

Health Talents International
General/GYN Surgery Clinic
October 7-14, 2017
Trip Report

Participants: *General Surgeons* Drs. Glen Blue, Damon Herr, Paul Humphrey, Jonathan Wilson; *GYN Surgeons* Drs. Janel Crawford, Paul Eun, Mark Seaver and Lindsay Ferguson; *Family Practice Emergency Medicine* Dr. David Brazzel; *Periodontist* Dr. Marcus Blue; *Anesthesiologist* Dr. Qinzhi Gong; *CRNAs* Desiree Cherye, Jeff Cherye and Alisa Vroman; *OR Nurses:* Gretchen Metheny, Shirley Rubelmann, Barbara Van Beckum and Beulah Ziegs; *Surgical Tech;* Kathy Jackson and Pamela Holliman; *OR Circulators:* John Jones; *Dental Hygienist* Bonnie Parham; *Recovery Nurses* Agustin Aquirre, Nicole Dalldorf, Kacy Forrest, Erin Gonsalves, Deana Herr, Rachel Jones, Ethan Kay, Aaron Redelsperger, Becky Tilton, Sara Wiggin and Sandy Williamson; *Paramedic* Ken Earle; *Translators* Cynthia Allen, Olguita Brazzel, Olimpia Carson, Ruth Cross, Mark Ketchersid, Tony Martinez, Johanna Martinezmole, Karen Morrison, Rita Sills and Kay Wyatt; *Physical Therapy Assistant* Emily Kay; *Sterilization Crew* Dean Cross and Cary Sills; *Caregivers* Jane Dye, Brenda Griffith, Josefine Meerjanssen, Sarah Wilson, Faith Wright and Jody Wright; *Trip Chaplain* Matt Huddleston
Team Leader Rick Harper.

Travel for this team began on Friday, with more than half of the group flying into Guatemala City on Friday night, and three others flying into Houston before catching the morning flight on Saturday. RN, Nicole, Dalldorf, newly married and anxious to see her father, Dr. Paul Humphrey, was one of those who flew into Houston on Friday night. She would indeed enjoy a reunion with her father, but not until Sunday. The ten on our team flying out of Kansas City had their flight delayed, a mechanical issue, and would not arrive until Sunday.

The KC crew arrived during worship, Sunday morning, and missed out on the bus ride, inventorying of supplies and even the patient consultations. The schedule had been set Saturday evening while they were in flight; fortunately, they arrived in time to enjoy worship with the US team and the Montellano church family.

We all had a bit of surprise on Sunday morning, at least for those who've been to Clinica Ezell before. The large breadfruit trees on the right side of Clinica Ezell began losing large branches due to heavy rains and strong winds during the busy hurricane season, and Carlos feared they might fall on the dormitory. Sadly, they had to be cut down and as the photo reveals, these were large trees.



Fifty-Six North Americans teamed with more than thirty of our full-time to team this week with several being married couples or mother/daughter, father/daughter, mother/sister/brother combinations. Olympia Carlson, a native Guatemalan who went to the US in the fifties, joined us along with her daughter and son-in-law. Not only was she a “vintage” member of our team, she was the best story-teller...and Jesus was her favorite story, one shared over and over with any patient who would listen.

Sunday surgeries went extremely smooth with the three GYN, seven general and one oral surgery. Dr. Marcus Blue, a periodontist on his first trip, was able to team with his father, general surgeon, Dr. Glen Blue for a case on Sunday afternoon. Marcus performed most of his procedures in the dental clinic, but a few required general anesthesia and were performed in an available OR. I believe this was the first time Glen was able to work alongside his son, Marcus in the operating room.

We lost a couple of US nurses the week prior to our trip, not uncommon when assembling a large group. Illness and family issues arise that alter the best laid plans. Nevertheless, we did have a strong group of nurses and we brought in a few extra Guatemala professional nurses to serve with us. Kacy and Rachel, shown below, began coming as Harding University nursing students in 2016 and returned for their third trip in the past sixteen months. A pattern we hope continues!



Matt Huddleston, making a return trip after a nine-year hiatus and a move from California to Oklahoma, served as our trip chaplain this week. A former missionary to Japan, Matt was able to draw on his missionary experience and knowledge of the Bible to keep us focused on God and his abundant love for all. Matt knew many of our California team members already, so he enjoyed a bit of a reunion, but also cultivated new relationships and sought to meet the spiritual needs of the North Americans in our company of servants.

We awoke to eighteen patients scheduled for Monday and I am pleased to say it was another smooth day, uneventful if you will. The OR's were empty at a reasonable hour that evening, no patients experienced any complications and forty beds were filled with recovering or scheduled patients when we assembled for our nightly devotional. I asked Marcus how his first full day went in the dental clinic and we'll just say he saw more patients than he anticipated and slept very well that night.

Ethan and Emily Kay were making their first trip with us, Ethan is a nurse and Emily a physical therapy assistant. We sent Emily out with our mobile teams on Monday and she developed a deeper understanding, and appreciation for our patients and our mobile clinic system. She and Ethan collected crutches and canes before coming down and left a large bag of supplies for future use, and I have no doubt they will return.

Dubbed the Fantastic Four, Jane Dye, Brenda Griffith, Bonnie Parham and Kay Wyatt worked tirelessly in the dental clinic and recovery ward. Bonnie, a dental hygienist, brought down multiple supply items, treated patients and trained our local hygienist. All four are part of the West End Church of Christ which provides salary support for our head dentist, the beloved Dr. Silvia Albizures de Baltodano.

Tuesdays totals included four GYN, sixteen general and Wednesday held six GYN, sixteen more general and another oral case. We entered Thursday having already completed seventy-one cases.

Eleven was the number for Thursday, one oral, two GYN and eight general cases bringing our total to eighty-two for the week. Surgeries were complete by lunch time and a small contingency made their way to the chocolate farm, while the remnant walked into Montallano or caught a nap.

Weary and blessed, we gathered for a time of sharing on Thursday evening then settled down for a night of rest. Antigua was waiting and our hearts were full!



