

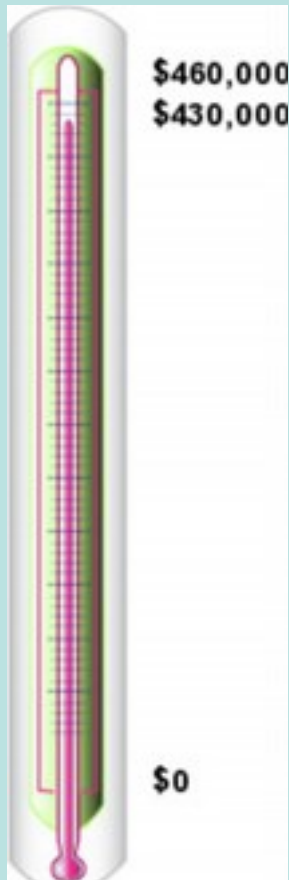


Hospitalito Atitlán

Newsletter December 2009

Phase II Fundraising Progress:

*Upon completion of
Phase II, Hospitalito will
move into its new home!*



**Make Your Gift
Now!**

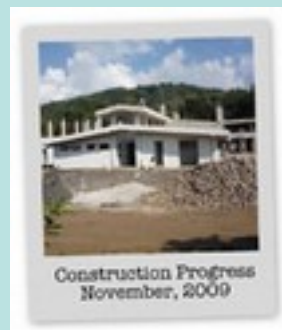
Your Help Can Give Hospitalito a New Home in 2010

Warmest Holiday Greetings from Hospitalito Atitlán?

From the very beginning, Hospitalito has been abundantly blessed with amazing volunteers and generous supporters like you. Thanks to all of you, the long medically underserved and poor indigenous population of Lake Atitlán now has access to 24-hour emergency care. This year, almost 900 patients each month are receiving excellent medical treatment from volunteer doctors and Guatemalan staff, physicians and nurses. For the hard-working Mayan people we serve, this is a dream come true. And you have helped make it possible.

As you know, Hospitalito moved temporarily into a former backpackers' hostel after devastating mudslides buried it and the town of Panabaj following Hurricane Stan. That was four years ago, and almost immediately, dedicated staff and volunteers began to plan for a new home.

Happily, that home is now much closer to becoming a reality.



Groundbreaking for a new \$1.5 million Hospitalito took place on November 10, 2008. The new building was designed pro bono by prominent architect, David Schele, of Austin, Texas. Hospital construction has been divided into three phases. Phase I created the foundation and basic structures; Phase II builds the first level, with essential medical and surgical areas; Phase III consists of additional surgical suites and amenities. To date, Phase I has been completed, and when Phase II is

completed, anticipated to be early Summer, 2010, Hospitalito will be able to move into a fully-equipped facility with double its current space. Phase III will progress as funds are available. Please visit our website for more details: www.hospitalitoatitlan.org

Your gift to
**Hospitalito
Operations**
helps ensure that we

We have made much progress since the campaign, "Give New Life to Hospitalito," was launched a year ago. I am happy to report that to date, \$1,060,000 has been raised. The Kendeda Fund, whose donor is a North

can continue giving excellent care at a discounted rate to those in need.

For Operations:

Your gift to Hospitalito Construction

will ensure that the communities around Lake Atitlan have a hospital to visit for years to come. And even better, your gift will be doubled by the Kendeda Fund!

For Construction:

Donate by mail:
Amigos Hospitalito
Atitlán
425 NW 10th Ave.,
Suite 305
Portland, OR 97209
Phone: (503) 595-0553
Fax: (503) 905-0509

American woman philanthropist, has made a huge difference to our efforts by committing to a challenge grant that matches dollar for dollar every donation up to \$750,000. As of now, we have claimed \$347,000 of that challenge. To complete Phase II, we need to raise \$30,000 more, which Kendeda will match with another \$30,000. This will allow us to move Hospitalito out of the backpackers hostel and into its new home.

On behalf of the indigenous people of Lake Atitlán, I ask for your help. Every donation and pledge to construction, no matter how large or small, will be doubled by the Kendeda Fund. Hospitalito also needs financial support for its day-to-day operations expenses. Providing quality medical care is our first priority. Please go to www.hospitalitoatitlan.org for instructions on giving. And please, be as generous as you possibly can.

