



Scalpel's Edge

Inside This Issue:

- January 2012 Mission Trip Report
- Halo Ministry
- Of Grace
- The Human Element in Surgery
- Prayer & Praise Points

The Ripple Effect

by Peter A. Cole, M.D., Co-Founder, Scalpel At The Cross

Imagine rising out of bed in the morning and taking a stroll down to the lake. It is the early dawn and there is not a whisper of wind. The water is like glass as the sun peaks over the horizon. Complete quietude surrounds, save for an occasional robin's tweet. You sit down on a tree trunk at water's edge and begin to meditate on God's creation before you. A northern pike dives from the water forty yards out and the lunge aims him back through the glassy surface. Its splash disseminates a circular wave propagating in every direction. You ponder... one small action of a fish sends a centripetal ripple which displaces water even dozens of yards away until it disappears into every inch of lakeshore along the three mile perimeter.

Magnificent! Yet if a small fish could affect the water of a lake with just a mere leap into the air, imagine what God purposes through an Amazon mission trip. This thought reminds me of Matthew 6:26, "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly

Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" I would suggest that whereas this verse implies God's provision for us, I think it would be equally true for His purpose in our lives--should our lives not have more purpose than a fish? When I pause to ponder this reality, my mind is blown to wonder what happens when fifteen teammates each take their own life plunge into a jungle frontier town at the edge of creation. This phenomenon might rightly be conceptualized as *the ripple effect*.

Perhaps there is nothing more gratifying than to witness *the ripple effect* of our mission trips. People come back to the United States different and desirous of making a difference. I will share three such anecdotes, which are just segments of the ripple from three beloved, former teammates. Keep in mind these are just three examples of which there are over a hundred now—a hundred team members—each sending out their own ripple in every direction. Ripples that won't terminate at a lake-

Continued on Page 7

A Gift of Light, Hope and Surgery to Peru

Scalpel At The Cross

January 2012 Mission Trip Report

Pucallpa, Peru

The January 2012 Scalpel at the Cross mission trip included 4 Orthopaedic surgeons, a Peruvian doctor, 1 registered nurse and 6 support members. The team evaluated 98 patients in clinic and did follow-up on 14 past patients. The team completed 33 surgeries/clinic procedures on 32 patients.

Orthopaedic Patients

- Patient 1: Right Hip - Femoral Head Resection (Girdlestone Procedure)
- Patient 2: Left Foot - Irrigation & Debridement of Gun Shot Wound
- Patient 3: Left Tibia - Closed Reduction & Casting
- Patient 4: Right Tibia / Fibula - Internal Fixation with SIGN Nail
- Patient 5: Left Forearm - Irrigation & Debridement, Open Reduction / Internal Fixation with Plates & Screws and Tendon Repair
- Patient 6: Left Wrist - Irrigation & Debridement, Placed External Fixator
- Patient 7a: Right Fibula - Irrigation & Debridement, Open Reduction / Internal Fixation with Plates & Screws and Syndesmosis Fixation
- Patient 7b: Right Leg - Skin Graft of Open Wound
- Patient 8: Left Elbow - Malunion Reconstruction with K-Wires
- Patient 9: Left Foot with Club Foot Deformity - Tendon Release and Ponsetti Casting
- Patient 10: Left Knee - Patellar Hardware Removal with Contracture Release
- Patient 11: Right Elbow - Fracture Fixation with K-Wires
- Patient 12: Left Ankle - Subtalar Arthrosis Arthrodesis and Exostectomy
- Patient 13: Left Hip - Hardware Removal
- Patient 14: Left Knee - Lateral Meniscus Arthrotomy
- Patient 15: Left Hand - Irrigation & Debridement of Open Metacarpophalangeal Joint and Tendon Repair
- Patient 16: Left Elbow - Irrigation & Debridement, Wound Revision
- Patient 17: Right Tibia - Hardware Removal, Irrigation & Debridement
- Patient 18: Right Elbow - Hardware Removal, Tendon Transfer and Radial Nerve Repair
- Patient 19: Left Elbow - Open Reduction / Internal Fixation with Plates & Screws
- Patient 20: Left Tibia - Non-Union Reconstruction / Internal Fixation with Plates & Screws using Iliac Crest Graft
- Patient 21: Left Femur - Non-Union Reconstruction / Internal Fixation with Plates & Screws
- Patient 22: Right Hip - Total Hip Arthroplasty
- Patient 23: Left Hand - Open Reduction / Internal Fixation with K-Wires
- Patient 24: Right Ankle - Hardware Removal, Irrigation & Debridement
- Patient 25: Left Foot - Excision of Supranumerary Digit

