might like. I'll post the one I recorded with Cindy on her clarinet at THE VERY BOTTOM OF THE FIRST PAGE OF OUR WEBSITE www.balmministries.net*
- ‡ *Prayers for ChristianGays.com – the outreach they do which is so inclusive, and their gracious support of us.*
- ‡ *Prayers for me to be able to set up a 50th anniversary tour later this year!!!!*

What You Have to Say

"I was just watching and listening to some music videos on YouTube... I also reflected on what God has done through you over the years...I have been writing about my own family history. I had some unpleasant experiences growing up getting beat up regularly by my older brother and other stuff, but I can't imagine going through all you've had to deal with.

God always lifts you back up. I just want to tell you again how much your example has meant to me and our family.

We had a young man (30 something) who rented property from us for a year before he moved on for a job promotion last November. We are confident he's gay (not that our "gaydar" is anything special). One day my wife told him how much she appreciates listening to an MCC pastor in Mississippi. His response was along the lines of "She can't help being attracted to the same sex but it's wrong to act on it." We're praying that God will move him along to a place of greater self-acceptance."

Upcoming travel

Feb 10 MCC Tampa FL, 10:30 am Special music for morning service.

www.MCCTampa.com

Watch for the 50th year tour.

June 9 Marsha's 50th birthday as a Christian and **June 23** the 50th anniversary of "For Those Tears I Died"

Who wants to be the first to book a concert for the 50th year tour?

(I would love to see you. You can reach us through the website

www.BalmMinistries.net or at ssbalm@aol.com – I know, I'm old I still use aol.)

A word from a longtime supporter of Balm ministries: ChristianGays.com is a community for ALL LGBT people to meet & develop friendships based on faith & other common interests. We offer Chat Rooms & Forums, & all information is private, accessible to members only. Join us now at <https://ChristianGays.com>