

Mother Lode Chapter

Clinic Report - March 2018

Primary Care Clinic

In preparing for our March trip to San Quintin our weather was literally changing from moment to moment over the week just prior to our Friday liftoff. But on Friday morning, we were ahead of the system coming in and it was blue skies and scattered clouds, just beautiful.

Chris Nelson took off from Placerville with passenger **Dianne VanOrder**, to Lincoln Airport 10 minutes away to pick up dentist **Paul Densler** and Physician's Assistant **Gordon Worley**. **Doug Wirzberger** flew from Stockton with **RJ Dlugopolski** to Sacramento Executive Airport to pick up **Dr. Bob Haining** and **Pam Polk, RN**. We had tail winds a good part of the way, and expected weather problems in southern California never materialized. Dr. Haining and Gordon Worley spent most of the day extremely busy seeing patients. In fact, we didn't finish the medical clinic until after 5:30pm (the latest I have ever been there that late). We saw many of the same things we usually see, but a lot of pediatric colds and coughs; multiple dermatology problems, along with some of our usual chronically ill patients. One of Dr. Haining's patients was a woman who had been severely burned as a child (mostly around the face

and neck) and she was seeking a referral to a plastic surgeon. A sister Flying Samaritan chapter flies to Baja the third weekend of each month to do surgery at Buen Pastor Hospital in San Quintin. Each month they supply surgeons from orthopedics, urology, OB/Gyn, ENT, and General surgery on a rotating basis to do surgery on patients that we refer for further treatment. There are also other medical professionals who are with Mexican Medical Missions and Christian Medical Missions who go to Buen Pastor Hospital to perform treatment and surgeries.



Dianne VanOrder with Oliver, a returning local patient

The medical staff had the opportunity to visit the manager and physician who run the medical clinic at the Los Pinos housing facility El Vergal. The housing facility has approximately 1000 people who live there and work at the greenhouses at Los Pinos, of course, many women and children are a part of this community. We were seeking to assist this medical facility with what-ever we could share of our supplies and equipment. **Dr. Mary Paz Alvarez** provided me with a wish-list of items that she thought would make her clinic more able to deal with the patients that she

sees. She has a very basic medical facility. The housing community includes a church, day care centers, two urgent care medical facilities, and a school and housing.

We saw 87 patients in our medical clinic, had some pizza for lunch, and left the clinic at 6:05 pm. It was a very satisfying clinic overall. The additional exam room has been completed except for paint which will be done before the April Clinic. We are also planning on a remodel of the reception area for medical to give the intake person more privacy when she interviews new patients, that construction should be completed before the April clinic.

We ate dinner at a new restaurant Saturday night, recommended by our volunteers from San Diego, **Rick and Margie Wilson**, great food, great entertainment. After watching the weather reports for our flight north, we took off at 8:30am into blue skies and scattered clouds, but a smooth flight home. Now to get ready for the upcoming April clinic.

Dianne VanOrder, RN

Thanks to our Sponsors!

A SPECIAL THANKS to some of our many important program sponsors without whom The Flying Samaritans could not make the significant humanitarian impact delivered to those in need. Both monetary and non are essential to the operation of our clinic.

- Celeste Roseberry-Mckibbin with "Love, Talk, Read" generously donates children's books for each of the backpacks.
- Soroptimist International: Placerville, Cameron Park and Folsom
- Rotary Club International: Folsom; Folsom Lake; Placerville; Arden-Arcade; Pocket-Greenhaven; Loomis; Roseville-Sunrise; Orangevale, East Sacramento
- Rotary Interact Clubs; Casa Robles High School; Oak Ridge High School
- Ann Hively
- Lions Club International; Folsom Lake; Placerville; Embarcadero; Sacramento Senator
- Cris Gerard
- Dee Farmer
- Dr Bob Haining
- Dr Nancy Archibald and her Dental Team
- Folsom Project For The Visually Impaired; Don Ring
- Sister team, Dianne Vanorder and Margaret Sanderson
- Restoring Vision
- SOLO Eyewear
- Vitamin Angels
- SHARE Institute; Dr. Soheir Stolba
- Jack Olson; Folsom Lake Bank
- Tanya Moran
- Marlyn Pino-Jones
- Bank Of America Retiree Group
- Folsom Prison "Hooks And Needles"
- Placer County Corrections, Women's Division
- Sharron Flynn and neighbors
- Rolling Hills Church
- Brenda and Sterling Daley
- Cheri Throckmorton
- Trish McCum, American Sewing Guild
- German Club of Stockton
- Debi Amaral/VSP
- Maria Boyd
- Barsotti Family/Fran Ward
- Barbara Goyette
- Karin Aguilar
- Fiber Fanatics Knitting Group
- Lofti Lou Knitting Groups
- Joyce Hansen
- Elena Munoz-Plaza
- Lena Miguelgorry
- Eloisa Ciancaglini, RN
- David Herrmann
- Theresa Dao-Makiyama
- Todd Makiyama
- Alexandra Hansen
- Patricia A. Nelson
- Brian Claassen
- Dr John Demshar
- Lonnie Davis/Hope Haven West
- Anthony Pineiro and Wife
- Anu Rau M.D.
- Renfro's Bridal Shop
- Falco Family Foundation