Clinic Patients

- Patient 26: Left Wrist - Clinic Procedure - Closed Reduction & Casting
- Patient 27: Left Knee - Clinic Procedure - Injection
- Patient 28: Left Foot - Clinic Procedure - Injection
- Patient 29: Left Knee - Clinic Procedure - Injection
- Patient 30: Left Knee - Clinic Procedure - Injection
- Patient 31: Right Shoulder - Clinic Procedure - Injection
- Patient 32: Right Hand - Clinic Procedure - Injection



Halo Ministry: Supernatural Tapestry

by Nancy E. Cole, Co-Founder, Director of Halo Ministries

For the Cole family, this summer has been a season of personal adjustment... the graduation of our middle son and his embarking upon God's work in Asia; the transition from 11 years of home education to the matriculation of our youngest into mainstream schooling; the loss of our beloved mother/grandmother after a hard fought battle with illness. For us, this journey has been laden with two juxtaposed realities: advancement, growth, maturity, alongside bittersweet "goodbyes" of life as it was known. We are learning to cling loosely to precious family members in order to promote passage to their next stage, and though we wrestle over "releasing" our affections and investment in one another, we find it to be a very good and necessary thing!

Scripturally, these paradoxes are familiar: "one must lose one's life to find it" (Matthew 10:39), "the last will be first" (Matthew 20:16), "to be weak is to be strong" (2 Corinthians 12:10). On an experiential level, the co-existence of these contrasts has made everything in our world appear seemingly more vivid, colorful, significant, and poignant.

Reflecting on these matters in the weeks preceding our July mission trip led to an appreciation, perhaps more so than ever, of how transitory life is and the necessity of embracing each moment for what it offers. This is an important concept to lay hold of especially when embarking upon a mission to the developing world where things do not operate as we might intend and flexibility and spontaneity are critical. One might argue that our perspective on the ephemeral nature of things was uniquely framed by the changes *our* particular family underwent over the summer. To our amazement, however, it appeared as though our *entire mission team* was grappling, at some level, with the fleetingness

of life and the necessity of finding purpose. Team members, coming from more diverse faith backgrounds than is generally the case on these trips, repeatedly expressed how moving our times together were, co-laboring in service, and how much they hoped to be able to preserve and duplicate the richness of these experiences in future years. It was as if the Peruvian ministerial hues were so brilliant this time around, that they deeply touched the core of team members' souls in a riveting manner which emphatically, could not be denied. There was, in God's providence, much discussion generated during team devotionals and otherwise to the brevity of our time on earth and the need for securing **truthful** meaning in it all beyond serving for philanthropic benefit.

As a result of this mindset, each and every interaction among ourselves as Team Scalpel, as well as the dynamics encountered between us and those we served, seemed peppered with a certain sense of vitality unique to this trip. Whether engaging in informal games while crowded into a cramped van traveling to/from our many venues, attempting peculiar culinary delicacies the likes of guinea pig and alpaca, or trying new Peruvian dance moves indigenous to an area we had not previously visited, there seemed to be a vibrant connectedness that literally wove our lives together in one accord in spite of age, personality, knowledge, culture, and even marked faith differentials. Each team member certainly possessed his/her own "distinctions," yet these unique personal features melded into a tapestry of unified endeavor which benefitted those we served, as well as we ourselves, to the Glory of God! Only the God of the impossible can take a motley crew such as us, and use our contrasts to overcome our contrasts and merge them together for good!



"Whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith." - 1 John 5:4

Our trip was replete with examples where the Lord took ordinary interactions and turned them into extraordinary interpersonal moments to be cherished and endeared. Whether engaged with fellow missionaries serving full-time on the field in Pucallpa who we spent mornings "rounding on" to catch up on life's happenings, competing in fútbol matches against a local tribe across the lagoon, or fellowshiping in song and game with the Pucallpan Owansa Bible Club, we all came away from these experiences changed, provoked, impacted at a heart level.

