



## No Good Deed Goes Unpunished

From my very first visit to Honduras until now, one of the first things I noticed about the children was their eyes, those beautiful windows to the soul. But the second thing I noticed was a proliferation of exceedingly rotten teeth.

My heart has ached for this problem that goes beyond appearance - the children are in pain. Health complications arise. No matter how brilliant a leader they might be, missing and rotten teeth affect their confidence. I see it in every child and teen with dental problems.

Most of us reading this newsletter had adequate dental care as children. From the time I was old enough for a dental visit, my mother made sure that every six months my teeth made an appearance for a check-up and cleaning. I was one of the rare birds that adored my dentist. Perhaps it is because I never had a cavity large enough to require the dreaded numbing shot.

Most of our kids don't know what it means to dread a dentist because they have never been to one...

From the inception of our work, one of the top wishes I had for our kids was a Dental Clinic! Medical Brigades by the scores come to Honduras. We even hosted a couple of them in Linaca. But I had never seen a Dental Brigade until a few years ago.

Heading back to the states on a completely full flight, a very nice gentleman found himself wedged between me and the person who had the window seat. After inquiring how he got stuck with such a horrible seat, I asked him what he was doing in Honduras.

It turned out he was a dentist returning home after heading up a Dental Brigade in a remote

area of Honduras. Hearing those words, I could have kissed the secretary who booked his flight and neglected to get him a better seat assignment!

For the next several hours I shamelessly brought out photographs of our kids and explained our work in Linaca and Jamastran. By the end of the flight the dentist introduced me to another team member of the brigade, who followed up with me and came to see our work some months later.

Flash forward two years and that poor dentist's miserable seat assignment became my long-awaited answer to prayer! (Sorry, Dr. J!) At the end of April, a group from Cape Cares, two hygienists, a lawyer, a paramedic, an accountant, the dentist and his son descended on Linaca and worked harder than any brigade I have ever seen!

These people pay their own way to come on trips. The amount of equipment they had to transfer to Linaca from another site was staggering. Add to that weather and other travel complications that made their lives a nightmare for several days trying to get into Honduras and then the amount of effort and energy they put into the week, had me seeing halos over each and every head.

Many of our kids had been suffering the pain of rotten teeth that had no hope for anything other than extraction. The bravery the kids displayed in the face of needles and blood and tooth pulling was extraordinary. I should say the same for our dentist, whose least favorite thing to do is extraction, which was the majority of his work on the kids...

The rest of the team cleaned and scraped years of tartar off of teeth and sealed them with a special treatment to prevent further decay. The work was arduous to say the

least, in the primitive conditions of our center. One team member kept meticulous records for follow-up. The enthusiasm and work ethic of this team spoke volumes to the mentors and kids.



One of our beautiful young girls, whose front teeth were blackened with decay and full of holes, was spackled with some sort of new-fangled filler that made her happy to smile for the first time in years! See the picture above and below for the difference!





The kids who had extractions were thrilled to be out of pain.



The saddest moment of the visit came when the dentist was evaluating one of the girls who is a part of our Junior Teen Leadership Team. At age 14, she is a pretty little slip of a girl who has been attending the center since its inception.

Her family is comprised of a single mom with six children and virtually no way to make ends meet.

When we first met the mother and for years after, most of the her day was spent caring for her youngest child, a profoundly mentally and physically disabled girl, born with arms that appeared to be on backwards, and twisted legs and spine.



The disfigured child seemed like a fragile

little Sparrow who had fallen from its nest. We called her Pajarito, meaning little bird in Spanish.

Pajarito could not eat solid food. Milk was all she could tolerate and her mother could not afford it. From the time we met her when she was two, until she died at the age of seven, one of our sponsors made sure that Pajarito was supplied with all the milk she wanted.

When the Little Pajarito flew off to Heaven, our team embalmed her, purchased a casket, provided food, and hosted the funeral.

Because of our relationship with Pajarito's family, and knowing the great needs this family has, I was particularly thrilled that her sister would finally be getting dental care. As she was being evaluated for treatment, the dentist turned away with a distressed look on his face.

He told me that he had not seen anything much worse than her teeth in all his years of serving in Honduras. At the tender age of fourteen she needs all her teeth pulled and dentures...

So as not to alarm her, the dentist smiled and spoke kindly to the young girl, assuring her that the rest of the team would be taking great care of her. Her teeth were then sealed just like the other children, so that she would not feel left out or know the difference. But we do. It will cost a few hundred dollars to get this child's teeth extracted and have her fitted for false teeth.

The dental brigade was quite

impressed with our team of mentors and teen leaders. They trained some of them to do a follow-up procedure on a monthly basis to prevent cavities. Should this succeed, it is something that could be done on a more wide-spread basis in the village.

Another thing the brigade noticed was that our children were so full of joy, and they knew how to work and they knew how to play. Other communities the brigade serves are filled with children they describe in much the same way we found the children of Linaca and Jamastran when we first started working there - the kids are withdrawn, seldom smile or laugh, have little creativity and don't know how to play.

It is amazing what a little love and attention can do to open up a child's world to create and release the joy inside.

From one man's misfortune on a flight, came a fortune of blessings to our kids! It is our hope that this wonderful team of caring and professional saints will come back to Linaca on a regular basis.



#### ANOTHER MATCHING GRANT FOR THE KIDS!

A generous partner has put up a \$20,000 matching grant for the children's center. Our most pressing needs are general funds to run the center and our teen scholarships costing \$50 per month, per teen. This covers our bus service, uniforms, books, and matriculation fees. In return our teens give 10 hours of service a week, tutoring children in the center, and doing a variety of community projects - such as the dental project in this newsletter! The example of our teens inspire young and old, rich and poor to work together for the benefit of all.

#### DESIGNATED GIVING GOES 100% WHERE SPECIFIED

World Resources Group is unique among non-profits. Specified donations to the children go 100% to the fund designated and are 100% tax deductible. Undesignated giving is used where the Board of Directors deems the need to be greatest. With the little we have been given, the miracles have flowed. If you know of friends or corporate sponsors either in the U.S. or in Honduras that might help us reach our goals, please send this newsletter along!