

# Flying Mother Lode Chapter

## Clinic Report - October, 2016

### Primary Care Clinic



Beautiful weather for October with smooth air for flying. **Joel Prosser** flew **Mariana Locke, Julia Carey** (a high school student) & Julia's father, **Mark Carey**. **Ney Grant** flew **Ann & David Hively & Pam Polk**. **Mark Rudolf** flew **Debbie Marino, Bruce Hultgren & Gwen Douglass**. **Chris Nelson** flew **Jack Olson & Donna Root** (Carol Armstrong was forced to cancel due to illness). **Dean McDavid** flew **Bob Haining, Malcolm McHenry**, Dean's daughter, **Lauren**, & me. We arrived early in the day after an early departure & enjoyed a leisure-filled afternoon followed by about 13 of us going to the Old Mill Restaurant for dinner; the remaining people stayed at the hotel to eat.

Sadly, we learned that one of the hotel employees always seen sweeping & mopping the hallways was killed as a pedestrian by an automobile. He was very much liked by all for his quiet demeanor.

Saturday was very busy with Chris's group dispensing clothes, hand bags etc. Dean drove a mother of 15 children home (she still has four children at home) after she walked seven miles to our clinic to get three bags of clothes for her children; these had been donated & collected by Chris. The medical clinic quickly filled with patients, and Drs. McHenry & Haining evaluated while Mariana hustled around seeing female patients & babies. The eye clinic was the busiest with a lot of people helping to fit & dispense eyeglasses. Julia Carey will write an article detailing the eyeglass program originating with Folsom Prison inmates labeling the used eyeglasses, etc.

Saturday, Joel gave a presentation to a group of locals at Celito Lindo Restaurant, detailing the history of our organization in the hopes of getting donations to our scholarship fund. He has put much effort into enlarging this fund so that even more scholarships can be awarded.

Around 10 a.m. on Saturday, Alfonso Rodriguez took seven of us on a tour of the tomato greenhouse which had over 50 varieties of large tomatoes & many varieties of Roma tomatoes. We then visited the desalinization plant where ocean water has most of the minerals removed, leaving water with only 200 parts per million of sodium chloride; this is then used to irrigate the tomato & cucumber plants. He gave us several large boxes of tomatoes, which many of us carried home.

Saturday evening, most of us drove to Jardines for a fine meal.

Early departure on Sunday morning with most of us arriving home before 2 p.m. After delivering passengers, Dean & Lauren McDavid flew home to Denver in just over 4 hours.

-Sr. Bilito

# Primary Care Clinic Photos



**Jack Olson (Folsom Lake Rotary) and Chris Nelson fitting new glasses for a patient on the spot**



**Dr. Malcom McHenry consulting with a family**



**Lauren McDavid translating for Dr. Bilito McDavid**

# Folsom Lake Rotary Club



My name is Jack Olson and I would like to share my experience helping the Flying Samaritans Mother Lode Chapter. The Flying Samaritans are a group of Doctors, dentists, nurses, translators, pilots and support personnel which operate a free medical clinic in Baja California, Mexico. Our club, The Rotary Club of Folsom Lake, has sponsored the month of October. For \$1,000 we can provide all the necessary medical, dental and vision supplies the clinic needs for one month.

On the second weekend of every month, The Flying Samaritans fly to San Quintin Mexico in private aircraft owned and flown by some of the volunteers. The focus is on providing medical, dental and vision services to the population of San Quintin Valley in Baja California, with extended reach to individuals throughout Baja. These monthly clinics generally attract over 200 people from the surrounding area. The majority of patients are poor, uninsured Mexicans or Indigenous Native Americans. Approximately 40% are children and 45% are women

My trip started early on the second Friday in October, 2016. With wheels up at 7:30 a.m. we embarked on our first two and a half hour leg of our trip to the border. We chose Mexicali to go through customs as the weather on the coast was fogged in. I was lucky enough to be aboard an aircraft that had a high ceiling and could climb above the clouds which made our flight smoother than most. When we touched down in San Quintin, I was excited to be a part of the group and could not wait to embark on a weekend of service and care for the people of Baja, Mexico. I already was familiar with the incredible work that the doctors, dentists, and other volunteers of Flying Samaritans do to provide medical care and supplies for the people of Mexico. I was eager to see the wonderful work they were about to do first hand. We arrived at the hotel in San Quintin around 2:30 pm and promptly ordered margaritas, chips and guacamole to tide us over until dinner. After snacks in the courtyard, a small group walked out to the beach and collected a bag full of sea shells for our friends at home. Then off for street tacos on the main drag, (Highway 1) in San Quintin.