The victory we experienced through these *halo ministry* exchanges was palpable to the youngest of our members as well as those who had not fully embraced the Christian faith as we understand it. It was as if God, in an act of common grace, made **the life** He promises to give irresistibly enticing to any and all in our midst. He drew us close and bound us tightly. Praise be to Him alone!



Of Grace

by Ralph S. Bovard, MD, Scalpel Team Member, January 2012

"There is the Mystery, and nothing but the Mystery."- Ken Patchen

The opportunity to go to Peru with the Scalpel At The Cross team arose from a seemingly "happenstance" meeting in December 2011 with Dr. Cole. As with so many things, a sudden opportunity becomes a memorable life event. A few weeks later, I found myself boarding a plane heading to Lima with Dr. Cole, Dr. Dave Solfelt, Kevin Mannion (Stryker), and Matt Haffner. We soon joined additional team members Lisa Schroder, Hillary Howse, Joel & Sarah Molitor, Dr. Jim Wyman, Chad Robran, and Dra. Rosita Escudero (the Scalpel surgical liaison) in Peru.

I have always rated experiences based on whether I remember things in black and white or in hues of color. Peru is a kaleidoscope of colors. The smiles of the children, white teeth and bright eyes, framed in light brown and mahogany faces are enduring images. I remember blue skies, emerald jungles, and black coffee as well as the bright lights of the O.R. with crisp green scrubs, long open incisions with crimson orchids of blood soaked gauze, and the pungent smell of the cautery. Outside the multi-colored motcars, motorcycles, and small vans jostle in the streets like beetles. This same traffic produces any number of injuries and general mayhem.

Drs. Cole, Solfelt, and Wyman performed orthopedic cases at the local hospital in Pucallpa with the assistance of Joel, Sarah, Hillary, Matt, Kevin, and Chad. Dra. Escudero, Whitney Gahagen, and Urby provided invaluable translator services. I helped in the clinic triaging patients with general orthopedic problems. I was actually bussed (kissed) on the cheek by several matronly women at the conclusion of these visits. This was a generous expression of thanks that I have yet to experience in our American health care system. With the invaluable assistance of Lisa and Whitney, we performed some injections for knee arthri-

tis, shoulder impingement, thumb arthritis, and plantar fasciitis (PF). PF seems to be a common problem due to the fact that people wear flat sandals with little or no arch support. Unfortunate cases appeared for which little could be done: palsied limbs during complicated births, paraplegia from a gun shot wound, spinal tumors, and a poor, young boy with an aggressive osteosarcoma of the thigh/femur bone.

Peru is also a land of great disparities-of wealth and poverty, of sophistication and a rural provincialism, of technology and rustic hand tools, of soaring Andes mountains and the Amazon basin lowlands. Lima is a metropolis of some ten million inhabitants. We dined at the elegant Rosa Nautica and Rustica restaurants by the sea. Meanwhile, Pucallpa is a bustling city of nearly a quarter million persons across the Andes to the east in the catchment that forms the headwaters of the Amazon. The Amazon Basin is a sensory wonderland, a cacophony of honks, cries, rustlings, crescendoing bird calls, chittering, the resonant buzzing of the cicadas at dusk on the river, and the sound of the bow waters sloshing and spraying off the prow of the boat... and sometimes, amazingly, pure silence. It is a panoply of images, colors, sounds, and tactile sensations. Outside Pucallpa the Scalpel mission lodge sits amidst the lakes that feed the Ucayali River and ultimately the Amazon River itself.

South America Mission pilot, Craig Gahagen, flew a group of us by floatplane to a small Indian village situated on the Ucayali River for an afternoon. There were less than a hundred villagers. Ever the gracious hosts, Craig and his wife, Heather, and co-pilots also took us out on the lakes-river for a spectacular and memorable afternoon. There are 1,800 different species of birds found in Peru, which is a fifth of all the 8,500 birds in the entire world. We saw lineated woodpeckers, Amazon kingfishers, yellow rumped caciques, snowy egrets, turkey vultures, dusky headed parakeets, purple



gallinules, scarlet macaws, black fronted nun-birds, and black and a white hawk eagle. In addition to exotic birdlife, we saw fresh water river dolphins and a sloth, and stopped at an indigenous zoo where several of the team members had the opportunity to "hold" a 12'-15' anaconda on their shoulders. Pictures confirm the impression that if it had wanted to "put the squeeze" on any of us, it would have been short work.

