



Dr. John Schacherl and staff, Denise and Amber Jacobson, treat a patient in the dental clinic.



Dr. Rob Bechtel and his five handsome patients with their no-longer-crossed eyes the day after surgery.



David and his parents are very happy with his new prosthetic eye.



Our SRW eye team at PWM in September 2012.

Too Many Crossed Eyes

By Jennifer Mitchell RN

“There is nothing more endearing than a room full of cross-eyed kids.” These were the words spoken to us by Mary Dowling, executive director of Sharing Resources Worldwide, in a meeting to prepare us for our upcoming ophthalmic medical mission trip to La Providencia in Siguatepeque, Honduras. Mary has been working with the people of La Providencia for seven years, bringing down teams of medical personnel that are capable of bringing specific types of medical care to the children of Honduras that they would otherwise not be able to afford or have available to them. Groups of dental, orthopedic and ophthalmic personnel travel down twice a year for at least a week at a time to help improve the specific health needs of the people they see. Specifically, on this trip Mary and a group including one pediatric eye surgeon, two Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists, three operating room nurses, one recovery room nurse and two ophthalmologists would be traveling to Siguatepeque to perform strabismus surgery on children and provide prosthetic eyes to those in need.

In the country of Honduras, there is only one pediatric eye surgeon and the cost of surgery is something that the majority of the population will never be able to afford. Therefore, the chance for a child to travel to Siguatepeque and have surgery during the week that we are there is, for many, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. *Strabismus* is a condition that involves the alignment of the eyes, usually due to a lack of coordination with the extraocular muscles being able to bring the gaze of each eye to the same point in space and preventing normal vision; it causes a “cross-eyed” appearance in the majority of the people afflicted with this condi-

tion. In addition to providing the strabismus surgery, the two certified ophthalmologists that were traveling with the team would be hand-crafting and hand-painting custom prosthetic eyes and scleral shells for the Honduran patients that have lost their eye due to trauma or a type of cancer called retinal blastoma (the treatment of which includes removal of the eyeball). No one in Honduras makes prosthetic eyes. The patients being cared for and treated by the two ophthalmologists have spent the majority of their lives with no eye in their socket, and in rare cases, with no eyes.

We arrived in Honduras Saturday afternoon and were driven two hours up into the mountainous region of the country to Siguatepeque. After getting settled into our hotel and having dinner, sleep was necessary as we prepared for the busy day of interviewing and screening patients to determine their eligibility for surgery and other treatments. That night, gunshots (or fireworks) were heard from directly behind our hotel. We each were warned by many people prior to our trip to Honduras about the level of danger we were putting ourselves in by traveling to one of the most dangerous countries in the world at this point in time, and by flying directly into the city with the highest homicide rate in the world. These gunshots, said to be potential warning shots by the security guards that stood vigil at our hotel or another local business every night, were the only noises of violence heard during the entire trip. Overall, we felt very safe during our entire trip. The La Providencia staff was very aware and willing to educate us about the steps we needed to take to be safe in this country. It became very clear, the paramount need for us all to be aware of our safety, when Mary made the statement that, “if

anything happened to any of us, we would be shut down. We would not be able to come to this country again, ever.”

Sunday was screening day. As we pulled through the gates of La Providencia and saw the swarms of people awaiting our arrival, we knew it was going to be a busy day. For the next 12 hours we screened over 50 surgical candidates and the ophthalmologists saw dozens of patients. The stories of the kids, their families and the amount of time and effort it took them to get there will live with all of us forever. The spirit of these people was something that was ingrained in each of us that day. Their humble ability to get through this trying day with grace and patience was something that touched each and every one of us. Later, as we discussed the characteristics of the people we encountered that day, we all agreed that one would be hard pressed to come across a group of people that would be willing to be so patient and humble in the United States.

One of the stories that really made an impact was that of a *muy guapo* (very handsome) 15-year-old boy that came to see us. He had an extreme case of strabismus in one eye and had been given glasses to help his vision. The prescription in the glasses that he wore on a daily basis were doing absolutely nothing to help his vision, and, regardless of what he had been told, they definitely were not doing anything to straighten out the physical appearance of his eye. He and his mother were told by ophthalmologists in Honduras that nothing more could be done for him, but they took a chance after hearing about our group at La Providencia from people in their community and made the seven-hour trek to Siguatepeque. We were

continued on page 2

Rewards Worth Waiting For

By Mary Dowling

It's always a treat to leave the cold, snowy weather of Wisconsin in January and travel to a much warmer climate, visit with old friends and enjoy the local cuisine. For many of us, this is what winter medical missions to Providence World Ministries (PWM) in Siguatepeque, Honduras, are like.

