

Scalpel's Edge



Wave of Blessing

By Peter A. Cole, M.D., April 2009 Mission Team Member

The Oceanside for me, is the most enchanting setting on God's earth. I am picturing the times when I look out onto the horizon over the sea. I may be standing on a sandy beach inspiring salty breeze, or perhaps lying atop a seaside bluff above crashing waves. If you have been blessed to have these experiences, you can note the drone of waves approaching the shoreline... and you might consider that they just don't stop... don't slow down. The waves have been pounding on that shoreline for years, centuries... in fact, since God created the oceans in Genesis. With a bit keener appreciation for the process, you will note that this infinite sequence is not quite so dronish, because the waves differ in quality and size depending on a number of variables such as the wind, temperature, currents, and ocean-going vessels. One of the intriguing variances is the size of the waves. Particularly when the surf is up, every 7 waves or so is larger than the others. And every once in a great while, one of those larger waves comes with greater enormity, and in the right conditions—greatest enormity!

There are many parallels to blessings from the Lord. Blessings land on our personal

shorelines everyday as well—without ceasing. This fact has also been true since our beginnings. They have always been there, just like the waves. Sometimes these waves of blessings come to us calm and steady, almost in metronomic sequence, and other times they hit our shores with ferocity, often disguised as destructive forces – yet in time we learn they too are still blessings. This past year was like one of those big waves packed with blessing for Scalpel At The Cross. It was one of those “one in seven” waves, the very kind surfers tread water for—just waiting for the best run of the day! To us it seemed enormous, that the Lord blessed us in 2008 with a few large and many small donations—we believe all sacrificial! This wave of donations enabled us, indeed thrust us forward to build the work facility at the mission camp, which exceeded our own vision, a 2,000 square foot building with clinic and storage space, office and reception capacity, and a fellowship-conference hall. These blessings included furniture for this new facility, and filled its shelves with key supplies. A major inventory of orthopaedic instruments & implants were able to be purchased, called the SIGN Nail system. This system of intramedullary rods for broken bones, was designed specifically

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Thru the Eyes of a Child

by Jacob A. Schroder, April 2009 Mission Team Member

The April trip started with a visit to the capital city of Lima. During the morning, after the flight had arrived late, the group met on top of the hotel to have a discussion. Dr. Cole started off talking about his run that morning and the surfers he saw in the ocean. He made the analogy that the surfers each had their unique surfboards. He noted that we Christians are like the surfers, the surfboards were our tools that we use to carry out God's work, and the ocean waves are like the power of the Holy Spirit--carrying us through life doing the work God wants us to do. We went around the table in a circle with everyone sharing what their surfboard was. Some people added sparkles and many colors to their surfboards, which they felt went along with their personality.

Finally, it was my turn, which put me on the spot since I am too young to have a job and I don't do anything medical. I also was the last person to go, so I had a lot of time to think up something at which I am good.

Since I had been on three previous trips, I decided that my surfboard was that I was good with kids. I loved being with the kids on prior trips; there had been the kids of the mission team members as well as the Peruvian children. After I was done talking, somebody also spoke up and said that I took directions well and was of really good help.

Now, while they were talking, I thought to myself that on prior trips I did do a lot of helping and carrying things. I am almost like a pack mule. For example on this trip, I carried a backpack for my mom. You wouldn't think that in the jungle one would need very many things to carry around with you. I can promise you however, that if you weighed the backpack, it would weigh almost fifty pounds!

After our discussion ended, we went back into our hotel rooms and I started to think about why I really keep going back to this snake-filled, bug-bitten, hectic place. Now for some of you, you might think that I would never go there and see all the piranhas and caiman (a relative of the alligator found in the Amazon) swimming under the house. Or have me risk my toes getting bitten by some crazy snake that jumps between the cracks of the boardwalk, only then to have my toe tasered.

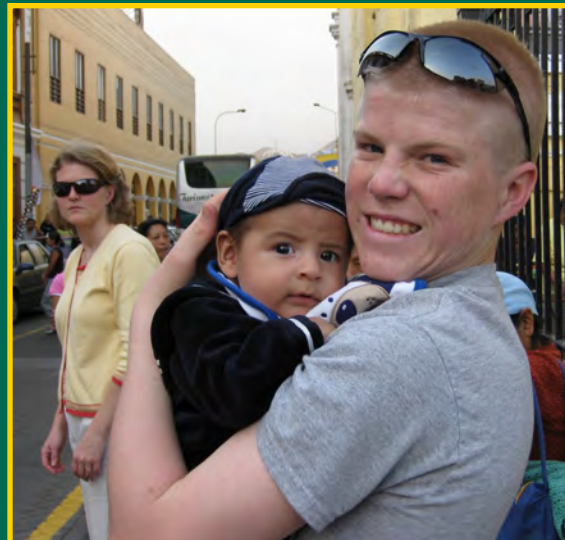
Maybe the days are hectic and hot, but when you get back to the house at night and hear the noises of the wild animals, or see the beautiful sunsets, you would understand the reasons I keep going back.

