



Latest News from Hospitalito Atitlán in Guatemala



December 2012

Elena's Story: Healing a Child Thanks to Your Support



Thanks to your support, every day Hospitalito Atitlán heals a sick child, improves the health of an adult, saves a life. There are endless stories about the work we do.

This one is about 22-month-old Elena, who suffered second degree, accidental burns from a boiling pot of corn in the family kitchen. Unfortunately, these types of injuries are common.

The baby screamed - she was burned on her neck and arm, which was red and blistering. Her mother Maria was frightened to tears by her baby's inconsolable pain. Family members helped tear off the baby's clothing, wrap her in a blanket and call a tuk-tuk (local taxi) to bring them to the Hospitalito.

Dr. Andrew Smith was on call. When he recognized the severity of the burns, he recommended that Elena go to a burn center in Guatemala City. But the family refused to leave the town. So, they diligently brought Elena back to Hospitalito Atitlán for daily medical evaluations and painful wound dressings. Maria comforted the child, but each appointment was torturous.

Thanks to Dr. Andy, the Hospitalito staff, and the family's vigilance, there was no infection. Elena has begun physical therapy and her skin is growing back. At this time her neck burn is almost invisible and the other scars should fade with time.

From the Board President

Dear Amigos:

The Asociación K'aslimaál and staff of Hospitalito Atitlán would like to thank all our supporters for their unconditional assistance both moral and financial in helping the Hospitalito achieve its goals for bringing healthcare and hope to our community.

In the 80's, I worked at the old hospital in Panabaj. And when it closed during the war-time, being without a hospital was deeply troubling. In 2004, with the initiative to reopen our abandoned hospital, we were hopeful for our future, and I was ready to help. Friends and I volunteered to paint the roof, interior hallways and whatever was necessary. My youngest son was born in the Hospitalito in 2005, just months before it was destroyed.

Last year when I was asked to serve on the Board, I didn't hesitate. This is our community hospital and we must do everything to see that our neighbours receive the healthcare they deserve. Please know that we are faithfully working to fulfill our mission to provide care to the underprivileged in the region.

As the holiday season approaches, we sincerely hope that you will continue with your support for Hospitalito Atitlán by making a generous donation to help Hospitalito to continue to serve in our community.

Muchas gracias,

Nicolas Sapalú Damián

About Nicolas (Aklax) Sapalú Damián: Best known as Aklax, he represents community members who the hospital serves. He is the helpful minibus driver who greets volunteers at the airport, navigating through crazy Guatemala City traffic with a smile on his face. The Board benefits from his experience as a community leader, past hospital worker, a construction volunteer and a friend of medical volunteers.

Asociación
K'aslimaál
Pro Salud Educación Y Desarrollo

Your donation will help twice as many families thanks to a Challenge Grant from the Samir D. Gergis Charitable Trust!

Amigos Hospitalito Atitlán

AHA is a 501(c)3 organization which supports Hospitalito Atitlán,

Chair & Treasurer Larry Finnegan

Vice Chair - Lyn Dickey

Secretary - Lisa Gatti

Trustee - William Cuneo

Trustee - Rob Meyer, M. D.

Trustee - Brian Strom, M. D.

Asociación K'aslimaál

The Asociación is the Guatemalan legal entity responsible for Hospitalito Atitlán

