



The

# RESOURCE

The Newsletter of Sharing Resources Worldwide

Summer 2005

## SRW Mission Trip to Honduras: My Favorite Part[s]

by Marge Abegglen

Tegucigalpa is a beautiful city built in a natural, bowl-like formation in the mountains of Honduras. As SRW mission team members discovered recently, travel to our clinic locations was a daily adventure on winding mountain roads, which we shared with an amazing number of other drivers who seemed to regard traffic signs as mere suggestions rather than law. Thanks to very capable drivers, the team survived every journey and enjoyed a productive visit from January 29 to February 6, 2005. This was SRW's first mission to Honduras, but the relationships made there are the kind that will last a long time.

The surgical group consisted of an orthopedic team led by pediatric orthopedic surgeon David Mann, and an ophthalmic group led by ophthalmologists Neal Luchesse and Mansoor Mogavar. Support staff for these two specialties completed the team of fifteen people. The orthopedic team worked in the Honduran Military Hospital, where Dr. Mann screened fifty-four children to determine whether they could be helped by surgery. Some were born with club-foot or extra toes. Some who suffer from cerebral palsy needed their tendons lengthened so they would be able to walk more easily. Seventeen children who underwent surgery are now enjoying a healthier, more comfortable life.

The eye team worked in a clinic in a different part of the city, screening sixty patients with crossed eyes (strabismus) and tear duct prob-



*Marge Abegglen with Lucia before her surgery.*

lems. They operated on forty-five of these children, many of whom were grateful to have their strabismus problems corrected. As kids returned one day after surgery for postoperative checkups, there were smiles on the faces of parents and loved ones, as well as the young patients themselves, who would now have corrected vision, a more normal appearance, and restored self-esteem.

I have been lucky enough to go on many mission trips with SRW, and as I reflect on each trip, I try to decide what my favorite part was. Sometimes there are so many "favorite parts" that I can't come up with just one. I treasure the camaraderie we have as a group. Most of us lead completely separate lives back in Wisconsin, and yet when we

unite on a mission trip and start working in the operating room, it's as if we work together every day. Lifelong friendships have been made and are renewed each year in a foreign country. I also enjoy problem solving when the answers are not at my fingertips. In my stateside job in the operating room, I can work through most challenges very easily. But when you're in a poor foreign country and the only supplies you have are the ones you brought, it makes the thought process a bit more interesting. Above all, the most amazing thing I see when I go on a trip like this is the absolute trust I encounter every time I take a child from its mother's arms to go into surgery. These moms don't know me, or anyone else in the group, but they trust us completely. They know we'll do the best we can for their child. It's refreshing to witness that kind of faith.

When you look at the number of children who need help, compared to the number that we actually *can* help, it seems like a very small thing we've done. But when you look at the lives that have been changed by our efforts—a child who can walk normally and go to school, or a child who isn't ridiculed because of her crossed eyes—then you realize that we have indeed accomplished a great thing.

*Value of services, supplies and equipment donated: \$468,291.00*

*Ratio of cost to value: 1 to 234*

In other words, for every \$1.00 donated to SRW for this mission, the mission team delivered \$234.00 worth of services in Honduras. This



*Four of our little patients waiting for eye surgery in Feb of 2005.*

is due to the generous contributions of many donors, including Sweeney Construction, which covered the

cost of medications associated with the surgeries done that week in Honduras. Thank you to Sweeney Con-

struction and all who were a direct, or not so direct, part of this mission.