An additional THANKS from the children, women, and men in rural Baja for all of your thoughtful humanitarian contributions!!!

Backpacks for Baja

March's Clinic celebrated reaching over 3,200 "Backpacks For Baja" distributed to those in need since the program began in 2014!!!



Chris, with the assistance of several local volunteers, distributed over 40 special backpacks to children attending the clinic. Each backpack included a special gift, sunglasses, important sundries such as tooth brushes and toothpaste as well as school supplies and a first aid kit. In addition each backpack includes a book donated by **Celeste Roseberry-McKibbin** of "Love Talk Read". Women attending the clinic also received handmade handbags that include personal care items, sunglasses, and a special gift.

A special thanks to **Ynez**, her Mom **Laura** and **Cinthia**, who are all local volunteers. They not only volunteer with Optical needs but made backpacks and assist with distribution of give a ways!!!

Volunteers also distributed many donated items and sundries such as toothpaste, soap, shampoo and lotions. In addition there were special handmade dresses that were made and/or acquired in support of the "**Dress A Girl Around The World**" initiative. This

initiative is designed to provide at least one nice dress to as many young girls as possible to build Dignity, Health, Joy and Love. Each dress was personally fitted to a happy recipient. The **Rolling Hills Church** sewing team also contributed handmade children's dresses, dolls and other children's items which were greatly appreciated!!!

There was also a distribution of hundreds of men, women and children's clothing items which were greatly appreciated by the thankful recipients.

With the weather being cool we also gave out a large supply of handmade hats and scarf's as well as socks. These items were all made by the "**Hooks and Needles**" team of men at Folsom Prison. This team also contributes handmade stuffed toys and other impactful items each month. The items were greatly appreciated by all and the recipients asked that their thanks be passed along!!!

Linda Nelson makes many of the backpacks/handbags and manages the coordination of the items that go into them as well as putting them together and ensuring they are ready for transportation/distribution. Thanks for your caring and thoughtful efforts!!!

Cheri Throckmorton along with help from members of The Rolling Hills Church, once again, contributed handmade backpacks and other meaningful and much needed items. THANKS!!!

Great teamwork takes place every month in helping make this impactful initiative happen!!!!

A special thanks from the women and children in Baja for everyone's humanitarian contributions!!!



Optical Clinic

A new record of over 115 exams given to patients in one day!!! 97 exams before noon!!!



The newly renovated optical clinic is serving patients at an exponential rate

Jesus and a friend, **Victoria** as well as **Candy Castro**, a local student and the daughter of one of our long time volunteers, gave oversight to the distribution of children's and adult sunglasses.

We had a pre exam and initial patient intake forms completed by **Judy** and other local volunteers including **Melanie** the daughter of long time volunteer **Imelda**. We continue to train/utilize everyone that was capable to ensure timely service for those in need.

The total number of patients seen was well over 200 with over 115 exams using the Auto Refractor and/or Spot Vision. In addition we gave out 27 pairs of readers and 2 pairs of glasses ordered from months prior. We also distributed approximately 220 pairs of sunglasses not including those that were in the Backpacks given to women and children. The children's sunglasses were a big hit as many of the recipients had never had the opportunity to own a pair in the past and the styles were current and "cool" with themes that they could relate to such as Spiderman, Batman and Ninja Turtles for the boys. The children's sunglasses as well as some of the readers distributed were provided by the **Restoring Vision** organization as well as the **Lions Club**...Thanks!!!

