

AMRF NEWS



American Medical Resources Foundation, Inc. Volume 28, No. 1, Fall Winter 2019-20

AMRF: Alive and Well

Many of our dear friends and contributors have missed receiving the AMRF News with reports of AMRF projects delivering used, but functional medical equipment to hospitals serving the needy. We apologize. In March, 2016, we felt it necessary to close our warehouse in Brockton, MA due to the greatly increasing cost of receiving and refurbishing the medical equipment we were receiving from hospitals and other medical centers. More of it was really “used up” and beyond our capability to refurbish. Furthermore, the cost of buying used equipment from used equipment vendors was increasing greatly as well. We simply were unable in many cases to obtain enough donated funds for each program and to continue to rent the warehouse. We were sorry to take this step after 30 years of receiving, repairing, packing and shipping medical equipment with a team of volunteers which faithfully came to Brockton each

Continued on page 4

Ophthalmic Equipment to Guatemala

On March 13th, 2019 AMRF sent a container of ophthalmic equipment to Salud y Vida, in Guatemala. The container was processed in Oxnard, California. We were able to accomplish this program with the support of Dr. Gordy (donor of the equipment), and support from Scott Sologaistoa, Sherri Medeiros, and Carol Sologaistoa.

During our visit to Guatemala in April of 2019, as a follow up on the Ophthalmic donation, the team of the American Medical Resources Foundation (AMRF), Dr. Patricia Hough, AMRF’s Medical Director, Victor Sologaistoa, President and CEO and Carol Sologaistoa, Board Member and Nursing Skills support, held discussions in regard to the execution of a joint initiative, between Asociación Civil Proyecto Salud y Vida (PROSAVI) and AMRF.

Discussions were held with the PROSAVI’s team in behalf of the Mayors (Alcaldes) of the municipalities of Estanzuela and Zacapa to donor, with Victor and Carol



Dr. Gordy, with Victor and Carol



Equipment being utilized at one of the five clinics

Project Description

In March of 2019 Dennis Gordy MD FACS of Oxnard, CA. donated five complete exam rooms of Ophthalmic equipment, including two complete Laser units.

AMRF processed this donation with packing, inventoried and shipped one 40’ container with this donation, which will support in providing two levels of eye-care in rural areas of Guatemala’s much needed population for this type of service.

Due to the precarious financial situation of the National Government and its priorities, the areas of visual healthcare needs have not received the necessary attention from the Ministry of Public Health. Eye care is left to the private sectors. Also the prevalence of other health care issues such as diabetes, which has a great negative impact on visual health, the Ministry deemed it necessary to leave the level of support of service and care provided to those with limited resources to the private sector.

Continued on page 2

Assisting our less fortunate neighbors by donating medical equipment and supplies to hospitals and clinics in developing nations.

Ophthalmic Equipment to Guatemala Continued from page 1

AMRF and PROSAVI are both of the belief that this initiative is best achieved in partnership with other organizations and groups. Contact has been made and achieved with other players in the field, namely: ASAPROSAR (The Salvadoran Association for Rural Health) which offers a visual health initiative and clinic in Santa Ana, El Salvador as well as with the Benemérito Comité Pro



Antoine Solagnier, from PROSAVI, reviewing equipment donation

Ciegos y Sordos (ProCiegos) in Guatemala.

PROSAVI has received from AMRF a large shipment of eye-care equipment. This equipment consists of 5 eye-care exam rooms for ophthalmic care as well as equipment for more specialized visual care areas. Transportation of this equipment within the country has been provided by PROSAVI.

The scope of the project

is to establish a total of 5 eye-care clinics, as the first level of service where the patient can be evaluated and can obtain affordable assistance, as well as the prescribed eyeglasses.

For services that go beyond the capabilities of the primary level eye-care clinics, the patient will be referred on to either ASAPROSAR and/or ProCiegos.