Members of the SRW Mission team to Honduras

Marge Abegglen, RN  
 Mary Dowling, RN  
 Toby Haines, RN  
 Julie Balzer, Surgical Technician  
 Neil Lucchese, MD  
 David Mann, MD  
 Debra Dahlke, CRNA  
 Kathy Sweeney, LPN  
 Patricia White, CRNA  
 Shelley Wilker, Surgical Technician  
 Mansoor Movaghar, MD  
 Mark Kernan, SRNA  
 John Ketzler, MD  
 Mathew Halanski, MD  
 Bonita Steinbach, RN

## Large and Small: It All Makes a Difference

What might a forty-foot container and a four-inch syringe have in common? Neither is insignificant; either can be a gift of life which meets a need somewhere in our world. The contents of a large container shipped to a regional hospital or clinic might benefit hundreds, if not thousands. Last year, for example, SRW sent four anesthesia machines to hospitals in Honduras and Peru, to replace machines that were 30 or 40 years old. Thousands of patients will have safer surgeries because outdated equipment has been replaced by more dependable machines. Though such shipments are costly, these large and heavy items cannot be sent by any other means.

On the other hand, SRW is able to assist many local groups and individuals traveling to developing countries, who can carry smaller supplies and equipment in their luggage. Dr Karrous Farro traveled to Afghanistan in 2004, where he spent several months working in that country's largest women's hospital. Though he was sent through a program at the University of Wisconsin, the stethoscopes and newborn-resuscitation equipment he packed along came from the SRW warehouse, and we mailed him



*Dr. Proper explains the operation of the new anesthesia machine donated by SRW to local staff at a hospital in Peru in March 2005.*

more while he was there. There were days when that equipment made the difference between life and death in the delivery room. Those few pieces of equipment, no longer needed in Wisconsin, were invaluable to children born under less-than-ideal conditions.

A Sheboygan Campus Life group recently took twenty-two large suitcases of equipment and supplies from our warehouse to jungle hospitals and clinics in Ecuador. In their thank-you note to SRW, they stated that, "in many areas, health care is either non-existent or minimal, and in most cases unaffordable

to the poorest of the poor. Your donation therefore will bring health and smiles to those who have so little."

Whether they arrive in a forty-foot container, or the suitcase of a traveler, our surplus supplies can improve the health and well-being of many worldwide—in big ways and small. You can help SRW send the gift of life to those in need. Your tax-deductible donation will help meet the costs of collecting, sorting, packing and shipping items which would otherwise end up in Wisconsin landfills.

# Bringing Our Vision to Lima

by Chester Hilton, a team member

On March 4, 2005, thirty-two volunteers from LaCrosse, Madison, Beaver Dam, Marshfield and other cities, left the snow and cold of Wisconsin to journey to a very warm suburb of Lima, Peru. Once there, the group divided into two teams, one of which provided surgery at the local hospital, repairing cleft lips and palates and strabismus (crossed eyes). The other group, based at an orphanage called Casa Hogar Juan Pablo 11, performed eye examinations and fit individuals with glasses.

The surgical team put in long days at the hospital, arriving shortly after 7:00 in the morning and working until about 7:00 each evening. This team included Dr. Dennis Ryan, an ophthalmologist, and Dr. Joseph Benacci, a plastic surgeon, as well as Dr. Jacky Proper, an anesthesiologist, and Dr. David Nelson, a pediatrician.

Dr. Steve LaLiberte headed the efforts of the eye clinic team working at the orphanage, examining about 2,800 individuals and dispensing about 2,200 pairs of glasses.

The 2005 Casa Hogar Medical Mission was a great success. Many



Manuel waits very happily for his surgery to correct his cleft lip in March in Peru

needy people received medical care that would never have been available without this mission. It was very satisfying to help others in need. My thanks to Sharing Resources Worldwide for all of their work in making this mission possible.

The value of goods and services delivered by this SRW mission team are as follows.

- The plastic surgery clinic screened 26 pediatric patients and accomplished 18 surgeries.
- The ophthalmologist screened 31 pediatric patients and completed 24 surgeries.
- The combined value of services of both the eyeglass team and the surgical team was \$738,480.

Because of the generosity of many, the cost to SRW for this mission was \$1,694. In other words, for every \$1 donated to SRW for this mission, we were able to provide \$435 worth of goods and services to our brothers and sisters in Peru.

