

The CHHF Herald

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Patient Jesi Cruz at new outdoor window

Improvements Continue at Limón Clinic

CHHF's excellent clinic facility, dedicated in 1997, continues to serve extremely well. Begun with four bedrooms, two were added in 2000 and two more in 2004. Teams continue to comment on the comfort of the well-planned building. At the end of 2009 and the early months of 2010, several improvements were undertaken.

In the summer of 2009, the team from Ebenezer Baptist Church (Florence, SC) extended the corridor near David Kelley's room so that another door could be placed at the end of the hallway. This has allowed the use of the adjacent back room as an examination room for doctors. With the additional exam room, there are now three exam rooms, a nurse intake room, and a room for emergencies.

Because the records room was overflowing with the storage of 13 years of charts, an expansion of the records office was necessary. These workers now have an increase of 85% office space not including the storage of off-site records under the stairwell. Most importantly, patients now receive their records at an outdoor window and wait outside until there is space available in the waiting room. This has significantly improved the confusion and noise levels in the reception area. Because the expansion of the records room necessitated a change to the covered front entrance, the upstairs porch on the street side has now doubled in size.

In March 2010, a team from Williamsburg (VA) United Methodist Church constructed two new bunk beds. Many teams had requested additional sleeping space; now instead of sleeping 16, the clinic has beds for 18.

The clinic's much-loved old yellow bus spent part of the rainy season in the repair shop. By the end of March, the bus had a new floor and a rebuilt engine. New brakes were installed in May. The roads which teams travel from Limon to outlying clinics are no better; however, the bus ride surely is.

May and June brought problems with the water pump, ice maker, and kitchen stove. Hopefully, as July approaches all will be repaired or replaced so that teams can continue to enjoy the comfort of the clinic.

Whatever the case, some aspects of a volunteer week in Honduras will never change: that fantastic ocean view whether from the clinic porch or from a morning or evening walk on the beach, the rewards of making a difference in the many lives, and the memorable relationships forged for a lifetime.

Donations Make a Difference

In 2009, through the efforts of frequent CHHF volunteer Carolyn Spencer, Dr. Lance Evans at Manhattan College (NY) donated three microscopes for the lab. One of them has been placed at the clinic in Icoteas in order to relieve the necessity of transporting a microscope each time teams go to Icoteas.

Recently, through First United Methodist Church of Pine Bluff, Arizona, an anonymous donor gave thousands of dollars of much needed over-the-counter medical supplies and also injectable antibiotics to CHHF. These donations are a major contribution to the clinic pharmacy.

On June 24 in Clemmons, NC, June DeLugas Interiors hosted an art show and charity event called "Art with A Heart." A local artist donated an original artwork for raffle; the event included live music, wine and cheese. A portion of the proceeds benefited CHHF.

Volunteers who work frequently at the clinic know of fourteen year old Aslyn who has cerebral palsy and is often brought to the clinic by her caring mother. CHHF BOD member Derinda Connor will deliver a jogging stroller in July so that the mother will no longer have to carry her 34 pound daughter everywhere.

CHHF knows and appreciates that each volunteer team makes improvements at the clinic by completing repairs or volunteering construction efforts. In addition, each team adds to the medical and pharmaceutical supplies. All these donations support the efforts of CHHF to improve the healthcare in the region of Limon. Thank you for all you do for CHHF and the people of Limón.

Cock-a-doodle-do, or the Legend of the Crowing Rooster

American roosters crow at daybreak. However, such is not the case with Central American roosters. Volunteers at the Limón clinic are always surprised by the next-door rooster who crows each night, beginning about 3 a.m. For years teams have dealt with the loss of sleep due to the crowing rooster. One team leader even has a supply of ear plugs. There is an unsubstantiated legend which tells the story that years ago an unnamed volunteer decided to put a stop to the rooster's nighttime ritual. In discussion with the neighbor who owned the rooster, the volunteer struck a deal; money and a rooster exchanged hands. The negotiating volunteer and the entire team enjoyed that night's peace and quiet. But on the next night, a rooster's crowing awakened the team at 3 a.m., continuing for hours. When the rooster's purchaser questioned the neighbor about the new rooster, he was told that the funds received for the old rooster were more than enough to purchase a new rooster and to also stock his pantry. Needless to say, a solution to the crowing rooster has not been found and volunteers still deal with the loss of sleep and laugh about the crowing rooster.



Dr. Gibson's Corner

In March I made my 37th mission trip to Honduras. Once again we saw hundreds of patients and even delivered a baby in the middle of the night. Before I knew it, the week was over and we were in the van, dodging the craters on the dirt road, heading back to the big city of San Pedro Sula. This is a quiet time for me as I reflect, not only on this trip, but the many trips to this remote village. A smile came to my face as I remembered a 72 year old diabetic patient who walked to the clinic from the distant edge of the village. She came because of a deep ulcer on her foot. After the wound was cleaned and dressed, I asked that she be driven home in our van. The interpreter related this to her and she became extremely excited. We thought it was because she wouldn't have the long walk home, but we were wrong. She had *never* been in a vehicle. As the van came to a halt near her dirt floor hut, she wanted the driver to "beep" the horn so her neighbors would come out to see how she got home that day. It's hard to imagine a 72 year old never having ridden in a vehicle, but also remember, this village and the surrounding areas had *no* access to health or dental care before the establishment of the Carolina Honduras Health Foundation.

The building of our free clinic in Limon has brought volunteer teams who not only provide health and dental care but who have touched the lives of many people in more ways than we will ever know. A clinic in this remote village was my dream, but it is now a true life-saving reality for many very poor Hondurans because of the generosity of caring people like you. Thank you for your continuing support of the Carolina Honduras Health Foundation. Good people doing great things!

CHHF is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization that meets the US Tax Code requirements for a tax deductible organization.

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