



Guatemala Village Health

“Improving lives
one village at a time”

¡BIENVENIDOS! Welcome!

Greetings and welcome to the 2019 issue of the Guatemala Village Health (GVH)

<p>2020 Important Dates</p>	<p>Medical Team Trips: February 7th – 21st, July 31st – August 15th (UW Bothell) GVH Annual Dinner: Saturday May 2nd, Red Lion Bellevue Guatemalan Independence Day Fiesta: Saturday September 12th</p>
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Composting Toilets & Eco-filter Updates:

We have successfully completed our Rotary International grant project – constructing 200 composting toilets and installing 200 eco-filters to provide clean water for 200 of 758 families!

We were given the opportunity to present on our progress at the AAFP (American Academy of Family Physicians) and WONCA (World Organization of Family Doctors) conferences this September in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where we were recognized for our progress. Our data showed decreases in rates of diarrhea and parasitic/worm infections. We are continuing to collect data and provide support for families in the maintenance of water filters and ongoing production of compost as a product from the toilets. We plan to use this compost as a part of our permaculture production project, moving forward to piloting and training this coming year.



Mission: Improve village and individual health in Guatemalan rural villages by educating villagers, empowering local leaders, and developing local health providers.

We are a 501c3 organization based in Seattle, Washington. EIN #27-3002849.

Visit us at GuatemalaVillageHealth.org

August 2019 Trip Overview: By Sherry Smith

I am not a person who usually feels called to a particular path. But that's what happened. The email came in May about the August medical trip to Guatemala. All I knew was that I wanted to go. And I wanted to go with Sally, my 17 year-old daughter. We did, and I am grateful.

For 13 days we were cogs in a complex and essential mobile medical machine. My part was triage translation: turning Spanish, which local health promoters translated from the indigenous language Q'eqchi', to English for the nurses and sending responses back again in Spanish

I loved my steady and small role. And I loved watching how the medical staff from Guatemala and the US worked together to puzzle out symptoms. How the doctors and nurses gave each person time and respect. How in each village we set up the three doctor stations, generators, WIFI, pharmacy, family planning station, triage lines.

After the clinic was done and generators turned off, I loved the darkness in the village. The lightning bugs rose up and the thunder rolled in. By the end of the trip, we had seen over 500 patients in eight clinics in seven villages. We all helped make it happen—together.



Volunteer of the year: By Teresa Wallace



Dr. Ann Dryer was a practicing physician when one of her patients told Ann about the work she was doing with GVH. As a result of this encounter, Ann eventually decided to travel to Guatemala, taking her first trip with GVH in 2014.

On that first trip, Ann jumped right to work. She was willing to do any kind of job and see any patient. We hiked through mud and water, went on a journey out to sea in rough weather to get to a new village, and sweat continuously in 100-degree weather. All the while, Ann had her camera, taking pictures and documenting the entire journey. She is an amateur - professional photographer and captures amazing shots, often staying up long after others are in bed, and getting up at 4 AM to get the perfect shot.

After this first trip Ann continued as an active participant in GVH. She has donated pictures and crafted gourds for the Annual GVH Auction. She travels often to Guatemala, and in February will be a new trip leader! She is gracious, kind, and has a delightful sense of humor that allows her to work with everyone. She has a generous spirit and draws people to her. We have been very lucky to have her work with our organization, and are very thankful for her contributions.

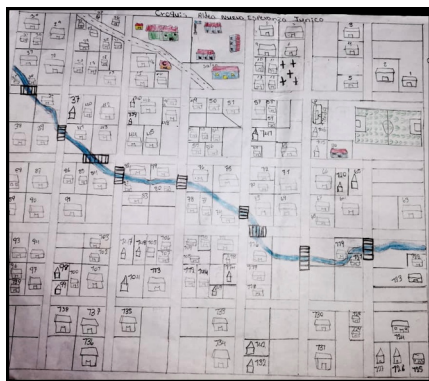
September Event Update:

On September 14th, we gathered to celebrate Guatemalan Independence Day at the only remaining working farm in Seattle, hosted by Lisa Sferra and Garth Olsen. The fantastic food, incredible drinks and delightful desserts all contributed to the lively atmosphere of our celebration and tribute to the independence of Guatemala.

