

Although the warehouse was closed for most of the summer, there has been a great deal of activity. IH volunteers have packed two 40-foot shipping containers and assisted travelers taking suitcases and boxes of medical supplies for destinations all over the world.

Caravan to Cuba

Last summer volunteers from International H.O.P.E assisted members of the Manitoba-Cuba Solidarity Committee to pack a van with medical equipment and supplies as well as crutches and walkers. Ours was the first stop along the way. The van was driven to Minneapolis by MCSC president Diane Zack and co-chair of medical aid, Frances Molaro. In Minneapolis the supplies were loaded onto a bus which will make several pickups along the route before eventually reaching Havana. Coinciding with the pickups in Central America are ones from Eastern USA starting in Boston and another in Western America starting in Seattle. All three caravans meet in Texas and from there challenge the border to get into Mexico – destination Tampico. All the vehicles containing supplies are loaded onto a barge sailing to Havana. The American part of the journey is organized by a group called Pastors for Peace. The purpose of the caravan is twofold: to deliver much needed medical supplies to a bereft country but also to bring to the attention of the American people the hardships caused by the U.S. economic blockade of Cuba.



Diane Zack,
David Mackling,
Frances Molaro,
Adele Kory &
Gorden Andrus

Guatemala

Adrienne Reimer, a fourth year nursing student at the University of Manitoba, had an opportunity to accompany the Christian Medical Dental Association to Cubulco, Guatemala. Before leaving she packed a suitcase of medical supplies. Although a hospital has been built by a local Cubulcan family with two surgical suites, the suites are not used until the humanitarian team arrives. When it does come, the citizens line up by the hundreds seeking medical care. While Adrienne was there, 50 major surgeries were performed, countless teeth were extracted and many minor procedures executed. A surgeon and nurse also tour around the

surrounding communities performing minor surgeries. In all, 722 patients were seen in four days. The people of Cubulco suffer the effects of extreme poverty with no running water. Because of this, the team distributes vitamins and de-worming medications.



Children waiting outside the clinic for treatment or candy? The team was appreciated for more than just medical expertise

Dr. L. Ross, a pediatric plastic surgeon, gathered supplies for a stint in Guatemala. We will report on his experience in the next newsletter.

St. Vincent

Byron Jones is an amazing man! Last year he was able to secure funding for a container to be sent to his hurricane ravaged birth place, St. Vincent in the Caribbean. Since that time he has been working feverously to raise enough funds for a second container. On Thanksgiving day IH volunteers assisted Byron and other members of the island community to pack beds, incubators, isolettes, wheelchairs, equipment, fetal heart monitors and much, much more. The value of the equipment is estimated at \$1,100,000. The container should arrive at its destination by the end of November.



Unpacking the first container sent to St. Vincent

Bolivia

A Winnipeg OR nurse, Fran Majkut, and two Winnipeg physicians, Duncan Inglis, a surgeon, and Adrian Howaleska, an anesthetist traveled to San Lucas Bolivia to participate in a surgical mission. The mission was organized by the non-profit organization, Esperança. Esperança has been in existence since 1973 working to “improve the well being of children and their families

through public health programming and volunteer surgical missions” (www.esperanca.org). Fran reports that they performed 30-50 surgeries (gall bladder, thyroid, bowel resections and hernias) during the two weeks they were in San Lucas. Their patients are poor farmers or fisherman who would be unable to pay for surgery and consequently debilitated by their affliction. Prior to leaving for Bolivia, Fran packed a variety of surgical supplies and equipment which was greatly appreciated by the team.

Tanzania

This will be the fifth time since 2001, Harry and Elaine Mueller have traveled to Mwanza, Tanzania to volunteer at the Starehe Children’s Home. The home has approximately 101 children most of whom have been orphaned, abused and often abandoned. Harry and Elaine tell the story of two siblings ages 4 and 6 who were brought to the Home, after being severely abused by their uncle and were found wandering the streets of a village adjacent to Mwanza. Their backs were scarred where they had been whipped and burned. They had huge distended stomachs from either worms or malnutrition. They have adapted very well to their new home. Two 1 month old babies weighing 3 and 4 pounds came to the home infected with malaria. Their mother and the other triplet had already died. The two surviving babies had been expected to die but are thriving. Some of the supplies taken from the warehouse are used at the Starehe home. The rest are given to a 10 bed hospital at nearby Kimkumaka where the children go for treatment.



Harry & Elaine Mueller and some of their charges

Children’s Hunger Fund Canada

Deanna Waters, a local volunteer with the CHFC came to the warehouse seeking pediatric medical supplies for the Wentz medical Center in Ggaba, Uganda.



Dr. Myron Wentz, center back, children and members of the African Renewal Mission, were part of the celebration to open the Center, along with Dave Phillips, President of the Children’s Hunger Fund, far right.

According to their brochure, this state of the art medical facility serves a village population of more than 80,000 children. It also has a Winnipeg connection! Gail Fones, former president of the Manitoba College of Nurses, is serving a six month term at the clinic. Debra Lefebvre, a volunteer from Ontario took the supplies to the clinic. In her letter of thanks, Debra tells us how overjoyed the two doctors, Martin and Jonathon, and Gail were to receive the supplies. She says “Thanks so much for your on-going generosity and support! I cannot express my/our gratitude enough!

Ukraine

Our partners, Louie Sawatzky and the Mennonite Benevolent Society, are at it again. Yet another container was packed in late October destined for Zapprizhzya, Eastern Ukraine. Louie and the Society are fabulous fundraisers since it costs approximately \$7,000 to send a container. International H.O.P.E is proud to support such an energetic, compassionate group of people.

Earthquake Relief

Following the devastating earthquake in Pakistan and Kashmir, Dr. Ahmed Farooq and two other Winnipeg physicians travelled to the stricken areas with over 12 boxes of medical supplies and crutches. The supplies were shipped free of charge by Reimer Express to Toronto. From Toronto, the supplies are being flown to the earthquake area by Pakistani Airways, again, free of charge. We will report more on this in the next newsletter.

Warehouse Happenings

Love, Love, Love

Two of our volunteers, Bob Mann and Sylvia Dolynchuk met while helping to pack one of our containers. They will be tying the knot this Christmas. Volunteering for IH has many rewards!

Movie Business

We’re in the movies – not our volunteers but our equipment. Several movie equipment companies have borrowed our beds and other standard equipment for hospital and disaster scenes. In return IH receives a small donation which helps to offset our operating expenses.

They are back

We have been fortunate to see the return of some of the students for another stint at volunteering: Colin Walus, Tyler Morgan and Greg Longbottom. New recruits are Amelia and Conrad Goerz, Neal Lund, Clare Wilson and Stephen Spikula. We certainly do appreciate their enthusiasm, energy and all the work they do. IH would also like to thank John Muller who fixes everything mechanical including our C-arm and Ron Blowatt and Tom Nichol who repair our wheelchairs. Fran Majkut and Sally are new volunteers at the warehouse.

Visit our website at: www.internationalhope.ca .