

PANAMA MISSIONS SPRING NEWSLETTER

WHAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED WHEN CHRISTIANS WORK TOGETHER. Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. Eccl. 4:9

FORTY YEARS IN PANAMA.

As I arrived in Panama during the height of the rainy season one hot and humid July day in 1984, I never realized what lay ahead. I found the local church of Christ and was invited to preach to over 200 people the following Sunday. This began a long and beautiful relationship. A relationship that would span four decades.

In the Balboa church of Christ downtown Panama City, I had the privilege of preaching in numerous campaigns and baptizing many people. In the mid-nineties Betsy and I visited the Darien Province for the first time, and I was hooked. This province joins Columbia and is the home to the Embera and Wonan Indian people of which I have built a wonderful relationship. I have preached in their villages and baptized a number of these sweet people.

As the years passed others began to join us traveling several times a year for the purpose of teaching, Preaching and conducting medical attention to thousands of people. We have had the privilege from one end of Panama to the other preaching the gospel and serving through our humanitarian efforts. God is good and provided wonderful Christians to travel and serve. Several



Food being delivered deep in the Darien.

congregations of the Lord's church have been established through our medical missions.

Mission work can never happen without the support of churches and many individual Christians. We have received support from all over the country thus we have been able to make a difference in the lives of thousands of people. Thank you all for being part of this ministry over the years.

We have experienced the highs and the lows during the years of this ministry. It is uplifting to see people's lives changed as they hear and obey the gospel.

As I
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write I am thinking about what was the thing that happened during the past four It has to be the floods of 2010 when the province was flooded from one end to the Lives were lost and property destroyed, people were hungry and thirsty. I came home for a brief time and was able to

The clean water project has touched many lives.

immediately returned to Panama and began working with locals and taking food and water to people who were stranded. It was heart rendering and yet I was encouraged by people that supported this ministry and your love for people you do not know.



We were able to provide water filters for people who were getting sick because of drinking contaminated water and because of the generosity of Christians in the United States we have been able to provide over \$60,000 worth of Water filters. Everywhere I go people ask for these filters and for the past 14 years we have distributed and trained people in the use of the filter. The lady to the left received her filter 10 years ago and takes care of it and because of this she has clean water for her family and tells me that her children do not get sick.

baptized into Christ. This is our in our lives and how much we care Christians can do when they work health so I can continue working the world. I am thankful for all the hundreds that have travelled with right was one of the many who remained faithful. She has four



Space does not allow me to tell all that has happened in this great ministry, the churches that have been

established and all the people that have obeyed the gospel by being ultimate goal, to let people see Jesus when they suffer. Yes, look at what together. I pray to the Lord for good for His cause in this beautiful part of financial support and for the me over the years. Carman to the have been baptized and have children.

Diane Edrington reports: Panama Mission medical team was honored and privileged to collaborate with the Elite Senafront Border services for this year's medical event in the Darien province of Panama.

General Jorge Gobeia , Director of Senafront coordinated the event, Colonel Leonel Espinosa supervised and the special forces team assisted our team in providing security, interpreters and medical assistance.

a child



This amazing work force gave us the opportunity to provide health care to villages deeper in the rainforest that have very little if any access to health care. Each day we loaded up Senafront trucks and jeeps to start the 3 to 4 hour journey in the Darien jungle. We treated 1,063 patients. Many illnesses were treated including several cases of malaria. Providing healthcare to those in need is one thing but caring for those in need is another. I would walk around the open areas while our

team was treating patients and to see the look on faces of hope and gratitude that someone cares. God has blessed Panama Missions with many opportunities to reach out to those who need us the most and this event was no exception. My favorite phrase that describes each mission trip is "If no one knows I exist then no one knows I live" Panama Mission team knows they exist and with the Lord's blessings we will continue to help because we know they live.....

A special thank you to Beverly Martindale from Batesville, MS. and her team for purchasing and packing medications for these events. *Keep Panama Missions in your prayers as we continue the journey of helping others through our Lord with his blessings.*

Diane Edrington RNP Medical Director/Panama Missions



One evening over 24 years ago Doctor Russ Burcham an ophthalmologist from Denver, Colorado called me. A call I was not expecting but one that changed many lives, mine included. Since that day thousands of surgeries have been performed. I have never seen a blind person receive their sight and I don't have words to express what I felt. People that had no hope of ever obtaining the surgery for cataracts were able to receive it because of the sacrifice of Dr. Burcham and those who worked with him. Russ is a man of great faith and gives God the credit for his success. Each year he leads his team to Panama to continue changing lives.