During the event, Chapines en Seattle recognized GVH as "Organization of the Year" for the work we do with vulnerable populations in Guatemala. We were also lucky enough to have two accomplished artists, Edgar Santiago and Andrés Orozco regale us with Spanish songs and a poem detailing the beauty of Guatemala and life there. It was an animated evening filled with camaraderie, laughter, and plenty of dancing! DJ Johnny, our live DJ, kept everyone glued to the dance floor when they weren't exploring the delectable Latin American cuisine by Aaron Montenegro (Montenegro Eats) and hand-made cocktails by our very own Joe Kyle. We all had such an incredible time, and are so grateful to everyone who contributed to the success of the night, especially all those who attended!



Alejandra's Census Work: By Alejandra Zarazúa



This year we've started a project called "Community Diagnosis" which according to the WHO is defined as "A quantitative and qualitative description of the health of citizens and the factors which influence their health. It identifies problems, proposes areas for improvement and simulates action". Our purpose with this project is to identify the greatest needs in each of our villages. At the beginning of the year, we started teaching the health promoters about the project and training them in how to obtain the necessary information. This census is unique because it's not only about the number of people and their ages, but we also use parts of the Ministry of Health Census which is focused on health determinants like educational levels, quality of home, location and characteristics of the stoves, access to water, garbage disposal and their relationship with farm animals.

This information is all critical for community diagnoses, but we need to add other factors that relate to how people are living from a social perspective. For example: recognizing whether the kids are going to school and with what frequency, are there signs of violence in the household and if anyone living there suffers from chronic disease.

With this information, our plan for next year is to develop a Risk Map for each village. In this map, we will divide each house in six squares, and will assign a color of risk: red, yellow or green in each of them according to how the risk factors add up. One will be for the makeup of the house and its characteristics and the other 5 will be divided in age and sex groups: <10 years of age, teenagers, women in fertile age, men, and the elderly. Once we complete the risk map and data from the census, we will have a more comprehensive understanding of the needs in every village so will be able to better assist them on both community and individual levels. We are looking forward to more opportunities to continue helping our villagers in the future and to improve their health.



Jennifer Hoock's Fulbright Award & Sabbatical in Guatemala:

Our co-founder and Director of Programs, Jennifer Hoock, will be spending six months (January to July) in Guatemala for her sabbatical from Kaiser Permanente of Washington, supported by a Fulbright scholarship. She will be working on the development of primary care in Guatemala, partnering with an organization called El Instituto de Salud Incluyentes (Institute of Inclusive Health). It is a nonprofit organization that has been working for 20 years to develop and implement a model of integrated primary care based on the principles of the Alma Alta decree. They are working alongside the Ministry of Health at health centers in Huehuetenango and Quetzaltenango (in western Guatemala) to deliver care that is focused on individual, family and community levels that are culturally appropriate.



Jennifer will be teaching in a certificate program for health professionals – including doctors, nurses and researchers – in trans-disciplinary care (otherwise known as family medicine). It is her hope that this will lead to an ongoing collaboration between El Instituto de Salud Incluyentes and GVH, as well as a possible fellowship exchange at Kaiser Permanente. We are very excited for this opportunity, and hope to learn and grow with the new network this experience may provide us.

Nurse Education: Juanita, Julio & Lesbia

Juanita, our Nurse Manager, will be finishing her second practicum to complete a technical nursing degree and will take her exams in spring. She will resume full-time nursing duties for GVH in January, with the goal of spending one week of each month in El Estor, the closest town to our villages, and another week in the villages doing home visits. She will alternate locations each month to optimize her opportunities to train health workers and nurses.

Julio, our Village Project Manager, is fulfilling his dream to train as a health care professional. He is in his first year of nursing school at The Pan-American University in El Estor, with two years remaining until he completes his degree.

Lesbia, our Village Health Manager in charge of health promoters, just graduated with her GED, and will continue her nursing education in the coming year.



Ak'Tenamit Collaboration:

Ak'Tenamit is a local boarding school in the Rio Dulce region of Guatemala that focuses on educating students in skills that can be applied in their home villages. José and Aura, the first students we have sent to Ak'Tenamit, are each completing their first year of high school and middle school, respectively. José is studying community organization with the goal of helping to train villagers in the skills he learns. We are hoping that next year, with the support of the Diana Orellana Scholarship Fund, we will be able to send children from our villages who have proven to be attentive students with high marks in elementary and middle school.

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GVH Inspirations:

“There were so many eye-opening experiences – I witnessed the commitment among the health promoters and leaders with whom we collaborated to create change within their communities...and so many different individuals, in three different languages with a common goal, working seamlessly with each other was amazing to experience. I will forever keep a special place in my heart of GVH.”

- Jill High, February 2018 trip