Two of the five primary eye-care clinics are to be in the eastern region of Guatemala, an area that has largely been ignored by non-government organisations during the last two decades. The clinics are to be located in Estanzuela and Zacapa (city). Both in the department of Zacapa, Guatemala, where the clinic in Estanzuela serves a large geographic area consisting of the municipalities of Estanzuela, San Jorge, Huité, Rio Hondo and Gualán, Zacapa. The clinic in Zacapa city is to serve the municipalities

of Zacapa and Chiquimula as well as to serve as a spill-over location for the clinic in Estanzuela. The clinic in Zacapa is to form part of a larger clinic and initiative which will provide additional medical services such as care for diabetes and hypertension as well as dental care.

Similarly, a third clinic is opening up in Santa María Nebaj, a municipality of the Guatemalan department of El Cuiché, which will serve also the municipalities of: San Antonio Ilorenza, Canillá, Patzité, Zacualpa, Chiché, Chinique, Santa Cruz del Quiché, Chichicastenango, Sacapulas and San Bartolomé Jocotenango. This clinic is situated in a small privately owned, not for profit hospital and is the first of its kind in the region.



Packing and staging donation ready for shipment

The fourth and fifth eye-care clinics will form part of the organization of ProCiegos and will open in Zaragoza, Chimaltenango and Barberena, Santa Rosa. A partnership has been struck between ProCiegos and PROSAVI whereby they will support them with the donation of the equipment for two primary level eye-care clinics and ProCiegos will contribute technical assistance to PROSAVI and will receive the patients referred by PROSAVI for advanced care.

The specialised equipment has been donated to ASAPROSAR in El Salvador under a similar agreement whereby PROSAVI donates the equipment to ASAPROSAR while ASAPROSAR will provide technical assistance to PROSAVI as well as provide further treatment to patients referred to it by PROSAVI.

AMRF

The American Medical Resources Foundation donates used, but totally functional medical equipment to hospitals serving the needy worldwide. AMRF also develops and provides training programs for medical equipment repair technicians and hospital managers responsible for the maintenance, repair, and calibration of medical equipment.

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AMRF NEWS

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This issue was written by Kay Barney using material from the trip report of Victor and Carol Sologaistoa. Designed and formatted by AMRF volunteer Bob Schechter, Bartleby Scriveners Writing Service.

Gathering Hospital Equipment Is Adventure and Competition

On March 13th, AMRF was contacted and invited to come to Rideout Hospital, in California, to assess and hopefully accept equipment, that was no longer in use. Victor Sologaitoa, President/ CEO and Carol Sologaitoa LPN, went to Yuba City and made an assessment and graciously accepted this opportunity, to fulfill the needs of a hospital in Guatemala.



Loading at Yuba City Hospital

While in Marysville, we were invited to go to a hospital in the neighboring town of Yuba City that had also been shut down, where a great amount of equipment was there for the taking. We noticed there were other organizations interested in this equipment as well, so we had to act fast to beat



Equipment in Guatemala

the competition. We were told it was a first come first serve and we acted swiftly.

Carol got busy and recruited, Jean Demeo, a coworker, and in turn recruited her cousin Miriam Schheck, and Brady Goodell. We all moved with great determination through this hospital, searching and gathering the best of what was available. We centralized it all and inventoried every piece, organizing it so loading day would go as smoothly as possible. It was quite an adventure, the halls were dark and

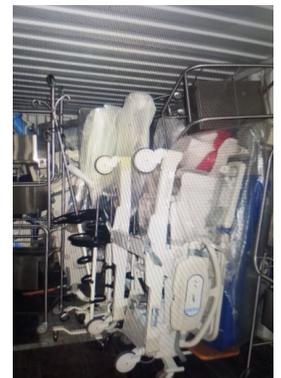
puddled. There was one working elevator. We placed one person upstairs retrieving the pieces and one person downstairs taking it off the elevator in an assembly line type fashion. We gathered such items as birthing beds, baby bassinets, I.V. poles, exam tables, med carts, a blood bank refrigerator, just to name a few. As we transported items to the centralized locations,



Unloading container in Guatemala

we found other pieces of equipment to be added. Time passed quickly and a feeling of accomplishment was enjoyed by all.

