

SCALPEL'S EDGE

Scalpel AT THE CROSS
A Christian Medical Mission
to the Peruvian Amazon

A GIFT OF LIGHT, HOPE AND SURGERY TO PERU

FALL 2016 | ISSUE 20

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“Letting go is at the very heart of being a Christian. It is the “letting go” that promotes our conversion to Christianity in the first place.”

—Peter A. Cole, MD



Figure 1b

LETTING GO

by Peter A. Cole, MD — President, Scalpel At The Cross



Figure 1a

Letting go may be the hardest thing for a person to do. I have lived it. I am living it. Perhaps you are right here with me now in some aspect of your own life. The scriptures inform us of the inevitability of God-purposed seasons in life (Ecclesiastes 3:3-14). The term “seasons,” is often used as a metaphor for change. Seasons of life are often marked with distinctive milestones, but not always. Our Mission Director, Peggy, once wrote about these (Scalpel’s Edge, Winter 2014, Issue 15), calling out the markers in her life that represented new seasons, periods of significant growth and change.

Change may be difficult because it demands adjustment and letting go, often of something that is familiar or even dear to us. Letting go can be abrupt, sometimes without warning; and yet other times it is insidious, even to an extent that we realize we are in a different place, saying to ourselves, “This isn’t like it used to be.” Letting go is often associated with sadness, fear, anxiety, and even anger. On the other side of those emotions however, can be joy, relief, excitement, and even peace. Every time though, we grow stronger, wiser, fuller in experience, and deeper in faith. This growth too, will happen to you. It is the process of

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LETTING GO

sanctification, becoming more Christ-like. I write about this topic in this edition, because we had to do a lot of letting go in 2016 at Scalpel At The Cross. I will focus on relationships, people, and personnel to whom we had to say goodbye.

Scalpel At The Cross has eight members on its Board of Directors, and we had three members transition off this year. On behalf of the mission leadership and staff, I want to publically express my gratitude to these individuals. Collectively, their passion, hard work and creativity are responsible for much of what people see today in the ministry. Two were original members, since 2005, and all three love Scalpel At The Cross to this day. Joel Molitor (2012-2016) served on the board with a born-again passion, which began in the jungle on his first trip to accompany his lovely Sarah (Figure 1a). He is thoughtful, a strong mentor and family man. He and Sarah are dear friends, and their jungle zeal bore great fruit for the kingdom. Chad Robran (2005-2016) is a lifetime compatriot (Figure 1b). He started with Scalpel's first trip, recorded in January of 2005. He has a pioneer spirit, is a visionary, a connector of people, and an adventurer at heart. He is ebullient and warms the hearts of people around him. Lisa Schroder served faithfully (Figure 2a). Her approach was fearless, and manifest most clearly as our Mission Director from (2007-2013). Her reach was deep and wide, touching nearly every aspect of our organization, but perhaps her most distinctive and visible contribution was the hire and development of Dra. Rosa Escudero as the Peruvian Medical Director (Figure 2b), and Kelli Hooks as our stateside Mission Coordinator (Figure 2c). We would not be where we are today without this triumvirate, and in many ways they have paved the way for years to come. Yes, letting go of these dear individuals is hard, but their departure is

associated with new hope for refreshment through the exciting addition of three new board members, Danielle Ellerbe, Mark Hedrick, and Derek Eitreim, whose bios are featured in this edition of Scalpel's Edge.

Rosa Escudero served in the capacity of Peruvian Medical Director between 2007-2016, helping to execute the patient outcomes program as we know it today. She was dedicated and worked hard to fulfill her duties, and she provided excellent follow-up on hundreds of patients who were not always easy to find, accomplishing an astonishing follow-up rate of 80% at one year after surgery. Rosa's faith grew precipitously during her time with Scalpel, and it was a joy to serve alongside her on surgical campaigns when she was our primary liaison between the mission and the hospital staff. Rosa moved her family to the United States this summer, and she and her brave husband, Miguel, will seek citizenship in the years to come. In this edition of Scalpel's Edge, we announce Rosa's capable replacement, Isaac Mendoza, a great man of faith, with an excellent orthopaedic-related background in physical therapy, orthotics and prosthetics. Isaac is also a pastor with a passion for spreading the gospel to those who don't know it, including our broken patients! Rosa's departure represents the sadness associated with letting go, while Isaac's introduction represents the hope and joy. The same can be said for the sad goodbye to our dear Kelli Hooks, our

