

# June Mission Team Visit to Guatemala

September 27, 2012

## An Event prior to the July Team Arrival

As you are already aware from our last update, our June team did a super job. They arrived on June 21 and departed on June 30. After a long period of rest (3 days 😊), we had visitors to come from the country of **Paraguay**. On July 3, **Pedro Vera** and **Troy Spradlin**, a North America missionary, arrived to Guatemala. Their primary purpose for visiting was to look at the operation of **Instituto Teológico Latinoamericano (ITL)**, our preacher training school. Lord willing, their plans are soon to start a training facility there in Paraguay.

It was a pleasure to spend time with these brothers and to share our experiences with them. It is great to know that there are sound men on the field serving the Lord's church and that they have a desire to help other faithful men and women to do the same.

These brothers departed Guatemala on Saturday, July 6. Please keep them and their labors for the Lord in Paraguay in your prayers.

## The July Team Arrives

On Thursday evening, July 5, our July team of 16 people arrived. Even though there was a little delay in the flights, everyone arrived that same evening. Thankfully, we were able to arrange for 14 of them to be on the same flight. The other two members of the team, Byron's mother, **Aralee Hernandez**, and niece, **Ashley Figueroa** were coming directly from Los Angeles, Calif., on another airline that arrived a little later than scheduled. However, all in all, everything worked out. The rest of the team was from three states. Nine of them were from the same congregation in McMinnville,



## Friday, Saturday and Sunday

Friday was a day of relaxation and a time to learn a little about Guatemalan history. We traveled to Zone 1 of Guatemala City. There is a lot of history in this zone. We visited the National Palace and the central market. For most on the team this was their first time to Guatemala; so the experience was a learning one. Others who had been already to Guatemala always enjoy visiting

Tenn. They were **Dr. Glenn Davis** and his daughter, **Jenna**; **Lester Amos**; **Lisa Gregory** and her daughter **Michaela**; **Sharon Gilliam** and her daughter **Emily Simmons**; **Allison Marcrom** and **Cynthia Whitham**. From Nashville, Tenn., we had **Chris** and **Heather Nelson**. **Jennifer Elam** from Simpsonville, S. Car., **Sahdiq McNair** from Moreno Valley, Calif., and **Jason Rich** from Dallas, Tex., were also a part of the team. These 14 individuals left different airports and met up in Houston, Tex., to board the same airplane bound for Guatemala.

We are grateful that the team, for the most part, had a smooth travel to Guatemala. There were

this area. Of course, everyone enjoys the art of haggling at the market. To watch the expertise of some of the team members you would think that this is how we shop in the U.S. 😊 That evening the team, along with many members of Linda Vista and the students from ITL, came to our home for fellowship and a type of "ice-breaker" meal. Some of you already are thinking that we probably

no major hold ups as there have been at times in the past. Everyone's luggage made it and all the medication passed through customs without a problem. A few years ago all of the medicines for the medical clinic were held up in customs. The medicines were not released until the day the team left and, not surprisingly, some of it was missing. This time we did our best to make sure all the paper work was in order to make the entrance of everything much smoother. Although everyone was tired from their travels, they found their accommodations at Hotel Tikal Futura more than adequate for their stay. We were tempted to stay there ourselves. 😊

played our annual game of Jenga. Well you're right! We did. And, guess who won? The men reclaimed their title (or their pride as some would say 😊). The men felt it necessary to stop the competition after the first game so there would be no chance of spoiling our victory! 😊



On Saturday, like we



have in the past, the team spent the morning making final preparations for the seminar that took place at Linda Vista that afternoon. They were picked up a little before noon and enjoyed lunch together on their way to Linda Vista. The afternoon was a special event for everyone as there were classes for our children, our teens and adults. This year's theme was **"La Familia Como Dios Quiere"** (English: **The Family As God Desires**). It started with some great singing, prayers and Bible readings. Our first class, a combined one titled **"God Desires Love and Discipline"**

was taught by Glenn Davis. We then divided the group with the males (adults and teens) moving to a local school and the females remaining at the building. Ray Amos and Cynthia Whitham taught our first divided class for the adults entitled **"Male Leadership in the Home/ Respecting Leadership in the Home"**. The second class, **"Proper Priorities in the Home,"** was taught by Jason Rich and Jennifer Elam. At the same time we had teen classes. The first one, **"Learning Your True Value"** was taught by Sahdiq McNair, and Jenna Davis and Heather Nelson. Chris Nelson, Michaela Gregory, Emily Simmons and Allison Marcrom gave the second class entitled **"What Are Your Priorities?"** While all of this was going on the children, divided into their age groups, were upstairs at the church building receiving their classes, which were taught by Sharon Gilliam and Lisa Gregory. There were also teachers from Linda Vista who helped with these classes.

And, finally, at least as far as classes are concerned, where would we be without our translators. We are thankful to Aralee, Ashley, **Benjamin Montejo**, Byron and **Johania Reyes** for helping our members and visitors to understand what was being taught. May we never forget



to recognize that translation is a vital part of this type of seminar for which we are grateful that we have people who can do it. After all the mentioned activities, we concluded the day with the meal prepared by Patty Ordoñez, with the help of other sisters from

the Linda Vista congregation. Everyone left very well fed both spiritually and physically.



For the Lord's Day activities we began with a bi-lingual worship service in the morning with men from the States and local brothers participating. Jason Rich preached the sermon, which was entitled **"The Life Worth Imitating."** After the worship time our combined Bible class was taught by Ray Amos. The subject was **"Effective Communication in the Home."** It was during probably one of the worst rainstorms we have had, so the huge drops of water on the tin roof did not allow for very good communication! 😊

Our children's classes, divided into various groups, were taught by Jennifer Elam, Cynthia Whitham, Jenna Davis and Heather Nelson. Some teachers from the Linda Vista family taught the very small children, while others served as helpers for our visiting teachers.



