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MEDICINES  
FOR MISSIONS®

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The Newsletter of Blessings International

April 2018



# From the Heart

BLESSINGS' STAFF  
REACH OUT IN THE FIELD





*Left: Bernie with Darrenz and friends at an orphanage being served by the HOMS project.*

*Below: A young girl being measured as a part of the HOMS project. A young boy receives Albendazole through the HOMS project.*



## HAITI

# WHEN I TOUCHED HIS HAND, HE TOUCHED MY HEART

by Bernie Morris, Blessings' CFO

**I had the opportunity to take a trip to Haiti in May of 2017, where I observed the Haiti Orphanage Medical Support (HOMS) project in action. HOMS is funded through Blessings International's Medicine for Orphans Fund.**

These beautiful children are dependent upon others to meet their basic needs, including regular health care, medicine and vitamins, which may help to save and sustain their precious lives. I saw this provision first hand as a cholera outbreak was quickly treated by medicines from Blessings while I was in Titianyen, Haiti. Blessings International was able to quickly provide medicines for treatment.

As Debi Lammert, APRN-CNS and I made the circuit to some of the 19 orphanages in the HOMS project, the children's height and weight measurements were taken. I have three young children myself, so when I saw a little boy that looked about the size of my four year old son, I was shocked to learn he was actually almost 8 years old. I am so grateful for the HOMS project, knowing we can help make a difference in this little boy's life and the other 776 orphans we serve. We also dispensed some deworming medicine, antibiotics and other vital medicine from Blessings International, in addition to multivitamins and some vitamin A supplementation.

Darrenz, a child in one of the orphanages we visited, and I made a special connection. When we first met, he was kind of shy, but then he warmed up naturally and sat in my lap. I grasped his hand and he grasped mine. When I touched his hand, he touched my heart. Even though we couldn't communicate to one another verbally, we didn't need words. In that moment, it seemed like I was able to offer a little hope to him, a memory I will always cherish.

**Thank you in advance for partnering with us as we seek to heal the hurting, build healthy communities, and transform lives with the love of Christ.**





## GUATEMALA

# MY HEART IS FOREVER CHANGED

by Heather Hall, Blessings' Customer Service Representative

In October, I had the privilege and honor to go on a medical mission trip to Guatemala with one of my regular ministries, a wonderful organization called Health Talents. Rick Harper led our group of about 34 men, women and teens, which included: doctors, nurses, and caregivers. Before this trip, I had been on one non-medical mission trip in my life to Mexico. I started this journey with really no idea what to expect and didn't realize how my heart would be transformed for life! I left with great anticipation to see firsthand how my customers use the medicine Blessings provides for them.

Right off the bat I got to experience personally what some of our customers face, trying to get through customs in Guatemala City Airport. I saw for myself how much the paperwork we offer them on our Order Form really does help! My teammates went through customs without any difficulty but when they got to me, they pushed the "Big Red Button." I was sent to another line where they opened my suitcase, stuffed full of reading glasses and medicine. Then, to make things worse, they proceeded to question me in Spanish. I had no idea what they were saying! They finally got someone that could speak a little broken English and they asked me, "Why so many glasses?" "Why so much medicine?" My heart was pounding. Nervously I said "Clinica," then I remembered I had the Proforma, explaining the medicine wasn't for resale and it was certified as safe, pure and effective. Thankfully, they allowed me to go through with all of the medicine and glasses!

*Below: A young boy, David, being evaluated for surgery by the Health Talents' Medical team.*



*Above: Heather preparing medicine at the clinic.  
Right: Heather caring for a young boy, David, prior to surgery.*

After getting through the airport, we drove about 3 1/2 hours on bumpy roads in crazy traffic to get to the hospital and clinic in Montellano. When we arrived, I couldn't believe my eyes! There were many Guatemalan and Mayan people already waiting to be seen. We dropped our bags & started counting medicine and taking inventory of the medicines and supplies, while the doctors started checking the patients. After a long evening, we finally got the patients settled into their beds, and checked into the hospital where they would have surgery the next day. I went to bed exhausted, hot and still anxious about what the week would truly entail. Needless to say, I didn't sleep very well that night.