capable Mission Coordinator, and to many, the face of our ministry. She was funny, outspoken, and dedicated to the bone! She represented our ministry fearlessly from Rochester, Indiana; but as we sought to consolidate our home office in Miami, Florida, God brought Linda Nite to our family as the new Mission Coordinator--the sadness and joy in letting go--He is sovereign indeed!

Letting go is at the very heart of being a Christian. It is the "letting go" that promotes our conversion to Christianity in the first place. The apostle Paul says in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in

Figure 2c



Figure 2a



Figure 2b

the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

Our spiritual rebirth is a result of letting go of our pride, egocentric perspective, and sin. For those of you who have gone through this conversion, you know. But you also know that though our spiritual rebirth occurs at the moment God chooses for us to turn our lives over to Christ, accepting Him as lord and savior, the process of letting go of pride and sin is a growing-up in the Lord, a steady purification and cleansing which never stops during our lives on earth. We can let go to be born again, but we are challenged to continue letting go, allowing God to replace our identity in self with our identity in Christ. It is my prayer, that this letting go will become your prize today.

ECCLESIASTES 3:3-14

*¹There is a time for everything,
and a season for every activity under
the heaven:*

²a time to be born and a time to die,

a time to plant and a time to uproot,

³a time to kill and a time to heal,

a time to tear down and a time to build,

⁴a time to weep and a time to laugh,

a time to mourn and a time to dance,

*⁵a time to scatter stones and a time to
gather them,*

*a time to embrace and a time to refrain
from embracing,*

⁶a time to search and a time to give up,

a time to keep and a time to throw away,

⁷a time to tear and a time to mend,

a time to be silent and a time to speak,

⁸a time to love and a time to hate,

a time for war and a time for peace.

⁹What do workers gain from their toil?

¹⁰I have seen the burden God has laid on the human race.

¹¹He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart; yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

¹²I know that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to do good while they live.

¹³That each of them may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all their toil—this is the gift of God.

¹⁴I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it.

God does it so that people will fear him. †

FOREVER CHANGED

By Dennis Barrett

Bemidji, Minnesota is my home, and I have had the honor to know and work with Dr. Jason Caron, orthopaedic surgeon, over the past 8 years. He talked about the ministry in the jungle with excitement, always inviting me to come.

God was speaking to me through Matthew 22: 37-39, “Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” I prayed He would provide opportunity for me to truly live out these verses, and this is exactly what He did. He provided this opportunity to love amazing people, my neighbors. I really felt God calling me to be part of the Scalpel At The Cross mission.

My medical background as an orthopaedic registered nurse first

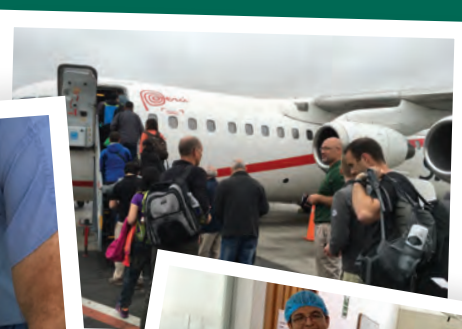
assistant kicked in, and I started to process the impact of orthopaedic surgery in the jungle. I asked Dr. Caron questions about the process of seeing patients and making decisions for surgery, the conditions of the facility, patient conditions, and the main types of procedures that are performed. He described many severe hip arthropathy conditions and the desire to do total hip arthroplasty, but he needed to pursue supplies through our local Depuy representative. The company donated all the implants needed; what an amazing gift!

Our first morning in Pucallpa, we gathered supplies and headed to Hospital Amazonico, where we would meet our patients for the first time. There was apprehension about news of a possible strike by the hospital employees; however, although the strike was going on when we arrived, the staff made themselves available, wanting to help. Many of the



staff know the impact of this ministry and desire to help make it successful.