Also, when you are down there you use your surfboard which can make you realize what an impact you can have on people's lives. When we were at the hospital and there were young children waiting on their parents, and you pull out even the smallest little thing that

we might throw away, like hot wheels car, and give it to them, you can't even imagine the expressions on their faces. Then when you go to surgery and come back an hour later, you see them still playing with that little toy you gave them, it just warms your heart so much that you will probably start to sweat - if you haven't already.

In addition, while in Peru, the friends you make and the fun you have with others make you laugh every time you think back on it. For instance, just watching Chad do his evening ritual of taking a flashlight and checking every spot in his room where a creepy or crawly creature could possibly hide or having supper with the Gahagens and saying that we are going to see a movie and walking into a room and all of the sudden the lights turn off and there is a disco ball hanging from the fan and Play That Funky Music comes on, you can't help but chuckle. It even adds more to it when you see Dr. Cole in the center of the room doing his little head bob thing that he calls dancing.

All of these things and many more are just the beginning of the wild, rough, and yet still relaxing trips to the country of Peru. If there is any part of you that is thinking of going, but you are saying how can my surfboard be of help to a medical mission, take it from a veteran - there are plenty of things that you could do to help - so become a part of the Scalpel Team.



Let the World Change You... and You Can Change the World

by Heidi E. Hagerott, April 2009 Mission Team Member

From April 3-12th, a group of 12 individuals came together from across the United States to embark on a journey of sharing Christ's love and mercy through the humble service of their gifts and passions as part of Scalpel at the Cross' 6th mission trip. Little did I know what was awaiting me when I stepped off the plane in Lima, Peru, with eleven of my teammates. Our team consisted of a variety of talents, one of which I would like to speak about. Bob Tillges, a specialist in Prosthetics and Orthotics, joined our team just a short two weeks before departure. He had made a prosthetic leg for a young Shipibo Indian woman named Alejandra. She had been an amputee since the age of four. Imagine the situation in today's world. As an amputee in the United States, one may see it as an inconvenience, but life can be lived fully and happily with the services of so many wonderful people such as Bob; however, in the jungle those services are nowhere in sight, or even thought of as a possibility. Life must carry on at all expense. With a strong will and a determined heart, Alejandra lived her life, using a stick as a crutch to stomp through the mud and brush of the jungle. Not only did she care for herself, but for her family as well. When Alejandra first entered the clinic, I could see the strength in her eyes and solemn expression. Did she know what was to await her? After living life for 20 years without a limb, how would one adjust to such a dramatic change?

We arrived at the clinic in Pucallpa late Monday evening after our three day weekend in Lima. We started to unpack and stock the clinic with the donated supplies collected in the U.S. Meanwhile Bob started working diligently to fit Alejandra with her new leg. Seeing Bob work with Alejandra was a blessing in itself. His gentle spirit and soft touch was inspirational. His approach proved that communication takes many forms, beyond words. When she was ready to take her first steps, the Scalpel team lined up in the hallway of the clinic ready with enthusiasm and anticipation. A face so stoic and solemn suddenly turned into an expression of delight and excitement.



Bob Tillges assists Alejandra as she tests her new prosthetic leg at the new clinic.

Could we even imagine what it would feel like to walk without a crutch after 20 years? Is it even possible for us who live in a world so developed with technology to understand what it is like to live by any means possible? So often we take those small blessings for granted. This beautiful young woman was blessed with so much that day by means of utilizing God's wonderful gifts to spread his love and compassion.

After a long week in Pucallpa, working with the medical team, sharing fellowship and life stories, I sit today in my home in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, with a different perspective in life. I feel as though I

left my family, not only the mission team, but the people of Pucallpa as well. The faces of the children with such an innocence and love for life, but also the faces of many years of suffering and pain, hard work and struggle. I cannot go on in my daily life as if the people of Peru have disappeared, as if their suffering is over, but I can be content in my heart that God has used my gifts to touch the lives of the few we were able to see. This trip has revealed a new mission in my life, a clearer path that God wants me to follow, although much more difficult than the one before. I am confident with his guidance and the support of my fellow believers that I will succeed.



Heidi Hagerott poses with a Peruvian boy.



Jessica Woodworth and Heidi Hagerott

From Peru to Peru, A Glimpse of God's Magnificent Plan

by Kevin T. Emerson, April 2009 Mission Team Member

As human beings, we never know what great and wonderful things God has in store for us. However, through His word, we know that God loves each of us and that He is with us always. I would like to express how God worked through me during April's mission trip to Pucallpa.