The service was efficient and the success rate of fitting was excellent due to the efforts/diligence of the entire team!!!

A special thanks to **Don Ring** of the **Lions Club** and **Folsom Lake Lions** for providing the prescription glasses and sunglasses. Also the generous donation by **Solo Eyewear** and **Restoring Vision** of reading glasses and children's glasses was appreciated by the thankful recipients.

We also received a donation from **Chris Morris** with **VSP** of 100 pairs of high end sunglasses that were a huge hit particularly with the Women who appreciate the styles and quality that we would not normally be able to provide!!!

Another special THANKS to **Jim McKay** and the **Central Valley Chapter of the Flying Samaritans**. They helped us with the funding to purchase a much needed Lensometer and also loaned us a Spot Vision set of evaluation equipment. **Dr John Demshar** also made the generous donation of a Slit Lamp. The new equipment greatly improved our ability to accurately and quickly evaluate patients and help them with the appropriate optical solution.

MANY THANKS to everyone that made this clinic an impactful humanitarian effort!!!

Chris

Over 99% of the patients needing glasses were fitted on the spot this month thanks to a new work flow instituted by **Margie Wilson** as well as the diligence and training of the entire team!!!

Historically, we have been able to fit about 94 percent of the patients with glasses on the day of the clinic and we then order the remainder online for delivery by one of the pilots the following month. Thanks to the knowledge and patience of **Margie Wilson, R.J. Dlugoplski, Ruthan Smith** and **Doug Wirzberger** in the fitting/evaluation area nearly all patients needing prescription glasses were fitted on the spot!!! This is very significant in our effort to assist those in need of vision care on the day they are evaluated. The patient that we could not fit the day of the clinic will have their glasses ordered for pick up in April.

This was a team effort with **Joe Zachwieja**, interpreting and assisting with training and utilizing the new Spot Vision equipment in the initial evaluation. **Ynez** and **Cinthia**, both local volunteers, took responsibility for some of the Auto Refractor exams and **Judy**, another long time local volunteer managed the intake of new patients and assisted with exams as well as provided knowledgeable assistance to all. **Judy's** son

Optical Clinic

Optical Team Member Going The Extra Mile For Vision

Last January clinic we had Karina, a young mother, who came in with very high minus glasses (-18) that were being held together with Crazy glue. We tried to find her glasses but nothing came close. Using the trial lenses I tested the auto-refraction which did not seem to help at all. I knew Jenny Amaraneni of Solo Optical was going to have an optometrist at a clinic she was arranging at an orphanage in Tijuana later that month so I asked Jenny if the doctor could see her. We arranged for Karina to be seen there.

Karina went and the optometrist found a prescription that helped her and glasses were ordered. During the last couple of months, I have gotten to know Karina and her family through Facebook and we communicated with Messenger. She mentioned her daughter, age 8, could really use some clothes and sent pictures of herself volunteering in the kitchen at a local school.

I brought the glasses to our March clinic and dispensed them to Karina along with several large boxes of clothes for her daughter and her. Karina was so happy, she brought 2 long-stemmed roses to the clinic, one for me and one for Jenny!

I am the oldest of seven girls and used clothes for me as I was growing up was always the greatest gift. So happy I am able to give back!

Margie Wilson



Karina at work with her new glasses



Karina and her daughter

A Fresh Perspective...

This month, our first "Fresh Perspective" piece comes from
RJ Dlugopolski



RJ Dlugopolski working in the optical clinic

A Journey to Kindness

I'll be the first to admit that I was a bit skeptical of the whole outing when my buddy Doug suggested I join him with the Flying Samaritans to help at the San Quintin, Baja California clinic. Fly 5 hrs in a prop plane? Mexico, is it safe? What can I do to help, I'm a chemical engineer, not a doctor? Well, after my nerves settled very quickly in Doug's plane I realized the greater good of this "mission" far outweighed any worries I may have had. The trip down was remarkable, with great company of Dr. Bob and Pam. Doug was an expert pilot and very safety conscious the entire trip. As soon as we arrived in San Quintin I could see that this was a special place with a community that deeply appreciated anything and everything we could provide.