For making this mission possible, SRW thanks mission team members and also:

- Casa Hogar Juan Pablo Staff and Children
- The Diocese of LaCrosse
- Franciscan Skemp Foundation
- Ethicon
- Americares

- Gunderson Lutheran Foundation
  - Anesthesia Department of Gunderson Lutheran Hospital
  - Lions Clubs in the LaCrosse Area
- Mission team members were:

Marge Abegglen  
James Bardenwerper  
Joseph Benacci  
Linda Benjamin  
Mary Dowling  
Mary Dudley  
Sr. Rose Grabrowski  
Chester Hilton  
Linda Hilton  
Donna Hundt  
Joanne Kernan  
Mark Kernan  
Steve La Liberte  
Jeff La Merre  
Craig Mc Cormick  
Susan Mc Cormick  
Anne Nelson  
David Nelson  
Becky Panzer  
Dean Proper  
Jackie Proper  
Racquel Reiter  
Thomas Reiter  
Dennis Ryan  
Sharon Ryan  
Cynthia Sjolander  
James Tillman  
Bernard Wahl  
Mary Wahl  
Shelley Wilker

*Founded in January 2002, Sharing Resources Worldwide makes surplus and recycled medical supplies, durable medical equipment, and related items and activities available to needy populations around the world. SRW endeavors to improve the health and quality of life of its recipients and to empower them to live with increased dignity, independence, and hope.*

*We do this through three areas—medical missions, shipping and the wheelchair project.*

*All donations are tax deductible. Please make checks payable to Sharing Resources Worldwide.*

*Sharing Resources Worldwide is incorporated in the state of Wisconsin and is a tax exempt charitable 501 (c) (3) organization.*

## Sorting and Packing:

# What Would We Do Without Our Volunteers?

by Lisa Fernandez

Ever wonder how SRW manages to load a forty-foot container of medical supplies and equipment in under two hours? After all, we did it nineteen times last year. Nineteen containers full of valuable, life-enhancing and life-saving items, packed to maximize space and value of our donations. As usual, given a fixed price for the shipment, SRW strives to make the most of the opportunity, and no nook or cranny is left vacant.

We could never do it without The McFarland Boys, a team of—well, men actually—who show up each and every time to push and pull and pack and stack to the max! No one can do it like they can—with humor and grace, determination and skill, strength and lots of sweat. What motivates them? They know their work is changing lives for the better. These men find time and energy for Sharing Resources Worldwide, even though their lives are already busy with jobs, family, and community commitments. Mobilized initially

by Ken Brost, they have perfected the art of container loading. If there were an award for this skill, SRW would make sure they received it. But for now, their reward is the sat-



isfaction of a job well done, along with a continuous supply of pizza and chocolate, hugs and laughter. To say nothing of their stimulating and animated post-load discussions! Their favorite subject: "Let's try to solve the problems of the world."

Less boisterous but no less valuable is our team of medical supply sorters—Linda Craig, Mary Jane Schuknecht, Gloria Zeller, Bev Odegard and Chris Kwilinski. The four women are all RN's, and Chris

is the husband of an RN. These talented and hardworking volunteers bring their training and long careers as nurses (and in Chris's case, prior experience sorting medical supplies) to bear on endless boxes of donated medical supplies that must be gleaned, sorted, and repacked before they're shipped to needy countries around the world. Week after week, these sorters arrive at the warehouse to spend hours picking through boxes of everything from gauze to IV catheters, weeding out any damaged or expired articles and

neatly packing the rest for shipment. Thanks to them, we are no longer drowning in unsorted supplies, and can even see the back wall of our warehouse! And thanks to them, we are always ready to ship badly needed items quickly.

Does this kind of volunteering sound fun and interesting? Give us a call or drop us an email if you'd like to join our awesome SRW team! You can find our contact information on the back of this newsletter.

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## Ingredients in the Recipe for Learning

Successful learning requires more than just a qualified teacher and eager students. You also need desks, paper and pencils. SRW has collected hundreds of cast-off Wisconsin school desks and sent them to Nicaragua. Now we'd like you to help us provide some of the other basic ingredients for successful learning: *school supplies*.