Report of surgical team for 2024



For the 24th year Dr. Russ Burcham from Denver, Colorado has led a medical group into Panama which has changed the lives of thousands of people who otherwise would have remained blind. January and February of 2024 they operated on 236 people. People from all over Panama made the trip to Torti, Panama for surgery. Through the efforts of Doctor Burcham three congregations have been established. These three churches are thriving, and the gospel

is being proclaimed to the lost. The need is so great the Dr. Burcham has decided to bring his team back to Panama for an October campaign in Chiriqui, Panama located toward the Costa Rica border. He and his team demonstrate the love and compassion of Jesus letting people know God loves them.

Also traveling with this team is a group of general medicine nurses and doctors taking care of medical needs. Over 800 people were examined and received treatment.



Clinic of Hope

Clinic of Hope turned the lights on April 11, 2009, and stands as a symbol throughout the Darien Province of the love, compassion and dedication of many committed Christians who have worked and stayed at the clinic. Because of the talents of people like Bill Watts, Allen Gunn, David Brady and many others this building continues to give hope to people who cannot

travel to Panama City for medical treatment nor have the resources to obtain medications. Where we can't help with major illnesses there are many things that can and have been accomplished, such as a baby who was found to have a serious heart defect and was transported to the Childrens hospital in Panama City where he had open heart surgery. Also, hundreds of pap tests have been performed with one lady testing positive for cancer. *Yes, it brings hope when there is no hope.* Teams go down from time to time to perform maintenance on the building. Thanks to so many who have made this possible.



Operation Christmas Joy has completed our 27th year with churches and individuals from many states making gifts along with sewing clubs sewing beautiful clothes for the children. Thousands of gifts are given out each year along with backpacks for school age children.

Sara Bills, Panama Missions Operation Christmas Joy coordinator has decided to retire. Sara is a lady with many talents and will be missed. She organized Operation Christmas Joy into a program that affected the lives of people both in the United States and Panama. She also published and edited our newsletter and corrected my errors. She decided she must at her very youthful age of ? give attention to other projects such as helping shut ends and so much more. Thank you, Sara, for being such a great part of this ministry. Her and Larry give much of their time to helping and encouraging others. They attend the University Church of Christ in Montgomery, Alabama.



To celebrate 40 years of serving the Lord in Panama, Betsy and I are planning on hosting a BBQ on the 3rd of August. I know this is a hot time of the year, but we can all enjoy eating BBQ and all the trimmings. We will be sending out more information so mark your calendars for this date.

Calendar for 2024-25

March 28-February 6 Meteti, Panama

April 9-19 Maintenance team to work on Clinic of Hope

June 14- 21 Sanson, Panama Medical/ Evangelistic

August 3, 2024, Forty years in Panama BBQ Brady Home 12:00 PM until.

October 5 Medical? Cataract surgery campaign to Chiriqu, Panama

October 17-18 pickup OCJ Christmas gifts

Operation Christmas Joy container loading November 4

Operation Christmas Joy Panama December 3-13

Again, thank you all for being such great encouragers and supporters of this great ministry. I am looking forward to the next years as we continue serving the Lord in Panama. God bless you all.
Larry Brady

On March 28th Larry and Betsy Brady along with Kathy flowers, Clyda Coalson, Jan Born, and Charlotte Young arrived in Panama where they traveled to the Darien province where the Clinic of Hope is located. Over the next week we were able to preach at two different congregations and conduct vacation Bible school in each of those churches. The group also traveled by boat to an Embera Indian community located up the Chucunaque River.

Traveling and visiting in the local schools was truly a happy event for we were able to present Jesus Christ and his love for the world to many children. At night time and during worship services vacation Bible school was held in two different congregations. So much effort was put into the time that we had allotted for this mission. We also helped a number of families who were struggling from not enough food as well as water filters that are always in high demand. I am thankful for those who helped make it possible to travel into these areas to present Jesus Christ and him crucified. More will be more will be written about this mission trip at a later time.