With warmest wishes and deep gratitude,
Bonnie O'Neill
Chair, Amigos Hospitalito Atitlán

P.S. Your gift, whether to construction or operations, will make a huge and lasting difference in the lives of the poor of Lake Atitlán, Guatemala, for generations to come.

P.S. Can you make your gift today? Click here to [donate](#) online, either to our operations fund or to construction!

The Knaus Family Vacation



My name is Gary Knaus. I am a 60-year-old Family Practice physician practicing for 33 years in a small town in the mountains of Colorado. My son Chad is finishing his Family Practice residency, and in September of 2008 he brought up the possibility of spending a "rural month" in Guatemala at a small clinic he had found on the Internet. This seemed like an intriguing opportunity and adventure for the two of us. He, however, had in mind taking our entire family. The experience expanded to the inclusion of my wife and daughter, his wife, and three young children, ages 2, 6 and 8, his mother-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law and aunt. "It wasn't a surprise to us that everyone wanted to come. Of course, with that many people there and living together in fairly close quarters there were negotiations and conflicts. However, it all worked out fine as we all assumed it would," says Gary's wife Jill Knaus.

Guatemala City turned out to be very accessible from the United States, and our three and one-half hour drive from Santiago through dramatic mountains and canyons, ubiquitous garden and farming plots everywhere, and small diverse villages was a cultural treat, topped by the view of Lago de Atitlán, the volcanoes, and Santiago. We were able to secure lodging and delicious dining for the month at La Posada de Santiago. This provided very comfortable and safe accommodations. The community at La Posada made us feel very included in their daily routines. Our days quickly developed into new routines.

Chad and I fell right into the every fifth night 24-hour shift at the Hospitalito, covering the emergency room and inpatient facility, and on the other days when not immediately post-call, seeing patients in La Clinica. Each morning started with a morning meeting to review the care rendered at El Hospitalito over the 24 hours, discussing interesting cases, signing off on hospital patients, and reviewing various Hospitalito procedures.

Our medical experience was very broad, including a number of things that we see commonly in our practice settings in the States, including diabetes, COPD, hypertension, anxiety, debilidad (depression), and various injuries. Unfortunately, because of water and sanitary situations, Santiago has a very large number of people with gastrointestinal diseases, including parasites, infections, and somewhat unusual problems. We saw multiple children and adults with asthma and respiratory problems related to the open fires for cooking in the community. We saw some trauma. We saw a number of more unusual problems that I have not probably seen for twenty years in the United States, including TB, gastric obstruction, Reyes syndrome, and mumps.

We became comfortable journeying into Santiago, with daily forays to the market for food, and multiple trips to the small towns around the lake. Each of these towns has a different culture, traditional dress, and character. Our family was able to immerse itself into the culture and was fascinated to learn of the history and culture of the area. The scenery is spectacular. The textiles and art are dramatic, and the people beautiful, warm and gracious.

“The 8 and 6 year old took Spanish lessons in Santiago and loved that. The time there has made an impact on their lives in that they talk about their experiences there and about the people they saw and the things they observed. The two older grandkids kept journals about their experiences and how these experiences made them feel. There was NOT one word of complaint in the month we were there that there was nothing to do or that anything was bad. They just went with the flow and loved seeing all the things that are so different from things in their lives, “ said Jill Knaus.

For the benefit of other future volunteers, it is a close call, day to day, as to who is being helped more -- us as volunteers in the experience that we have, or the work we are doing to help the patients in Santiago. It is very satisfying to develop and reinforce clinical acumen without a lot of support from lab and imaging. The difference of routines from our usual life was a welcome and enlightening change.

The challenge of language, with much translation being from Tz'utujil to Spanish, is a mental stress, but an enriching part of the experience. While we saw a broad expanse of medical problems, some of them foreign to us, I was struck that there is a narrow and universal range of human fears, desires, needs, and feelings that accompany these medical problems.

Finally, it must be said that I was impressed every day by the work of the staff and physicians of the Hospitalito. Given their history and makeshift facilities, the level, quality and modernity of health care that is offered and

practiced is amazing. The medical care that the people of Santiago are receiving is truly first-rate. The leadership of Dr. Juan Manuel Chuc is reflected at every level of the staff. This group of young people is professional in every way, committed to what they do, and committed to the care of the community. This level of commitment is apparent across the spectrum from the support staff at every level to the nurses to the physicians. This has been experience that we won't forget and that we hope to repeat.