At the end of each school year, SRW collects and recycles discarded, but still useful, school supplies from students in Madison-area schools. Another great season for collecting school supplies (at the store) is late August to early September, when supplies are plentiful

at reduced prices. Those weeks are soon approaching.

SRW has room in some shipments to Central and South America, to include school supplies which are desperately needed in local classrooms. You can provide these missing ingredients for hundreds of students who simply cannot afford such things.

Would you, your school, class, church or civic group consider buying school supplies, or collecting funds and sending them to SRW so we can purchase supplies this fall? It doesn't take much: even \$5 buys lots of notebooks or pencils in late August and early September. Items

most needed are *paper* (any kind), *pencils*, *pencil sharpeners*, *pens*, *markers*, *crayons*, *scissors*, *rulers*, and *backpacks*.

If you're interested in such a project, please contact our SRW Directors. Mary (608-445-8503) or Lisa (608-445-8504) would be happy to visit with your group and share an entertaining five-minute video suitable for all ages. As members of your group see what schools are like in some of the countries SRW visits, they'll be informed and inspired to provide the basic supplies American students enjoy and use every school day.

# Scraps of Blessing

by Sylvia Boomsma

When pizza coupons sold by SRW as a fundraiser started to circulate in her office, Andrea Romine's curiosity got the best of her. She checked out the Sharing Resources Worldwide website and happened upon a wish list, which included baby hats. "I can make baby hats, no problem," she thought, and got in touch with SRW Co-director Mary Dowling. When she heard about the many needs SRW seeks to meet all over the world, she called on her coworkers for back-up. Meeting with the 23 people she supervises in the scheduling and switchboard departments of various Dean clinics, she suggested that her staff collect items needed in other countries as part of their annual charity drive, a yearly tradition which has replaced a holiday gift exchange in their office.

Since it was late August, their original focus was school supplies. But as they alerted friends, church groups and family members from Florida to Kansas, the range of items grew. Andrea's antennae were up at all times for anything she remembered from SRW's wish list. "I'd keep things in mind while shopping," she says. "For example, I found a big sale

on facecloths at a discount store, remembered that they were a needed item, and bought a whole bunch of them."

Andrea and one of her coworkers began to make child-sized quilts. Soon, people in the department started donating scraps of fabric, which Juanita Ovadal used to make thirty-five blankets. Other people from Andrea's department continued to collect and make items, networking with friends and acquaintances all over the country. Since their work-related contacts with Dean patients are usually limited to brief phone conversations, they were eager to try this new kind of healthcare. They took joy in knowing that their love and concern would touch even people they would never meet personally. The satisfaction of helping others gave them a sense of personal fulfillment and opened their eyes to service which would reach way beyond their own sphere of work. They had



*This child is ready to go home after having eye surgery — with blanket and stuffed animal that provided much comfort for child and mother.*

found a new way to personally make a difference in other people's lives.

Andrea and her coworkers were gratified as they thought of their lovely, handmade quilts being distributed by SRW surgical mission teams to children undergoing operations. "When I saw pictures from the mission trip," Andrea says, "there were the blankets I had held in my own hands, now being grasped and cuddled by children in other countries. I thought of my own daughter, who had surgery when she was only five years old. Her blanket was such an important comfort to her." Here, Andrea's voice chokes up. "You can give money to a big charity organization, and that's good, but it's so impersonal, and you never really know just how your donation is used. It blew me out of the water to see those blankets comforting children in other countries and keeping them warm after surgery. Now *that's* doing something."

In addition to the lovely quilts made by Andrea and her co-workers, SRW thanks

- Bonnet Prairie Lutheran Church of Rio, Wisconsin
- Family and Consumer Education Class in Verona Schools
- and many other individuals and smaller groups who contribute quilts and other gifts for our patients around the world.