We were able to meet many amazing people and hear their stories, learning about their life, family, accomplishments, and desire to have function of their bodies free of pain. There were many surgical candidates to fill our surgery days, and surgical patients are scheduled for follow-up appointments where they receive a medical check-up, prayer, and the message that there is a heavenly father that loves them, created them for



“ Sunday morning we brought a truck full of totes carrying orthopaedic surgical instruments and implants, total hip instruments, and the power equipment for upcoming surgeries. All I could think of were the many individuals and companies that donated towards those instruments and supplies. ”

a purpose, and desires to have a relationship with them.

Sunday morning we brought a truck full of totes carrying orthopaedic surgical instruments and implants, total hip instruments, and the power equipment for upcoming surgeries. All I could think of were the many individuals and companies that donated towards those instruments and supplies. Again, this is one of the ways that people love God and their neighbor. Monday and Tuesday were somewhat of a blur. There was limited staffing due to the ongoing strike, but God is amazing and there were always helpers when needed. The team was in high gear and

helped in every way possible, stepping out of their comfort zone and helping as possible. Our desire was to do as many surgeries as possible since we had opportunity for our patients to have their surgeries and to be disciplined by the Scalpel team. When I felt tired or spent, God impressed upon me to love my neighbor as myself, filling my heart with love for the Pucallpan people and the energy to persevere.

I leave you with a memory that has changed my life forever. One of the patients was a 40-year-old pastor from outside Pucallpa. He learned about the clinic and came to seek surgery, which we completed during our second surgery day. As I

set up for the next case after moving him to the recovery area, I heard him cough a few times. I checked and found that he was trying to get the oral airway out of his mouth. When I removed the oral airway he looked at me, smiled, and with tears rolling down his cheeks, he said, “gracias”. I encouraged him to rest and stayed with him until, soon after, Isaac came into the recovery room, laid hands on him and prayed for him. I laid my hands on him as well, and as we prayed, I thanked God deeply for His Spirit that gives me the strength to listen, obey and love. I am forever changed.†

INTRODUCING MARK HEDRICK

by Chuck Archerd

Mark Hedrick is a senior partner of Blue Ridge Bone & Joint, practicing in Asheville, North Carolina. He is a graduate of the University of Georgia (go Dogs!) and the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University, and he completed his internship and orthopaedic residency at the University of S. Alabama Medical Center. He went on to complete a fellowship in Foot and Ankle Surgery at Emory University. Mark and his wife Barbara have twin daughters and a son, and we all raised our children together in Asheville, North Carolina, enjoying a friendship for over 19 years.

Two years ago, Mark invited my wife, Anne, and I to join him on a Scalpel At The Cross trip. It was his fourth trip over as many years. Feeling God's peace, we decided to join Mark and meet our Maker in an adventurous way. Mark led our team in his laid-back style, reminding us to remain like Gumby, to be flexible and trust God to do His work during our trip.

Mark is a quiet, steady leader who encourages others with his hard work, servant heart, and perfectly timed sense of humor. No matter how long the day, he takes time to pray with the patient and family, bring a smile to a frightened child's face, or share

an encouraging word. Though Anne and I had no medical skills, Mark assured us that the surgeries enabled God's healing of the body, but gospel work was affecting souls for eternity. We felt like such an integral part of the team, praying with patients and families and sharing the gospel. We discovered our Maker in a new and powerful way, and we so are grateful for the friendship and servant leadership of Mark Hedrick in our lives. †



Danielle "Dani" Christine Ellerbe (Cole) bears a name meaning "God is my judge, anointed one". Born in Providence, Rhode Island, she is a New England woman with Midwest hospitality, having lived in Seattle, WA and Jackson, MS, before settling down in the state of ten thousand lakes, Minnesota.

In a pivotal year after high school, Danielle served as a music teacher at SAM Academy, a school for children of missionaries in Pucallpa, Peru. She experienced significant deepening of her faith and returned to pursue nursing at Boston College, desiring to serve a deprived world physically and spiritually, leading souls to Christ.