President - Nicolas Sapalú Damián

Vice President - Francisco Sojuel

Treasurer - David Glanville

Secretary - Lyn Dickey

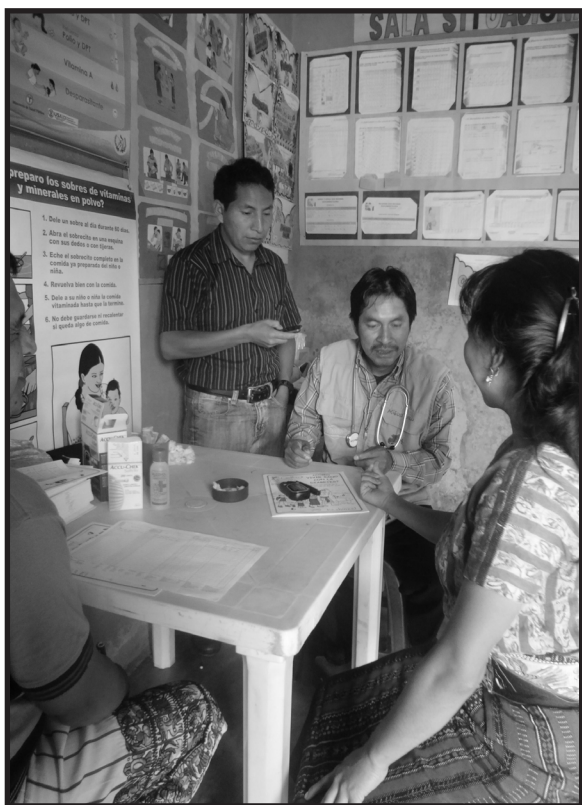
Vocal I - Brent Burket, M. D.

Vocal II - Juan Tziná Sosof

Vocal III - Diego Chichóm Ramirez

New HA Program Improves Diabetes Prevention & Treatment

The numbers of Santiago Atitlán community members with diabetes is increasing, affecting patients and their families.



Program coordinator Victor Ramirez (standing) oversees the education and administration of the Diabetes Clubs.

In July, Hospitalito Atitlán launched Managing Diabetes in Santiago Atitlán, a comprehensive program to improve diabetes prevention and treatment in our community.

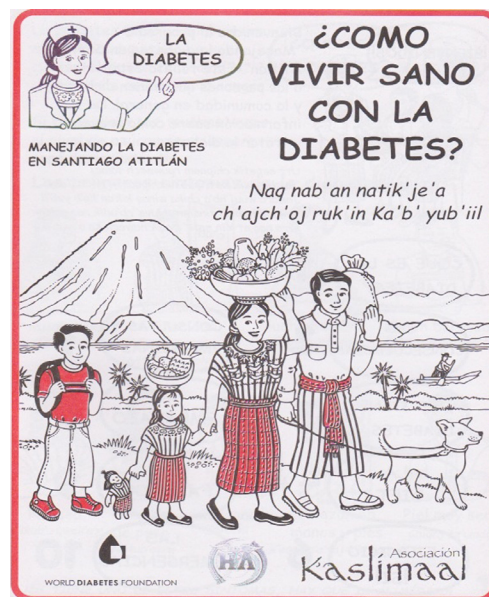
The program, is a three-year initiative underwritten by the World Diabetes Foundation (Denmark) that includes the training of 200 healthcare workers in the Lake Atitlán area.

Weekly diabetes “clubs” have opened in Panul, Pachichaj and Xechivoy in PRODESCA centers (government clinics). The “clubs” provide patients with education, testing and support and will be open through 2015.

On November 14th all local health organizations celebrated “Día Mundial de Diabetes” with a walk, education and testing for diabetes in the park. The event was organized by Hospitalito Atitlán, PRODESCA and the Centro de Salud.

How to Live Healthy with Diabetes

A ten page booklet designed by artist Angelika Bauer is one of the educational tools used in the WDF project. Full of illustrations and text in both Spanish and Tz’utujil the picture manual educates using respect and humor. The booklet is being used in the government clinics and the Hospitalito.



Scholarship Helps Staffer Earn BA in Nursing

Hospitalito Atitlán's hardworking nurses only had auxiliary nursing degree training until November, when Concepcion Damian Ixbalan 'Chonita' received her BA in nursing, surrounded by her proud family.

Chonita has worked at the Hospitalito for six years, showing great dedication towards our patients. Hospital administrators recommended her for a merit scholarship funded by the Share the Dream — part of HA's “Professionalizing Hospitalito Medical Staff” scholarship program.