## Summary of SRW 2004 Statistics

- Volunteer hours recorded at SRW: 2,465
- Shipments sent from warehouse: 19
- Number of countries that received products or shipments from SRW: 13

- Saved by SRW from our Wisconsin landfills: 281 tons
- Total value of our missions and shipments: \$1,947,651.00





Leslie Linser, Kristi Rietz and Candace Weber cook up a feast to benefit Mulukuku, Nicaragua. Friends new and old meet, greet and eat for a great cause.

## The Best French Toast on the Planet

by Lisa Fernandez

What do you get when you combine the Best French Toast on the Planet, committed caring people, and a great cause? **An awesome fundraiser!**

The Best French Toast on the Planet benefit breakfast for Mulukuku, Nicaragua, was held at the First Unitarian Society Meeting House in Madison on April 30, 2005. More than 150 people at-

tended, and the breakfast raised over \$3,400—funds that will be used to send a shipment of school desks, school and medical supplies, and other badly needed items to Mulukuku, Nicaragua. Organized by Diana Lardy, LuAnn Greiner, Kristi Rietz and Leslie Linser, this event featured fantastic food; a beautiful, sun-drenched setting; lively conversation and company; the opportunity to learn more about SRW; the chance to browse and buy beautiful artwork by Mulukuku artists; and the opportunity to help make the lives of people in Mulukuku happier and healthier.

The buzz of conversation filled the sunny lower meeting house, as friends old and new mingled and feasted on French toast (ala cook

extraordinaire Leslie Linser, using her grandma's secret recipe), yogurt, fruit, sausage, juice and coffee. Thanks to the generous donation of the space and the food items served, and to the all-volunteer labor force that put it together, there was absolutely no cost to SRW. All money raised will benefit Mulukuku, Nicaragua. Beyond the money raised, this happy event provided a venue for the exchange of goodwill, networking, information, resources and ideas.

Sharing Resources Worldwide gives heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to this awesome event. Without all of you, our work would not be possible. We are forever grateful to all our volunteers and supporters.



## SRW Building Mission Trip to Honduras

Would you be interested in traveling to Honduras for a week this fall to participate with others from this area in the building of the clinic building at the orphanage complex being built by Providence World Ministries in Siguatepeque, Honduras? SRW is organizing such a team at this time. If you might be interested, please contact Mary Dowling at 608-455-8503 or send an email to [mdowl@tds.net](mailto:mdowl@tds.net).

## Do You Know a Catheter When You See One?

Then we need you.

If you're an RN or LPN with a few free hours in your week, you can help **Sharing Resources Worldwide**, a locally-based, globally-focused organization which provides excess and discarded medical supplies and equipment to needy regions worldwide. We're seeking volunteers with a medical background, to help us sort and box for shipment essentials like tape, dressings, catheters, suture kits and sterile

gloves. By donating just 2-4 hours per week, you can save and improve lives around the world, and put to good use what would otherwise be thrown away.

Would you consider volunteering at the SRW warehouse facility on Madison's East Side? Training and assistance provided. Some lifting and bending involved. A sense of community and the satisfaction of doing something worthwhile guaranteed.

Please contact Mary at 608-445-8503 or Lisa at 608-445-8504 for more information.

We thank graphic artist Lisa Otto of Grey Horse Studio and SpectraPrint for their donations to the production of this newsletter.

# Late Breaking News!

## In The Beginning

In December of 2001, Lisa and I started consulting friends and supporters of the programs we had worked on for several years to determine how feasible it would be to form our own organization. Those friends and supporters seemed to like the idea and we decided to move forward to form *Sharing Resources Worldwide*. We had one problem! It takes four to six months to complete the process to be a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization. What were we to do?

Dr. John Woodford contacted The Dean Foundation, we met with them, and they agreed to make our SRW program one of the projects listed on their activities (i.e. they gave us an *umbrella*). This gave us instant nonprofit status through them. We could begin to organize and actually get our programs up

and working and tackle the non-profit status for SRW later. We could not have even started without The Dean Foundation's help. They have done our bookkeeping, offered legal advice, put our web page out there and generally offered us support and encouragement from the beginning. Now, three years later, we feel it is time to *grow up and move away from home*.