These pilots of the SAM group are an amazing cadre of dauntless and heroic spirits. They bring to mind the intrepid navigators of years gone by who carried out fabled flights that often exposed them to great danger... as well as profound insight and spiritual enlightenment. *Wind, Sand, and Stars* by Antoine de Saint Exupery comes to mind.

Dave Solfelt has worked in Africa for prolonged periods at a number of missions. His stories and tales of his times there were fascinating. I had the opportunity to work at a Lutheran Mission Hospital in Papua, New Guinea, in 1986-87. Our experiences reaffirm the truth that there are wonderful people wherever you go. They come in all sizes, shapes, and colors. It is a lesson of toleration that we all need to embrace and share when we return to our native lands. The opportunity to offer care, to try to assuage illness, and to balm injury is great. Even small acts of kindness and medical care can have far reaching benefit and implications. Such trips are a reminder of how truly fortunate we are in America in terms of prosperity and access to quality healthcare. We have many blessings.

I greatly admire those who are bilingual or multilingual. I have always thought that our translators at the hospital were some of the most intelligent and interesting people one could meet. The translators who assist with the vital work of Scalpel At The Cross: Urby, Whitney, Sarah, Lisa, Rosa, Dr. Cole, etc., are a

gifted lot. My own knowledge of Spanish is rudimentary, but as one enchanted by the cantos of world literature and the interplay of cultures, I am fascinated by this beautiful language. Some of my favorite artists are part of this broad citizenry: Pablo Neruda, Pablo Casals, Gabriel Marquez, Allende, Fuentes, Picasso, etc. We owe much to this great culture. Spanish is a lovely evolution of the Romance languages with its Latin and Greek origins. Our medical training allows us to recognize some of the Latin/Greek word roots that form the basis of Spanish, Portuguese, and French vocabulary. One of my favorite words is “grace.” It is a word of broad application that derives from gracious, grateful, and gracias!

Grace and gracias derive from the Latin word *gratus*, which had meanings such as “pleasing,” “beloved,” “agreeable,” and “favorable.” The English word became part of English by way of Old French. *Gracias* is the second-person of the French word *gracier*. English words from the same root are: congratulate, gratuitous, gratis, gratify, graceful, gratitude. Spanish words: *agradecer* (to give thanks), *agrado* (pleasure or kindness), *gratis* (free), *gratitude* (gratitude), *gratification* (reward), and *gratuito* (free, gratuitous).

The word *gracias* means “thank you” in Spanish. It is said that upon arriving at the site of the city of *Gracias* in Honduras in 1536, the Spanish explorers, tired after having trekked through the mountainous terrain, said, “*Gracias a Dios hemos llegado a tierra plana*,” meaning, “Thank God we have arrived at flat land.”

Grace and gracias have a range of meanings that overlap. While “thank you” is the essence of it all, the words pay respect to beauty, life, food, or divine kindness. One can move with elegance and grace, display manly or womanly graces, be saved by the Grace of God, and say grace at the dinner table.

My Grandpa Ralph’s dinner blessing was constant but sincere: “God bless us, and keep us. And make His face to

shine upon us. And be gracious unto us. Amen.”

At the beginning of the wondrous novel *A River Runs Through It*, Norman McLean reflects that his father, a minister, compared the Galilean disciples to fishermen. “My father was very sure about certain matters pertaining to the universe. To him, all good things – trout as well as eternal salvation – come by grace and grace comes by art and art does not come easy.” As a boy McLean thought that meant fly-fishers. He grew up in Montana and wrote the book as a 70-year old retired professor of English in Chicago.

After college I had a 1950 Chevy pick-up that we pulled out of a farm lot and rebuilt from the chassis up. My grandma’s friend was named Grace and I named it after her. It was a faithful and trusty vehicle of whom I have fond memories.

My good friend Roger Volkmann is an orthopedic surgeon in Wenatchee, Washington. We went to medical school together at the U. of M. and enjoyed epic mountaineering trips together. Last summer Roger suffered a post-traumatic stroke that left his left side paralyzed. He has made courageous and amazing progress in his recovery and is now back in clinical practice. He was the most fit person I have ever known and he was laid low in an instant. His mental strength and determination has shown him an exemplar for us. His wife Sue said, “We don’t deserve any of the gifts we are given. That’s what grace is all about.”