Saturday at sunrise the clinic began. The courtyard was already beginning to fill up with patients as we began preparing for the day. I was assigned to help with the Optical Clinic and was taught how to operate an auto refractor (which can provide the eye doctors the data needed to order a pair of prescription glasses). We performed a near record 81 eye exams during the day and also dispensed around 25 pairs of eye glasses to patients that had been seen the previous month. The most satisfying thing was to see a young child put on their brand new glasses and watch as they finally saw a clear picture of the world for the very first time. It truly gave me goose bumps. They would put on their glasses and look around the room as if they had not seen it before. One young boy looked at his mom, in focus for the first time, and gave her a huge hug while they both had the biggest smiles wash over their faces, (mom is very misty). When I gave another man his first pair of glasses and saw a great big smile wash over his face, I realized those glasses were about giving him hope for his future. Those glasses were about opening the eyes of his heart and his dreams to the better days ahead of him as well as opening the eyes in his head. Every time we as a clinic go down to Baja, we send a clear message to our patients that they have human dignity, that their lives matter, and that better days are ahead. While we may run out of toothbrush kits or might not be able to serve every single person who needs medical care, we can show our Latino brothers and sisters that the restraints of poverty can never defeat the forces of compassion and kindness, as long as someone cares enough to release those forces. All the wonderful volunteers have the Rotary spirit of Service Above Self and demonstrates leadership and compassion in action really looks like. I look forward to visiting the farmlands of San Quintin again very soon.

All in all, attending a clinic with the Flying Samaritans was a gratifying and eye opening experience. Not only did I get to experience a little bit of Mexico, but I met a lot of caring Flying Samaritans who have the same drive as my fellow Rotarians to help out our less fortunate neighbors in Mexico. If you need a great program for your club, I highly encourage you to call Chris Nelson (916-730-1407) and invite the Flying Samaritans to speak to your club and also consider volunteering for one of their clinics. It will leave a lasting impression on you and you will not be disappointed. Our club now has a meaningful, hands on, international service project that makes a difference in people's lives.

# Backpacks for Baja



October Celebrated reaching over 2000 "Backpacks For Baja" distributed to those in need since the program began in 2014!!!

**Chris** and with the assistance of **Ann Hively, Gwen Douglass** as well as several local volunteers gave out over 70 children's backpacks as well as a significant amount of Women's and Children's clothing. This brings the total Backpacks distributed to 2045 since the program began in 2014!!! Each includes sunglasses, hygiene and health related items such as tooth paste/toothbrushes, shampoo etc as well as books, school supplies and fun items for the children and cosmetic items for the women.

**Linda Nelson** makes many of the Backpacks/handbags and manages the coordination of the items that go into them as well as putting them together and ensuring they are ready for transportation/distribution.

## Opening up their new books on the spot

A Special thanks to some of the program sponsors:

- **Celeste Roseberry-Mckibbin** with "Love, Talk, Read" generously donated children's books for each of the packs. These were a big hit as always!!!
- **Soroptimists of Placerville, Cameron Park and Folsom**
- **Tanya Moran**
- **Marlyn Pino-Jones**
- **Bank Of America Retiree Group**
- **Folsom Prison "Hooks And Needles"**
- **Placer County Corrections, Women's Division**
- **Sharron Flynn**
- **Brenda and Sterling Daley**
- **Trish McCum**
- **Lions Club of Folsom**
- **German Club of Stockton**
- **Quilters of Sonora**
- **Casa Robles Interact Club**
- **Orangevale Rotary**



Great Teamwork takes place every month in helping make this impactful initiative happen!!!!

A special thanks from the Women and Children in Baja for all of your humanitarian contributions!!!

# Optical Clinic



The Optical area was busy throughout the day with a steady flow of those in need of vision care. Despite the significant number of patients everyone was seen in a timely manner. Thanks to **Bruce Hultgren** for coaching and ensuring that everyone, many new to optometry and with little Spanish capability, were effective and productive in their roles.

In summary there were 81 exams completed with the auto refractor. These exams were primarily done by Jack Olson. the exams resulted in 69 patients needing prescription glasses. Of these 45 were fitted on the spot with readymade glasses and 24 pairs, requiring prescriptions not in stock, were ordered for delivery next month. In addition 17 pairs of reading glasses were dispensed.

