

International, Robin at Ritzman Pharmacies in Wadsworth, Dr. Anthony Cirino in Brunswick and last year's optometrist popular Dr. Molly Lescher who we hope can join us in 2012...but no pressure. Cindy of Fellowship Travel International helped make our flight arrangements.

The medical mission team was made up of 42 people with various medical knowledge and expertise, mission experience and people with good hearts hoping to help others in need. Through the Fall, I worked with Mae Cruz of Sociedad Amigos de los Niños in Honduras, the organization Holy Family Parish has a partnership with to provide an annual medical mission. We worked together on various aspects of our stay: accommodations, transportation, supplies we need from Honduras, etc.



On Sunday, January 9, 2011, medical mission team members gathered at Holy Family Church in Stow for the 11:30 am Mass and were called up to the sanctuary to receive a blessing from Father Paul Rosing and the congregation gathered. After Mass, we assembled in the Parish Center in the school to pack our suitcases (2 each) with the medicines, vitamins and supplies that Dan and his team of workers had prepared. We learned that nurse Harpo Chambers had an abscess in one of her tonsils and was waiting to see a specialist and pharmacist Ginny Hoffman had a high fever and had been taken to an emergency room. Both women had traveled on previous teams to Honduras. By Monday, both women had been advised not to go on the trip...both were terribly disappointed but knew they had to be healthy to go that far from home.

On Wednesday, January 12, those traveling from Cleveland met at Hopkins Airport at 4:00 am to check-in. Each person had 2 suitcases full of medicines and supplies with their personal items in their carry on luggage. Continental Airlines allows 1 suitcase to be checked for our international flight but charges us the \$30 for a second suitcase...this came to almost \$1,000...hence the need for a fundraiser. Our flight to Houston departed early as they had to de-ice the plane before take-off at 6:45 am. We arrived in Houston for a short layover and to meet fellow team members who came from Salt Lake City and Chicago. Our flight from Houston took off at 9:40 am and after a very smooth landing in the bowl of Tegucigalpa (the capital of Honduras) we landed at 12:20 pm where it was very sunny and about 82 degrees. We learned shortly after landing that the airport in Cleveland closed shortly after we took off due to bad weather (a miracle). We met Mae and Cato (our truck driver and one of our Honduran translators) as we counted the suitcases, all of which arrived (another miracle).



We arrived at Nuevo Paraiso, an hour east of Tegucigalpa, about 4:30 pm and were taken to our guest quarters at the clinic, a new place for us to stay due to two other groups also staying at Nuevo Paraiso. After finding our rooms and dropping off our suitcases, I led a quick tour of Nuevo Paraiso especially for the new members of the team. At 6:00 pm we gathered in the dining room also called 'Cafeteria Aurora' which we shortened to 'Café Aurora' which sounded less institutional. Dinner was roasted chicken, mashed potatoes, salad and bread, cantaloupe for dessert. At 7:00 pm I celebrated Mass for our team and a few of the teenage girls from Hope House in Nuevo Paraiso led the singing in Spanish for us. After Mass, we had a brief meeting in the Chapel about the next day's brigade, drinkable and non-drinkable water, toilet rules, the 'quiet zone' in the hall of our guest quarters and that we could socialize in the Café Aurora in the evening. A few people helped bag anti-parasite meds which we purchase in Honduras and a few others played cards for a little while. As I was getting ready for bed, I noticed that I had not heard any roosters, the sound of which is heard at any time of day or night in Honduras...strange!



On Thursday, January 13 our 8:00 am breakfast of pancakes and bananas was served after we prayed our Medical Mission prayer asking God's blessing on us and on the people we were going to serve that day. We loaded our truck and buses at 9:00 am to go to nearby Nueva Esperanza, about 5 minutes away. I always ask Mae to make our first brigade day close and small if possible to get our rhythm working. Working triage, taking initial information, blood pressures, temperatures and sugar numbers, nurses Katie Bender and Laurie Jones worked with translator leader and 6th year missionary Larry Gerbetz, Britt Shroyer translated for nurses Kaitlyn Chambers and Maureen Hudak, nurses Megan DalSanto and Pat Danzey were assisted by translator Jim Hoffman, Hondurans Eric and Daniel 'Chochito' translated for nurses Patty Shroyer and Annette Murphy and nurse team leader Bob Plona. These local Honduran high school and college-age students have taught themselves English and are a valuable help to our team members who do not speak Spanish. We pay each of them a good day's wage to interpret for us.