Many of our committed team members return to work in Siguatepeque each year. Our 2012 team of 18 medical professionals included only four new members. Our team screened 98 children on Sunday, January 27. From Monday through Friday, we operated on 32 children, all of whom did well. Because this is orthopedic surgery, our work is only the beginning, and our patients will have many cast changes after we leave. During the subsequent months, local doctors Bertha Turcios and Silvio Gonzalez willingly bear the increased work load we leave them. Without their skillful follow-up, we would not be able to perform orthopedic surgeries. The work we do is truly a group effort, and it does take a village to help a child! We are so grateful to the PWM staff for their part in the process. PWM also finds volun-

teer translators to assist us during the week as we work with the patients and families. In addition, PWM has the most wonderful cook on staff, and we eat delicious local foods during our visit, enjoying her contributions very much.

The dental team worked a long week as well, treating 93 patients with various dental problems, including one patient with 16 cavities. The dental volunteers are gratified that the education they've offered in past years is starting to pay off, as many of the older children at the PWM school have greatly improved dental hygiene and thus need little care. Dr. Schacherl and his staff work very hard, and their contribution leads to lives greatly improved through dental care. We hope that in 2013 the dental clinic will be completed, with an added chair and more space for storage. That means even more work for the SRW dental team, but they will be equal to it.

You may wonder where our patients come from, and how they hear that an SRW team is in town. Patients come from as far as 10 hours away, as word of our visit is spread through advertisements in newspapers, and on TV and radio. The best advertising is word of mouth,



Maria likes her new casts and the camera.



Look closely and count. She also had extra toes removed from both feet.



Club feet that will be repaired in one three-hour surgery.

continued from page 1

able to get him in for surgery that week, even though there were many surgical patients waiting from the year before. His surgery went very well and he was an extremely pleasant patient in recovery as he quietly sat in bed, covered with a donated handmade quilt and sporting his Wayfarer-style sunglasses from the bag of donated items that each child receives post-operatively. The next day the difference in his appearance was remarkable. His eyes appeared much more straightened in the sockets and he wore a huge smile on his face. As his mother was thanking us over and over again, she had tears streaming down her face and was beaming at her son as though she could see a completely different future for the young man in front of her.

It is amazing to think that when this procedure—so common in the United States—is performed on these young Hondurans, it can potentially allow them a future that is so different from the one they may have without it. Allowing a child the confidence that goes with knowing that they are not being judged by peers, teachers and future employers for looking different is worth the efforts, x 100, made to come down to Honduras for this trip and all the hard work and long hours that are worked during the week that we were there.

Throughout the week, as surgeries were performed and prosthetic eyes were made and reshaped, a common theme of patience, gratitude and humility wove its way into every aspect of the culture and the work we were doing. It was amazing to be able to allow these children a step-up in a life that is already very challenging for so many reasons.

And it is also amazing to take back so many reminders of the many assets that we take advantage of on a daily basis and the rich lives

that we each lead.

During that week, 31 children had eye surgery and 19 new eyes were made.

The week before the eye team was there, the dental team treated 100 patients. Some had as many as 17 cavities to be filled, so treating 100 is only part of the story.

Dental team members were:

John Schacherl DDS
Denise Jacobsen RDH
Dianne Courtney RDH
Amber Jacobsen Dental Assistant

The Ocularists were:

Carrie Messer
Susan Tynes

Medical/surgical team members were:

Mary Dowling RN
Pat White CRNA
Kat Harden CRNA
Robert Bechtel MD
John Alameida RN
Wendy Read RN
Jennifer Mitchell RN
Belinda Smith RN

Biomedical Engineer Extraordinaire:

Gary Haefer (Gary keeps the team and the equipment running smoothly) ●

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Please return this card with your donation to the address above.

For your convenience, SRW can now accept your donation by credit card online. Just go to our website at www.sharingresourcesworldwide.org and donate via credit card on our secure site.

and the best compliment we can receive is when patients themselves refer others to us for treatment.

About 30 of the children our medical team screened last year were kids we had treated in the past who came to show us the outcomes of their treatment. The joy of seeing the results of our efforts is a reward worth waiting for, as children proudly display their new ability to walk, or walk better, and their parents look on with smiles and appreciative laughter.

None of this is possible without support from our friends and those who comprise our teams. Thank you all! No donation or effort is too small, because pooled contributions have the power to change lives and give many children hope for a better future.



Our January 2013 orthopedic team.

