



## Partners in Health of Maine

*Compañeros en la Salud*

Volunteers sharing the gift of health

September 2016

### Letter from Dr. Robert Bach

*It was a sad return after the passing of the wonderful Dr. Patricia Ballesteros. Her friendship and passion for this foundation will be greatly missed and as so this newsletter is dedicated in her memory.*

The most recent trip in April showed progress in our continuous projects and gave the glimpse of a few new ones. The laparoscopic teaching program flourishes with the help of doctors like Dr. Grant and Dr. Baxt through their continued support and mentorship of Nicaraguan general surgeons Dr. Antonio and Dr. Salas. It's always wonderful to see new relationships grow and was such a pleasure to bring along lead OR tech, Elisabeth Cawley who was instrumental in reorganization of the new supply room.

As a team, we have been working on establishing a hospice program for the hospital and the city. Under the leadership of Alice Ramirez, RN of Puerto Cabezas the program has taken hold and is gaining interest. It has been amazing to witness the incredible dedication Alice has committed to the people of Puerto Cabezas. Our hope is to raise enough money to pay another full time hospice nurse, with only Alice working full time the demand is high. We look forward to our trip in October and many thanks to all of our volunteers.

-Robert Bach, President



Dr. Patricia Ballesteros



Dr. Antonio, Katherine Badger and Elisabeth Cawley

### Volunteer Testimonial

"I had the honor of spending a week in Puerto Cabezas, Nicaragua: working, laughing, and learning alongside Dr. Bach and other Partner in Health of Maine volunteers. Seeing such compassionate healthcare being performed in another country was an inspiring and educational experience. As a student of medicine, and a future healthcare provider these experiences are irreplaceable. I am truly thankful to have been able to be a part of this organization's invaluable impact on the community in Puerto Cabezas."

-Elisabeth Cawley, Volunteer

## Upcoming Projects/Needs

We are excited about the upcoming trips in October/November and wanted to give you a preview into what we would love your help in accomplishing this year through your support and interest.

- Upper Video Endoscope
- Scholarship to train a lab technician to do culture and sensitivities
- Salary to pay a full time palliative/hospice nurse to work both in the hospital and in the community

## Future EMS Collaboration

As talk of the new hospital solidifies, it is with excitement that we dip our toes into the exploration of a new project. Puerto Cabezas, a city of nearly sixty-seven thousand people lacks one of the common services we rely on so heavily here in the United States, Emergency Medical Services. Katherine Badger, a premedical student, began laying the groundwork to team up with the local Nicaraguan fire station to host trainings in basic Emergency Medical Services during our next trip in April. The idea is to make use of the structure that is already present in the fire station, including the 24-hour manned dispatch and build off of it through public outreach and specific medical trainings to support a functioning EMS service in the city. Your donation will help us establish this much needed service for the city. If you have any ambulance supplies or know any paramedics that would be interested, let us know!



Dr. Bach and volunteer Katherine Badger with local fire department

## A Letter From the Vice President



Dr. Baxt with Director Marylou Rodrigez and Dr. Salas

On this past trip, my husband Ernie and I, had the pleasure of working with a new volunteer, Dr. Robert Baxt. Dr. Baxt is a general surgeon who has had extensive experience working in various developing countries. He first came to Puerto Cabezas in November of 2015 as a volunteer on the US Navy Comfort Ship and became interested in the work of Partners in Health of Maine. On this most recent trip he was able to teach laparoscopic surgery to two of the local surgeons with whom he quickly bonded. In addition, he reached out to the community and gave a lecture at the Mayor's office on the care of pressures sores that are common among paralyzed divers. He is looking forward returning in October to continue working with the surgeons.

Ernie has continued to make many improvements in the hospital with his carpentry skills. He has organized a team and built a security hut in addition to his various projects including: building shelves, fixing doors, and many other repairs. I have also agreed to design, teach, and initiate a program that would train personnel in the lab to perform cultures and sensitivities, which would enable physicians to choose the correct antibiotic in the presence of an infection. This would be a huge step in infection control for the hospital and I am very excited to facilitate the growth of this project.

-Jill Grant, Vice President

## HOW TO DONATE

Please send your donation to:

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Please contact Jill Grant ([jgrant6198@aol.com](mailto:jgrant6198@aol.com)) with further interest or questions