Those examining patients were Doctor Carlos Saavedra who headed up the doctors and was born in Argentina so he needs no translator, Dr. Matt Maruna was assisted by his sister nurse Melissa Maruna and translator Mae Cruz, Matt's wife Dr. Martha Tzou (they traveled from Madison, Wisconsin to Chicago to join us in Houston) was assisted by Hondurans Alberto and Hugo, translator Margarita Lopez translated for Dr. Mike Tricaso, physician assistant Ashley Finch was aided by Andy Hudak who served as her translator and physician assistant Joan Hayes was assisted by Honduran Johan. Honduran Doctor Marina Naira also examined patients as we are required to have a Honduran doctor on our team to assist the visiting doctors with Honduran medical situations that may be unfamiliar to them.



The dental team was headed by Dr. Brandon Jones who was assisted by his dental assistant Carlee Brown and translator Honduran Luis. Dr. Jeannie Felton was assisted by Honduran Daniella and Dr. Larry Kalke was assisted by nurse Janet Wertz and translator

Fidelma Iammarino. Christy Horner assisted by sterilizing instruments. Brandon, his wife nurse Laurie and Carlee all flew from their home in Salt Lake City meeting us in Houston. The pharmacy was staffed by lead pharmacist Dan Krinsky and Jackie Guttenberg who were assisted by Dennis Calsin, Sally Benjamin, Jim McClarnon, Nancy Walker Gerbetz, Susan Garrabrant, Katie Herbkersman, Marlene Maruna, Gerry Danzey, translator Honduran Cato and bus drivers Hondurans Armando and Tiburcio. Trista Piccola assisted me with crowd control making sure the Hondurans were in the right line or sending them to the right place.



In the early afternoon, Anna Flores came to ask us to visit her father, Saul who was in their house about 5 minutes away. I took Dr. Marina with me to their home. Saul was in a dark bedroom laying in bed, the mattress of which was very worn and sunken in the middle, obviously where he had been laying for a long time. Anna explained that her father had suffered a number of strokes, couldn't see and complained of severe pain in his back...no wonder seeing the mattress. Dr. Marina examined Saul and said she would give him some medicine but that the mattress needed to be replaced. Toward the end of seeing

patients, an elderly man came asking for sunglasses, we had no more sunglasses with us to give him. Carlito, a 12-year old boy who lived nearby took off the sunglasses he had been given earlier and gave them to the man who thanked the young boy for his generosity and respect of an older person. After we finished seeing patients around 3:00 pm and returned to Nuevo Paraiso, I asked Cato where we could buy a new mattress. He said we could get one in San Francisco, a town about 15 minutes away. I asked him to take me there, I purchased a mattress for \$100 and returned to the Flores' house. It was like a scene from Publisher's Clearinghouse Sweepstakes, the look on Anna's face was well worth the purchase. She couldn't believe a new mattress was delivered that fast. She got her father out of bed, we put the new mattress on the bed frame, moved the old mattress to the backyard and she laid her father on fresh sheets on the new bed. They were both very grateful. We found 12-year old Carlito and I gave him 2 new pairs of sunglasses for his generosity to the elderly man earlier. Carlito firmly shook my hand and said, "Thank you Padre". At 6:00 pm we gathered for dinner of shredded beef, rice, green beans and tortillas. Some went to bed early while others spent the evening socializing playing cards or visiting.



