

UA South Campus Ophthalmology Residency Postcard from Kino Bay 2014



October 8-12, 2014

Each year, we try to provide the residents from the UA South Campus a clinical experience that is “outside their comfort zone,” and at the same time preparing them to lead the delivery of eye care to those in rural and underserved areas. Last year we traveled to join a large, week-long eye care project in Hermosillo – and this year we went a little further down the road, to Kino Bay, Sonora, Mexico.

Sometimes the signs are confusing, and you don't see what is right in front of you...



For several years, PDG Gerson Gonzalez (a member of the South Tucson Lions Club) has requested that our group work with their sister club, the Hermosillo-Kino Lions Club to provide care for the people who live in Old Kino, and members of the Seri Nation, the indigenous people of the sea and desert who also live on Kino Bay.

This year, thanks to the efforts of Dan Twelker, OD, PhD, and through the sponsorship of the Tucson Eyes on Sight Lions Club Branch of the Tucson Breakfast Lions Club, we were able to honor that request. After a few days, it was clear that this partnership has great potential for both service and education.

It's good to know you're wanted!



We (L-R: Clara Choo, MD; Joe Miller, MD, MPH; Pat Broyles; Donna Kihl; Whitney Smith, MD; and Dan Twelker, OD, PhD) left bright and early (6 AM) Wednesday morning and were in Kino Bay by 2 PM. By 4 PM, the clinic was in operation in the very nice Parish Hall of Parroquia Guadalupe, Old Kino.



Seri People



The Seri Indians have dwelled in the Sonoran Desert for thousands of years. We were told that they now number about 1000. The local museum gives a good account of their history and crafts, such as the large food storage basket shown.

Most Unexpected Health Care Facility Encountered



After seeing about 30 patients on Wednesday, we got started Thursday morning when I was visited by Dr. Jorge A. Grijalva Chavez, who asked if I would like to visit his hyperbaric facility. I played hooky for a half hour and had an opportunity to visit this dual use facility. For divers who ascend too rapidly, the recompression alleviates the bends. For patients with non-healing diabetic ulcers, the intense oxygen therapy increases the rate of healing.

Dr. Chavez explained that the facility provides hyperbaric treatments for patients as far south as San Carlos, and is located in Kino Bay to provide care for the large number of recreational divers. He showed me several pictures of dramatic resolution of foot ulcers in diabetic patients. As chance would have it, I met in the waiting room my first patient from the day before – a lady who came for a diabetic retinal exam.

Glasses Galore



It doesn't make too much sense to do eye exams for free and not be able to offer anything more than a prescription, when the patients cannot afford the examination in the first place. The goal is to complete an eye exam, and offer a well-fitting pair of glasses that allow the patient to see well. Successful planning requires some degree of guesswork required (gender? age? nearsighted or farsighted?). Fortunately, Pat Broyles and Donna Kihl, with the support of the local Lions Club members who process donated glasses, have it down to a system. The doctors would provide a prescription, and Pat and Donna would find the closest match from the inventory that was brought along from Tucson.

Equipment



A chance encounter during a vacation visit led Dan Twelker to meet Dr. Muth, a retired optometrist who has a house in New Kino and who had set up an exam room in the church. We were able to borrow the slit lamp and phoropter for our visit, a rare treat as most often only hand-held tools can be used for diagnosis.

Moving the chair proved to be more than we could handle, so we had to improvise...

Here, Joe Miller, MD, MPH (the only non-Spanish speaking clinician) is examining a patient with Lion Erick Martinez, his interpreter for the day.



is better—one or two?”), which does not lend itself well to this practice environment.

Diabetic Eye Care



People with diabetes need to have eye exams, as often they are not aware of the effects of diabetes on their vision. Here, Clara Choo MD is performing a dilated fundus exam.

Teaching Time



It seems that there are always more patients than there is time to see them. Dan was very careful to set the expectations of patient volume to a level that was consistent with teaching time. For our residents, this experience provides an invaluable opportunity to master retinoscopy, the art of measuring patients for glasses by observing how the light comes into focus on their retinas. While our residents are trained in the method, more often than not they perform subjective refraction (“which

Refractive Eye Care



It is incredibly satisfying to have a patient come and sit down in front of you, say that they are having trouble seeing, and be able to do something about it. During this mission, our residents experienced the pleasure of meeting such people, examining them with confidence, and providing them with a pair of glasses on the basis of their examination skills (not trial and error!) that put a smile on the face of the patient when they looked at the end of the room through their new eyewear. Here, Whitney Smith, MD is performing retinoscopy to provide a farsighted patient with glasses.

Recreation



There was time for a morning run, and certainly time at the end of the day for a swim on the beautiful beach.



Food. Lots of Food.



The food started with tamales at the first gas stop. Warnings were unheeded.

Shrimp



Kino Bay is famous for its fishing. Also its sushi, as demonstrated by our young friend, who demonstrated the art of retrieving from the trap, deveining, and swallowing the prawn shown.

Meat. Lots of Meat.



We shared dinners with our Lions Club hosts. And they sure do like to cook! We were quartered in adjoining houses across the road from the beach, with the UA team in one house and the Lions members in the other. We shared dinner and breakfast each day, and a “working lunch” was provided (i.e., clinic continued while we all grabbed a quick bite to eat). The Club members live in Hermosillo, but their Club provides service to the Kino Bay community, so most members were commuting an hour each way to and from Hermosillo.

The motto of the Lions Club is “We Serve”—and the Club de Leones Hermosillo-Kino certainly lived up to the motto. Every day we had Club members helping keep the clinic organized, the patients seen in order, follow-up arranged, and translation services for the non-Spanish speaker.

Thank You, Club de Leones Hermosillo-Kino, for a successful trip!



Members of the Lions Club who were with us for Wednesday night, with a special thanks to Club member, Dr. Jesús Valenzuela, an Hermosillo ophthalmologist who was invaluable in communicating to the patients.

Thank you, Lion Victor Blancas de la Cruz who organized the mission, Club President Homobono Valdez, Club Secretary Jorge Ochoa, and Lion Erick Martinez who so often translated for me. The Hermosillo-Kino Lions Club has 23 members, and all assisted in some way in making our trip both possible and productive.

In all, 279 patients were seen over the four days. 82 patients received prescription glasses (bifocal or single vision) that were provided by ALERT. 140 pairs of reading glasses were dispensed, and 7 pairs of special order glasses were promised for delivery after we get them fabricated. Patients also received a pair of sunglasses.

L (from front): Cirilo Meza, Lacho Pedraza, Tomás Valdez, Erick Martinez, David Bustos, Victor Blancas de la Cruz, Dr. Dan Twelker, Donna Kihl. R (from front): Trinidad, a driver, Dr. Marcos Mazariegos, Armando Ortiz, Jorge Sánchez, Dr. Jesús Valenzuela, Dr. Whitney Smith, Dr. Clara Choo, Pat Broyles.



Through careful planning, we were able to complete our visit with enough supplies, and with some left over. Here, we are transferring the remainder of our supplies from this mission to the Club to further assist the community they serve.

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Back row L-R (standing): Victor Blancas, Pat Broyles, Donna Kihl, Dr. Whitney Smith, Homobono Valdez, Dr. Dan Twelker, Jorge Ochoa, Lacho Pedraza, Dr. Clara Choo, Dr. Joe Miller, David Bustos (comsario). Front row (L-R): Tomás Valdez, Dr. Jesús Valenzuela, Armando Ortiz.