

Fall 2005

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## Making a Difference

By Robert Paschall, MD



Eight years ago an HMA team set up a satellite clinic at a school in the village of Bacadia, Honduras during a team mission to La Buena Fe Clinic.

That day Lilian Macias brought her 11 month old daughter Suyapita to the makeshift clinic and asked for help with her child who had not been able to move her legs since birth. It was readily apparent this was a complex case. That night with one of our bilingual nurses we made a house call to Bacadia for a detailed history to be obtained and a thorough physical assessment to be conducted. It turned out the child was born with spina bifida (open spine) and although she had surgery in Honduras to close the defect and to place a shunt from her head to her abdomen the mother hoped that more could be done by health care professionals from the United States.

Suyapita is now 9 years old and has traveled to the U.S. with her mother on 3 occasions to attend the Spina Bifida Clinic at Shriner's Hosp. for Children in St. Louis. These visits have allowed her to avoid some of the complications of spina bifida. At Shriner's she was fitted with custom designed and constructed braces, walker and crutches so now she is able to ambulate upright without assistance. Of course all of this has to be resized as Suyapita grows taller. Some of us had the fortunate experience 2 years ago of seeing Suyapita for the first time assume an upright position and ambulate around the

room, then the house and then up and down a driveway. Although Suyapita cannot negotiate the rough rocky roads in her village she is able to move about her house without having to scoot along on the floor. Think about how it would feel as a 9 year old to have to slide around on the floor to get from one room to another while your siblings and friends walk.

As is common in children with spina bifida, Suyapita has an abnormal curvature of her back (scoliosis) which is progressively worsening and will eventually cause her to have respiratory difficulty as her torso gradually curves to one side decreasing the capacity of her lung to expand. Surgery to straighten her back is tentatively scheduled for Jan. 2006 pending the results of an MRI of her back in Dec.

2005. Suyapita and her mother will be required to stay in the U.S. for six months after the surgery. Although all the care at Shriner's Hospital is free to the patient, two very generous families in St. Louis and Illinois have covered ancillary expenses for visas, passports, exit taxes, food, housing and other unforeseen expenses. Additional donations are welcome!!



Contact Paula at 816-833-1000 ext 2262.

## Ruth Completes Nurses' Village Health Training

For the past year 6 nurses have received formal education from the Berhorst Organization in Chimantanango, Guatemala. In January 2006 Ruth Humbert will begin training them in conducting rural village clinics. The amount of people able to be seen in clinics will multiply by 6 during 2006! Many health professionals, especially those who have traveled to the developing countries, have longed for the day indigenous people are trained to provide basic health care for the local villages. We are seeing that day!

Ruth has been providing village health care for 2 years and her statistics reveal that most of her patients require simple inter-ventions. People pay approximately \$0.62 for Ruth's services and medicines at the clinics. During one month Ruth will dispense or use:

5000	Children's Vitamins
2000	Adult Vitamins
2000	Acetamenophen
2000	Ibuprofen
500	Children's Tylenol
75	pkgs of cough drops
25	bottles of cough syrup
	Ziplock bags for dispensing
AA	batteries for equipment

These nurses will now see and treat patients in other villages that currently do not have access to health professionals. They will also need the same volume of drugs for one month of clinics when they are fully functioning.

In addition, they need some basic equipment:

6	Urine dip stick bottles
6	Glucometers with strips
6	Otosopes (non-electric)
6	Pen lights
5	Reflex hammers
4	Stethoscopes (portable)
4	BP cuffs

Ruth has been spending most of the HMA stipend as well as much of her own money to purchase these medicines and supplies. Ruth would like to remain in Guatemala to continue her work but she requires grants or additional funding sources. To assist Ruth in helping the money stretch further, HMA is accepting donations of equipment and over-the-counter medications. We also need to establish on-going sources. If you have contacts or supplies, please contact Paula at 816-833-1000 ext 2262.

Ruth hopes to secure funding for 5 additional nurses this next year to attend Behrhorst nurse's training.

