

HTI August Surgical Trip
Clinica Ezell
August 4-11, 2012

Trip Participants: Surgeons: Scott Ballinger, MD, James Elmore, MD, Dwayne Fulks, MD, George Haight, MD, Dwayne Lett, MD; Ralph Marrero, MD; Anesthesia: Stephen Harvey, MD, Gordon Corder, CRNA, Carrie Hovater, CRNA, Pam Wade, CRNA; Cardiologist: Quinton Dickerson, MD; Pediatrician; Bubba Edwards, MD; Nurses: Kristen Allen, RN, Nanci Andrus, RN, Niki Bails, RN, Glenn Berkey RN, Neva Berkey RN, Debbie Edwards, RN, Jennifer Hicks, RN, Christy Marshall, RN, Cynthia McKay, RN, Katrina Miller, RN, Leslie Shoemaker RN, Sarah Tucker, RN, Ashlea Yale, RN, Mike Caldwell LPN; Speech Pathologist: Jason Fuller; Surgical Asst: Amanda DePriest, CST; Dental Student/Translator: Esther Schara; Medical Student/Translator: Drew Guess; Nursing Students: Kate Bridges, Kasey House; Pre PA Students: Emily Buttram, Collin Grimes, Sarabeth Ivey (Also a translator); Premed Student: Zach Whiteside; Pre-nursing Students: Kelsie Hull, Joelle Whitlock; Translators: Carson Hicks, Kathleen Fuller; Sterilization: Jared Corder; Don Griffin, Marsha Griffin; Compassionate Caregivers: Lacey Bristol, Ann Dickerson, Melanie Daley, Sophie Fuller, Julie Ann Harper, John Mark Hicks, Alisha Hovater, Karen Sims, Jonathon Yale; Mr. Fix-It: JD Elmore; Massage Therapist: Shanna Wilson; Team Leader: Rick Harper

If the list above seems rather large, it is because this was the largest surgical team we've ever assembled, beating February by one. What a blessing to have so many translators, nurses and nursing students to join our talented surgeons and anesthesia providers. And for the first time this year all of our luggage arrived at the same time we did! Of course, our Memphis based team members flight was delayed by six hours, but they arrived in Guatemala City on Saturday night and traveled down on Sunday morning prior to surgery beginning.

Thanks to the United Airlines priority status for six on this team, we were able to bring twelve additional bags of supplies. Upon arrival in Montellano on Saturday evening, we opened and inventoried each bag in the dining room before placing the supplies and medicine into intermediate storage for use that week. While this was going on, our surgeons and translators began seeing the two-three dozen patients waiting for exams. Following supper, a brief orientation and group meetings for OR and recovery room personnel it was off to bed following a lengthy day.

It rained Saturday night so we woke up to a cool and pleasant Sunday morning, but have no fear, the heat did return by the time worship service began at 10:00. Following a leisurely breakfast and a time of worship with the he Montellano church family, and a final orientation and surgery commenced in earnest. Rick tells each team that completing surgery by 6:00 PM is optimal, thus that is our target each day. However, Sunday is a day of getting acquainted and we traditionally

work a bit later into the evening. That tradition continued with one room finishing up around 7:30 PM and a total of ten surgeries for the day. By 8:30, John Mark Hicks was sharing a devotional thought from the gospels and our beds were calling once again.

Nineteen cases were scheduled for Monday, five each for ENT and Plastics, seven General and two Urology. Dr. Quinton Dickerson, cardiologist and HTI board member, along with first-timer Dr. Bubba Edwards, a pediatrician, went out with our full-time physicians for mobile clinics each day. We enjoy have specialists come down as it not only provides great care for our patients, but it serves to educate our ministry team physicians. Drs. Lux and Sierra have an unquenchable desire to learn and truly appreciate their US visitors. Surgeries went quite smooth with only one room working late on Monday.

(Dr. Edwards with patient and his trusted translator, Kathleen Fuller.)



I do want to give a special shout out to our head nurse in recovery, Lesli Shoemaker. Lesli developed a stress fracture a few weeks before the trip, but refused to let a “little boot” and discomfort dissuade her from returning to Clinica Ezell. Lesli and her husband, Top, adopted their precious children from Guatemala, thus they have great affection for the country and our ministry. Thanks Lesli!

We went to bed on Monday, knowing we had another eighteen cases scheduled for Tuesday with a couple of cases needing a bit more instrumentation. It would be the urology case that kept us late on Tuesday, a bladder stone the size of an almond, proved to be a challenge for Dr. James Elmore and his OR team in room one, but their talent and perseverance prevailed. All the while, OR room three with Dr. Scott Ballinger and first-time, Dr. Ralph Marrero were dealing with exhausting thyroid and parotid cases. Working around the various facial nerves and removing both benign and malignant masses is tedious and delicate work.

Tuesday was also day two of delivering ABC supplies to the families on the coast. Each day, one to three team members traveled with Violeta and Luis to the various communities in our ABC Program and returned with greater appreciation of the impact this program has on the future of the children blessed to sponsored.

After late evenings on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday, Wednesday brought a nice reprieve with only thirteen cases scheduled. We could have handled one more case in each room that day, but it was nice to catch our breath. Plus, it allowed Dr. Stephen Harvey to break free and go to Chicacao and meet his ABC child...a surprise for him and the child. Dr. Harvey, an anesthesiologist, is a young father and like many of our volunteers, torn by the desire to serve in Guatemala and missing his daughter and expectant wife. Seeing his ABC child made the separation from his family a bit more bearable.

(Dr. Harvey with one of young patients, pictured below.)



Ten cases were scheduled for Thursday, five General cases and five Plastic cases and we were done by noon and able to take a large group to San Lucas Toliman. August is one of two plastic surgery trips we schedule each year and Dr. Dwayne Fulks comes down for each and blesses us all.

(Plastic surgery surgical tech, Amanda DePriest with a before photo, the after surgery photo follows.)



August Surgical Jornada 2012 is in the books and God was truly glorified. Our patients returned for postoperative checkups one week later and all were doing well with no complications or infections. Well done...faithful servants of the August 2012 team.