The following morning, we went to a Spanish church and then after we ate lunch, began surgeries. The first day was a little chaotic trying to get into a groove of everything that needed to be done. This was an eye surgery trip, so there were a lot of cataract surgeries for elderly people but there was one 3 year old boy, David, who stole my heart! He was born blind with cataracts on both eyes! He was my patient for the day, I had to keep drops in his eyes to keep them dilated for surgery. He could not eat or drink all day waiting for his turn. He and his dad were incredibly patient. There was only one anesthesiologist on the trip and he had to stay with the patients during their surgeries. We finally got to David at close to 7pm! At this point, we don't know if David will be able to see, but he will be returning to have more surgery within the next year. I pray for him often and remain hopeful. Like David there were so many people we touched in some way this week. The doctors performed 111 surgeries in 5 days which included a lot of cataract removals, but also plastic surgery and some tonsillectomies.

I served as a caregiver, and we were actually busier than the nurses! We had to see that all the patients had eye drops put in their eyes every 5 minutes for an hour prior to their surgery, get them from their hospital bed to the gurney, and prepped for surgery. Then when they came



Many tears of joy were shed! It was amazing to witness these immediate transformations!

out of surgery we had to get them off the gurney and back into their hospital beds. I had many elderly people grab my arm crying as I put them back in their beds saying "Peudo ver! Gracias! Peudo ver!" meaning "I can see! Thank you! I can see!" Many tears of joy were shed! It was amazing to witness these immediate transformations!

I watched two of these cataract surgeries being performed. They are much more involved and difficult in a developing nation than in the states because patients are not able to receive preventative care and treatment. As such, due to the extensiveness of their cataracts, what would normally take about five minutes in the U.S. may take 45 minutes elsewhere.

Every night I went to bed with swollen throbbing legs exhausted and hot, but with a joy and satisfaction in my heart that I cannot attempt to describe in words!

It is so easy to fall in love with the Guatemalan and Mayan people. They are thankful, loving, and kind. They have so little and have such hard lives, yet are happy, and family and community oriented. It is such an honor to work for Blessings International, an organization that helps Health Talents and other non-profits with their medical mission supply needs. We are changing the world for the less fortunate who are served physically, mentally, and spiritually. I can't wait for my next adventure. My heart is forever changed!



## NICARAGUA

# ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

by Barry Ewy, Blessings CEO

As you have read throughout this newsletter, those of us at Blessings International not only enjoy serving those who serve others, but we also love to serve through missions! Along with my wife Beverly, daughter Caroline, and son Blake, I joined the project to Nicaragua known as 1Nation1Day. Organized by Missions.me, 1Nation1Day (1N1D) took almost 2,700 missionaries to Nicaragua for one week last July. The missionaries served in medical clinics, evangelism, school outreaches, pastoral training, house building, and water filtration projects.

The medical team consisted of over 300 medical professionals serving in seven clinics throughout Nicaragua. My family served in the capital city of Managua at the Managua 1 clinic. Our clinic consisted of health care providers in the areas of medical (physicians and nurse practitioners), dental, optometry, physical therapy, and pharmacy. We also had wonderful missionaries working in registration, triage, and on a prayer team. In all, there were over 60 missionaries working in our clinic alone not including local volunteers and translators.

*Right: Barry Ewy, his wife, Beverly, and children Caroline and Blake serving in Nicaragua.*



Each day of the mission was filled with great camaraderie and great service. For me, however, the greatest part of the mission trip was serving the Lord alongside my wife and kids. Our primary responsibility was to work in the pharmacy where we served approximately 1,500 Nicaraguans during the week and dispensed over 5,000 prescriptions. The entire medical outreach to Nicaragua served over 10,000 patients! Blessings International was the provider of medicine for all of the clinics in the entire nation.

Each day Beverly and I, along with the other pharmacy team members, worked to count medicine, fill and dispense prescriptions, and counsel patients. While Beverly and I were working in the pharmacy, Caroline and Blake spent their mornings helping in the pharmacy to count vitamins, acetaminophen, and ibuprofen. In the afternoons, Caroline and Blake played with the Nicaraguan children that had come to the clinic with their parents. It was a great diversion and tremendous help to all of the medical providers and parents/patients to have someone entertaining the kids!



Left above: Caroline with several of the children she met at the clinic. Left below: Blake playing light sabers with a new Nicaraguan friend.