“It has been difficult finding local healthcare professionals for the Hospitalito who have both a high level of training and speak the local Maya language Tz’utujil,” said Dr. Juan Manuel Chuc Ajanel, MD, Director of Hospitalito Atitlán. “Thanks to Share the Dream's support, we are on the road to helping our staff enhance their skills.”



Chonita Damián with Dr. Chuc

Chonita studied for her degree at the Universidad Rafael Landivar in Escuintla, two hours from Santiago Atitlán, on Fridays and Saturdays for two years; then three days a week. She did her practicum at the Centro de Salud in Santiago Atitlán and her hospital work at the Hospital Regional de Escuintla. “I am so grateful that the Hospitalito and Share the Dream gave me the opportunity to become a professional nurse and serve my people,” Chonita said.

Hospitalito Atitlán hopes to offer two more Share the Dream scholarships in 2013 for the study of X-ray technician and Laboratory.

Previous HA scholarships, funded by individuals and organizations, have gone to train maintenance personnel and for the study of medical equipment repair, all part of making a hospital function.

Since 2005, your support has provided care to 22,000 patients and more than \$250,000 in free or discounted services to the poor.

Guatemalan support for the Hospitalito

Donors and visitors frequently ask about if the Hospitalito receives funding from the Guatemalan government. The answer is no. But, we do have many Guatemalan friends and donors who have supported our work.

Amigos del Lago is an association of businessmen with vacation homes on Lake Atitlán. The group not only supports environmental initiatives on the lake, but also the Hospitalito — donating close to \$75,000 towards the new building. This year, members donated \$22,500 to help cover medical services.

Commercial coffee buyers (coffee is a big industry in the area) provided \$140,000 towards the Hospitalito's construction. Recently, they provided a \$5,000 contribution for our new ambulance.

Patients who can afford to pay for their medical care cover 50 percent of the hospital's operating costs, allowing us to care for their indigent neighbors.

Area churches and the **ex-pat community** have helped raise funds for the Hospitalito at events in Santiago Atitlán and in Panajachel.

Community Outreach

Hospitalito staff, specialists and volunteers will be working monthly at the government health centers in Chacaya and Cerro de Oro. The teams will provide medical consultations and trainings for community healthcare workers.

These “Días de Salud” are funded by the Strachan Family Foundation and the British Embassy in Guatemala.

Educational talks for pregnant women are part of the activities and Vitamin Angels has generously donated prenatal and children's vitamins.

Saluting Dr. Kevin Bjork: HA Supporter & Volunteer Since 2007

Dr. Kevin Bjork, a Stillwater, MN surgeon, has been volunteering in Guatemala since 2001. He learned about Hospitalito Atitlán right after the mudslide destroyed the building. He has been a volunteer and strong supporter of the Hospitalito, along with his congregation at the Trinity Lutheran Church, since 2007.

That year, church members and friends accompanied Dr. Kevin to the Hospitalito, including construction workers (Mano Amiga) led by Tom Theits and nurses (supported by the Lakeview Hospital Foundation). Over the years, congregants helped to raise funds for the new building.

Dr. Kevin, Tom and others were here on the first day of construction in 2008 and pitched in — building the materials storage shed, pulling electrical cable and shoveling gravel, and they returned several times during the project. They also donated needed equipment and supplies.

This January, Dr. Kevin returned for a week of surgeries bringing two anesthesiologists — Jim Turner and Bill Falinski and medical coordinator Dan Cummings. At week's end, they committed to providing a scholarship in medical equipment repair, obtaining improved anesthesia machines, and helping to raise funds for a sorely needed ambulance.

Surgeon
Kevin Bjork
in the
drivers seat
of the new
Hospitalito
ambulance



Their plans became a reality in November:

- Dr. Kevin and his team operated on more than thirty patients using their donated anesthesia machines.
- Mano Amiga workers installed a tile mopboard in the Hospitalito hallway
- Dan Cummings and Kirby Newborg, an ambulance outfitting specialist added lights, a siren and more to the Hospitalito's new Mitsubishi van/ambulance.

