



## October 2023 Surgical Team

We had an unusual trip this month, to say the least. In September, while in Chichi, the riots were a grassroots

effort, and by the time we arrived in October, they were much more active and growing.

When we hit the ground on the 6<sup>th</sup>, most of the team except for 6 would be staying Friday night at the Barcelo in Guatemala City. This trip was smaller than our typical surgical teams with only 35 in total.

The reports we were getting from Kemmel, Sheri, and all their contacts on the ground were that 25-30 roadblocks were blocking many of the major crossroads around the country. By the time the remainder of the team landed on Saturday, the blockades had grown in size and number, and we decided it was best to stay in place in the city until we felt it was safe to proceed to Ezell.



We decided for the entire team to stay Saturday night at Barcelo and give our intel another day before deciding what to do next. It was decided at this point to leave at 4:30 AM Sunday morning thinking that the roadblocks would diminish

by dark and provide an open avenue for us to proceed.

With the roadblocks along the way, our driver was able to drive around and avoid all of them without having to stop at all. We made it to Ezell in 3.5 hours, unloaded, grabbed a few minutes of sleep, and then proceeded with the regular Sunday routine of breakfast, church, then meeting with Dr. Walter. Surgeries began that afternoon as scheduled with a few changes in our emergency protocol because of road blockades and no blood availability.

Mark Lindsey MD  
 Damon Herr MD  
 Leanne Brechtel MD  
 Abby Kaye MD  
 Janel Crawford MD  
 Walt Schoutko MD  
 Mark Seaver MD  
 Iian Kay MD  
 Buster Herren MD  
 Jeff Cherye CRNA  
 Desiree Cherye CRNA  
 Martine Gould SRNA  
 Meron Admuassu SRNA  
 Virginia Beavers PTA  
 Trevor Williams Surg  
 Tech  
 Ethan Alexander EMT  
 Ken Earle EMT  
 Barbara Burg RN  
 Dorothy Taylor RN  
 Rosio Moreno RN  
 Sandy Wilkinson RN  
 Jodi Pilot RN  
 Sharon Hendrix RN  
 Roger Graves RN  
 Tito Dauck RN  
 Susan Thomas RN  
 Ken Rish CRT  
 Rita Sills  
 Tom McGinnes CPT  
 Justus Meerjanssen  
 Cary Sills  
 Sonny Bevers  
 Bruce Smith Chaplain  
 Bode Teague Leader





Sunday and Monday went well but the increase in road blockades, now growing to over 100, made it clear that staying at Ezell could jeopardize our ability to get out of the country later in the week. It was also a concern that many of the patients scheduled to come were not able to make the journey and were being turned away at the roadblocks. Many blockades were now in place for 24-hour periods which meant there was no way around or through them. It was decided that our best chance was to leave Ezell at midnight on Wednesday morning. We had two pick-ups in front of the bus, both had written letters from TSI stating that we were a medical team from the States there to help their fellow countrymen. This proved to be our saving grace which helped us through three different blockades along the way.



With Rick's assistance in the States, we were able to get all the flights changed and everyone out on Wednesday by 2:00 p.m.

Though this was an unusual trip, it was an adventure! I think everyone understood the declining situation and appreciated our ability to get them out safely.

Sincerely in Christ,  
Bode

Airport when leaving