From the Director - Dr. Chuc



The year is coming to a close, and our dream of a new hospital is drawing ever closer to reality. We began dreaming four years ago, when mudslides caused by tropical storm Stan buried the old hospital. Every day we witness Santiago Atitlán's need for our medical services. Our patient numbers increase ten percent annually, our Mother/ Infant Health program has grown from 44 to 63 children. East Salem Rotary Club, District 5100, wrote a Rotary International Grant and thanks to it HA recently received a diesel power generator, a copy machine, computers, an anesthesia machine and other medical equipment - a true testament to the confidence in the hospital and its board of directors, Asociaci? K'aslimaal. **Thanks to all volunteers, medical and administrative**, for keeping this great work alive.

Dr. Dean - A Promise Kept

Dr. Glen Dean, a dentist in Grand Junction, CO, is living a dream and completing a good promise to himself made forty years ago.

"I served a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints in Guatemala and El Salvador in 1966-68. I vowed that one day I would return to help the people. Now is the time to make good on my vow," said Dr. Dean.



After the mudslide in October 2005, Dr. Dean worked in Chiquimula and in Xela (Quetzaltenango), where he maintains a portable three-chair dental clinic in an orphanage. Dr. Dean first visited Hospitalito Atitlán in August 2005, with his two nephews. Together they set up a onechair dental clinic. He returned earlier this year to see how things were going with the new Hospitalito. Looking at the architectural plans, Dr. Dean saw the perfect opportunity to help - a dental clinic in the new hospital. When he learned that he could pledge his donation over up to three years, and that the Kendeda Fund would match his full pledge immediately, Dr. Dean signed up on the spot! He filled out his pledge card, announcing his commitment to donate \$1000 a month for 25 months. The Kendeda Fund immediately matched Dr. Dean's full \$25,000 pledge! It was that simple. Dr. Dean brought two groups to Hospitalito this summer. They were happy to share his dream and discover

his life's passion - Guatemala.

Andrea's Second Chance



Visitors to Andrea Tzina Pop's household used to cover their noses to avoid the smell of urine. This was always extremely embarrassing for Andrea, as she knew the source of the odor all too well – it came from her.

For seven years Andrea suffered from incontinence due to a common problem in the developing world - a fistula. Fistulas can happen due to complications in giving birth. The results of fistula, namely, incontinence, can be devastating for a woman, and is sadly common in communities that lack the type of maternal health care that Hospitalito Atilán is now able to provide.

Andrea is used to hardship. She is a mother of two, and has been the breadwinner of the family since her boys were small. Her husband was killed 22 years ago during the civil war. Andrea's fistula, however, caused her more constant pain and embarrassment than any of her other burdens. The smell of urine was her steady companion. She had lost her lust for life.

In April, Andrea contacted Hospitalito Atilán and spoke with an OB/Gyn volunteer, visiting from Spain, who suggested surgery to the repair the fistula. The treatment for her condition is a relatively simple surgery with a 90% success rate. Still, Andrea hesitated, worried about the cost. The hospital's social workers met with her, and based on Andrea's finances, were able to discount the surgery to a fee she could afford.

That very month, Andrea moved ahead with the procedure. Everything went according to plans – the surgery was a success, and Andrea recovered without any complications. Seven years of suffering came to an end.

These days, Andrea enjoys going to town and sitting down to do traditional back-strap weaving in a home that smells clean. "I thank God and the hospital for giving me a normal life. I once again feel tranquil and am happy to be alive," said Andrea Tzina Pop.

Hospitalito in the U.S.A.!

Hospitalito Atilán's medical director Dr. Juan Manuel Chuc made his first trip to the United States in September. He and Lyn Dickey, treasurer of the board, were invited to the University of Pennsylvania for speaking engagements and a fundraising event at the home of Amigos Hospitalito Atilán board member, Dr. Brian Strom. It was an eye opening experience and an opportunity to visit first world hospital facilities. Thanks to our friends at U Penn for their generosity and wonderful hospitality.





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