



Newsletter for June 2011



pat and I have been on a vacation trip for nearly two weeks. We will return to Tucson in mid-June in time for the June LSI clinic. Right now we are in a hotel room in Playa del Carmen in the Yucatan, and the streets are running curb-to-curb with rain water. This sounds like a good time to make a newsletter. Thanks to all who sent me articles. I don't have the full newsletter template on my laptop, so it is a bit sparse.

Carl the Flying Curmudgeon (and Newsletter Editor)

May Women's Clinic

BEST. CLINIC EVER!
By Peggy Clementi, Helper

On a picture perfect Saturday morning, two planes headed to El Rosario for our annual Women's Clinic. Pilot Alexis Hernandez flew with two passengers; Dr. Anthea Dixon and me, Peggy Clementi, helper, while pilot Randy Wells transported Mary Jean Wells, nurse, Samantha Luois, health educator/interpreter and Diana Osborne, interpreter. Both planes were off the ground by 7:15 am. A brief stop in San Filipe for customs and fuel and we were back in the air. After perfect landings on the mesa (no cows on the runway) we loaded up the van and it was off to clinic. There was a brief moment of figuring out how to turn on the water and electricity, as no one on this trip had physically done it before. Along with setting up the courtyard, we also took a few minutes to add another exam room so Dr. Dixon could see more patients with ease. By noon we were up and running at full speed.

We had taken lunch orders while still in the van, so our pilots, Alexis and Randy, headed to Mama Espinoza's for food. Diana did extensive triage while Samantha did a wonderful job of education in the courtyard. Dr. Dixon and Mary Jean were a busy team seeing 26 patients in total, and I helped by emptying trash and requesting the next patient. With such a great crew doing such great work, we were able to see everyone that showed up and be completely done with clinic by 3:30 pm.

Then it was back to the mesa for the planes so we could fly up the coast to San Quintin. What a marvelous sight!! We even had a fabulous view of our hotel from the air. Thanks Alexis!! We got our rooms and then met for a wonderful dinner at the hotel. We did an extensive debriefing of the clinic, with everyone feeling it went quite well. Both pilots felt it was the smoothest clinic they'd ever been on and both are looking forward to doing another women's clinic. They were very unobtrusive to the El Rosario women and us, making it very comfortable for all the women to open up and talk about health issues that wouldn't have been discussed with men present. Thanks guys!

Dr. Dixon expressed concerns of the purpose of the clinic: are we there to just take pap tests or should it be more of a 'well woman' type clinic? Health educator Samantha said the main topic the patients wanted information on was infectious diseases. She has agreed to re-work our posters on the subject, as they are much too graphic. Interpreter Diana commented that the women attending this clinic were mostly very healthy on the whole, very patient and that Samantha was charismatic! Our nurse Mary Jean's biggest concern was to ensure that we get results back to our patients. She noticed that a number of the women had indicated that they had a pap done within the last 4-6 months but had never gotten results. What is the point of doing the test if they never get results? And I just continue to marvel at the Samaritans as a group and how well everyone interacts with each other and the community. Thanks to all for the BEST. CLINIC. EVER!!

Peggy Clementi

First-Timer Report by Hank Willis

April 15, 2011 started as a long day and a half and ended as a very valuable and worthwhile experience with a great team of people. For my first Flying Samaritans trip, after a half day at the office, I drove two hours to the Spokane airport, flew commercial to Denver for a three hour layover, then on to Tucson. Ken Reed, DMD, and pilot for Flying Samaritans graciously picked me up from the Tucson airport and put me up at his house for the night. Early Friday morning we loaded up his plane and made the trip to El Rosario for the weekend. Getting into El Rosario was adventurous with a cow on the airstrip, a van that didn't want to start and subsequently got stuck in the mud, and a less than helpful Mexican army.

Once we arrived at the clinic and started working I immediately realized that the long journey was well worth it. A group of people quickly gathered in the courtyard patiently awaiting needed dental and medical care. Our team of three dentists (including myself), a hygienist, a medical doctor, and support staff worked together seamlessly to get people out of pain and into better dental health. We were able to accomplish quite a bit of dentistry, and I was pleasantly surprised with the amount of restorative work we could do; it wasn't all extractions like I anticipated. The dental clinic, although rustic by US standards, was well equipped with a good array of equipment and materials.

It was really a pleasure to help a group of people who desperately needed dental care. Everyone was always grateful for the care and even the little children were great to work with. My Spanish is pretty rusty, but the four and five year old kids didn't seem to mind a bit!

Ever since dental school I've wanted to participate in some sort of foreign dental outreach, but with a young family and new practice I didn't think I could take the time away. The Flying Samaritans trip was perfect in that I could contribute my time and skill without being gone from home for long. It was just a short weekend away. The trip rekindled a spark to make more of an effort to get out and serve. I hope to be back again!

Hank Willis, DDS

Website

The Tucson Chapter website is at: <http://www.flyingsamaritansaz.org/Tucson/FSAZTucson.htm>

Bill and Carl are working on getting the PayPal set up for dues and donations. There are a few issues that we are working out.

May Meeting Minutes

The May meeting minutes will be published in a separate newsletter. I am using my laptop on the vacation and the minutes are probably on my main computer at home.