Several months ago we started the process of becoming our own independent entity and that process is now complete. SRW is now its own 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization, incorporated in the state of Wisconsin.

Both Lisa and I and our board of directors are very appreciative of the assistance that The Dean Foundation was able to give us. We will continue to work together where

and when we are able to. We wish to particularly thank Leslie Taylor MD and Rebecca Johnson. There were others behind the scenes at the Foundation that we do not even know about, I am sure. To all we say, *thanks from the bottom of our hearts!*

What this means for you is that you should make all checks/donations out to **Sharing Resources Worldwide** now and continue to send them to us directly.

Our web site will be redesigned and can be accessed by typing in *Sharing Resources Worldwide* for your search engine.

Thanks to all — this is a huge step for us — but one we have worked toward from the beginning and now feel prepared to take. Watch us grow and become independent.

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### **Sharing Resources Worldwide**

2556 C Advance Road • Madison, WI 53718  
Phone- 608-445-8503 or 445-8504 • Fax 608-437-7662  
Email- [mdowl@tds.net](mailto:mdowl@tds.net) or [pocoapocolisa@juno.com](mailto:pocoapocolisa@juno.com)

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Donation checks should be made out to **Sharing Resources Worldwide**.  
Please return this card with your donation to the address above.

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*Your donation will help Sharing Resources Worldwide provide the following:*

\$50 will fund postoperative glasses or casting material for a child we serve on a medical mission.

\$100 will fund medications needed for a child's surgery on a medical mission.

\$250 will fund wheelchair parts for several wheelchairs that need repairs in Nicaragua.

\$2000 will fund the medications needed for 40-50 children receiving our services during one of our upcoming medical missions.

\$4000 will fund the cost of a shipment of wheelchairs, medical, and school supplies to Central America.

This the amount I can send you at this time. \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact us about a presentation to our group or an appointment with me to discuss how I can help SRW in other ways.

Please include me on your mailing list for future newsletters and information about SRW.

Please remove me from your mailing list and future communication.

***Help SRW provide Independence, Improved Health, Mobility, Dignity, and Hope worldwide***



## ***How do you turn \$1.00 into \$435.00?***

Easy! You donate it to SRW! How is this possible? Read all about it in this newsletter's stories of our mission trips to Honduras and Peru.

The value of goods and services delivered by our Honduras mission team was \$468,291. The cost to SRW for this mission (in other words, the amount taken from SRW's budget) was \$2,001. So, for every dollar you donated, \$234 worth of goods and services were delivered to needy folk in Honduras.

The value of goods and services delivered by our Peru mission team was \$738,480. This trip cost SRW's budget \$1,694. So, for every dollar you donated, \$435 worth of goods and services were delivered in the form of exams, corrective surgeries and eyeglasses.

You can shop sales, specials, and auctions. But you can hardly get a better return on your investment anywhere! Thank you to our donors. Every dollar makes a difference.



*A warm blanket and stuffed animal make recovery go much better for a child after surgery. For story, see page 5.*

## **If it ain't broke, don't fix it. But when it is...**

SRW owes a debt of gratitude to Gary and Mark at Midwest Biomedical Services, Inc. of Madison. They have volunteered their time and expertise to examine donated medical equipment when it arrives at our SRW warehouse. When they discover that items are not in working order, they repair them before we send

them on to be used in hospitals and clinics from Peru to Africa and beyond. Their services make our shipments even more valuable, increasing SRW's impact because we can assure recipients that the equipment they receive from us will be in working order. Thank you, Midwest Biomedical, for your generosity!

Sharing Resources Worldwide  
2556 C Advance Road  
Madison, WI 53718  
Fax 608-437-7662  
Mary Dowling  
608-445-8503  
mdowl@tds.net  
Lisa Fernandez  
608-445-8504  
pocapocolisa@junio.com