Thank you to the following team members!

- Marge Ableggen, RN
- Mary Dowling, RN
- Roxanne Tillema, RN
- Ken Noonan, MD
- Kristan Sodergren, RN/NP
- Elizabeth Shimon, PA
- Toby Haines, RN
- Leslie Hill, Translator
- Nathan Faulker, MD
- Tracy Cotter, MD
- John Schacherl, DDS
- Christine Longoria, PA
- Robert Groshek, MD
- Amber Jacobsen, Dental Assistant
- Denise Jacobsen, RDH
- Tatyana Kudinenk, RDH
- Robert Machotka, RN ●



Look for us on facebook!

MISSION

Through the delivery of excellent health care Sharing Resources Worldwide (SRW) endeavors to improve the quality of life of disadvantaged populations around the world.

VISION

By organizing and supporting medical teams, SRW will provide surgical, medical, dental care, and eye care for disadvantaged people. When possible, SRW will work closely with in-country partners to deliver these kinds of care. SRW will provide on-site medical professionals and institutions with donated supplies and equipment and allow them to consistently offer needed services for their needy populations. SRW's primary concern will be meeting the needs of children 18 years old and younger.

VALUES

SRW's board, director, and medical team members will provide needed care and treatment internationally, while consistently demonstrating the following core values:

- Excellence
- Respect
- Compassion
- Accountability

Meant to Be

by Mary Dowling

It can be a blessing to leave Wisconsin on a cold, gray, bleak "spring" day in April, and deplane in lush, warm, sunny Honduras. This is even more true when everything has come together so perfectly that you know the trip was blessed before it ever started. This was the feeling I had as I traveled with a very gifted medical team to Providence World Ministries (PWM) in Siguatepeque this past month.

Since we began our affiliation with PWM in 2005, Sharing Resources Worldwide has sent several surgical, dental, eyeglass and prosthetic-eye teams. When PWM Medical Director Dr. Bertha Turcios asked if SRW could send a team of pediatricians to screen local children for health issues, I knew exactly who I wanted to invite on SRW's first such mission to Honduras.

Dr. Nike Mourikes is an internal medicine/pediatric specialist who worked in Chicago with HIV patients for several years. She had previously traveled with our teams to Nicaragua for similar missions, and has now relocated from Chicago to Madison. I contacted her and she was interested. Oh... did I mention that she's fluent in Spanish?!

Dr. Otto Aldana, a neonatologist in Miami, had previously traveled to Nicaragua on a pediatric team as well. He too was interested in joining us. Oh... did I mention that he is also fluent in Spanish and was born in Nicaragua?! In addition, he has a niece by marriage, Dr. Lucy Valladares Mejia, a pediatrician from Honduras, who also speaks fluent Spanish, and who wanted to join the team as well!

By this time, I could see that this trip was just meant to be! After much discussion, we found a week that worked for all of us, and on April 7 we traveled to PWM. During our week in Siguatepeque, we screened 180 children and treated many for ear infections, upper respiratory infections, asthma, skin infections, urinary tract infections and other common and uncommon medical issues.

While we were planning our trip, PWM staff had been in touch with local pediatricians, and they had asked if our doctors could prepare some educational seminars for Siguatepeque's doctors, nurses and social workers. Three seminars resulted: Preventing The Transmission of HIV from Mother to Infant; The Advantages of Breastfeeding; and Formulas for Infant Feeding. Our team also visited a local delivery facility for pregnant mothers and the Regional Hospital in Comoyagua near Siguatepeque. It is our hope to offer ongoing assistance and education for pediatricians and the pediatric population in the area.

This was a very productive week and another way for PWM to reach out to local children and



Dr. Otto Aldana exams a patient in the pediatric clinic at PWM.



Registering for the pediatric clinic, Noellia is all eyes.

orphanages with much needed services and networking. Yes, it was certainly meant to be.

Thank you to team members Nike, Otto and Lucy. It was wonderful to see you working with mothers and their families, offering assistance with their children's health issues and showing them compassion and expertise in your teaching. Thank you PWM staff, for your assistance and wonderful hospitality, friendship and warm weather! We will return again soon. ●



Dr. Nike Mourikes gives her presentation on Prevention and Treatment of HIV from Mother to Baby to local medical professionals in Siguatepeque in April 2013.

Coming up for SRW

October 2013—Eye surgery and dental mission to Honduras

January 2014—ocular prosthetics and eyeglass mission to Honduras

February 2014— orthopedic and dental mission to Honduras ●

All donations are tax deductible.

Please make checks payable to:

Sharing Resources Worldwide.

