



Heartbreak Maria

by Rick Harper

I met heartbreak Maria on September 8 outside her home in La Campesina, Guatemala. I saw her home from a distance, like so many others I've seen before, I knew it would meet my minimal expectations: unfinished lumber, dirt floor and a bed for four about the size of a large water trough. *Appropriate since her home was no larger than a horse stable.*

As we approached her home, she came over to visit Dr. Patricia Velasquez, Elmer, Domingo and me, the tall gringo. I suppressed a gasp when I saw Maria, covered in sores from head to toe, like a modern day leper. Dr. Patricia sensed my reaction and assured me she was much better thanks to the treatment she's been receiving. *If this was better, how much worse had it been...and my heart began to break.*

Dr. Patricia told me that Maria was her "star" patient, a star because thirteen year old Maria came to our simple clinic week after week all by herself to receive medical care. I learned she came alone because her mother was too embarrassed, too ashamed to be seen with Maria...*and the breaking of my heart continued.*

It was during that first visit with Dr. Patricia, some months ago now, that Maria broke her heart. After completing her medical exam and before walking Maria to our pharmacy table and prayer station, she asked Maria for a hug. Maria was unsure what to do, she replied "my mother has never approached me for a hug." *There is no breaking now, my heart is broken, shattered and my spirit is groaning.*

Maria received four hugs that day, one from each of us making the home visit. She's not very good at it, hugging that is. I wanted her to melt into my arms, much like she'd melted my heart. *She is simply not there yet.*

What she does well, is reach out, stiffly wrap her arms around you and hold on for a very, very long time... *and that is good enough.*

Maria will receive the medical care she needs, along with love, prayers and support from both the Health Talents family and the church family meeting near her home in San Basilio. When she is better, she hopes to return to school. (Many there did not want to be around someone with sores like she has all over her frail body.) She does attend worship service now and maybe one day, her mother will join her.

For now, she's just reaching out and holding on.

I suspect we should do the same. Reach out to Jesus, hold on tight and allow Him to reach down, mend a broken heart...*and turn on our heart light!*



3 MONTH UPDATE:

Upon returning to the US, we asked full-time, home-schooling Mom and sometime fashion model, Hannah Carpenter, to take a shopping trip and purchase several sets of clothes for Maria. Maria's condition is exacerbated by sunlight, so we purchased clothes protecting her from the sun.

Each week, we deliver a few sets of clothes to Maria, retrieve those that have been worn and take them back to Clinica Ezell for treatment. Of course, treatment is simply washing with soap and water in a washing machine, not scrubbing with harsh soaps on rocks in a nearby stream.

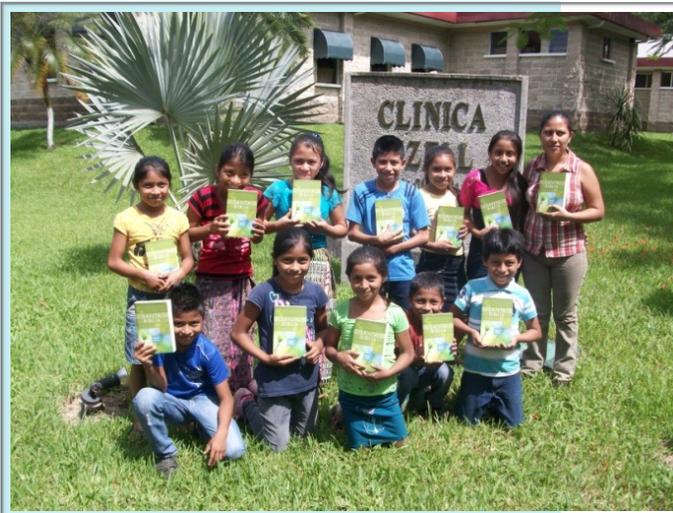


With a side of mushrooms?

News from our Community Development team: Oscar and Obdulio have expanded their research for nutritional items that can be locally grown. You may have seen the “practice” garden on the Clinica Ezell property. This time however, the garden won’t be necessary. They are cultivating mushrooms. They have gone through the training with other organizations that are promoting their production. Mushrooms are easy to grow, the process simply involves putting crushed corn cobs in a plastic bag, cutting slits in the bag and injecting the mushroom spores. The bag is stored in a dark place and soon there are mushrooms growing out the sides of the bag! They will provide much needed variety and nutrition to families in the communities we serve.

Evangelism News:

Baldemar has initiated a new program in the public schools targeting 3rd through 6th graders. He is teaching them how to use and read the Bible. The teachers have also been receptive to understanding the Bible better. Each student is given a Bible to keep and the lesson is finished with refreshments. He says he is encouraged to think that the students are taking this message home and sharing it with their families. We know the seeds of faith planted in these bright young minds will grow into a harvest of souls. Keep up the good work, Baldemar!



Bates Scholarship Turns a Dream into Reality

Not every road to success is an easy one and this could not be more true for our newest Bates Scholarship graduate, Dr. Manuela Ixquiactap Tambriz. Dr. Manuela is a 26 year old Mayan woman from the mountains of Santo Tomas, Guatemala who grew up with a dream. When Dr. Manuela was seven she became a part of the ABC program and recalls many occasions where she was around HTI mission teams. Dr. Manuela stated that “at that time there was a desire born in me, a dream to study dentistry...I admired the doctors and promoters who wore the HTI scrub tops so much, and I wanted to be one of them with all my heart.” From this tender age Dr. Manuela’s heart light was turned on and burned with a desire to serve others. Now that she has overcome great obstacles to reach her dream of being a dentist she says that, “Now more than ever my objective is clear, to serve God! Being part of a ministry which brings souls to Christ, this is my biggest wish.”



This amazing young woman will now join the HTI team at Clinica Ezell to work full time under the direction of her mentor Dr. Silvia Albizurez. Dr. Silvia describes Dr. Manuela as “My dream come true, she is someone who has sufficient love and professionalism to bless the ministry of HTI.” With the addition of this new dental position the number of patients we are able to serve will greatly increase. These patients will not only receive compassionate Christian dental care but will have the opportunity to hear the Truth of Jesus Christ, to be prayed for and to have their heart lights turned on!

Health Talents has other graduates this year who each have a special story like Manuela’s. Our Scholarship Committee recently approved 33 scholarships for a total of \$36,000 for students in 2016. As this year comes to a close please consider supporting students like Manuela by donating to our scholarship programs so that we can continue to turn dreams into reality for these talented students!

STRETCH YOUR DOLLARS! \$5,000 match made for new donations to the Sherman Scholarship Program! This does not include existing pledges. Please send your donations, specifying the



Sherman Scholarship Program

HTI P.O. Box 8303 Searcy, AR 72145

What's New?



If you've ever operated at Clinica Ezell you'll be thrilled to see that we've acquired 2 new surgical beds!

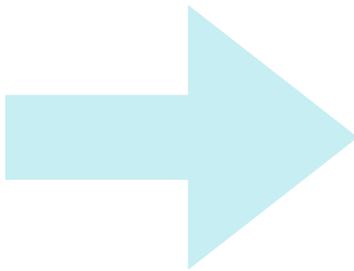


Kemmel and Gregorio working on plans for laying the tubing for the new compressor and central suction unit.



Between December 2014 and February 2015 we added 4 new trucks

You will soon have the option of receiving your receipts electronically, so be looking for that communication. E-receipts will allow you to receive them more quickly. reduce paper and postage expense. A win/win for all...and it is optional.



2015 will be a MORE THAN year!

More than 9,000 dental patients
More than 33,000 medical patients
More than 800 surgical patients
More than 43,000 heart lights turned on