## **Kristen Batty in Guatemala**

For 4 months in 2006, Kristen Batty, 4<sup>th</sup> year medical student of Michigan State University, will be working with Ruth in Guatemala. Together they will do village health clinics in addition to the village health worker training. Kristen is inter-ested in healthcare in developing nations and with the US underserved population.

## Onil Stove Update

*Forty stoves are being assembled by the residents of Cruz Nueva, Guatemala from funds donated by people wanting to make a difference!*

*Ruth states that the villagers are very appreciative of the support and contributions from the USA to make their stove project a reality. The mayor arranged and the village paid for the supplies to be delivered.*

*Our goal is 50 Onil stoves in 2005!*

*If you would like to be part of this project, contact Paula at 816-833-1000 ext 2262.*

## Health & Spirituality

### Workshop Attendance Growing

Responses were overwhelmingly positive for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Health & Spirituality Workshop held September 16-17, 2005 at the Temple. Keynote speaker and local religious leader, Vern Barnet, was well received and welcomed to return next year as a class presenter. Over 110 participants enjoyed the weekend with 11 skill-building breakout sessions.

Plans are underway for next year's workshop in Independence, Missouri and in Phoenix, Arizona in September 2006. Baltimore, Maryland is also planning a workshop in the spring.

Phoenix Central Congregation will be hosting the Arizona Health & Spirituality Workshop scheduled for September 15-16, 2006. The workshop theme is "Spirituality and Health for Everyone" with Dr. Joy Weydert providing a keynote address on "Pathways to Health". Breakout sessions will include: Movement Prayer, Five Wishes (from Aging With Dignity), Pet Ministry, and Writing the Psalms For Today.

As more details are available they will be printed in the newsletter.

### Do you have extra Frequent Flyer Miles?

Although you can not donate the miles directly, you can purchase an airline ticket and donate it to HMA for Ruth Humbert or another mission volunteer! If you can donate half of the required miles, HMA will match the remainder of funds for Ruth's ticket.

### CONTRIBUTION AND/OR MEMBERSHIP FORM

*Information may be taken over the phone by calling 1-800-825-2806 ext 2262 Mon., Thurs., or Friday*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Level of Membership: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Member (\$25-\$99) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsor (\$100-\$249) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Patron (\$250 & up)

Additional Contributions: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Onil Stoves/ Ruth Humbert support in Guatemala @ \$100 each  
\$ \_\_\_\_\_ General Fund, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Missions Fund, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Chaplain Ministries, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Cong. Health Ministries

Payment Method: \_\_\_\_\_ Check *Please mail to:* Health Ministries Assoc. 1001 W. Walnut Independence, Mo 64050  
\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ MasterCard # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Amt. \_\_\_\_\_

Pledge amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ monthly, \$ \_\_\_\_\_ quarterly. Will make by check \_\_\_\_\_, Make by credit card \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry and Committee interests: \_\_\_\_\_

## UP-COMING EVENTS

OPEN BOARD MEETING - Jan. 22, 2006, 9:00 AM @ Temple Independence, MO

HEALTH MISSION - Jan. 28 - Feb. 5, 2006, Leader- Pamela Stewart, MD [drpes@mac.com](mailto:drpes@mac.com)

HEALTH MISSION - March 2006, Leader- Ron Edwards, MD [ronaldjedwards@cox.net](mailto:ronaldjedwards@cox.net)

OPEN BOARD MEETING - April 23, 2006, 9:00 AM, @ Temple Independence, MO

HEALTH & SPIRITUALITY WORKSHOP - Sept. 15-16, 2006, @ Phoenix, Arizona

HEALTH & SPIRITUALITY WORKSHOP - Sept. 22-23, 2006, Independence, MO

Enclosed in this newsletter is a new *Bulletin Insert* that can be downloaded from the HMA website: [www.Insert.hmaCofChrist.org](http://www.Insert.hmaCofChrist.org).

In the Congregational Health Ministry folder will be Resources and you may choose the insert designed for that month or one of the other pertinent health topics to promote better health of the body, mind, and spirit of your congregation!!