Day 2 was just as exciting. Loading began. Victor was in charge of orchestrating the loading process, being sure the inventory was correct, and items of greatest importance took priority and that every space was filled. Having inexperienced loading crew can be a challenge. However, having Victor in charge, with all of his knowledge and experience, had no problem deciding what was to be loaded first, we loaded this container in record time.



Birthing beds

Unfortunately, not all of the equipment would fit. Selected items were left organized for the other organization, ready for them to load. They weren't exactly happy, but we did our best to help them.

On April 2019 we shipped the 40' container, with mostly OB/GYN equipment, from Oakland. Its release in Guatemala was delayed due to the Easter holiday, so it was stored at the facility of APEVIHS in Retalhuleu for ultimate distribution.

Checking on AMRF Donations to Senegal

Beth Jordan, a volunteer of AMRF, visited the Hospital Barthimee in Thies, Senegal in April 2019 as a follow up to the equipment donation by AMRF in May 2018 and to check the status of the equipment. Beth, a cousin of Dr. Hough, AMRF's Medical Director, brought a battery and paper for an inoperable EKG machine.

Beth writes:

I had a lovely tour of the hospital, talked to many different people, but mostly to the technician that works on the equipment. I did meet Dr. Adamson, toured with the technician who is responsible for repairs and maintenance of the equipment, Lassona Guye, and the director of the hospital, Abduly Ly. I also spoke to people in some of the departments with the help



EKG machine

of our translator. They were very grateful for all the equipment, most of which is in great working order, and so very helpful to the hospital where it is used constantly. The two OR rooms I inspected were running with your equipment. The O2 machine (anesthesia machine) and the huge lights they mounted on the ceiling are a great improvement. I did not go into the patient rooms, but I was told some of the beds are not working. They would like help in procuring a new generator for auxiliary power when the main power fails. The current generator is very old. Their elevator is broken. They don't know what is wrong. They have no good way to get patients up and down on beds or in wheelchairs. Also getting equipment up and down that is heavy is a large problem without an elevator. They would like help to get it fixed. Elevator repair men are in short supply in Senegal!

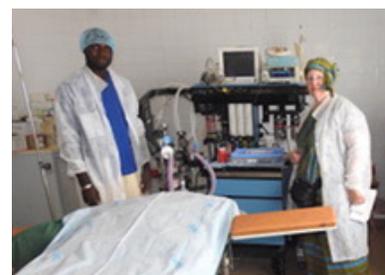
Here is the list of things they showed me:

1. Their mobile radiology (x ray) machine worked for about 3 months, then stopped. This may be a problem with the batteries that are attached. This unit is very important and they hope it can be fixed.
2. The EKG machine worked at first but not since the battery failed. It is very difficult to get the right battery in Senegal. I believe they tried the battery from the other EKG (which seems the same and works great) and that battery made the other machine work. In addition, getting EKG paper in Senegal is impossible. The machine is wonderful, and the patients are very happy with it as



Hospital Barthimee

3. The maternity infant warmer controls indicate it is working, but no heat comes out. They say it never worked since they got it. They do not know how to fix it.
4. The huge hanging lamps work in two OR rooms and are "strong light" for surgery and very helpful. One lamp is in storage. There may be some missing parts. They would like it fixed. I also will send pictures of portable tall on-stand OR lights they said they would like to have more of. They take less energy than the larger ceiling lights.



Beth Jordan, Volunteer

5. The anesthesia machines (two I saw) work great and are used for surgery.
6. Infant Incubators. (I think they said you gave them three.) Two work great. The third one doesn't work. When they turn it on the settings say it works, but the light on the left that has an "x" in a rectangle flashes and the machine makes a noise.
7. Patient beds. About half of the twenty you gave them work well. The others have a problem raising the head. This may be an electrical connection problem. This is the info I believe they told me. Keep in mind it was with translators and difficult English. The hospital staff said to thank you for helping them, and they appreciate any added help you can give them to

Continued on page 5

“Accidental Conversation” Leads Volunteer to AMRF

Just an incidental conversation with a colleague from my home state and I was hooked! The more that I learned about the mission and accomplishments of American Medical Resources Foundation, the more certain I was that I wanted to help out a great cause. That desire became a reality when Carol contacted me in March of 2019. "We are in need of some volunteers to help pack and inventory equipment next week." I made some phone calls and was able to enlist my niece Miriam and her boyfriend, Brady to join in the experience.

