

## Clínica El Buen



Like the Good Samaritan,  
may we not be ashamed of  
touching the wounds of  
those who suffer, but try  
to heal them with concrete  
acts of love.  
-Pope Francis

**MAY 2017**

Buenas, Buenas! Here comes another tiny glimpse into our lives here at the clinic.

Life moves along at a fast clip and we are kept quite busy with a fairly constant flow of sick people. Of course some days are busier than others, and some people sicker than others. We are so ever thankful to our heavenly Father and Healer who guides us when we're not sure what to do, and for all of you who back us up.



Our current staff: Left to right  
Kendra Martin – head nurse  
Norma Sanabria – secretary  
Marisela Ochoa – Pharmacist  
Ingrid Ruiz – LPN  
Elizabeth Mejia – LPN  
Kelly Ramer – RN  
Benj Martin (Not pictured)  
works part time and fills in  
when needed.



Dec. 2016

Our staff has changed a bit since the last year. Priscila and Sandra left our ranks, returning to their hometowns and families. Sandra is helping her dad and brothers with their family business, and also helping at the church school there in San Bartolomé. Priscila is working on opening up a small clinic in Oratorio with the supplies from the El Naranjo clinic since it was shut down in December. She also visits a couple villages periodically to hold clinic days.

We ask you to pray for both of them as the readjust to life out of El Chal, and to the work God has called them to. We really miss them!!!

We decided to be a little extravagant with farewell gifts.© We're very thankful for their many years of labor here at the clinic!



Littman Stethoscope for Pris



Photo blanket for Sandra

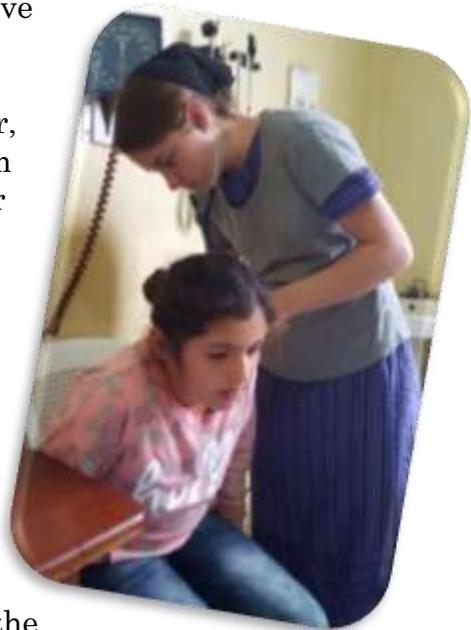


But it hasn't been all goodbyes; we are happy to welcome to our ranks, Marisela Ochoa, from Nicaragua. She has committed to helping us in the Pharmacy for at least a year.



Dorcas Miller came to help us during the month of January, while Kelly was on furlough. Thanks so much Dorcas, we are ever so grateful! Not sure what we would have done without you!

Tricia Burkholder, nursing student from NE, and former missionary kid here in El Chal, came in January for 6 weeks. She helped with any number



of odd jobs and shadowed the nurses. Come again soon Tricia! Enjoyed having you, and blessings in your studies!

We were privileged to again host the team of nursing students from Malone University for a day this year. Kendra spent the rest of the week with them at Hospital Shalom, acting as translator and giving a glimpse of what it's like to be a nurse in Guatemala.



Kelly and Kendra enjoyed the opportunity to help translate with a large, international medical team called Faith In Practice. It was a great learning experience, working directly with a doctor for 4 days.





### ...BUT I KNOW A MAN WHO CAN...



It was another Monday morning, another week, another opportunity to serve. Patients filled the porch as I passed through, greetings of ‘Buenos Dias’ echoed out as I quickly scanned the crowd. ...Thinking to myself ... it will be a busy morning, but feeling reassured that with a full staff of 5 nurses working in the back we wouldn’t have to turn anyone away today or have to tell them that it wouldn’t be until the afternoon that they could be seen.



The day started per usual with a short devotional and prayer- today it was by Elizabet. As she prayed, she asked God that He would help us to not only meet the physical needs of the patients but also those spiritual needs as well.

Once Norma had handed numbers out, and all diabetic patients has passed through for their blood sugar checks, I grabbed my faithful stethoscope a trusty pen and the next waiting chart on the pile. Opening it up I noted it was a diabetic control, so quickly found her blood sugar results on the list. ... A little high today- scanning through her history I noticed she had not come last month for her control but had been coming regularly prior to that. M-m-m-m, a little detective work ahead. Standing at the door, I called her name. A rather striking, slightly built, middle-aged lady with loosely hanging, jet-black hair arose from the bench and made her way to the door. We passed by the scales for a quick weight check before passing to the consultorio.



