

HEALTH TALENTS INTERNATIONAL
Gynecology/Plastic Surgery Clinic
February 9-16, 2008

Team Participants

Physicians: Grady Bruce, MD, Shannon Carroll, MD, Quinton Dickerson, MD, Mark Kellum, MD, Roy Kellum, MD, Phillip Strawther, MD, Dwayne Fulks, MD. **Anesthesia:** Jeff Bennie, MD, Jonathan Bennie, MD, Tamara Cameron, CRNA, Yvette Riker, CRNA, Kristy Smith, CRNA. **Pediatric Resident:** Katy Farrell, MD-R-4. **Dentist:** Barry Loffredo, DDS, **dental assistant** Seth Wyngowski. **Nurses:** Nancy Bennie, RN, Lisa Cantrell, RN, Jan Harper, RN, Joy Kellum, RN, Linda Osborne, RN, Martha Oyston, RN, Molly Stallings, RN, Misty Vance, RN, Cyndi Yates, RN. **Certified Surg Tech:** Richard Yates. **Nursing Students:** Joanna Meeks, Hannah Plexico, Laura Reeder, Katie Rinard, Megan Williams. **Medical Students:** Zack Self, Jeff Beers. **EMT Trained:** Jack Rowe. **Sterilization:** Alfred Anderson, Bill Strawther. **Non-Medical Support:** Amanda Bennie, Ann Dickerson, Mary Ann Hornbuckle, Payne Kellum, Susan Kellum, Marjorie Strawther. **Team Leaders:** Rick Harper, Julie Wheatley

As you can see we had a large but very productive team this year. There were several different arrival times in Guatemala due to the different schedules for the week. All participants got to Guatemala with most bags. The ones that were lost did show up in Montellano on Monday so team members didn't suffer too long without their luggage.

Once the team arrived we started the process of unpacking and preparing for the following day. Saturday evening most of our plastics patients for the week arrived and we began seeing them. It made for a long night but we were happy to have an idea of what we would be facing throughout the week. That evening Rick gave the orientation presentation to the group and everyone turned in for the night.

Sunday started off with a lovely service at the Montellano Church of Christ. We sang some songs in Spanish and then a few in English. Brother Baldemar Ruiz gave the message and we enjoyed the time with our brothers and sisters as well as our visiting patients.

After lunch on Sunday the operating began. We were well staffed in the OR and we felt the effects of that. Things ran amazingly smoothly for the first day of operating with a new group. We had a great sterilization team that kept up with the flow of operations throughout the week. Not only that but they were able to sterilize close to 100 sets of towels! The April team will certainly appreciate their efforts.

As patients started leaving the OR we were blessed to have a great number of skilled nurses in the recovery room awaiting their arrival. We not only had several great nurses but also some energetic and well trained nursing students. The extra hands and help these students provided throughout the week was a huge help. The nursing students were able to gain great experience as well as put their studies to use. They were a great bunch of ladies and we feel sure that they will have great success as nurses in the future.

On Sunday afternoon the GYN doctors reviewed their patients for the day and had them lined up and ready for their operations within an hour or so. The sweet ladies were all so appreciative for the care and love they received from HTI. One of the prayer requests we had for the week came from a GYN consultation. Yolanda from the Church of Christ in Zone 11 came in and was diagnosed with cervical cancer that had progressed to the point that it was inoperable. She was referred for radiation therapy in the capital.

Sunday afternoon also held a fun adventure for several team members. Carlos took a group to the cacao (chocolate) farm of a local family. The group was able to try the cacao fruit and get a tour of the farm. It was an enjoyable afternoon for all participants.

Our GYN team operated along side of Dr. Bruce our urologist. They performed twenty-nine surgeries on Sun. through Wed. After they operated their little ladies were taken care of by our recovery room team. Their nails were painted and they walked around the room in a conga line led by Marjorie Strawther, while singing La Cucaracha! This team made sure that the patients were not only cared for but pampered!



There were two patients that struck the heart cords of many team members. Demitri is an elderly gentleman who arrived with a large tumor on his left arm. He was asking to have his arm removed because of the pain the tumor caused him. Our plastic surgeons decided that they could safely remove the arm and Demitri was scheduled for surgery the following day. Once Dr. Fulks and Strawther began the operation they realized that they may be able to save the arm. After a couple of hours in surgery Demitri left the operating room, arm in tact! Dr. Fulks was able to carry some of the tumor home for a biopsy when he left on Tuesday. We heard from him at the end of the week and found out that the tumor was cancerous. Demitri will follow up with the surgeons in August to see how he is progressing.





Mayra is the other patient that captured the hearts of many team members. She gave us a scare when she started having bladder spasms and pain after she had been doing well for a day post-op. The following morning Mayra woke up and her smile had returned and she barely even recalled the pain that she had experienced the night before. Her sweet disposition and hugs and kisses brought smiles to many.

Each and every time we have a plastics week we have many babies and small children that are simply adorable and easy to fall in love with. One of our adorable little guys this week was Edgar. He was a returning patient from August of 07. Edgar had a sweet smile and we are all looking forward to his healing so he can speak properly and finally be able to attend school at the age of 12.

The medical students Zack and Jeff were both able to assist in several surgeries and had many opportunities to learn. In addition to these students Dr. Marcos Lux and Ruben Romano (one of our scholarship students and Dr. Jessica Romano's brother) were able to both observe and assist in surgery. All in all these students gained experience that would be otherwise practically impossible for them to have. The surgeons we had were great about teaching and helping these students.

While the operating was taking place we also had Dr. Dickerson and Dr. Farrell out in the villages each day seeing patients. Ruben Romano also participated in two days of mobile clinics one with each Dr. Walter and Dr. David.

On Tuesday Dr. Dickerson, Rick, and Carlos held a meeting with all the TSI staff. The presentation consisted of the vision and mission of HTI, the US Board of Directors and their role. Questions like "what are we doing well?" and "what can we improve?" were

discussed in this meeting as well. This was a successful effort to open up discussion with our TSI staff to find out how they feel things are going and make sure they are familiar with the mission as seen by the HTI board.

Dr. Barry Loffredo and his assistant Seth Wyngowski worked in the dental clinic with Silvia, Jessica and the assistants all week. This was a great time of training for Drs Silvia and Jessica. Dr. Loffredo was energetic and happy to share new methods and tips with our staff. They all spent a pleasant week working and learning together.

Several team members left us on Thursday to return to the states because of family problems or scheduling issues. Thus on Thursday we had a smaller number and operated our typical half day. By the end of the day our surgery number reached a total of 65 for the week. Around mid morning team members started heading off to the waterfall. Two different groups climbed up to the falls that day and then it was time to relax and get packed up.

Friday morning the doctors did their last rounds and many teary goodbyes were said between the team members and the darling patients. After the goodbyes the team picture was taken and everyone loaded onto the bus bound for Antigua. A lovely day was spent relaxing, shopping and eating in Antigua. Both the Roy Kellum family and Ms. Martha Oyston were able to visit with their ABC children in the afternoon. That time was special for all involved.

Dinner that evening at Hotel Antigua was a lovely way to wind up the night. Carlos, Silvia, Darling, Danny, and Alex and his family were all able to join us in Antigua for dinner. The team was glad to have another opportunity to say goodbye. Saturday morning at 4:30am the bus pulled away from Hotel Antigua and we made it to the airport and home without any lost luggage or team members. Once again God blessed us as we attempted to share His light and love with those around us.