Not knowing what to expect, we drove up to Marysville and met with Carol and Victor to learn the game plan for gathering donations to be shipped from the hospital in Yuba to Guatemala the next day. I was quite impressed with the organization and networking that had taken place to secure items for donation and we prepared ourselves to be the worker bees in effort to get the job done. Roaming the halls of the dark, empty hospital searching for items marked for donation, one couldn't help but wonder about the history of the facility and how great it is that AMRF is able to essentially recycle medical equipment and supplies to hospitals/clinics in underdeveloped countries around the world. The day seemed to fly by and I was so energized by the experience that I even tried to see if I could take the next day off work to stay and continue helping with the final bit of loading. It was a great adventure that the three of us would welcome again.



*Jean Demeo, Carol, and volunteers
Miriam Schenck and Brady Goodell*

Thank you to Carol and Victor for all that you do. I wish AMRF luck in future endeavors and hope to be a part in whatever way I can.

Sincerely,

*Jean Demeo with
Miriam Schenck and Brady Goodell.*

AMRF Alive and Well *Continued from page 1*

Tuesday, and technicians employed throughout the week as needed to repair incoming equipment

Now we have shifted to a mode of working on smaller projects which do not require a large warehouse to support. Our President, Victor Sologaiostoa, has moved to Santa Barbara, California, and is managing AMRF successfully from there on both the east and west coasts, using many different warehouse and shipping facilities only when required. We are happy to report on these program in this issue of the AMRF News. We are sorry we were unable to report these to you on a more timely basis.

Senegal *Continued from page 4*

get things fixed.

As of now, the actions required to resolve the problems of the EKG—Item 2 above—have been completed. A plan of procurement, implementation and funding requirements for the rest

Fortunately, we were able to finance these programs through a series of grants, some donations and with the cash remaining when the warehouse was closed. However, again we will welcome your help with donations to continue our charitable work at the current level, with the hope of increasing the amount of equipment and on-site technical support we can give to hospitals serving the needy worldwide.

Yours in service,
Kay Barney, Chairman Emeritus

of the items is being developed.

Volunteer Beth Jordan brought with her a battery for the EKG Machine, and paper for it.

PLEASE DONATE TO AMRF

I would like to discuss a
Planned Giving
Program.

Please contact me at:

Tel. _____

Email _____

As a person who desires to relieve suffering and assist hospitals and clinics serving the poor in developing nations, please enroll me as a contributor to the *American Medical Resources Foundation*. Enclosed is my contribution of:

\$10,000 () \$5,000 () \$2,500 ()

\$1,000 () \$500 () \$100 () Other ()

Name _____

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State _____ Zip _____

I would like to make a
multi-year pledge of:

\$ _____

with the following dona-
tion schedule:

Date	Amount
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Please do not send cash

Can You Help Us With Equipment or Supplies From Your Hospital or Company?

Donations of used, functioning or repairable medical equipment or supplies are urgently needed for shipment to hospitals and clinics serving the poor in developing countries around the world.

We will arrange pickup and/or shipping from anywhere in the U.S.

Equipment donations from for-profit organizations are exempt from Federal Income Tax. Donors should check with their tax advisors to

establish the value of the charitable deduction.

We are in need of any equipment and supplies used in patient care.

All the equipment is checked and repaired as needed in our own facility before being donated to hospitals overseas.

All donations will be greatly appreciated by the recipient.

Please call 508.930.1804 with a list of equipment to donate. Or, you may contact us by e-mail: victor@amrf.com

AMRF

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