And now I have learned that Dr. Cole was born in Havre de Grace, Maryland, on Chesapeake Bay before moving to Caracas, Venezuela, as a young boy. Such a litany of events put in place to lead back to Miami and ultimately Minnesota. And then the circle back to South America where he graces Peru with his surgical gifts and ministry. The late Steve Jobs said, “The only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work, and the only way to do great work is to love what you do.”

Peter is the exemplar of that passion and dedication.

To complete the Minnesota circle I learned that the famous image titled “Grace,” that depicts a man with bowed head at a table with a loaf of bread and a Bible, was designated the Minnesota state photograph in 2002. [MN statute 2004-1.1498] The original was a sepia photograph taken in 1918 by Bovey, MN, artist Eric Enstrom of a peddler named Charles Wilden: “It shows a man who is grateful for the simple things in life.” Enstrom’s daughter, Rhoda Nyberg, enhanced the photo with oil paints to add color. Her obituary was in the Minneapolis Star Tribune, Tuesday, February 28th, 2012; she was 95 years old. (<http://www.photopixels.com/grace/index.html>)

It’s all a blessing isn’t it? Milan Kundera talks about the “fortuities,” things that happen when we least expect it or anticipate it. It is the idea that when you commit to something larger than yourself, wheels turn and the Heavens shift, and your life opens to new opportunity, a new reality.

There is a wonderful quote in Beryl Markham’s book *West With The Night*: “I saw the alchemy of perspective reduce my world, and all my other life, to grains in a cup. I learned to watch, to put my trust in other hands than mine. And I learned to wander. I learned what every dreaming child needs to know-- that no horizon is so far that you cannot get above it or beyond it.”

Cielo azul y café negro (Blue skies and black coffee). And...Gracias to you all for this wonderful experience.

Ralph Bovard

PS: A book comes to mind, that I want to re-read in the wake of this Peruvian odyssey: *A Fortunate Life* by Australian A.B. Facey.

The Human Element in Surgery

By Mike Torchia, Medical Student, July 2012 Team Member

After one year of medical school and every bit the “wise fool” that sophomore translates into in Greek, I often find myself naively assuming that all physicians practice at the highest ideals of the Hippocratic Oath. Part of this is because I’ve been blessed to be around physicians who practice medicine in the way Sir William Osler envisioned it 100 years ago, as “a calling which extracts from you at every turn self-sacrifice, devotion, love, and tenderness to your fellow men.” Yet there is all too often a forgetfulness of what Pope Benedict XVI warns us of: “Ignorance of the fact that man has a wounded nature inclined to evil gives rise to serious errors in the areas of education, politics, social action, and morals.”

Pope Benedict’s words were manifested in a particularly poignant way during the July 2012 Mission. A man had suffered an extremely severe hip injury, with fractures on both sides of the hip bone in several places. Thankfully, he sustained this trauma two weeks before the July 2012 trip, and his fracture pattern was one that Dr. Cole has extensive experience and expertise in treating. It was both perplexing and frustrating, then, when the day of surgery was marked by delay after delay at the hospital in getting the patient ready for the operation. After several hours marked by an inability of the different hospital departments to coordinate care, the operation was called off due to lack of time available to complete the case, a very disheartening conclusion given that it was the last operating day of the trip. I will never forget the look on the patient’s face when he was told he had to remain in traction for another six weeks because the operation was not feasible.

In one sense, the situation was an inability of the local hospital physicians to put the interests of the patient first. And yes, the situation calls for a cultural sensitivity in acknowledging that the Peruvian medical education system is not blessed as we are in America to be steeped in

the Oslerian tradition of always putting the patient first or to be in a system with abundant financial resources. Yet to accept the substandard outcome of this patient as simply part of being in the Peruvian medical system is to succumb to a relativism that says we can disregard the truth that human beings deserve dignity in favor of cultural sensitivity. Nor can we fall prey to the temptation to blame the unfortunate outcome on the ambiguous and all-encompassing scapegoat of “hospital politics.” Because yes, politics were involved, but deeper than that, the genesis of those dysfunctional politics is found in the ugly side of what is in all of our hearts. It was the little bit of pride at not wanting to give up control of one’s sphere of influence, the little bit of envy, the little bit of mistrust, the little bit of sloth, the little bit of unforgiveness that all conspired in a perfect storm to prevent the patient from receiving the operation he needed.

