

Health for Humanity Service Society

Annual Report 2006

We have just returned from our fourth successful mission to Guatemala, and with our first mission to the Philippines due to leave in January 2007, we have much to report on as we approach the end of 2006.

In May, we were again indebted to Sunsail Canada for hosting our fifth annual fund raising regatta which raised more than \$10,000.00; half of our needed funds. Unfortunately, Sunsail is no longer maintaining a base in Vancouver and, therefore, unable to sponsor the sailing regatta next year. We are greatly indebted to Ian McPherson who organised our charity regattas for the past 5 years. This year we welcome the addition of the White Rock Millennium Rotary Club as a major supporter of our missions and we hope this assistance will be ongoing. The remainder of our funding comes from personal donations and we thank all those individuals whose contributions, large and small, make it possible for us to provide surgery in the developing world. The donated funds are used exclusively for patient care expenses which include the cost of using the operating rooms, medications, supplies, laboratory tests, transporting many of our patients from the rural villages, and providing food and accommodation for our recovering patients until they are fit to return to their villages. In addition, we are grateful to many individuals and companies in the Canadian Pharmaceutical and Medical Equipment and Supply industries who have continued to support our work. The majority of our medications and supplies for this year's mission were donated. A complete list of our donors and supporters can be found on our website www.h4h.ca



With renovations completed at the hospital in Guatemala, we were able to send a full team of 12 physicians, 14 nurses, and 9 support staff. Over the two weeks in November our team completed 118 surgeries, including cleft lip and palate repairs, hysterectomies, cholecystectomies, and hernia repairs. All of these surgeries have a major impact on our patients' lives as they enable a return to full activity. Again, we worked with local professionals and there was a useful exchange of knowledge. It is now 10 years since the end of the civil war and the return of democracy. Each year we hope to see some improvements in healthcare when we return to Guatemala, but this year we learned that none of the National Hospitals had been performing elective surgery since June due to funding problems. It is clear that there is an ongoing need for our volunteer services, and H4H is committed to sending surgical teams as long as the need continues. We also continue to investigate other ways that we can assist the developing healthcare services in Guatemala.

This year some of our group once again visited Santiago Atitlan, the site of the 2006 hurricane Stan mudslides that caused considerable loss of life and damage. The Santiago hospital, staffed by volunteers, was severely damaged and is still housed in temporary accommodation. Although the villagers have been re-housed there still remains severe poverty in this area. It is obvious that governments do not have the answer to these global problems and I encourage every individual to make some contribution, however small, to correct the inequality that exists in our world. Together we can make a difference.

In another development this year H4H was approached by a group of nurses from the Philippines, now working in Vancouver, to work with them to send a surgical team to the Philippines in January 2007. Under the leadership of Dr. Peter Scoates, our team will perform surgery for one week in Baguio City and report on the need and feasibility of sending further surgical teams to this area of the Philippines. At present, it is our policy that each mission be funded separately so that donors know exactly where their funds are being used. We thank all the donors who have supported this new initiative.

Plans are already underway for our next visit to Antigua scheduled to depart November 9th, 2007. We hope that all of you who generously donated last year will remember us again in the coming year. All donations of \$20.00 or more receive a charitable tax receipt. We remind you that we have no paid staff, our administrative overhead is minimal, and all team members volunteer their time, and pay for their own transportation and accommodation. All donations are used for expenses related to medical care.

Thanks again to our Board, team members, and other volunteers for their commitment and hard work. Thanks also to our donors for their support in 2006. I wish our first Health for Humanity Philippines team every success on this exploratory mission and look forward to another successful year in 2007.

Cindy Masaro, President, Health for Humanity.