The fitting of glasses, once a prescription is determined, is complex and time consuming. This process was managed by **Lauren McDavid** with assistance from Pilots, **Ney Grant**, **Mark Rudolf** and volunteer **Mark Carey**. Wait times were kept to a minimum and a great job was done by all with Lauren's coaching to ensure proper fit and vision capability.

A special thanks **Donna Root** who assisted throughout the day keeping things organized and helping where ever needed and to **Carol Armstrong** who has been facilitating the pre sorting of glasses in the United States in preparation for use in Baja.



Testing out a new pair of glasses - fitted and ready on the spot!

# A Fresh Perspective...

This month, our first of two "Fresh Perspective" pieces comes from **Donna Root**.

First Timer to Los Pinos

I would like you to know, small airplanes were not my favorite. However, because of my A-1 pilot, I will try it again. Our flight began at 7AM Friday with 3 of us heading for Los Pinos (San Quintin) and landed on time without any incident. Shortly thereafter we unloaded, obtained our transportation and headed for the Clinic where we left ALL the supplies. Our hotel was next and a welcomed sight. After checking in, dropping our bags in our room about 20 volunteers proceeded to dinner (great company). Then off to bed – 8:45 for me. The next morning we all had breakfast at 7AM, then proceeded to the clinic. From that time until we left at 5PM it was nonstop.



All of the volunteers, for this great cause, are awesome. Their ages range from 20 to middle 80's. I wondered when I volunteered to help just what could someone with no medical experience do – well, let me tell you, there is plenty of work for everyone, experienced or not. One of the most amazing thing is just showing you care and how appreciative the "local people" are. The children just light up when they see the Toy Lady, Gwen. She's the most popular with them. Mothers were grateful of anything – clothes, hats, tooth brushes, back packs and especially for our outstanding Drs. and Nurses. This week the medical side saw 75+ patients, while the eye clinic saw 80 different patients. These patients ranged from babies, to the young, old, men and woman. No one was turned away. So much more could be said but will be saved for another time.

**Gwen Douglass "playing Santa" and helping give away donated goods**

What A Day!!! Looking forward to do it again. One last thing, I would like to thank Chris Nelson for helping me to appreciate all that this group is doing. As General McArthur said, "I SHALL RETURN".

**-Donna Root**



## A Fresh Perspective...

This month, our second of two "Fresh Perspective" pieces comes from **Julia Carey**

After flying over the seemingly endless rows of greenhouses, we turned final and landed. It was only a short walk to the San Quintin Clinic. The Flying Samaritans make this trip every month and after seeing the impact they have, I can understand why. The happy faces of the children and the adults were more rewarding than I could ever explain. The first time I heard about the Flying Samaritans was in the spring of 2016. Mark Mckibbin, former Casa Roble Interact President, had directed and written a melodrama, "My Clouded Mirror", to raise money for the Flying Samaritans. His play was a hit, selling out multiple nights and ultimately raising twenty four hundred dollars for the Samaritans. At that time the play seemed too disconnected from the organization for me to truly understand its significance. However, the play introduced me to the cause itself.



**Julia Carey holding one of the infant patients**

After hearing more about the Samaritans in the fall of 2016 during Interact Club meetings, I contacted Anne Hively, my Rotarian Advisor, asking her how I could get involved. I was then delighted to hear that my father and I could sign up for the October San Quintin Clinic. Unfortunately, there were several bumps on the road. It was not until Sunday October 3rd, less than a week before takeoff, that my father and I made the final plan to attend the October 2016 San Quintin Flying Samaritans Clinic.

Families began lining up outside the clinic over an hour before opening. My job was to check the blood pressure and temperature of each patient after Anne recorded their weight. Four different doctors held medical exams to address each patient's needs, while a pharmacist counted pills.

On the Optometry side of the clinic, eye exams were conducted and each patient received a free

pair of used glasses. If no pair of glasses worked for the patient, the Flying Samaritans ordered a prescription in the US. I witnessed the excitement of the children and parents receiving baseball caps and backpacks filled with the donations collected by our Interact Club and Orangevale Rotary.

My experience with the Flying Samaritans taught me valuable lessons. I learned how the funds raised at my own school helped purchase medications and supplies, this led me to the conclusion that even young students can have a real, positive, impact on the world. My trip to San Quintin left me wanting to make a difference in the world as well. I was inspired to continue pursuing my private pilot's license, and my father is now in the process of completing his IFR rating. Both of us plan to one day fly for the Samaritans or a similar group. I believe every high school student would benefit from experience like mine and learn to appreciate what we have by serving others.

**-Julia Carey**



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