On Friday, January 14 we ate breakfast at 6:45 am: scrambled eggs, bacon, toast and cereal. Jim McClarnon and Gerry Danzey stayed at Nuevo Paraiso to do some work on the water system, clean filters and see what else they could fix. We left Nuevo Paraiso at 7:45 heading to Tatumbla, a rather large town about an hour away. There were a lot of people waiting for us in a line outside the gate of the school where we would conduct the brigade. Guards with machine guns guarded the entrance...it looked really scary but I think it was only to deter any troublemakers. We set up and began seeing patients by 9:15. Around 11:00 am the Mayor of Tatumbla came to look for Mae and me to thank us for coming to take care of his citizens. A 10-year old boy with a tooth poking out of the roof of his mouth was brought to me to see if the dentists could remove the tooth; the 'mesiodens' was extracted and the

boy didn't flinch but showed the small hole in the roof of his mouth proudly. At 5:00 pm, 12 students from Archbishop Hoban High School and 2 of their teachers who were staying at Pedro Atala (a Sociedad children's home in Tegucigalpa) arrived to see what we were doing and how a medical brigade works. We saw more than 700 people and returned to Nuevo Paraiso by 7:15 pm. We ate pan-fried tilapia, rice, plantain chips, salsa and watermelon for dinner...my favorite meal in Honduras. After dinner, we unloaded the suitcases and repacked them for the next day. I had to ask why I still heard no roosters. It was explained that some weeks earlier, there were complaints about the number of roosters in the area and the noise they were making all day and all night. A few locals took it upon themselves and killed the roosters. After hearing of this extreme solution, I actually missed hearing them.



Due to the distance of our brigade for Saturday, January 15, we ate breakfast early at 6:15 am: sunny side up eggs, Honduran sausage, beans, tortillas and avocados and cereal. We left Nuevo Paraiso at 7:00 am and headed northwest through Talanga to Las Pilas (a mountain village we have been to twice before). We arrived at 9:00 am and began seeing patients at 9:30 am. The view from our brigade sight is beautiful...lots of mountains and valleys and yes, we heard roosters again. The dental clinic was a 5 minute walk up a hill to a beautiful peek with a view of miles of mountains...the most beautiful view for any dental patient. We finished seeing patients by 3:00 pm and decided that those who wanted to return to Nuevo Paraiso would return on one of our buses while the other bus would go to the Intercontinental Hotel in Tegucigalpa to watch the Pittsburgh Steelers play the Baltimore Ravens in a playoff game and to keep the black and gold Dan Krinsky happy! He was really happy when the Steelers won 31-24 in a bit of a nail-biter. Meanwhile at Nuevo Paraiso, dinner was served at 6:00 pm: spaghetti with chicken and vegetables in a white cheese sauce.



On Sunday, January 16, our 'day-off' we ate breakfast at 6:45 am: French toast and pineapple. We left Nuevo Paraiso at 7:40 am for our near hour drive to Tegucigalpa and Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Suyapa. The Hoban High School group joined us for Mass. The priest mentioned both our groups in his remarks and thanked us for coming to Honduras to serve others. We walked a short distance behind the Basilica to the original chapel of Suyapa and to buy some religious articles. We boarded the buses under blue skies and 85 degrees and headed to the Valley of the Angels for lunch at Las Tejas, a clean, safe and typical Honduran restaurant. After lunch we spent 2 hours near the souvenir shops where some shopped and others watched yet another football game...a bonus for Dan! We arrived

back at Nuevo Paraiso for dinner at 6:30 pm: arroz con pollo (chicken and rice) a delicious dish cooked by Juana and the ladies in the

kitchen at the Café Aurora. Some of the team gathered for card-playing and socializing later on in the evening. John and Karen Godt from Cleveland and the Hope for Honduran Children Foundation joined us for socializing. They had arrived that day with a group of 18 Elon University students to do various educational and service projects in Nuevo Paraiso.