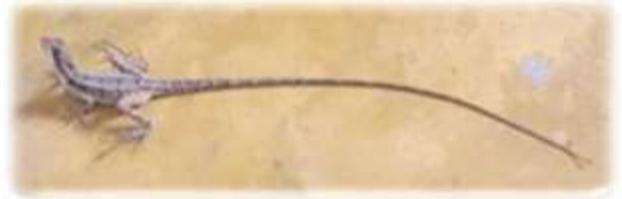
She was friendly, but I observed a look of sadness, pain in those dark eyes. As the consult started and continued I noted her history, etc and stated that we missed seeing her last month for check up. “Yes” she said, “my brother was killed in a gang related killing while driving one of the micro-buses.” A-w-w yes the pain of a loss. ... At a loss of





words, I simply sat back and listened as she shared. She continued, now with a noted tear welling up in her eyes and threatening to spill over, that he (her brother) wasn't a Christian. For years the family had been pleading with him to change his ways... But he continued to

refuse. Aw-w-w... the pain goes deep, the pain of a soul lost for eternity, bound by Satan's grip. ..."yes", I simply said after she finished sharing, tears of my own threatening to well up, "I can't take away the pain ...the loss ..... But I know a Man who can..... A-w-w- a smile hinted through the pain of her eyes and the tear threatening to fall, slid unabated down her cheek. "Yes I know this Man", she simply said. ... And so we left her burden and pain at the cross that day for that moment in time. At the cross of the Man that can ---turn sorrow to joy and mourning to laughter, and heal the broken hearted.



Elizabet handed me a chart - "can you do this curación (dressing change) for me?" "Sure" I replied. "Oh, one more thing- read his chart before you start - HIV+, I'll fill you in later". "Why God oh why"..... Lil Junior was waiting at the door, with his aunt, when I went to call him in - a likable chap of 10 years old with a shy, mischievous smile. He'd let the bike control him, instead of him controlling the bike, leading to a crash, a gash in the forehead that required stitches and a rather skinned-up face. Eliz had put the stitches in 2 days previously, but wanted him to come back for check-up. Things were healing well and they were soon out the door. Returning to the nurses' station, Elizabet was waiting and recounted his history. His mother died soon after he was born, due to HIV - a deadbeat father who ran off before Jr was born and now left to his tía (aunt) to care for him. The love and care his aunt had for him blessed my heart. But then a thought came- "But the pain, stigma, shame, and lifelong effect this disease will have on him, esp. those teenage years." "He can't bear it on his own". .... A quiet voice whispered in my heart...." No HE can't ... but I know a man that can".... A-w-w yes God, he's your child. You will be there for him.

She was young - 14 and looking for a little one- Rosa came due to medical needs. Follow-up

visits were needed as well and she faithfully showed up. Slowly over the course of the 3 visits, she opened more and more. ...With a father who constantly beat her, she readily agreed to take the hand of a 26-year-old guy, from a neighboring town, when he asked --- a means to escape from the tyranny of her home life in hopes of a promised love by this man, and a better life. 4 months after living together and learning a little one was on the way, she became sick and showed up at the clinic. She





shared that now her man doesn't want her. She had known that he had been living with another woman prior to being with her, but he had promised that she was his one and only one now. Who will love her now and give her the stability she deserves? ...Who will help her care for this new life when she herself is but a child? - She can't do it on her own. ...A voice whispers in my heart ... "No SHE can't but I know a Man that can. " ... "Yes, she's your child God... give her the love and strength she needs for the journey ahead."



Little 2 year-old Myron was brought by mommy into the clinic for a nagging cold that just wouldn't go away. Little sister sleeping and all wrapped up in a blanket was brought along too. Mommy quietly asked before leaving the consult, "Will you please weigh my baby?" "She is 2 months old and was born with a heart problem. "The Doctor says she'll need surgery when she's 5 months old." "He says children with this problem have a hard time gaining weight." "Sure", I said. I pulled back the blanket for a peek ... those eyes, ears, the forehead - a special child- Down Syndrome, it's called in the medical world. I ask to listen to her heart - the all too familiar sound of very distinct murmur was present. We weighed her- she had gained 2 lbs since birth and the mother was overjoyed to be able to go to the Doctor next week for a follow-up visit, knowing that her little one had gained some weight, little as it was. I can't do anything more for this child, but I know a man that can ... One who can heal her heart and most of all give grace, strength, wisdom and love to and for mommy, daddy and big brother Myron to care for lil sister in the years ahead. ... "yes, here's another of your special children God- one who's journey through life will depend on You and the love and care of her family to thrive."

.... Life is a journey and this Man continues to teach us - refine us - and daily remind us that we are but instruments in His hands. Sometimes He simply wants us to lay it all at His feet and let Him complete the work.



*Names and ages have been changed for patient privacy.*

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

God bless you in your work wherever you are and whatever you do. Thank you for your interest and prayers for what we do here.

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Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.  
~Leo Buscaglia