INTRODUCING DANIELLE ELLERBE

by Jordan Ellerbe

In 2013, Danielle participated in the Boston Marathon when bombs went off at the finish line a few feet ahead and behind her; thankfully, she was not injured. Danielle and a friend hosted "The Last Five," dedicated to victims of the bombings who did not finish the last five miles. This spread to over 18,000 people, with colleges throughout the country joining, and Danielle completed the Boston Marathon the following year.

Missions and ministry to young people began in Danielle's life over 12 years ago, when she served on the first Scalpel At The Cross trip. She has returned to Pucallpa 15 times, and in 2014 co-led a trip there with her now-husband Jordan. That trip consisted of 12-15 college students from three different cities in the US. Danielle

also serves as a mentor in a girls' youth prison ministry, developing relationships that are not confined to prison walls, but reaching families throughout Boston. Recognizing her leadership with these young women, her church appointed her as a new youth group leader.

Danielle is newly wed to Jordan Ellerbe, living in the Fenway Park area of Boston. She is a passionate fan of the Boston Red Sox, Miami Hurricanes, and New England Patriots. She works as a nurse at Boston Medical Center, her dream job for the past five years. Danielle's faith is contagious, and her love for Jesus leaves anyone who crosses her path challenged and blessed as she shines in the darkness, is a voice for the voiceless, and brings hope to the hopeless. †

INTRODUCING DEREK EITREIM

by Kathy Eitreim

100% Norwegian, Derek was born and raised in Minnesota in a family that loved the Lord. He personalized his faith during a year at Bodenseehof Bible School in Germany and then graduated from Wheaton College with a BA in Economics and a desire to be life-long learner, as well as a with deeper understanding of Biblical truths, a collection of friends for life, and a wife from Texas (Kathy) who thinks he hung the moon. The Eitreim kids have followed in their footsteps; Kendall is a Wheaton grad, Colorado resident, and Stryker employee. Blake is a student at Baylor University, and Kirstin is a student at Bodenseehof in Germany.

No bones about it, Derek's vocation has mostly been about...bones. He was an orthopaedic sales representative for 18 years in Denver before becoming a sales manager with Stryker in Minneapolis, where he became acquainted with Peter

Cole. Currently, Derek serves as a Business Development Director with Surgical Care Affiliates recruiting surgeons to use SCA facilities.

The moment you meet Derek, you discover his uncanny way of posing the question that everyone else is thinking about but hesitant to ask. He believes in action through service and multi-tasks through a to-do list in record time. Derek balances assertiveness with a soft side. Truth be told, he's a crier...at birthday parties, prayer meetings, family gatherings, and times of worship through music.

Growing up in a family of faith is a blessing but can be taken for granted. With our family, Derek openly strives to know Jesus by asking him for guidance in decisions, comfort in disappointments, change



in areas of weakness, and by giving him credit for blessings.

When Peter Cole asked Derek to be part of Scalpel At The Cross, it was a perfect opportunity for Derek to be the hands and feet of Jesus in Peru. May God use Scalpel At The Cross to bring physical and spiritual healing to all those that they meet.✝

WELCOME!

Scalpel At The Cross is pleased to welcome Isaac Mendoza as our Peruvian Mission Coordinator!

Isaac has faithfully served alongside Scalpel At The Cross in Pucallpa for nine years, caring for people in the community with his physical therapy training and pastoral giftings. His life in Pucallpa, and years of experience with Scalpel, bring a unique understanding of the challenges as well as great joys of our mission.

We are grateful to have his presence in Pucallpa to help care for Scalpel patients

as they recover from their surgical procedures. Isaac's deep faith, quiet strength, and gentle compassion will,

“...be a lighthouse for Christ through a medical ministry in the Peruvian Amazon region of South America.”