After the morning activities we traveled to the **Adela Garcia** family's home for lunch. This has become a traditional stop for our teams on Sunday. Sister Adela, along with help from other family members, does a super job of preparing lunch for the group and several other visitors. From this home, we made our way to the **Amatitlan National Hospital**, located in Amatitlan, a town about 30 minutes from Linda Vista. Even though the hospitals here are VERY strict with visiting hours, even for family members, this one



allows us to enter after visiting hours are over. This gives us more personal time with the staff and patients. We were able to go inside to visit with patients, pray for them, and to give them care packages that included evangelistic material. We are thankful to **Vicki Calderon** for always taking the lead in putting these packages together. We are also grateful to the members of Linda Vista and those on our visiting teams for providing the items to go into the care packages. This visit to our national hospital is always an eye-opening experience for those from the U.S. Most of them leave the area saying they'll never complain about their medical care at home anymore.

After the visit to the hospital, we headed back to Linda Vista where we had a few

minutes to buy snacks before the evening worship started. We concluded the day with another bi-lingual worship time with men from Linda Vista and from the U.S. taking part. The sermon entitled "**Follow the Doctor's Orders**" was very well delivered by Glenn Davis. We believe it was also well received because the audience knew the speaker was also an M.D.

As you have read, the weekend was a very full one. After our evening worship, the team enjoyed a meal in route to the hotel. Needless to say, they were looking forward to a good night's rest before other activities would start the next morning. As you can see, coming to Guatemala with a team is no vacation. But, it is an enjoyable time as you serve the Lord and His people. Of course, you get to do quite a bit of site seeing also. 😊



## Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday

On Monday and Tuesday we had two projects that took place at the same time. The team, along with some of the members from Linda Vista, was divided into two groups. Some of them worked in a medical clinic led by Dr. Glenn Davis. This clinic was offered free of charge to members of Linda Vista and their family



members living in the same home. We were blessed to have members on the teams with medical experience. Sharon Gilliam (aka as Dr. Sharon to the Linda Vista members) is a Nurse Practitioner; she and Dr. Glenn

were able to see patients. Others on the team had nursing and pharmacy experience, while others were good with crowd control and working with children. All of these talents put together made a successful two-day clinic. Lord willing, we hope to be able to open this clinic to the neighborhood the next time.

The rest of the team worked in a construction project led by **Felipe Lopez**, a former member of Linda Vista, who now worships with the church in Amatitlan. The work took place in the home of the **William Ramos** family. The project was to build a permanent wall that would make a permanent separation between his home and the neighbors. It entailed quite a bit of manual labor because a lot of concrete first had to be removed in order to build the permanent wall. The workers did a splendid job and were able to get most of the project completed. Felipe was hired to complete what was left of the project.



Both projects on Monday and Tuesday went very well. Each day, Isabel Tovar and other sisters at Linda Vista prepared lunch. The food was great! The only thing missing was time for a quick siesta. 😊 Each evening the team had their evening meal together at the hotel or an area close to the hotel. The ITL students and other members from Linda Vista who live in the Guatemala City area joined them. On Wednesday, we visited in the homes of some of our members from the Linda

## Teaching the CENTRAL MESSAGE in CENTRAL AMERICA!

SEPTEMBER



Vista congregation. The purpose of these visits was to encourage these members. Some of the members were sick, some had been slacking in their attendance and others just needed a boost in their Christian walk. Our team, along with others from Linda Vista and from ITL, had a short devotional at each stop. There was time also given to each one being visited to make any prayer request known. Each visit ended with a special prayer mentioning those requests. After the visits in the afternoon, before Bible Study, the congregation had a special time with the medical providers. They were able to come to ask medical questions. The medical providers were able to address some medical issues common to many here in Guatemala. We believe that this was time well spent and plan

to do it again when we have another medical team.

On Wednesday evening we had our normal Bible class time, which was well attended. Sahdiq McNair, who was our only preacher on the team, delivered the combined class lesson. The title was **“One Body, Many Parts”** and it emphasized that every member of the body is important to the work of the church. Even though Sahdiq was not feeling well physically, he did an excellent job for the class. Once again, our children were blessed with classes led by the ladies on the team. Everyone present enjoyed our time of study and fellowship together.



### Thursday, Friday and Saturday

Now, for those of you who are thinking that Byron and Hi are not only missionaries, but also slave drivers, you must read on. 😊 Thursday and Friday the team went sightseeing and shopping.

On Thursday some of them stayed close while a few of them ventured all the way up north to Tikal National Park. On Friday, during the day, we went to Antigua where the team shopped and visited a cof-

fee farm. That evening we arrived back to the Linda Vista building where the congregation had planned a going away event for our July team. The purpose of this was to show our gratitude for all that the team had done while they were here. Many tears were shed as this would be the last time for this year that this particular group of brethren from the U.S. would be with us.



### Well That's Most of It Folks!

This has been a summation of the ten days that this team was here with us in Guatemala. We were not able to write about everything. As you can see, they stayed significantly busy doing good works and involved in good things while here. We are eternally grateful to the team for coming to Central America and for blessing the church family in so many ways. May God bless you all for your unselfish service to Him, to His church and to your fellow man. We pray that God will send you our way again soon. We will close for now. Our next update will give

you details about the World English Institute Teams (WEI) that were with us recently.

Serving the Master,

*Hawatthia "Hi" Jones*  
Missionary

*Byron E. Benitez*  
Missionary

We are on the Web

[www.missionguate.com](http://www.missionguate.com)  
[www.itlguatemala.org](http://www.itlguatemala.org)