

Guatemala Mission trip July 12-22, 2010

Hello Friends and Family,

We are in San Juan la Laguna, and all are safe and well!

Tuesday night we had our send off with Rev. Harvey Martz and set off for DIA where we met up with our last team member, Jeff, whose plane into DIA was canceled and whose bags have yet to arrive here in Guatemala. However, he made our flight to Atlanta. We went from Atlanta to Guatemala City, arriving around 11.30. We were met by Neil, one of Mary's visiting helpers. Next we go into our vans and drove to San Lucas, about 45 minutes outside Guatemala city for lunch at Pollo Companeros. (KFC comparative) We took our vans to Panajachel where we boarded a boat in the rain, and took our boat across to San Juan, after dropping Neil in San Pablo.

Mary met us at the dock and we walked to our hotel and got settled in. We then walked up to Petrona's house for dinner where we met Petrona and her daughter, as well as her two sons, Estuardo and Billy. We had a fantastic dinner and devotions, led by Dottie and Britt talking about being outside of our bubble-comfort zone, and how we are called by God to leave it in order to help others.

This morning we had a special treat, breakfast at Petrona's followed by a soccer game at the stadium adjacent to the Sanjuanrita Clinica (where Mary works). The health care providers rented out the stadium for us to play against them, and then cooked us a special meal which we ate at the clinic following the game.

This afternoon we took a tour of the town, and now are having some free time before dinner and devotions by Taylor and myself!

Tomorrow we will start working on our job sites - two houses in San Pablo, the neighboring village.

Continue to keep our team in your prayers as we work and are changed by the amazing people we are meeting.

I will write more tomorrow or Friday! At this point, no news is good news...if there ever is an emergency, you all will get calls and emails right away!

Blessings and love from all of us,

Lisa

Hello from San Juan la Laguna,

We had another gorgeous day in the 80's with beautiful views of Lake Atitlan. From our ride to and from our worksite to the neighboring village, San Pablo -one of the most impoverished villages around the lake- we see incredible scenery or waterfalls, lake and lush greenery. We will bring back pictures! Today we had pancakes and fruit for breakfast and then went to two worksites about a block from each other. We are working with locals laying block for two small homes. One is a two room house and the other has 3. Each of these houses will hold anywhere from 5 to 9 people and are very small. The two bedroom house is about 300 sq. ft. and is built in between two other homes about the same size. We are working with the homeowners to build their homes too! Everyone worked very well today, considering we are all still struggling with the language barrier. We are able to learn more and more Spanish and teach our new friends English as well!

This afternoon, we stopped work around 3 and enjoyed a little free time getting to walk around the village, buy cokes made with real sugar cane, as well as ice cream. Tomorrow we will go back to our worksites to lay more block and later in the week we hope to finish each home with a tin roof!

Everyone is healthy, though Brit had a headache for part of the day and we are encouraging her to hydrate! She rested and took it very easy today, as we encouraged her to get to feeling better before working. I (Lisa) hit my head 4 times in the same place on scaffolding, but am hopeful the throbbing will go away soon! Everyone else is well and we are all safe and in good spirits.

Mary has done an incredible job networking around the village here and the clinic wants to expand to San Pablo one day a week to help people who just don't have the means to get over here to San Juan. The health promoters that work at the clinic are so complementary of her and so thankful for all the work she has done.

Thank you for your continued prayers for safety, for our work we are doing here and the way God continues to work through each of us!

Escribe la mañana,

Lisa

Buenos Tardes from San Juan,

Good afternoon from San Juan! We are all safe and mostly well! Britt continues to have a cold and is resting. We are rotating caring for her and hoping she feels better very soon! John was also slightly under the weather this morning, but seems to be feeling better this afternoon. Please continue to pray for Both Britt and John as it is not fun to be sick away from home, especially in foreign country!

Our morning was spent learning about a local girl's school, Liceo Sistemática Integral, a local school for secretary training. They invited us to play basketball against them, and as you can imagine, our boys towered over them. They were very competitive and everyone kept the game fun! We then went to San Pablo and continued working on the two houses we began work on yesterday. They are coming along great with help from our local foremen and the homeowners themselves. Rebar bending and placing as well as cement and mortar work, and laying the last of the blocks over doorways and windows.

Tomorrow we will work in San Pablo again and Sunday we hope to take a hike to La Nariz, The nose!

Thank you for your continued prayers for health and safety!