Our crew of 13 from the Mother Lode Chapter of the Samaritans was composed of doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, dentists, and folks just like me that wanted to help. Everyone welcomed me onto the team was extremely supportive, thank you! At opening of the clinic, the lines of San Quintin residents and nearby areas were large. I was quickly assigned to the optical dispensing area and with the help and patience of Margie and Ruth-Anne, I came up to speed on some important questions to ask the patients in Spanish. ¿Que linea esta clara? (What line is clear?) ...when looking at the various eye charts we were equipped with. Rusty Spanish and all, I managed to assist quite a few folks with either readers or close matches of prescription glasses. The line was out the door and kept us very busy all day. According to Margie, we broke a new clinic record of >110 patients that day. WOW!! And the biggest reward of all was seeing one of my happy customers outside the clinic wearing their new glasses and needle-pointing with a smile of thanks on her face.

It was also clear that the impact of the Flying Samaritans was recognized and appreciated when the owner of our new favorite restaurant, Eucalyptus, made a special point of thanking all the volunteers and showing his sincere appreciation from the entire community. What a fantastic experience, Samaritans, and I look forward to coming back on future clinics to support your incredible acts of kindness and generosity!

RJ Dlugopolski

A Fresh Perspective...

This month, our second "Fresh Perspective" piece comes from **Ruthan Smith**



Ruthan Smith conducting a vision test with a patient

Perspective from a "Newbie"

In the fall of 2017 my niece asked if I would be interested in traveling to San Quintin, Baja and being involved with the Los Pinos Clinic? I have volunteered in many organizations but none similar to the Flying Samaritans. I do not have a clinical background but have been in healthcare for over 30 years, but healthcare administration. I really didn't think there were going to be claims or electronic medical records questions but I know my niece and knew that I was in for an adventure.

Long day of traveling from San Diego, but we did have great street tacos in Ensenada and arrived at a nice beach front hotel, I thought to myself "okay, I can do this" As we joined the Mother Lode crowd I was impressed by the focus and organization. Each knew the role they were going to play and if not (like moi!) we were willing to learn on the job. Everyone had a place and what was even better, the veterans took pity on me and began coaching.

My assignment was optometry, so I was with Joseph, Andrea and Margie. Judy was my "go to", translating for me and Andrea did not laugh outright when I pulled out my index cards with the phrases I thought I would be using.

Our first session we saw 88 patients and this past session, in March, 110. So, I smiled, gestured and just focused on trying to find the best glasses for our patients. When the prescription worked and improved their vision I did want to clap and do a small cheer.... The patients were patient and when I discovered how far some of them traveled my admiration grew.

I worked hard both sessions and at the March session was brave enough to decide on my own whether the fit was going to work. Thank heavens, I didn't have to run to Margie on every fitting. The most important thing I have taken from the clinic was that parents want the same thing for their families.... We are no different in my community of Riverside than a parent in San Quintin. I'm not going to discount the great margaritas or street tacos but I know my true reward is the feeling of having done something, in my limited way, to make someone's life better.

-Ruthan Smith

Dental Report

Our first patient of the day requested all his lower teeth out so he could have dentures made in the future. That was around 9 teeth and he was happy to have this behind him and plan for his future replacement teeth. The most difficult patient of the day was a 3 year old boy with baby bottle tooth decay. His upper anterior incisors were completely 'bombed out' and needed to be extracted. Mom mentioned that he had been hurting when eating for about a month. It took 2 assistants and his mom to assist and restrain him to accomplish these extractions. It was rather heartbreaking

and Mom was pretty shook up, as well as our first time dental assistant **Andrea Powell**. She hung in there though performing her chair side duties without hesitation although she later mentioned to me just felt like crying for the little guy. In the end he will now be better off. His older sister had the same procedure done when she was 3, so hopefully his parents now appreciate the need to restrict the bottle during nap and bedtime.



A few 3rd molar (wisdom tooth) extractions were performed and even a few fillings at the end of the day. All-in-all it was a good dental clinic and I was grateful to have the great help of Andrea and **Minerva** throughout the day. 24 patients and 34 extractions were performed to conclude another successful clinic.

