

MISSION OF HOPE, BOLIVIA NEWSLETTER

Volume 11, Issue 1

Spring, 2010

On March 20, 2010, **Surgery Team #14** arrived at the Mission of Hope hospital in Santa Cruz, Bolivia to provide a **week of free surgeries**. The team of 30 doctors, nurses, and helpers came from Oregon, California, Arkansas, Louisiana, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, and New York. They volunteered their time to construct ears, to close open palates and eardrums with holes, and to remove tonsils, adenoids, nasal obstructions and facial tumors...a total of **77 life-changing surgeries!**



Carla, 4 years old, is one of 4 children. Her father abandoned her, and her mother earns about \$4/day hand washing clothes for people. Carla had surgery to remove her adenoids, which had caused problems for several years!



Ronny, 8 years old, was born with only one ear. His mom does not work, and his dad works as a laborer. Using cartilage from his rib and tissue from his thigh, doctors made an ear! Ronny is very happy with his new ear!



Ana, 33 years old, is a single mom with 4 children. She lives with a friend in one of the poorest neighborhoods in Santa Cruz. She earns about \$7/day guarding parked cars. Ana came to the Mission of Hope clinic with very large and infected tonsils. After a successful tonsillectomy, she is now pain free!



Piedades, 59 years old, is the mother of 10 children! About 4 years ago, a tumor started growing inside of her cheek. Surgery was not even a consideration because she did not have money. Then she heard about the U.S. team that was coming. She had a beautiful surgery without any damage to her face!



Samuel's Story

Samuel is a 40 year old man who lives in Santa Cruz with his wife and 2 children. One Saturday afternoon, Samuel went to the store to buy a loaf of bread. He was at the cash register ready to check out when 3 armed men with revolvers entered the store. They **hit Samuel in the face with a gun, breaking his nose**. They hit him so hard that he fell to the floor.

The owner of the store took Samuel to a nearby clinic, but they **could not stop the bleeding**. From there, he was sent to a large hospital where they put gauze in his nose and **sent him home without pain medicine**, telling him to come back on Monday. Samuel returned to the hospital on Monday, only to be told that it was "doctor's day" and a holiday, and they sent him home again. He returned to the hospital on Tuesday, but was again sent home and told to return on Wednesday because there was "no space." Finally, on Wednesday, he was admitted for surgery. The **surgery was done without anesthesia** and was not done well. For the next 6 months, Samuel was unable to sleep lying down and unable to breathe from his nose.

Samuel says his surgery experience with the U.S. team was "**totally different**" because he **never felt any pain!** After a successful surgery, he is **now able to breathe normally through his nose and sleep** without any problem. He is **very thankful** for the team and the care he received!

Lucio's Story

No one thought to take a photo of **Lucio**. It was an ordinary day at the Mission of Hope clinic. The surgery team had come and gone. The clinic doors opened at 8 a.m. and the first group of patients came in and took their places in the waiting room. Lucio was seated among them. As the Gospel was shared, Lucio was one of many who stood and gave his heart to Jesus.

As the nurse gently washed and cleaned his sore and infected feet, Lucio began telling his story. His wife died in childbirth 24 years ago. His children left home as soon as they became old enough. His father died 3 years ago, and his mother died 5 months ago. Feeling very alone because everyone that he loved had gone, he left La Paz where he was living and came to Santa Cruz looking for work as a truck driver. He found a job working for a lumber mill, transporting timber from the jungle.

One day while loading the truck, the load shifted and both of **his feet were trapped** under the weight of the timber. After the accident, the foreman gave Lucio \$15 and sent him on his way.

Soon the money was gone, and Lucio started **sleeping on the street and eating from the garbage can** in the marketplace. **His feet became infected** and sore, and he became **very depressed**. After living like this for a couple of months, he became friends with the night watchman, who told him about Mission of Hope, where everything is free. Lucio had come to the clinic the night before and slept outside the door, waiting for it to open.

Another nurse overheard Lucio's story and heard him say how much he wanted to return to La Paz to stay with his daughter. She bought him a ticket to La Paz with her personal money. Other **staff members gave money** for meals and travel expenses. **Mission of Hope donated all the medicines and medical supplies** that were needed to cure his feet and **gave him clean clothes to put on**.

Lucio left the Mission of Hope clinic with tears in his eyes, **overwhelmed with the love he had experienced**, giving thanks to God. A big "**thank you!**" to **all of you who support us** in this work to **bring hope and healing to the poor** in the name of Jesus!

Mission of Hope, Bolivia

P.O. Box 4001

Charlottesville, Virginia 22903

Tel. & Fax: 434-977-4748

Email: cindytha@cstone.net

www.missionofhopebolivia.org

Mission of Hope, Bolivia is a 501c3 tax-exempt organization.