

## August 2013 ENT/General/Plastic Surgical Team Trip Report

Those volunteering for this trip were: Dr. Dwayne Fulks, Mike Trimble, MD; James Elmore, MD; Scott Ballinger, MD; John Little, MD; Jack Hudkins, MD FACS; Stephen Harvey, MD; Jay Harnden, MD; Carrie Hovater, CRNA; Gordon Corder, CRNA; Lana Spry, PA-C; Patsy Sikes, RN; Sharon Depmore, RN; Julie Williams, RN; Jeanie Damren, LPN; Mike Caldwell, LPN; Derrick Sikes; Bill Guilford; Vanessa Booth, RN; Kelsey Camp; Brittany Clayton, RN; Patricia Corder, RN; Lacey Cross, RN; Jennifer Hicks, RN; Libby Shaw, GN; Katrina Miller, RN; Jodi Pilot, RN; Lesli Shoemaker, RN; Kate Spellman, RN; Joelle Whitlock; Madison Wolfe; Katherine Bridges; Zach Whiteside; Larissa Bristol; Chara Barbee; Brooks Bergman; Sophia Fuller; Julie Ann Harper; Alisha Hovater; Molly Koch; Matthew Little; Susan Mellor; Rachel Miller; Ryan Mitchell; Jill Spry; Carly Spry; Grayson Webster; Jared Corder; Susan Jordan; Eric Phelps; Karen Sims; Jason Fuller; JD Elmore; Dave Mellor; Rick Harper; Dylan Vires; Celia DeLeon-Suarez and Brittany Johns, RN.

*Day One at Clinica Ezell was blazing! Everyone seemed very interested in volunteering to help in surgery - OR rooms are air conditioned!*



We arrived into Guatemala City in light rain. It is rainy season, so we weren't surprised, just relieved that the heat was dampened a little. We waited until all our volunteers arrived, then boarded a chartered 50 passenger bus for the 3 hour ride to the Clinic. Most people had to get up very early Saturday morning to get to Guatemala City by 1 p.m. (mountain time) so the ride to the clinic was welcome for a nice nap.

Most of us received medical supplies to bring in our luggage, (we had 10 pounds of personal stuff, 90 pounds of supplies in our 2 suitcases). We all brought our goods to the dining room where things are sorted on the tables, inventoried and taken to the storage room to await stocking. This time there was an enormous surprise. Rick had diagrammed an organized system for the stock room and tasked Darling with bringing it to reality. She did a beautiful job! The stock room has never looked so tidy! She will be

able to keep it this way with the new system Rick designed. What a great beginning to the week.

Since we were all so tired, we had a quick welcome, everyone introduced themselves and instructions were given. Our devotional was about the story of the Good Samaritan - with a twist. It was focused on the inn keeper who was given the responsibility of taking care of the injured man. I had heard lessons about everyone else in the story, but never the inn keeper. Food for thought!

Sunday, we walked across the road to worship with the folks at the church of Christ. Carlos presented a lesson in Spanish, then gave us a brief synopsis so the non-spanish speakers would not be left out of this good lesson about not giving up.

After lunch the work began. Folks were lined up awaiting their surgery. We were doing plastic surgeries this week, so there were three babies with cleft palates whose lives will

be forever changed by the generosity of these volunteers.



Monday the surgeries began early, There were some tears shed today, actually a lot of tears. Three little mommas handed their babies over to surgeons and sat outside the OR doors and quietly wept until their baby emerged. Two were having facial reconstruction for cleft lips, the third little girl had been born with webbed hands and feet. All the surgeries went well, and it was interesting to see

how many of our team stopped and hugged, patted, gave an encouraging word or knelt beside the moms in prayer while they waited anxiously. One of the moms was asked to sit in a rocking chair in the recovery room and soon her baby was brought in for her to hold while the anesthesia wore off. She was so overjoyed that her baby's face was repaired she cried with gratitude this time. Every time someone would come by and say how pretty her baby looked she would start the tears again. Certainly that family will not forget this day!





Monday, we sent out three mobile teams, the one with Lana Spry as a newly licensed PA, drove out an hour into the country and saw 11 patients. It's nice to drive to different locations here.

The dental wing was also full today, while the folks were waiting to be seen one mom who had brought her son to the dentist mentioned that she was having some problems. Sheri our local missionary nurse

took her aside and treated her for an infection on the spot. It's just a blessing to see people working together with hearts to serve and bring glory to God! This is her birth month so Rick orchestrated a surprise of Diet Dr. Peppers - everyone brought a couple and surprised her. She was delighted!

Tuesday we woke to realize there had been an earthquake in the night. It was 5.5 on richter scale. Most of us were completely unaware of the earthquake, but it makes a great story!

We did our last cleft lip today on little Jamie. It's hard not to get attached to these little guys. He did fine and his joined lip looks great. He will probably live his life never remembering a time when he wasn't "muy guapo"! (very handsome).

There were several high school and college aged girls who are either nursing students or interested in



medicine on this trip. Many of them have proven to be experts in entertaining the children. They sit with them and read, play with puppets, draw and color by the hour. It takes some of the pressure off the parents who are trying to divert their child's attention away from the post-op pain. These girls have been so joyful and fun to watch.

Sometimes when we are not "on duty", we find work to do by counting pills or wrapping surgical packs. A young Guatemalan man named Lester asked if he could help us as we counted, bagged and labeled pills for distribution in the pharmacy. We began to ask him about himself and as it turns out he has been an ABC student for several years sponsored by Sharon Midgett. He is going into his senior year and has done well in school. He said that HTI had been like a family to him, providing him school clothes and shoes when he needed them, medicines and dental care which are unobtainable to most in this area. He is polite and charming and has set his goal to become a doctor so that he can serve with HTI some day! He will need a scholarship to go to university to make this happen, so he will be applying for that through HTI as well.

As usual, God's hand was in evidence and the givers were more blessed than the receivers.

