

DR. BOB KEENE

In just a year with Bob Keene's leadership, dentistry in El Rosario catapulted from "construction dentistry" to use of silver diamine fluoride technique (a.k.a. ITR) hailed by the New York Times as the forefront of changes in dentistry. Bob has an uncanny ability to strip out unnecessary gear and procedures that clog dentistry, and replace them with progressive techniques, education and tremendous humanity. A donated dental chair with multiple broken appendages? "Take 'em off!" said Bob and he happily got to work on a now sleek chair with basic tools. Bring 100s of kids into the Smile Clinic for fluoride treatments? "We'll go to THEM! Line 'em up in the schools!" said Bob. The Smile Clinic dentists are on the road making sure every child is evaluated and any needing advanced care are brought to the Clinic for treatment Bob-style with a choice of nifty protective sunglasses and his gentle touch. And Bob's influence in Honduras has grown – based on relationships with young Honduran dentists whom he mentors, he'll be teaching at a Honduran university in January.

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/12/health/silver-diamine-fluoride-dentist-cavities.html?_r=0



Bob Keene began volunteering in low-income countries in the 1960s and it provides firm footing for his leadership of the Smile Clinic.



Women lined up for cervical cancer screening.

CANCER PREVENTION

Cancer in low income countries is on the rise. Prevention and screening as well as links to cancer treatment are essential. In our third year partnering with Dartmouth's Norris Cotton Cancer Center, we again facilitated a cancer screening weekend for 400 women from 40 villages. Linda Kennedy directs this project that included screening for cervical, breast, thyroid and oral cancers. With eight gynecological exam cubicles in the Clinic and a high-tech lab in the back room, a primary care mini-clinic headed by Sue Burgos, a dozen project staff staying in the ACTS bunkhouse and 15 Honduran medical students sleeping on the floor of the Community Center between shifts as screening staff; the entire El Rosario "downtown" was put to use. Women who needed imaging for suspicious breast masses or treatment for cervical or thyroid cancer were cared for at our partnering cancer center, La Liga Contra el Cancer, in San Pedro Sula.



Community building in action: Children with new toothbrushes after a dental hygiene class that included parents.



www.actshonduras.org

Fall, 2016

Welcome to a window on ACTS' community development work in rural Honduras. With more than 25 years in the Locomapa region, we have strong local partners and are making progress to help Hondurans make their communities stronger. For an expanded view with many more photos please visit our website www.ActsHonduras.org.

Thanks to all who contributed time, talent, goods or treasure, 2016 was a year of significant progress. See what WE did together, and thanks!

NEWSFLASH: ANNOUNCING THE ACTS EL ROSARIO COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CENTER

"Centro de salud integral ACTS El Rosario"

Look for big changes in 2017 as the El Rosario medical and dental clinics transition to the ACTS El Rosario Comprehensive Health Center. We are committed to providing leadership for a comprehensive health center that is professionally staffed with a well-stocked pharmacy.

Just like in the US, people have difficult health challenges and need primary care and case management. To provide consistent medical care, local physician Elisa Zuniga MD will attend patients at the medical clinic every Saturday assisted by a professional nurse who will provide care on the weekdays. Dentist Reina Lara DMD will work one long weekend a month, visiting school children in their villages on Fridays and treating patients in the dental clinic on Saturdays and Sundays. The ACTS health team including Sue Burgos PA, Peter Mason MD, Bob Keene DMD, John Sanders MD and Jinny Brack MD will attend patients when they are in Honduras and are always available for consultation by email.

Fundraising goal for the Medical Center for 2017 is \$13,000 to fund the salaries of the three professionals.



Brad Taylor (not pictured) and Linda Kennedy and the Clinic Committee concluded a successful negotiation to hire Dr. Elisa Zuniga (red shirt).

DENTAL

Grants and donations of materials, along with Bob Keene's vision and can-do attitude have made the Smile Clinic operational in just a year. The decades-long story of dentistry in Locomapa, like much of Honduras and other low-income countries is of a local "construction dentist," in short, a guy with pliers. Now that is a bad memory and people of all ages are accessing the Smile Clinic for professional care in a sanitary environment. And we're hustling from school to school to teach dental hygiene, evaluate each child, and give fluoride treatments onsite. Fifty teens in La Fuerza para el Futuro, our Force for the Future leadership program spent a week under the direction of Jules Ortego designing and delivering dental education programs to six schools.

Fundraising goal for the Dental Clinic for 2017 is \$7,500 for consumable supplies including local anesthesia, ITR (Interim Therapeutic Restorations) and brushes for 1,000+ children.



Jules Ortego with young teens who wrote skits, made these "dental stations," then performed at each school and installed the stations

AGRICULTURE

ACTS is collaborating with the El Rosario micro bank on a long term, multi faceted approach to safer, more efficient use of agricultural pesticides. Programs include seminars on reducing contamination to farmers and their families, supplying Personal Protective Equipment, and a research project to measure both exposure to poisonous chemicals and the effectiveness of a decontamination shower, locker room and storage facility.

