

Health Talents International

January Surgical Clinic Jan 15-22, 2011

Team Participants: Surgeons: Ed Grogan, Eric Grogan, Tommy Hatchett, Judi Jehlel, Matt Landman, Danny Minor, Scott Smith ; Dentist: Jeff Hunter; Pediatric Resident: Dupree Hatch; Anesthesia: Duane Gill, Lawrence Freund, Tiffany Horton, Russell Harris, Brian Raymond; Nurses: Beth Bailey, Glenn Berkey, Neva Berkey, Leah Bradshaw, Brittney Cover, Cheryl Jackson, Tina Howell, Kelly Smith, Bonnie Spink, Rebecca Stowe, Katelin Taylor, Stephanie Vaughn, Jenni Whitefield; Physician Asst/Surgical Tech: Tim Thurston; Translators: Brittney Cover, Rachel Finney, Edgar Lucero, Janet Smith, Vicky Schandeval, Linly Stowe, Dakota West; Sterilization: Leslie Minor, Stacy Smith; Non-Medical Cargivers: Julie Anderson, Cathy Good, Laura Harris, Sarah Harris, Kendra Meadows, Kara Minor, Joan Sant, Kristina Smith; Mr. Fix-Its: Conley Matlock, Sam Yaws; Team Leader: Rick Harper

Much like last year, due to airline consolidations and departure points, we arrived in Guatemala on two different airlines and three different flights. Kelly Smith gave us a scare in Houston as she had “washed” her passport and was almost denied boarding. ***She assured everyone that she will get a new passport for next year!*** We arrived in Montellano shortly before 6:00 PM and quickly unpacked, sorted supplies and saw the patients who were scheduled for surgery on Sunday. Following dinner and a very brief meeting, it was off to bed for many and visiting with old friends for others.

Kelly Smith has become a legend in surgical supplies and prepared approximately ninety surgical packs and split them up between more than a dozen fellow travelers. Before the week was out, we would use seventy-six surgical packs! Edgar Lucero, the Hispanic minister from Tahlequah, OK returned for a second time as our trip chaplain and made the phrase, “I don’t want to take too much of your time” his mantra for the week. Others can comment on whether or not he was successful, though it is safe to say that it takes more words in Spanish to complete a thought than it does in English. We completed eight cases on Sunday, two GYN and six general surgeries.

We picked up on Monday with our veteran crew ready to roll. Dr. Matt Landman was the only rookie surgeon this week, a truly veteran crew. We had nineteen surgical patients scheduled for Monday, two of which were laparoscopic gallbladder surgeries, and seven that were GYN cases. Drs. Hatchett and Jehle were workhorses this week with a total of twenty-five major surgeries, quite a load for two surgeons. Stacy Smith returned to work in sterilization and took ownership of the sink, almost denying anyone else the opportunity to help. Leslie Minor was her normal self, tireless and efficient. Julie Anderson dropped by on several occasions, just to pitch in and has already committed to working in sterilization in 2012. Love it!

One of our scheduled nurses for this trip was admitted to the hospital in Nashville on Friday night, prior to our departure. After one night in recovery, it was clear that she was greatly missed and needed, so we moved one of our OR nurses, Cheryl Jackson, to work on the floor. Sarah Harris, a future CRNA, high school student and daughter of Dr. Russell Harris stepped up and capably filled the roll of circulator in OR two for the remainder of the week.

Our translation crew from 2010 returned for a repeat performance and Victoria Cover, a caregiver in 2010 added translator to her list of duties. Dakota, Edgar, Janet, Linly, Rachel, Victoria and Vicky were quite the team. As it turns out, Rachel is vying for an opening act or Master of Ceremonies duty on TND, *Thursday Night Devo*,...what a talent.

“Mr. Fix-It” Sam brought along a new disciple, Conley Matlock, and they alternated between working as carpenters, plumbers and electricians. Their major project for the week involved a curtain system for our post-op recovery area and shelving.

Later that evening on Monday, as I was leaving the sterilization room, Beth Bailey asked me if we had a “twelve lead EKG machine.” Not my favorite inquiry at 10:30 in the evening or any time for that matter. Fortunately, I knew where we kept our EKG machine, in the Dickerson Diagnostic Lab, and we ran a few tests on our patient and she turned out to be fine. We would use our EKG one other time during the week as we had a patient with an arrhythmia and our RN’s set up a critical care area and stayed up with her all night. In the end, all was well.

Tuesday was another full day of surgery, seven GYN cases and twelve general cases. We began sending out some of our team members to help with ABC food and supply deliveries on Monday and Tuesday was Kristina’s day to go. This was her first trip, though the second for her husband, Dr. Scott Smith. Scott and Kristina support three children in our ABC Program and I knew she would return misty eyed and inspired. She did not disappoint as she couldn’t talk about the day without shedding a tear.

We scheduled fifteen patients for Wednesday with eight being GYN patients and Thursday would follow with nine general cases. Things went smooth, even though the days were a little long. A special note of thanks to Glenn Berkey and Sarah Harris for working on our ophthalmic surgical microscope on Thursday and preparing it for the March Eye team. They, along with several others, stayed behind while 25-30 in our group made trips to San Lucas Toliman and the chocolate farm.

A blessed week indeed!



2011 Team above and two of our young caregivers, below.





Recovery Room Favorites