HEAR FROM ISAAC ON OUR WEBSITE AT:

<http://scalpelatthecross.org/news-publications/>

OR ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE AT:

<https://www.facebook.com/ScalpelAtTheCross/>

PRAYER POSSE

By Nancy Cole

This year can only be described as one in which affliction has consistently been eclipsed by Glory, with joy repeatedly emerging from ashes of adversity. Our hurdles turned out to be His willed victories, buttressing our faith and building our resolve to be on our knees, fighting the good fight in His name. Thank you Prayer Posse team for mobilizing at an instant's notice, and thanks be to God for revealing more of Himself to us through these challenges!

TRIAL: *Cashibo break-in resulting in devastating, expensive loss of orthopaedic implants.*

RESOLUTION: *Stryker corporate donation of implants, multiplied fifty-fold.*

TRIAL: *Peruvian officials unwilling to allow entry of medical supplies through customs.*

RESOLUTION: *Temporary documents accepted by customs for passage of all hardware.*

TRIAL: *Scalpel personnel and board member transitions bringing significant change.*

RESOLUTION: *New Scalpel family with unique giftings and passions are grafted into the fold.*

TRIAL: *Porch family moves to Pucallpa challenged to learn language and adjust to culture.*

RESOLUTION: *Porch family adds significant impact, both pastorally and medically, in the community.*

TRIAL: *Technology challenges associated with CrossCare software.*

RESOLUTION: *Implementation of new version resolves most issues.*

TRIAL: *Squatters attempt to take over land in Cashibo Cocha (Jungle Bunks location).*

RESOLUTION: *The attempted takeover is unsuccessful, and the squatters are removed.*

TRIAL: *Pucallpan hospital staff strike threatens to shut down Scalpel medical campaign.*

RESOLUTION: *Loyal hospital staff work during the strike and campaign continues.*

TRIAL: *Challenges in financial support, which mirror that of ministries nationwide.*

RESOLUTION: *Ministry expenses met, and successful fundraising event for Hand Across.*

JOYFUL CONGRATULATIONS!

OUR SCALPEL AT THE CROSS FAMILY WISHES TO CONGRATULATE JORDAN ELLERBE & DANIELLE COLE AND KEVIN MANNION & TINA MOST ON THEIR NEW MARRIAGES!

They have been very significant parts of our ministry in so many different ways, and we joyfully celebrate with them.

Danielle spent much of her youth in Peru, visiting regularly with Peter and Nancy Cole before Scalpel was an official mission, and joining the inaugural Scalpel trip in 2005. Since that time, she has lovingly and consistently served the people of Pucallpa and spent a gap year teaching at SAM Academy in Pucallpa, a school for the children of area missionaries. Dan-

ielle currently serves on the Scalpel board, providing fresh, creative ideas and vision for the future.

Tina has been a stalwart on five medical trips to the Amazon, the most significant of which was a special trip in 2014 when she met another mission pillar, Kevin Mannion. Kevin has advocated for Scalpel in securing some of the most important orthopaedic donations, which will equip many teams to help many patients in the Amazon jungle for years to come.



“ And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy.

—Hosea 2:19 ”

We are indebted to these couples and treasure their love and support of Scalpel At The Cross. Please join us in wishing these God-fearing couples long and happy marriages!†



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HUNDREDS OF PANCAKES FOR A GREAT CAUSE

by Lisa Schroder

On a beautiful August morning, 70 guests and volunteers shared hundreds of pancakes for breakfast and learned about the Hand Across Halo Ministry Project for Scalpel At The Cross. As shared in this summer's issue of Scalpel's Edge, Hand Across is dedicated to bolstering the Scalpel At The Cross mission while providing additional resources and aid to the local medical community, giving back to a community that hosts and supports the Scalpel mission.

About 25 team members greeted, cooked, served and presented to friends, coworkers and family members. New faces to Scalpel offered skills and unique gifts with servants' hearts and able hands, and connections were made and networks expanded. Past team members' testimonies eloquently painted the picture of what is needed and how we may accomplish it together through the grace of God.

So many people contributed, engaged and enabled in big and small ways, and we are grateful to have raised more than \$40K towards the project so far! ✝



Support our mission

Please remember
Scalpel At The Cross
in your year-end giving
this holiday season!

You may give online at:
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or contact us at:
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