



Newsletter dedicated to Dr Sydney Mueller He

Dr Sydney is a Nicaraguan general surgeon who has proven his skills over many years at Hospital Amanacer, the regional hospital in Puerto Cabezas. He received his general surgical training in Cuba and his endoscopy training in Managua. He is known for his personal touch with patients and his caring approach. He has developed an endoscopy service and is very conscientious about taking good care the equipment and keeping the endoscopy room is clean. He has also been able to perform several emergency procedures removing foreign bodies from the esophagus. This has prevented delay in treatment and transfer to Managua.

He is also interested in palliative care for which he is well suited because of his ability to show compassion to is patients. He and his wife have one daughter and are members of the Verbo church



EMS Arrives in Puerto Cabezas - Ambulance Donated

Report by Rob Rose ER Physician who taught a First Responder Course



Today, as much of the world appears glued to watching Harry and Meghan getting hitched without a hitch, my thoughts are of my week in Nicaragua in April. In juxtaposition to the pomp and ceremony filling our TVs are my fond memories of 19 firefighters, 4 Red Cross staff, and 2 disaster preparedness workers living in Puerto Cabezas, gathering in the outdoor fire station garage to learn about becoming emergency medical responders. But let me back up a step.

A number of years ago, while I was the emergency department director in North Conway, NH, Bob Bach, through a mutual friend, invited me to come to Puerto Cabezas to help “spruce up” the emergency department in the new

hospital dedicated to the late Nancy Bach that was fully equipped through Partners in Health of Maine. Having done some work in Honduras and El Salvador, I was interested in Nicaragua, but I could never find the time to accept Bob’s invitation.

Now, recently retired and with time on my hands, I re-contacted Bob last fall to express my continuing interest. He immediately responded and lined me up to come on the team’s April trip – this time to help train pre-hospital emergency responders. PIH of Maine had recently secured and refurbished an ambulance for Puerto Cabezas, a city in eastern Nicaragua of 40-60,000 people. Imagine a city of this size getting its first functioning ambulance!

So, there we were, gathered in the open garage with tables and chairs, a PA system, a white board, a projector all from the PIHOM house and my laptop. We also fortunate to have Dani, a newly-graduated-from-medical-school-in-Managua as a translator - who was terrific, along with periodic logistical, meals and refreshments support from my PIHOM team members – Jill, Ernie and Sarah. (Sarah, our

irrepressible orthopedic physician assistant did some of the orthopedic injury care training.) We covered 39 of the prescribed 56 hours of the course. We hope to finish the remaining 17 hours in November. In my experiences in Central America over the years, I've learned and re-learned the foolishness of just giving stuff away. It breeds inappropriate expectations and dependence – the opposite of what we're shooting for. The needs are so great and so obvious, that it is difficult to stop yourself from gifting. But giving stuff like an ambulance as part of an over-arching community driven, sharing, teaching, resource enhancing, medical community building project makes great sense and has great results. PIHOM is such a program. I, for one, will continue to support it.

Rob Rose, MD

(This project was initiated by Kathleen Badger who made the connection with the Fire Department because of their interest and the fact that they had a dispatcher 24/7 to handle the emergency calls. She is currently a medical student at Tufts medical school.)

Words From Our New President - Jill Grant

Dr Bach stepped down as President because of recent illness. Jill Grant became the new President and is doing an incredible job using her organizational skills combined with her enthusiasm



It has been a busy and productive year with various projects and new volunteers. They have been all energetic, flexible, and kind. Delivering wheel chairs, teaching classes, and assisting in surgery were among their projects. Sheila Townsend traveled with us in November 2017, who is a Medical Technologist from Bangor. Sheila and I took pictures in the open-air markets and stores of all the common foods that helped the students understand more about a healthier diet. We are designing an informative class on diabetic diets to be given to the nurses and doctors.

Ernie and his work crew were busy doing repairs and making beds for handicapped children. The David Fellers Healing Arts Foundation provided the mattresses and lumber. Ernie's crew then delivered the new beds to very happy families. Physical therapists who visit the children in their homes then have an elevated solid place to do their therapy.

In April, Ernie and I traveled with Sarah Warner PA, and Robert Rose MD. It was Dr. Bach's plan to take these new volunteers with him and oversee the EMT class that Dr. Rose was teaching. Due to some

serious health problems Dr. Bach chose me to assume the leadership of Partners in Health as well as organize this project. Sarah and Dr. Rose (Rob) hit the ground ready to work and spent the week teaching the EMT class. Sarah also assisted Dr. Espinoza Dr. Sidney Antonio and Dr Humberto Olayo in the hospital.

The last day of class, we gave out certificates of participation and officially donated the Toyota Land Cruiser Ambulance to the Fire Dept in honor of the late Doctora Patricia who was our medical representative in Nicaragua for many years. . It was a gift that will really make a difference in the community and hospital outreach for the very sick and injured. Rob and Sarah will be long be remembered for their hard work and their kindness



Sarah Warner became a new volunteer in February and embraced the role of a volunteer with unusual enthusiasm .As an orthopedic surgical P.A. she was able to assist Dr Ernesto Espinoza in orthopedic procedures and Dr Sydney in general surgery. She also was able to assist in teaching the first responder course, especially in splinting procedures. She is shown here as a volunteer patient being moved onto a stretcher.

