

2008 Guatemala Mission Team Daily News

Ron Amberg, Communications

Number 7, July 24, 2008

Spring Valley United Methodist Church



Fourth and final day for the team's work in Cunen.

Frank Andersen provides a medical summary for the week. ... Mark Jacobson gives the final report for the construction crew. ... Joni Copeland offers a devotion.

Friday, July 25, 12:30 P.M. Supplement: Jerry Malone adds: *We left Cunen at 7:00 this morning and are now in Camanchaj at the clinic dropping off supplies.*

DAY SIX, THURSDAY, JULY 24, 2008

SPRING VALLEY / EVERETT GUATEMALA MISSION TEAM

Frank Andersen:

Medical Notes

24 July 2008

Thursday evening and the work is done. I have a mania for statistics so here are the numbers:

The medical team saw 177 patients and did 22 ultrasound exams. We scheduled 4 patients for the gynecologic surgical team that is coming to Camanchaj in September. 59 of the patients were 16 or less.

The dental team saw 61 patients and extracted 110 teeth (24 patients were 16 or less).



One of Norma Warner's favorite lines is that flossing will keep your teeth fresh so your spouse likes to kiss you!

Our pharmacy team filled 492 prescriptions with medications supplied because of your generosity.

But the numbers don't tell the real stories that we saw happen throughout the week. Norma's [Warner] story yesterday of the woman who gave up her place for another patient was one for the most moving that I heard this week. But it was a week full of small and large kindnesses. Each year we seem to find more to love and appreciate in this wonderful county. These gentle, patient and kind folks show us the best of humanity. We are truly blessed to be able to work with them.



Norma Warner teaches basic health and sanitation to the patients before the start of clinic.

It was a special treat to be able to do ultrasound examinations this year. Many people came asking for an ultrasound, probably because they think there is something special in this technology – most of course didn't need one (this is a lesson we also need to learn in the U.S.). But for at least two patients, one with a breech baby and one woman with large fibroid tumors in her uterus, the ultrasound was very helpful.

Our final day in the medical clinic was again a cross section of the medical issues the Guatemalan people face – dysentery because of unclean water; ear infections, bronchitis and asthma due to lack of stoves and chimneys (Many Mayan’s cook on an open fire in the middle of the house.); elderly patients with severe rashes who had been unable to see a doctor. At devotions tonight Sue Metzler reminded us that even if the need seems overwhelming, each person that we help is one more whose pain or problem is relieved.

I’ll close with a story about one patient – a lovely 22 year old girl with epilepsy for 17 years. She has seizures several times a week, which causes her to be incontinent and to injure herself. She had come to the clinic when the last team was here a few months ago, but they had no seizure medications and couldn’t treat her. We were able to give her three months supply of seizure medication.

My experience in talking with other teams is that they often have a limited supply of medications – mostly antibiotics, dysentery treatment, ibuprofen for pain and vitamins. Because of the extraordinary generosity of the Dallas and Everett congregations, we always travel with a wide variety of medications. The medications we don’t use during the week stay at the Salud y Paz clinic and will be used throughout the rest of the year. I cannot thank you enough for what you do to help the people of Guatemala.



The young girl with epilepsy. We were able to give her three month’s supply of anti-seizure medication because of your generosity.

As always we finish the week with mixed feelings – we are ready to get back to friends and family (and let’s be honest – hot

showers and tap water we can drink!), but we are sad to leave our friends here. We look forward to returning again and are grateful that God had blessed us by giving us the opportunity to be here.

Yours in Christ,

Frank Andersen, MD



A severe rash that went untreated for many years. Fortunately, we have medication to begin treating it.

Mark Jacobson:

Thursday:

This will be the construction crew’s final report (@ least for this year).

Having made such tremendous progress painting walls the first couple days, we were all wondering how we were going to kill time for the third and fourth.

Then we started Robert’s [Gross] “green stripe”.

For Robert it was a lot like **The Green Mile** (if you haven’t seen the movie, it’s about death row). This is a stripe @ the base of the walls that serves as a trim/ cleaning line between the walls and floors and had to be painted w/ oil enamel as opposed to the nice latex that



The infamous “green stripe” was completed around the entire clinic by Thursday. The medical clinic is essentially ready to use as soon as electrical power gets hooked up.

we used on the walls. So not only was it an awkward location in which to work, but oil enamel is extremely messy. Even wearing latex gloves it seemed to show up in the oddest places on one's body, even places that weren't exposed (use your imagination).

In any event, the *Green Mile* slowed us down tremendously and magically filled up the rest of our work schedule. The good news is that we finished our task before our jefe (boss) fired us, and we parted still friends.

It was a wonderful week, even though we didn't get to do the task we had prepared for, and we leave what will soon be what I believe will be one of the finest clinics in the country. All that's left is for an electrician to wire the place and the final fit-out (installing furniture, medical equipment, etc.) to happen.

It has been an honor and pleasure to serve these gentle people and we look forward to coming back, although w/ this facility virtually finished I'm sure it will be somewhere else, which is sad because Cunen feels like visiting family.

See you all soon!

Mark J

Ps: Hi, Martha!



Michael Johnson and Meghann Beverly brought medications to Jan Andersen (seated), who did the post clinic-visit teaching.

Joni Copeland:

Guatemala Mission Team Devotions/for Tuesday Evening July 22, 2008 Cunen, Guatemala

Joni Copeland RN



Jorge's daughters joined us the last two nights for devotions. The youngest is in Shelly Johnson's lap.

Let us quiet ourselves and begin a time of being together with our Lord.

We are reminded in

Proverbs 16: 3 "Commit to the Lord whatever you do and your plans will succeed."

And in Mika 6:8

"What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love with mercy, to walk humbly with God."

As we continue to accept God's wonderful goodness to us, His tender graciousness towards us, His unfailing mercies that are new each day, the more we can turn to others and love more, and do justice. What we do here is in love and justice

and mercy. These often forgotten people by their own country are not forgotten by God for He has sent us. He has placed them firmly in our hearts and minds, our bodies and our souls to care about and to love, to care for and to plan for their health now and for their future.

We ask God to Breathe His light on us so that we become His shepherds to those who need His care. We are His voice, His hands, His Will in this land.

Let our work continue to be Blessed. Our team be strengthened by its mission power. Our pledge to each other and this work.

In 1st Peter 3 “God asks us to always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks us to give a reason for the Hope that we have. But do this with gentleness and respect.” We wouldn’t be here if we didn’t have Hope that God helps these people through us-that we are sent to make a difference. For some will say why bother and we will say we must go-for it is our calling and we are meant to come.

From the song “People need the Lord”
We are called to share His Light,
To a world where wrong seems right,
What could be too great a cost,
For sharing Life with those who are lost.
Through His love, our hearts can hold
All the grief they bear.
They must feel the words of love,
Only we can share.

People need the Lord
People need the Lord
At the end of their broken dreams,
He’s their open door
People need the Lord

Amen



Raoul taught us “I have the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy Down in My Heart” in Quiche at Wednesday night devotions. Jorge, the innkeeper, is in the background. Jan Andersen is singing and Frank Andersen played guitar.