

HTI August Surgical Trip
Clinica Ezell
August 1-8, 2009

Trip Participants: Surgeons: Dwayne Fulks MD, Scott Ballinger MD, Lyle Lowry MD, James Elmore MD; Anesthesia: Tim Diles MD, Russell Harris MD, Tiffany Horton CRNA, Sean Thompson SRNA, Kenan Ryan SRNA; Dermatology PA: Tammie Campanali; Nurses: Erica Hendrix RN, Patsy Sikes RN, Amanda Barnes RN, Lesli Shoemaker RN, Jeni Huggins RN, Alice Bush RN, Rachel Brock RN, Lance Shoemaker RN, Beth Faulk RN, Shelley Salter RN, Rivers Sellers RN, Charla Smith RN; Medical Student: Jonathan Walker; Pre Med Students: John Myers, Molly LaFlower, Lana Spry; PA Student: Annie Fulk, Sarah Watkins; Nursing Student: MaryBeth Markham; Translators: Kathleen Fuller, Jason Fuller, Meredith Bush; Sterilization: George Chapman, Susan Jordan, Derrick Sikes, Bill Guilford; Chaplain: Johnny Markham; NonMedical Volunteers: Anna Larson, Nathan Lowry, Sarah Harris, Debbie Scobey, Brice Reid, Christine Byrd, Tristin Byrd, Joyce Knox, Gary Dodd; Team Leaders: Marie Agee, Julie Wheatley

The group size was large with 48 people, half of whom were new to our organization! Our surgical cases totaled 53 for the week. What a great week in Guatemala! Upon our arrival the group slowly filtered through customs in Guatemala without any trouble. We were grateful for the ease in passing through without inspection and taxes!!! Once both flights had arrived in Guatemala the team loaded onto the bus and into the van and headed out to Montellano. The day was nice and traffic wasn't too bad heading out of the capital so we arrived at Clinica Ezell with plenty of time to set up and see Sunday's patients. Susan Jordan and her son Bryce had to come a day late because of delayed flights but everyone was happy to see them arrive safe and sound on Sunday afternoon with Alex.

There were several first time participants on this trip so Marie led a group through a tour of the hospital to help everyone get acquainted with our facilities. The veteran trip participants set in to organizing the OR's, nurses stations and sterilization room. While the nurses got set up the surgeons started seeing patients in clinic. All of the plastic surgery patients were there on Sat. to be seen by Dr. Fulks and Drs. Ballinger, Lowry and Elmore each saw patients for the following day. That night dinner was served followed by orientation and everyone headed off to bed.

Sunday morning was a typical Sunday in Montellano. The team finished preparing the OR's and relaxed before heading over to church. Dr. David Lux preached the sermon at church and the group got to participate a little bit by singing a few songs in English. Both Dr. David and our staff Danny and Darling had their babies at church and the group took this as a great photo opportunity before heading over to lunch at the clinic.

Dr. Walter and Rosario led the group through the medical orientation before lunch on Sunday. They did a great job explaining to everyone about the hospital procedures and then we followed their talk with a great meal and started operating. The day passed somewhat slowly as people got used to working together but things wrapped up early enough for our trip chaplain Johnny Markham to lead the group through some devotion time. Johnny was an excellent chaplain who had obviously put a great deal of thought into his talks. He challenged the group to decide if they really wanted to "Be Healed". He took

his talks out of the book of John. He pointed out that Jesus asked if a man WANTED to be healed and how often we have lived with our troubles for so long that we may not even want healing. He reminded us that Jesus offers healing but we have to WANT His healing touch and be willing to follow him to receive His blessings.

Monday morning we started off early with people going in every direction. Several team members went out to mobile clinics with our doctors, others headed out to help deliver ABC supplies and others headed over to the hospital to work. We had a full schedule of patients and worked our way down the list as the day went on. That afternoon the Tuesday patients showed up and the surgeons started seeing them between surgery cases. Monday was a long day for our team but all the patients came out of surgery just fine and the nurses and aids in the recovery room were always ready and excited to get their new patients in. The nurses did a wonderful job of taking care of the patients all week long. Glen and Neva Berkey were also a huge help in the OR's and Recovery room. They are a huge asset to HTI in Guatemala and we are so grateful for their service and the consistency they will help us to provide in the future. We were also blessed by having Alice Bush with us again and having her serve as our head nurse for the week. She did a great job of scheduling nurses and aids to keep the recovery room well staffed and patients well cared for. So many people contributing together like this helps to make the week go so smoothly.