The farmers in and around El Rosario continue to struggle with drought. For the last two years most of Honduras and much of Central America have experienced decreased and unpredictable rain. Since much of the farming in Honduras is based on timing of the rainy season, rain at the wrong time can be as damaging as no rain at all. The El Rosario micro bank is exploring irrigation options and advocating new, drought resistant crops.

Fundraising goal for Agriculture in 2017 is \$7,500 for Personal Protective Equipment to protect farmers spreading pesticides



Prior to the Pesticide Class, Brad Taylor taught the Micro Bank leaders the correct way to slip gloves on and off to avoid contamination.

OUR ORGANIZATION

ACTS Honduras is directed and managed by the Steering Committee including Helen Whyte keeping us on track, Mike Harris managing our agenda, Hart Silverwood overseeing our finances, Judy Wallick Frothingham and Jennifer Randolph coordinating communication and fundraising, Dan Saulnier managing our connections with Engineers Without Borders and those mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter. This fundraising appeal is our main source of income for projects in Honduras. Volunteers pay their own way for trip expenses and with the exception of paying for printing, postage and a post office box, all donations are used directly in Honduras.

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BIG RED BAGS

We all heaved a sigh of relief when Sue Burgos agreed to take on year-round responsibility for The Big Red Bags and the constant flow of donations to El Rosario. She collects, sorts and packs at least 5,000 pounds of clothing, linens and shoes each year for ACTS team members to haul in our famous Big Red Bags. This is in addition to \$8,000 of medicines provided each year to the Health Center, which also travels in the Big Red Bags. In Honduras, the donations are shared with: Lillian, a paraplegic who makes a small income selling used clothing; as well as the poorest families in two indigenous villages, and sales by local leaders at a festive "nearly new sale" that generates income for local projects. If you would like to donate goods, check the ACTS website for details on what is needed.

Fundraising goal for Big Red Bags in 2017 is \$8,000 for medicines



Dean Seibert at Logan Airport pushing 250# of donations and a wheelchair on top!

Amazon Smiles on ACTS



If you shop on Amazon, consider signing up at amazon.smile.

com so that Amazon will donate .5% of your shopping total to the charity of your choice. If you choose Americans Caring Teaching Sharing, ACTS will benefit from your selection. Thanks!

EDUCATION

All over the villages, the talk is of homework. The kids at the local school flood the ACTS-funded Community Center and Library to take advantage of the books, nine laptop computers, and the intranet designed by Ethan LaRochelle that provides a static copy of Wikipedia and educational videos on dozens of topics. For preschoolers to young adults, the Library is a busy place with valuable resources. Our librarian, Yorlin's, enthusiasm shines as he manages homework queries, teaches computer classes and supports local teachers. As a rule, libraries in low-income countries don't loan books to take home, but we do. The 2016 "lending library" project headed by Dean Siebert, Lisa Bisceglia and Betsy Rybeck Lynd is operating, and families are borrowing children's books and solar lights for those who live without electricity.

Coaxing adults to explore the Library for their own pleasure and information is the next challenge. Most had a few years of primary school and their literacy is rusty, at best. To attract adults, we plan to greatly increase our collection with easy-to-read books on requested adult topics such as menopause, farming and depression. To make the content accessible, Yorlin will host subject-specific social reading groups where participants can follow along as he reads aloud.

Fundraising goal for Education in 2017 is \$5,000 for easy-to-read adult books and \$1500 for laptop computers



Yorlin teaches this 6-month computer course on the Microsoft Office suite. These students, who have to share computers, attend the course after school two afternoons a week.

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE

(Online Donations Accepted here)

www.actshonduras.org



FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

First the good news for all who have followed Baby Gloria's story. Her very challenging skeletal deformities due to arthrogryposis were improved in 2016 when a surgery donated by Honduran pediatric orthopedic surgeon Dr. Jose Ramon Vasquez altered the position of her left foot so that it faces forward. Now Gloria, whose favorite subject is singing, can walk to school. She faces many more surgeries, but her bright mind and an education will greatly improve her chances in life.

In another case, a rare disease affects a family. Seven years ago, out on a back road near an indigenous village, a distraught mother threw herself in front of Dean Seibert's truck crying in despair that her son was sick. The source of his worsening condition was unknown and over the years two sisters also became afflicted with what we learned was homocystinuria. An ACTS-facilitated partnership among the finest Honduran doctors, a German pharmaceutical company, and Dartmouth pathology and genetics have brought advanced medical attention to the children and hope to their mother.

Fundraising goal for Families with Special Needs in 2017 is \$2,000 for travel funding for Gloria's next surgeries



Newborns in the US are tested for homocystinuria at birth. The genetic disease is more common in small insular communities like this poor indigenous village.

OUR PARTNERING ORGANIZATIONS

- The Health & Development and Clinic Committees of El Rosario
- Dartmouth Alumni and Student for Honduras (DASH)
- La Liga Contra el Cancer and PESCA
- Engineers Without Borders -USA Northeastern University
- Dartmouth's Norris Cotton Cancer Center
- Center for Genomics and Advanced Testing at Dartmouth
- Coverys
- Academy of Dentistry International
- Zondervan Foundation
- New Holland Apparel
- Lyme Bargain Barn
- United Church of Dorset