-Paul Denzler, DDS

Paul Denzler, Minerva, and Andrea Powell hard at work in the busy dental clinic



Expanding Optical Services

"Hecho Por Amigos Para Amigos - Enero 2018"

Thanks again to the Rodriguez family, we have expanded our clinic floor space by taking over the space adjacent to the dental clinic where Valentin used to live. We are in the process of finishing the refurbishing of the space, and will make an announcement once the renovations are totally complete. We are getting very close!!! With our ever expanding array of services and growing needs of clients, every bit of space is needed!

The space is now our new Optical Clinic which will allow us to better serve a greater number of optical patients as well as free up much needed space where Optical was located. This frees up much needed space for the Medical team to expand and add an additional patient room.

The project has taken a number of months so far and is planned to be a collaborative effort including members of the **Flying Samaritans**, the **East Sacramento Rotary** (who have assisted significantly in the past with premises and other challenging issues) as well as other participants as needed. **Victor Castro**, a local volunteer and "jack of all trades" has made a significant contribution using his cabinetry and carpenter skills.

In March, with a significant amount of clean up and construction completed, including the removal of a wall as well as electrical upgrades, the new space was used for the second time by the optical team. There is still work and refinements to be completed but the clinic ran smoothly and with greater efficiency due to the added space that allowed for workflow enhancements.

A special thanks to everyone who has assisted with this project. In particular **Rick Wilson** the project leader and **Margie Wilson** who did everything from painting to assisting with the massive cleanup efforts as well as designing signage and creative wall decorations.

Rick Wilson, worked tirelessly all weekend on the electrical upgrades necessary to operate efficiently as well as other important repairs.



Thanks!!!! It would not have happened without the great teamwork!!!!

A Special Thanks...

Special thanks to **Richard Lenyk** for his help over the past few months with the expansion of the Optical clinic into the new area. And we arrived at the March clinic to find that Richard had finished the construction on the 4th exam room in the Medical clinic. Richard does great work, and we thank him for offering his expertise to help us serve our patients.



Richard Lenyk has worked for months on the renovation of the old and new optical clinic

Del Presidente

Despite having to leave some volunteers behind because of a cancellation of an airplane due to a mechanical issue at the last moment, we were still able to provide great service to our clients. Let's face it - our volunteers are rock stars. Each of you gives to the team effort in a special way, and each of you (hopefully) gets back a sense of satisfaction that keeps you hooked on the Flying Sams clinic experience. It's really a great sign that we have so many long-standing volunteers. When I first considered joining the Sams, I searched for videos on YouTube that would help me to get a better idea of what the clinic experience would be like. My search revealed a video by the YouTube user NicaBoy81, who documented his first clinic experience in July of 2008. (Search "Flying Samaritans San Quintin Trip July08 .P1" to enjoy this video.) I found it amazing that so many volunteers in the video are still active members years later, including **'Papa' Joel Prosser, Sr. Bilito McDavid** and **Pam Polk!** I was reminded again just before the March, 2018 clinic of this same magnetic effect of our clinics. **Gordon Worley**, a Flying Sams volunteer and Facebook friend, posted a TBT picture the week before the clinic. For you 'non-cool' Facebook people, TBT means "Throw Back Thursday" and is descriptive of when someone posts a picture of themselves from long ago. In this TBT gem, Gordon posted a picture taken of him at a clinic in 2007!



Gordon Worley and the clinic circa 2007



And circa 2018!

Never having met Gordon in person before this March clinic, I hadn't realized that he was such a long-standing member. It would be an extra good treat for me to be able to meet him at the March, 2018 clinic and recreate the TBT photo! Looking just as dapper as he did in 2007, Gordon gladly agreed to pose for the new photo. We are really lucky to have some many veterans in our membership. To me, this attests to the notion that we are doing really great work in Baja and people are proud to be a part of it. Of course, we have some newbie volunteers that we never hear from again after their first clinic. For their own reasons, I guess they figure that the experience just wasn't what they were hoping for. But thankfully, we have a much larger number that get 'hooked' and keep coming back for years and years. Simply awesome!

Until next time,
Doug