By the time Tuesday rolled around the team was working like a well oiled machine. The sterilization room had a few interesting moments throughout the week trying to keep all the autoclaves running with the correct pressure and all at the same time but they did stay on top of things and were ready with clean, sterile instruments each time the OR staff came looking. The OR area also looked a great deal more spacious this trip because most of the additional storage room being mostly completed. Several of the shelves and some of the equipment that had been in the hallway was already stored back there in the spacious storage room. This is a great addition to the hospital and a safe way to store all of our equipment that had been sitting out in the hallway!

On Tuesday Dr. Fulks operated on a sweet little girl who ended up stealing the hearts of many. Her name is Gaby and she came in to have surgery on her hand where she had burned it as a small child. She was such a sweetheart and a beauty that all of the team members who came in contact with her were just delighted. We had several other patients that many of the team members bonded with and were sad to see leave when they were discharged.

Tuesday night the devotional time was rather special because Johnny opened up by sharing about how he came to be on the trip with his daughter MaryBeth. MaryBeth is the first Scoby scholar nursing student to come to Guatemala. It just so happened that Mrs. Joyce Knox and Mrs. Debbie Scobey were on the same trip as MaryBeth. These two ladies are the reason for the scholarship. Mrs. Knox lost her daughter a few years ago and her niece Debbie dedicated this scholarship in Heather's honor. It was a beautiful night of sharing and a great testimony to the life and ministry of Heather Knox Barber.

Wednesday was a slower day for plastic surgery but a big day for our ENT and General rooms. The patients were rolling out of the OR and keeping the nurses in recovery busy. Our dermatology PA

Tammie saw patients all day long on Monday and Tuesday at Clinica Ezell and then headed out to mobile clinic on Wed. with Dr. David and on Thursday with Dr. Walter. Tammie stayed very busy and worked long hours seeing patients. We were so very grateful for her expertise!

Wednesday afternoon was slower so a group got together and headed out to the Cacao farm for a little excursion. The group got rained on a little bit but had a great time playing with the parrots, eating chocolate and tasting the cacao fruit. The family was once again wonderful as they hosted us in their home and fed us bananas and showed us around their property.

Another special addition we had on this trip were the two student nurse anesthetists from Nashville. Keenan and Sean were very helpful all week long working with the anesthesiologists and running the rooms nice and smoothly. Tiffany Horton our other CRNA gets the credit for getting us in touch with the Middle Tennessee School of Anesthesia and helping us get these great students to Guatemala with us. We look forward to furthering this relationship with the school and having more students join us in the future.

"Voted" (not really, but by our actions) Favorite patient: Charming little Gaby, the little girl whose fingers released from scar tissue (pictured below)



Voted Most Unusual Patient: The woman who asked as she walked towards the operating room, "Could my shortness of breath be a problem in surgery?" In all her exams, she'd never mentioned that before! The docs cancelled her surgery.

On Thursday the surgeons operated only half a day. Several went to the water fall; others to the chocolate farm. Yet others stayed at Ezell to nap, play cards or watch a video on Tiffany's computer. Dr. James Elmore, now a pediatric urologist but also a former MET student from the early 90's, visited his host family in Santo Tomas, family of our own nurse Rosario Poncio. They had a photo of him he'd never seen before holding an infant. He was delighted! Wrap-up devo was especially meaningful with so many first timers. All seemed to relish their experience, and young Brice became the mascot of the group with his 14-yr-old youth and charm!

Friday rolled around and we left the clinic about 8:30 and arrived in Antigua at 11. Alex took Tiffany on to the city to catch her flight. The main activity on Friday afternoon seemed to be zip lining! Between 15-20 people enjoyed that exhilarating activity.

On Saturday for the second time in a year, our bus was blocked in while in the hotel parking lot and was 30 minutes late to pick up the group for our trip to the airport. It turned out to be one of the hotel's cars doing the blocking! I filed an official complaint at the desk and Alex said he would as well. Despite that stressful inconvenience, we made it to the airport on time for our flights. Everyone left Guatemala clutching both their treasures and their memories.

Written by Julie and Marie



Former MET Student Dr. James Elmore in



surgery!



Johnny and MaryBeth Markham