Escribe la mañana con amor,

Lisa

Hola Amigos,

This will be quick, as it is raining and almost time por la cena (for dinner). Today Britt and John are both feeling much better! Your prayers are working! We had a fantastic day today, beginning with pancakes, fruit and homemade cream of wheat (or something very similar). We were off to the worksite in San Pablo by 8:30 and worked through the rain! The group working on the three room house laid more block and tied more rebar, while the two room house began finishing the walls in the room that will have a small shower as part, as well as hauled roofing 2x4's to the worksite from down by the lake.

Tonight we will once again eat at our host home with the wonderful cooking from Petrona and her family.

Tomorrow we will leave early for a hike to the crosses and La Nariz. Some of our group will take a smaller hike and the rest of us will go all the way to the top. I have prepared a short worship service for when we

all reach the crosses. The afternoon we will go to a women's weaving cooperative and then possibly a coffee plantation to see the coffee making process.

Continue to keep us in your prayers and I will write more on Monday!

Adios,

Lisa

Hello All,

Everyone is healthy! A few people have come down with some stomach ickiness, but, for now, we are all back up and doing well!

Sunday, we had a wonderful breakfast of hot milk and cornflakes with bread and special garbanzo relish. We then took a hike to the cross - 30 minutes up, where we had our morning worship together. Then, a few people went back down to town, while the rest of the group hiked the brutally steep La Nariz. This was an hour and 20 minute hike, straight up, no short cuts. (Last year's hike did an easier version from Santa Clara). This year's group, being young and encouragable, went for the full force of the hill. While part of our group was a little too fast, got lost and then had to pay their entry fee to the Summit, the rest of the group make it 20 minutes earlier. Together we went down the mountain, just as steep, but slightly faster. The afternoon's meal was a large soup made by Petrona and was delicious as all of our meals have been.

In the afternoon we went to a women's weaving coop. where we shopped for naturally died articles. Anna, the woman in charge of the coop, was unable to show us the dying and weaving process due to her familial issues. We are holding Anna and the rest of her family in our prayers as her ex-husband came by the evening before and burned their next door neighbor's house down, as well as part of theirs. We ask that you continue to be in prayer for this family. After buying from the coop, the team had some free time and then dinner, followed by a great devotion talking about the different paths our lives take, thanks to Laura and Jeff.

Today we worked in the morning on our job sites in San Pablo, followed by a soccer game at the stadium. The school we visited the other day invited us to play against their teachers. With the help from two of our clinic worker friends, we won, 10-5, and fun was had by all. (Though our team is sore and tired).

Tomorrow we will work our last day and then head to Antigua on Wednesday morning for our last day in Guatemala.

Continued prayers for safety and health! <At least one more update tomorrow!

Hasta la mañana,

Lisa

Hola Amigos,

This may be our final update unless I find an internet cafe in Antigua tomorrow. Today was our last work day in San Pablo and we did some amazing work. Our three room house laid more block - some of the final blocks for the walls, tore out an entire adobe/clay oven and continued to dig out the floor. The group working on the two room house, with a baño dug out the floor in both rooms and poured cement in one, as well as the area the stove will sit in. We learned today that this house, around 300 sq. ft. will house Matteo

who has been working with us, his wife and their 9 children! The roof for this house was also in place when we arrived this morning, so there is shelter to be had.

Near the end of our work day, we were able to walk up to a house where the nurse from the clinic, Timeteo, runs a recycling program. He came up with the idea to have children pick up trash from the streets, chip bags, and sanitize them, and make them into earrings. Each child gets paid 5Q´s for 100 chip bags brought in. That is less than a dollar, but it helps feed their family he tells us. Children also work at cutting the bags and folding the pieces into earrings, once the bags are sanitized. These older children are able to earn money for their family too - 25Q´s, just over 3 dollars, for every 2 hours worked each day.

The rain stopped our work about 3:30 and we handed out toy cars from Toys for God's kids to the children in the village before we left. We got wet on our ride back from San Pablo, but are now clean and on our way to our host meal site to learn how to make tortillas from Petrona and her daughter Debe.

Tomorrow morning we will have breakfast and head out on the 8 o'clock boat towards Panajachel and then on to Antigua where we should arrive around lunch time. We will spend the rest of the day in Antigua, touring, shopping and enjoying a new place. We will have dinner together at a local restaurant and then stay in Antigua for the night. Thursday we will have breakfast together and head out to the airport in Guatemala City, an hour away, for our flight around noon.

Our flight will arrive in Denver Thursday evening late! Thank you Keith for bringing a bus for those of us who need rides!

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers as we wrap up our mission here. Everyone is safe and well and we hope to buy ice cream in Antigua! You should all be very proud of your team members, as they worked very hard and did an amazing job here!

Dios te Ama (God loves you)

Lisa