Many of you have stories of how those you have served touched your heart and impacted your life. Our stories are no different. On Thursday in the pharmacy, Beverly had just given a prescription to a man who began talking to her and was fairly adamant about what he was saying. When Beverly was able to get a translator to come back over, she asked what the gentleman was saying. The translator relayed that the man was telling Beverly, "I have nothing to give you, so I give you my heart". Needless to say, her heart melted! On Tuesday, Caroline was playing with a young boy who kept telling her the same thing over and over. She thought he was telling her his name so she just smiled and said "si". That evening when she was journaling, she began to write his name (or what she thought was his name) into her journal. When using a translator app, she realized the boy was telling her over and over that he loved her. Fortunately, the boy came back to the clinic later in the week and Caroline was able to give him a hug.

On Monday, Blake played Frisbee and light sabers with a boy for about two hours. The boy came back to the clinic on Thursday with another family member hoping to see Blake again. They played together, along with other children joining in, for another long time. What is striking to me about this interaction is that Blake didn't speak any Spanish and the other boy didn't speak any English. But they made it work! To me, that was a great representation of humanity. We may not speak the same language or have the same economic or social backgrounds, but if we desire it in our heart we can find a lot of common ground.

Our trip to Nicaragua, Bernie's trip to Haiti, and Heather's trip to Guatemala are just three examples of how those of us from Blessings are putting into action the heart we have for serving the Lord through serving others. It's with this same heart that we go to work each day to serve all of the teams that each year go to about 100 different nations with medicine from Blessings to cure malaria, treat infections, or provide basic daily medicine needs. Thanks for letting us share our stories and for the untold countless number of stories that all of you create through serving others each year.

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# HELP STOP



# A

# KILLER



**Malaria is the third biggest killer of children globally. According to the World Health Organization, in 2016 over 445,000 people died from malaria. An astounding 70% of these deaths were children under the age of five!**

During Fiscal Year 2017, Blessings International gave away anti-malarial medicine to 47 different countries. As a result of these gifts, approximately 8,200 people received treatment for malaria in nations throughout the world, including Nigeria, Ghana, Nepal, and Peru.

In recognition of World Malaria Day on April 25th, Blessings is offering free antimalarial medicine to teams traveling to malaria infested areas. For the months of April and May, Blessings will be giving away this medicine to help teams combat this very treatable disease. Details are available for medical professionals at [www.blessing.org/Order](http://www.blessing.org/Order)

As the hands and feet of Jesus, medical missionaries often go into malaria ridden countries facing political unrest and inadequate health care provisions. The good news of the gospel is exemplified by the healing that comes through the prayer and medicine that they bring. Below is an excerpt from a letter of thanks we received from one such missionary in the Amazon jungle region. A team from Houston, TX was responsible for getting the free antimalarials from Blessings into their hands. Their names and locations are withheld for their protection.

"We want to express our highest appreciation for your great contribution to our indigenous people going through suffering from a hard pounding of diseases without having any response from the health authorities, due to the socio-economic and political crisis our country is facing. Our hearts are filled with pain and helplessness seeing so much suffering and hopelessness in our people. The treatment resources coming to the health care facilities are insufficient to meet the needs of the Malaria infected patients. To have received this valuable contribution from you has been of great joy, because we have been able to be a blessing to some of the people affected by the disease. The treatment received from Blessings International has been provided to patients in different indigenous communities, including some brothers in Christ working as translators on the New Testament Translation project in the Amazon jungle region. However, there are many others still waiting, meanwhile some of them could die without receiving any treatment. Brothers and Sisters, we highly appreciate your great support for this work. Thank you for allowing us to be an instrument to blessing others."

**Will you help us stop a killer? You can make a difference by giving to the Malaria Medicine Fund to help alleviate the suffering and hopelessness from those afflicted with this disease. Your gift of \$50 will provide antimalarial medicine to treat 123 patients. 100% of your donation will be used to donate malaria medicine, none of Blessings' expenses will be deducted from your gift.**

## HOW TO GIVE

Your gift of **\$50** will provide antimalarial medicine to treat 123 patients



**GIVE BY MAIL**

Use enclosed donation card and envelope



**GIVE ONLINE**

Click "Donate" at [www.blessing.org](http://www.blessing.org)



**GIVE BY SECURE MOBILE APP**

Text "NOMALARIA" to 41444

**Every Gift Makes a Difference!**



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Guidestar has awarded Blessings their highest rating of Platinum to reflect our level of accountability and transparency. We rank in the top 2% of all rated charities.



Blessings has been accredited by Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability since 1981.



Federal employees can donate through the Combined Federal Campaign #11864. State and local government employees can look for us in their Charity Guide under the Neighbor to Nation federation.



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