The Moravian Clinic and Outreach Rural Health Delivery Program

By Andra Herriott

In the early 1950's, the Moravian church established a medical clinic in Bilwaskarma, (150 miles northwest of Puerto Cabezas), Nicaragua. In the mid 60's, Dr. Peter Hauptert upgraded this facility to where it became a teaching hospital. Some 20 nurses graduated before the facility was destroyed in the Nicaraguan Civil War. Canadians, based upon a request and search for funds by local leaders, provided financial assistance to re-build the nine bed clinic which has become the mainstay of the current program that continues to receive budget support through the Moravian Church of North America, Partners in Health of Maine, and Wisconsin friends of the Program.



A review of health records in 2005 indicated that the standard of living for the 10 communities (10,696 pop.) served by the clinic had not improved. In 2006 a curative to a preventive health delivery system was instigated using a census based (CBIO) program. Village leaders collect health facts and data that were then brought, formally to each town's attention. Health committees were established and trained to collect and present the findings. This data helped, establish the next year's health priorities for each community. People were taught to identify and understand health issues at the family level making them more responsible for their own health. In 2015-17 no women died in child birth with infant deaths following birth being 7 in 200 births in 2017.

During this period Dr. Bach facilitated the construction of an operating room for non emergency surgery, and Dr. Patricia Ballesteros oversaw the construction of a guest house to be used for seminars and

overnight accommodations for trainees and trainers and visiting doctors. (leaders from villages attending health conference)

A special thanks to Andy Heriot his daughter Jennifer and David Hauptert son of the late Peter Hauptert for sustaining the out reach program through their efforts and financial generosity

Well and Latrine Project

In 2018, the Rotarian Well and Latrine project has provided materials and supervision in three of ten villages along the Rio Coco River included in the project. Steve Johnson from the Bangor Rotary Club and Jill Grant from Partners in Health of Maine have provided local supervision and transportation of materials. This year 30 wells and 75 Latrines were completed. These wells will provide clean water to the people of the villages and will result in a longer life expectancy. Having a well near your home is a life changing event on the Rio Coco.



New Autoclave for Puerto Cabezas

This is a brand new autoclave that we had shipped this year that is now in Puerto Cabezas replacing a non functioning one. This was built by the Chosen Mission Project which designs them especially for mission hospital eliminating sophisticated electronics. They gave Partners in Health of Maine a \$5,000 discount on the autoclave that was worth \$10,000 . This was facilitated by Rick King who is the owner and has traveled to many countries on his own time to assist with installation



Support for Medical Students



Partners in Health has just started supporting Adelante Mujer which provides financial assistance to women who lack the financial means to attend medical school.

After graduation the women will serve in Nicaragua where there is only one doctor for about 3,000 people. Adelante Mujer believes that to educate a woman is to educate a family and a nation.

We have also been supporting individual male students.

The David Fellers Healing Arts Foundation.

This foundation provides wheel chairs, equipment and medicines to handicapped children and adults . Our assistance has been focused on storing and delivering the wheel chairs with follow up visits. Jack and Sally Fellers have inspired us with their dedication to the project in honor of their son.

Volunteering

Do you want an adventure? We are not talking about bungee jumping or sky diving. If you want to add another interest to your life, come with us to Nicaragua. We like to take thoughtful, hard working, flexible people to teach medicine, carpentry, computer, nursing, painting (artistic or walls), and many other things. We like people who want to learn about how other people live and do things. We try to fit our volunteers into a project that they will be both productive and enjoyable. It has always been our tradition that volunteers pay their own way . Travel funds have been often raised through someone's church. If you want to learn more, write an e-mail to Jill Grant, jgrant6198@aol.com.

Goals



- Completion of first responder course
- Continued teaching in laparoscope program
- Construction of Maintenance building \$15000-\$2000
- Purchase of a used Olympus gastroscope for back up \$3,500-\$4,000
- Construction Maternity Ward Extension \$15,000
- Development of a team of hospice volunteers from the community
- Painting and maintenance projects for hospital.

Donations

Any donation will be greatly appreciated.

Please make checks payable to Partners in Health of Maine and send to Jill Grant in the enclosed envelope, or you may visit our web site at PIHOM.COM where you will find a button to pay via Pay Pal.

Our history and mission can be seen on our web site PIHOM.Com. Our current activities can be seen on Face Book under Partners in Health of Maine

A Simple Legacy

*A doctor holding a patients
hand
Not a custom in this treasured
land*

*Before surgery patients lie on their back
often left alone
Staring at the light with no gesture of
empathy shown*

*There was an old surgeon volunteer who
sensed their fear
Often would observe their hiding a
silent tear*

*So he decided to hold their hand and
offer a prayer
And no one ever refused for they welcomed
a sign of care*

*He held a piece of paper with his prayer
written out
In Spanish and Miskito so there was
no doubt*

*"Gracias" or "Tengki poli" so often
heard
While a smile invariably
occurred*

*Then one day someone else was holding
the patient's hand
And the old surgeon could hear rejoicing
from the angel band*

*It was Sydney Antonio Mueller who had
taken his place
Taking the time to provide comfort
with God's grace*

*Thank you Doctor Sydney for your holistic
approach
It has been a privilege to be your teacher
and coach*

with admiration

Robert Bach