Changing Lives: 2012 Volunteer Surgical Teams



Cleft lip and palates: Teams work frequently in Guatemala, but not often enough to meet the need. Smile Network International and Global Smile Foundation have helped to put a smile on the faces of more than 60 patient's at Hospitalito Atitlán in 2012. T.E.S.S. Ultd, organizes patients from around the county for the surgical teams.



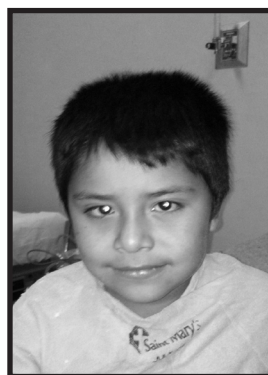
When OB/Gyn Dr. **Bill Chun**, surgeon **Eduardo Menor** and their families arrived in Santiago Atitlán, they didn't go to their vacation rental. Instead they pulled up directly to HA to scrub for an emergency surgery. Sunday morning the Boston surgeons evaluated 40 patients, and then another surprise, a ruptured appendix.

They performed 28 surgeries that week. "I am very impressed with the Hospitalito and the operating room staff. I only had to ask once. I congratulate everyone on a great operation." said Dr. Menor.

Dental Care: These brave little girls from San Antonio Chacaya were at the Hospitalito for dental care provided by a team of pediatric dentists led by Dr. Glen Dean.

Children from the school arrived for treatment and also received a stuffed animal. The older girl Maria had her work done in the chair, but little Chonita will have to wait for the anesthesiologist and the OR because her work will be extensive.

"There is great need. Many of the children were more than two hours in the chair and required up to 15 procedures. They have many abscesses and we worry this may be their only dental visit." said Dr. Dean, whose team also educates about dental hygiene.



Eye Jornadas: Ophthalmologists from the International Eye Institute from Coeur D'Alene, Idaho and Portland, Oregon operated on 42 patients of all ages during two jornadas in 2012. The group was led by Dr. Justin StormoGipson.

Team members Mike Oswald, CRNA and his wife Theresa visited classrooms to find children they could help. Manuel had complained of double vision, and his teacher suggested he should be examined. She said that many families don't understand that some eye conditions can be corrected.

Manuel was scheduled for the second surgery of the morning. He had everyone in pre-op laughing and he climbed onto the operating table with a smile on his face. "He was not afraid. He was simply excited to have his eye corrected", said team member Mike Oswald.

"If Manuel had been the only general anesthetic I had given the entire time while in Guatemala, I would have been satisfied. We can't wait to go back".

Keep up with
Hospitalito
news on the
BLOG and
Facebook.





Education Programs Benefit Area Healthcare Professionals and Patients



Equipment Repair: The Hospitalito hosted a three-day training on medical equipment maintenance and repair for employees of three regional hospitals.

The training was provided by MedShare International. Medshare's Bio-medical engineer Eben Armstrong led the training.



Hospitalito thanks our Rotarian Friends. Please contact us if your Club is interested in helping to provide medical equipment for the Hospitalito.



Maternal & Infant Program: A HA program that supports the regions most vulnerable women and children. For less than a dollar a day, you can help. Check the "donate" page on our website.

Diabetes Training: Santiago Atitlán healthcare workers get training in how to use a glucometer as part of our *Managing Diabetes* program.

Spanish and Cultural Immersion CME at Hospitalito Atitlán

Physicians can improve their medical Spanish and learn more about Maya customs and culture at Hospitalito Atitlán's five day Spanish & Cultural Immersion CME course.

Students must have studied basic Spanish. They will learn to perform a variety of medical tasks in Spanish, as well as learn how to better connect with patients from other cultures.

CME Octubre 2012

"I will be able to take a more comprehensive history from my Spanish speaking patients and I will be able to direct them during a physical exam."

*Erin Gertz, Ob / Gyn
Mount Sinai Hospital, New York, NY*

Visit our website for more information
www.hospitalitoatitlan.org

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Amigos Hospitalito Atitlán
PO Box 256
Jonesport, ME 04649
www.hospitalitoatitlan.org