Of course, to talk about the situation in this way seems like a Puritanical fire-and-brimstone sermon of judgment. The words from Luke 6:37 come to mind: “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.” However, so often we do not recognize or admit the uglier side of the human element in medicine. Too often, we have such a poverty of thinking that blames an intangible system for something that we know deep down is a manifestation of the ugliness that we all carry in our own hearts as humans.

Rather than being a cause for despair and gloom, though, it is actually a cause to deepen our trust and joy in the knowledge that is born of faith in Christ as a redeeming and renewing force in this world. Having the humility and courage to recognize our ugliness opens the endless possibilities born of faith to renewal and new life in Christ.

continued on page 8



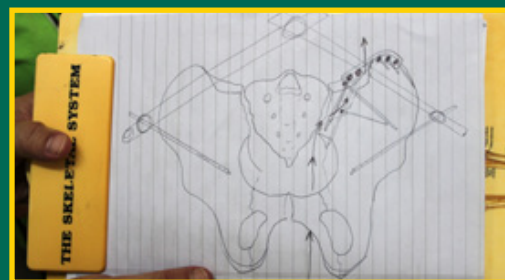
Mike Torchia



Arriving in Pucallpa



Two Scalpel doctors pause to examine patient x-rays.



A pre-operative plan for a patient with a pelvic fracture, showing the placement of an external fixator as well as the plates and screws which would have been used for surgery.

The Ripple Effect

Continued from Page 1

shore, but will instead pour into family members and marriages, surround friends upon friends, and illuminate generations.

Mr. Joel Molitor is a financial analyst from Northwestern Mutual Company, who makes a living selling financial instruments, investments, and advice to enhance the financial security of his customers. He accompanied his newly wedded wife on a Scalpel At The Cross mission trip a couple of years ago. “Sure I’ll go! Sounds like an adventure.” In nine days he was so impacted, not as much by the adventure, but by the ministry, that he committed to taking “ministry” back to his company workplace. Though Joel was not “medical” per se, he was moved by understanding in a new way, that missionaries don’t need to travel thousands of miles to be missionaries, but rather being a missionary was an approach to the Christian faith. He understood at a much more profound level that lost people need Jesus, and children of God need to know Jesus better. Those things could happen at work, and so he sought the advice and permission of his boss to host a company Bible study at work. I recall praying with Joel, for the Holy Spirit to be working amongst each person in the group no matter their faith-walk, for someone to even show up at all, and for Joel to have an inspired message to share. It was amazing to talk to Joel after each study, recalling his humble lesson, the personal sharing that took place, the willingness of members to be vulnerable, and in so doing, recommit to their faith. Each month the study evolved and no doubt each one was a leap into the lake which represented a new *ripple effect* flowing all over his sphere of influence in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Take another example--our daughter Danielle Christine. Dani has had the privilege of going to Peru since she was a little girl, perhaps a dozen times between the ages of 6-18 years. Our children know Peru almost like a second home, and the pattern of trips led to a network of Peruvian friends and a sense of family mission for Dani. Based on the work she witnessed through Scalpel At The Cross, she loved the mingling of patient care

and ministry, and dreamed of one day helping out in this capacity. She decided upon graduation from her large Minnesota public high school—Mounds View High, to do a “gap year” in Peru before going to college. Danielle taught in the jungle mission school, South American Mission Academy (grades K-12), serving as the music teacher, weekly Bible devotional leader, and teachers’ aide. After a great faith-walk of a year in the Amazon, she inspired a friend of hers, a year younger from her high school swim team, to follow in her footsteps at SAM Academy. Dear Halie had gone on a trip a couple years earlier and came back inspired to do a “gap year” like Dani. Halie begins at Carleton College as a freshman this year, and I guarantee Carleton has a different freshman than the one they accepted a year and a half ago—watch out Carleton! Danielle is now a sophomore at Boston College, where she is a leader in a Christian campus ministry, and a devotee of her Calvary Chapel Church in Boston, all which paint the BC student co-eds a slightly different shade of hope. Dani also inspired her brother, Peter, to do a gap year before he starts college next year, and the two of them led a summer Wednesday night Bible study at our home in which up to twenty-five kids from their high school days would come over weekly to dive into Scripture and its life application.

