



July 27, 2006

Fellow Supporters of Medical Aid for Children of Latin America:

It's about time that we give our Macla supporters a midyear report. Our medical/surgical group returned from the Dominican Republic in February after successfully operating on 217 patients, consulting with over 1000 patients and treating hundreds more.

At the Padre Billini Hospital in the Dominican Republic our clinic was a great success and our patients are still reaping the fruits of our labor. The hospital is using the medicine, equipment, sutures and instruments on hundreds of patients since we left. Our Dominican liaison, Dr. Miguel Cotes, is taking a Dominican surgical group from the hospital to the northwest section of the country near the Haitian border to complete 100-200 nose, throat, general surgery and gynecological procedures on the poor in the next two months. All of the medical equipment to the dressings for wounds had been donated by MACLA.

Dr. Dana Towle, my office partner and MACLA board member, is taking a group to La Paz, Bolivia this fall to resume our work there. Although the country is a hot bed of political unrest, we keep a low profile taking care of the Bolivian poor who would have no chance of any medical or surgical care. Bolivia is a wonderful country with many needs and grateful patients. We are well connected there.

Through MACLA, Dr. David Song, the director of the plastic surgical program at the University of Chicago is heading our first ear reconstruction team in Santo Domingo in November. We plan on operating on 5-10 patients with congenital microtia (absent ears) that week. The initial operation takes 4-6 hours and patients have 1-2 staged procedures thereafter. There are no surgeons in the country of 9 million who reconstruct ears from nothing and there are thousands of children in need of this complex reconstructive procedure. We are excited to begin this much needed program.

This last February, we had a special patient, Levanessa Meran, from Sister Babs' Inn of the Good Samaritan, who we have been treating for four years. She was born with a huge hemangioma (blood vessel tumor) of her upper lip and because this is a very vascular (bloody) it required conservative injections to decrease the size until this year. This year our surgical team helped resect the majority of her tumor restoring some normalcy to her face. In the recovery room, the post surgical area, most of us did not recognize her (even her mother) because honestly she didn't look like the same young girl. Her normal appearing countenance amazed us and made us weep. Her photographs are on the photo page.

Alfonso Sanchez, a 36 year old man who we originally operated on last year for severe burns, had more surgeries this year. Over 80% of his body was burned after his gasoline truck struck a bridge. It was amazing that he even lived through his initial injury, but because of the severity of his injuries he has been unable to walk, move his hands, close his eyes and unable to open his mouth. He has been a wonderful patient who rarely complains, only wanting to be independent and use his wheelchair (which we furnished). He's been totally dependent on family since the accident, but this year we completed the last operation on his hand to give some function to be able to steer and operate his wheelchair. Although he will never walk because of his severe burns, he can now manipulate around and even move in and out of bed by himself. His hugs, happiness and his new independence have been most fruitful. His picture is on the picture page.

Anna Maria Festell, a 29 year old who injured her hand 15 years ago from a machete injury while protecting herself from an assault, has had essentially a useless dominant right hand since that attack. Our expert hand surgeon and our medical team restored most of the function in her hand. Reports to us after three months shows she has more than 80% movement of all digits. This was a seemingly impossible problem as she had little hope of ever having a useful hand until our Macla team helped her.

MACLA's goal in our patient care delivery is to provide free reconstructive plastic surgery and general medical care to the poor of these countries. You help us deliver this quality surgery and we have been consistent for 23 years. This year we are now associated with seven medical schools and you have helped us establish a

reputation for caring of our fellow man at a low cost and with high quality. Please keep helping our patients. We need you all.

Sincerely,

Thomas E. Geraghty, M.D.

PS: In May my good friend and dedicated MACLA supporter, Matthew McInerney, died after a six year battle with pancreatic cancer. His wife, Joyce, and Matthew have personally aided MACLA in helping hundreds of patients. He had been interested in MACLA for many years and even through his fight against cancer he always opened his heart to us. He is off to the heavens and please pray for his family.