Sharing Resources Worldwide is incorporated in the state of Wisconsin and is a tax exempt charitable 501 (c) (3) organization.

For more information on Sharing Resources Worldwide, check out our Web site at

www.sharingresourcesworldwide.org

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Sharing Resources Worldwide Celebrates 10 Years

by Lisa Imhoff

Our Volunteer Appreciation dinner on October 13, 2012 took a different format this year. Instead of having a program where a volunteer of the year was honored and a speaker described some aspect of SRW's activities, Mary Dowling chose to celebrate these last 10 years by honoring *all* of the volunteers at a celebration at The Westside Club in Madison.

As guests arrived, we looked at several photo collages and I recognized many pictures which have appeared in the newsletter over the years. It was fun to chat with others about when this or that photo was taken, and I was often astonished to realize it was a lot longer ago than I would have guessed!

After dinner, Mary took the stage and gave a summary of SRW's accomplishments and changes. Then she went to every table and asked each of us to describe a memory or tell about

what we do for SRW. Many told about going on missions, and most people have been on several. Most of those stories included something harrowing (but related with much laughter) such as worrying whether the equipment would really arrive on time, or whether the electricity would be finished in the new clinic they'd be working in, but never if there would be enough patients to keep them busy for the week. One table told of collecting donations from Wisconsin businesses, and another table was filled with folks who work in the warehouse and prepare shipments. Apparently only two people who don't have medical training are allowed to go on missions, but their contributions to keeping equipment operating by making or patching something out of nothing are invaluable, and those stories made for some good entertainment. I related that I am the *only* volunteer who can *only* make my contribution (laying out the

newsletter) *only* from my desk.

Everyone told about how long they've been volunteering with SRW, and some people go back a long time with Mary. But other than her three children who were all present, only I and one or two others have a history of volunteering with Mary that predates SRW's formation.

Mary's children finished the evening with a loving tribute to their mother describing a lifetime of dedication to serving the disadvantaged and how deeply happy they could tell that it made her when she did her work for SRW.

And it was then that we all agreed that every volunteer is important in our own way to SRW's success, but Mary Dowling really embodies the heart and soul of SRW. Mary, you have created this organization which allows us all to be bigger people than we ever could have been without you. And for that, we all honor and thank you. ●



Our volunteers at work on an orthopedic mission.



SRW volunteers at work in our warehouse.



Our SRW volunteers making our warehouse space even more economical.

SRW Facts In the First 10 years

Founded in 2002

- SRW shipped medical supplies and equipment to 28 different countries
- 350+ shipments left our docks in the last 10 years
- SRW traveled to five different countries on two continents to do medical missions.
- SRW completed 23 missions since .
- Seven different specialties were

- represented with our missions (orthopedics, ENT, eyes, plastics, ocular plastics, ophthalmologist and dental care)
- Six dental missions have been completed to Honduras where a four-chair dental clinic is fully operational and where we can do the same treatments we do here in Wisconsin!
- We have completed five prosthetic eye (ocularist) missions to Honduras

- SRW completed five eyeglass missions and over 4,245 received services with those missions to Honduras, Nicaragua and Guinea, West Africa.
- More than 1,434 have received direct services by our teams in Honduras alone since 2005
- 127 different volunteer professionals have served on our SRW mission teams
- 53 of those have been on more than

- one mission
- Marge Abegglen has been on 14 missions with SRW and Kathy Sweeney on 10.
- More than 6,000 (primarily children) have received direct services from our teams from Africa to Peru.
- In September 2012, 148 children received services from our dental team, eye surgery team and eye prosthetic

- professionals in a two-week period in Honduras alone, and in January 2013, 32 children had orthopedic surgery and 93 were treated by our dental team.
- We have raised over \$1.4 million in those 10 years and the value of our services donated and supplies delivered and donated is over \$10 million.
- SRW still has no paid staff—everyone is a volunteer. ●

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See more about SRW and make copies of this newsletter at:
<http://www.sharingresourcesworldwide.org>

With Much Gratitude

There are many individuals and companies, both local and from across the U.S., that assist with surgical teams by donating funds and/or supplies. The success of our missions is very dependent on these donors.

We wish to thank them and acknowledge their contributions to our efforts. There are too many to list here...but we thank you all!

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Many more businesses and many individuals

SRW accepts gifts of appreciated stocks and mutual fund shares. Your gift of such qualifies for a tax deduction based on full market value of your stock or mutual fund shares plus you avoid the capital gains tax that would otherwise arise from the sale of stock or mutual fund shares.

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