The third ripple effect came from the leap of a former orthopaedic surgery resident, Dr. Jason Caron, now a surgeon in Bemidji, Minnesota, approximately six hours drive north of the Twin Cities. Jason spent three months with me training in his second year of residency at the University of Minnesota teaching facility, Regions Hospital, where I work. As we operated, I told stories of my Amazon trips, and he very clearly locked in a plan to go on one of the Scalpel At The Cross trips before he graduated from residency. Sure enough, Jason approached me as a Chief Resident a few years later, “Dr. Cole, is there any chance of my going with you on a trip to Peru this year?” Jason was my first resident to go on such a trip, and I must say, it was to date, the most extensive medical and surgical trip. Jason

was like a shark in a school of baitfish. He couldn’t get enough! He devoured the surgery and adventure and unknown, and just roiled in the excitement of our trip. He returned to the residency program and gave a Grand Rounds on his experience. I can’t remember Grand Rounds more stuffed with people, even lined sitting against the walls, eager to hear about Dr. Caron’s journey to the Amazon. You can easily imagine that the ripple yielded more residents and medical students going on a mission trip with us (and through other organizations), even to the extent that the Chairman and Residency Program Director have now asked me if we would be willing to accept officially funded resident trips as an option for their rotations at Regions Hospital – amazing! Dr. Caron is now on the Scalpel At The Cross Board of Directors! He has since gone on five mission trips with Scalpel At The Cross, including one in which he took his beautiful wife, Angie, and their four kids; and as if that were not enough, they welcomed their 5th beautiful child Grace Marie Caron, 9 months after visiting the Peruvian rainforest. Indeed the ripple effect is large.

I believe that our mantra, “A gift of light, hope, and surgery to Peru,” is being fulfilled indeed; but when Nancy and I started on our Scalpel At The Cross journey, we never realized how America itself could be changed through the mission. Look at Joel, Dani, and Jason’s lives. This is the ripple effect, the very magnificent and intricate design God has for His children. Proverbs 16:9 says, “A man plans his ways, but the Lord directs his steps.” Prospective mission team members do create a plan to come on a trip, and, I think most of the time, they have no idea what God has in store for them. The ripple effect for me has become the most gratifying byproduct of Scalpel At The Cross, and keeps me working hard with joy and inspired to keep taking teams to the Amazon.

You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Matthew 5:14

Prayer & Praise Points

by Nancy E. Cole, Co-Founder, Scalpel At The Cross

- Thanks be to God for answering our petitions in receiving the support of a locally based maintenance/groundskeeper to oversee our Jungle Bunk's campus, home, and medical clinic. We have been praying for on-site help for two years now, and this request has graciously been supplied by a new missionary to the field as of late this summer. His oversight will alleviate the challenges entailed in attempting to manage property stateside by imposing upon the SAMAIR missionaries that live close by.
- Thanks also abound for God's provision as our "portion and strength" during this most profitable July 2012 mission trip, when most outside distractions were kept at bay so that our focus could be almost exclusively ministerial and relational. This was by far one of the smoothest team trips to date in terms of health and logistics!
- Please join us in lifting up Scalpel's October 27th Board Meeting and fund-raiser which is being hosted in Phoenix, AZ, by Bob and Ginger Korljan. Our hope is that we might spread a passion for the ministry by exposing newcomers with the *ability* to partner with us the *desire* to co-labor with us, and that our time together might be specially anointed and God exalting!
- Plans are also underway for our November 9th-18th and January 17th-27th, 2013, Peru trips. We would appreciate your prayer cover as we assemble teams and itineraries which are most God glorifying and efficacious.



The Human Element in Surgery (continued from page 6)

These are the wounds of Christ we are call to heal. While the medical profession has a particular call to heal physical wounds, to stop there would be to live the Gospel in a shallow and lukewarm manner. We are also called to heal the wounds of pride, envy, ignorance, sloth, and anger, first in ourselves, and then in others. It is these deeper wounds that Christ asks us to heal, a demanding task, but as Jesus says in Matthew 19:26,

"With people this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." We can trust in the Psalmist who writes with confidence, "When you send your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth (Psalm 104: 30). With the wonders of modern medicine in the hands of people with souls animated by the love that flows from the trinitarian love of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, all things are truly possible.