We ate our breakfast of toasted cheese sandwiches, scrambled eggs, cantaloupe and cereal at 6:15 am on Monday, January 17 knowing we had a long day ahead of us. By 7:00 am we were on our 30 minute trip to El Jicarito, a new town for us where 500 people had signed up in advance to be seen by the medical team. Four Elon University students joined us: pre-med students Steve Greenberg and Drew Gardner, pre-nursing student Liz Palmer and Spanish student Scott Mills jumped in to assist in seeing patients and helping. The brigade sight was the best and most spacious we've ever had with lots of room for people to wait. Around noon, teams would take 10-15 minutes for a break to eat a peanut butter and jelly sandwich or a burrito and find the local toilet (bathroom is too nice of a word for some of the conditions that surround the toilet). About 3:00 pm the Hoban High School group arrived to assist in the pharmacy, with translation and demonstrate tooth care with a toothbrush and dental floss. We finished seeing patients at 5:00 pm. The community leaders thanked me for being able to stay so long and see more than 860 people in one day...an HF record! We arrived at Nuevo Paraiso at 6:30 for dinner: Honduran chicken tacos, rice, guacamole and pineapple. At 8:00 pm we gathered in the children's community center where the children entertained us with a talent show of their dancing and singing. The treats we purchased for the children were taken to their homes and given to them the next day because the tias ('aunt' in Spanish which they use to call the woman in charge of their house) thought it was too late for them to eat snacks and candy.



On Tuesday, January 18 we had pancakes and watermelon for breakfast at 7:45 am. We left for Guadalajara at 8:30 am and began seeing patients at 9:00 am. Three Elon students joined us: Scott again to help with translation and Kathleen Pate and Erin Bucksbaum who both helped in the pharmacy. It was quickly evident to us that we would be seeing more people in this town than we had seen in the same town last year, we also learned there had not been a medical brigade since we were here last January. We took a group photo at the end of the brigade and returned to Nuevo Paraiso by 4:30 pm where the electricity had gone out. By 6:00 pm dinner time, the sugar cane field across from the Café Aurora was being burned on purpose to burn away all of the excess leaves and drive out any critters leaving the cane to stand by itself to be harvested quickly and easily. During our dinner of roasted chicken, yucca (like potatoes), cucumber salad and pineapple the electricity came back on. We celebrated Britt's birthday (that day) and Martha's birthday (the next day) by singing and eating cake. After dinner we spent some time talking about our experiences of the week, memories we would take with us and how we can keep the experience fresh and influential in our lives. I reviewed the departure procedures of the next morning.



Mae, Doctor Marina and translator Eric thanked the group for coming to their country to serve their fellow Hondurans. Some of the group went to pack while others socialized one last night in the Café Aurora.

By 8:00 am on Wednesday, January 19, we were eating a breakfast of scrambled eggs, sausage, mantequilla (white creamy butter), tortillas and papaya. The bus was loaded with suitcases and we departed for the airport by 9:00 am. Everyone checked in, Mae and I went to pay the airport tax for the group and the group went through security at 12:30 for the 1:25 pm flight to Houston. Though we experienced at least 1 or 2 people being sick in our group each day (and not sure why) it was a truly remarkable and record-breaking week of medical brigades with the help of our friends from Hoban High School and Elon University. And still no sound of roosters at Nuevo Paraiso...maybe next year!

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	Thursday Jan 13, 2011	Friday Jan 14, 2011	Saturday Jan 15, 2011	Monday Jan 17, 2011	Tuesday Jan 18, 2011	TOTALS
Village	Nueva Esperanza	Tatumbra	Las Pilas	El Jicarito	Guadalajara	
Medical Exams						
Adults	144	381	112	457	257	1,351
Children	192	341	173	409	360	1,475
Total Medical	336	722	285	866	617	2,826
Dental Exams						
Adults	38	80	31	99	49	297
Children	71	62	41	89	57	320
Total Dental	109	142	72	188	106	617
Teeth extracted	220	250	125	477	249	1,321
Scripts						
Adults	624	1,627	513	1,749	1,060	5,573
Children	480	1,194	633	1,879	1,142	5,328
Total Scripts	1,104	2,821	1,146	3,628	2,202	10,901

Photos are available at www.holyfamilystow.org/honduras.php