I had traveled around the world before this trip, but never as a missionary. I had much trepidation, especially in regard to the language barrier, as I speak only a little broken Spanish. My comprehension of the language is only slightly better. But I prayed that God could use me despite this obvious shortfall.

My story begins in the small community of Peru, Indiana, where I have served as an AWANA leader for the past 11 years. For those of you who haven't heard of it, AWANA is a worldwide children's ministry dedicated to helping children come to know the Gospel of Christ. In addition to my role as an AWANA leader, I have also served as the graphic designer for Scalpel At The Cross, designing all of the newsletters, calendars, stationery, and other printed materials since December 2004.



Kevin Emerson surrounded by OANS Clubbers in at the Iglesia Bautista School in Pucallpa, Peru.

Romans 8:1 - There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

The AWANA program at my church, EastPointe Bible Church, has financially supported OANSA (AWANA in Spanish) clubs in Peru, South America, for the last five years through its Adopt-a-Club program. This sponsorship of OANSA children provides them with their uniforms, handbooks and supplies. We have assisted Peruvian children in Trujillo, Lima, and believe it or not, Pucallpa.

These same AWANA clubbers also collected many necessary medical supplies for our mission trip, providing an abundance of antibiotic ointments, bandages, rubbing alcohol, hydrogen peroxide and many other needed items which are not provided by the hospitals in Pucallpa to their patients. I found it very satisfying to know that my AWANA children were also fulfilling God's will by treating others with the love of Christ.

Are you starting to see some coincidences yet? Peru to Peru perhaps. God works in wondrous ways...

I had been assigned several responsibilities during this trip, among which were photography, videography, OANSA visits, as well as serving as a devotional leader for an evening.

One of the gifts that God has given me, in addition to a love for teaching children, is an artistic eye and an ability to communicate through photography. Capturing a moment in time and preserving it for others to see, is an art and skill I have nurtured during my life. Through this lens, God used my camera to demonstrate to others what His love looks like through the delight in a child's eye who was healed by a surgeon's skill, or through the concerned look for a patient in a doctor's expression. God consistently shows me what Christ-likeness is.

While in Lima, I had an opportunity to meet the Peruvian National Director of OANSA and his wife, Julio and Rosario Serrano. Prior to the mission trip, I had communicated with Julio via email, but had never had the opportunity to meet him. Julio is a gentle-spirited man with a great love of God, as well as for the children of Peru. Many members of the Scalpel team

also had the chance to get to know the Serranos as they joined us for a city tour of Lima and dinner later that evening. We found that despite my broken Spanish and his broken English, we were able to communicate effectively and discuss the many problems common to teaching the Gospel of Christ to the children in both of our countries. God showed me that through this conversation, He would use me to spread His word in Peru.

Upon arrival in Pucallpa, after a brief moment of being suffocated by the stifling heat and humidity, I again wondered how God would use me. Our team had really gotten an opportunity to come together in Lima, the fruits of which became readily apparent when they sprang into action at the opening of the new Scalpel At The Cross clinic in Pucallpa. Arriving several hours later than planned, the Scalpel team quickly took to the task of organizing supplies and evaluating patients. And once again, through the lens of my camera, God demonstrated His unswerving love toward His children, working and perfecting every detail to His ultimate glory. I will never forget Alejandra's smile as she walked up and down the clinic's hallway with her new prosthetic leg having been urged on by the clapping of the entire Scalpel At The Cross team.

God has a way of putting His people together. On Thursday evening, I had the opportunity to visit an OANSA club in Pucallpa. Despite confusion surrounding my visit, I again found His touch revealing while getting an unbelievable opportunity to see how the children of Peru come to know God through OANSA. Exchanging love and smiles with those children is something that will always be a part of me. Meeting and conversing with Pastor Jorge and a few of the OANSA leaders afterward, God demonstrated His glory over and over again through the common bond to each of us, His son Jesus Christ.

By Saturday morning, it seemed impossible that our time in Pucallpa would soon be over, there was so much more to be done, but we didn't have time to do anymore. I guess that is just God's way of reminding us that His work is never done.

The Human Body

by Theresa M. Mancuso, April 2009 Mission Team Member

I am reminded how the body of Christ is. No matter how small or insignificant the role, all work together for the glory of God. Never underestimate how God may use those hidden parts. He alone knows the heart, He knows every part intimately, and He uses all for a larger plan. Whether it is a large role, or just a cup of water to be that is given, it is all for His glory.

As the team continued to get up day after day, tirelessly, eagerly pouring their hearts out to each child of God, words started to come to me. And so I began to write them down. Words that are for the team and words describing my observations of Peru.

Below are the words that God placed on my heart of one team -- the Scalpel At The Cross team. This fruition was brought on by a willingness of Dr. and Mrs. Cole to act on the desire God had placed on their hearts many years back.



Theresa Mancuso



The Team

Laughter
Holiness
Transparent
Deep hearts
Touch
Vulnerable
Commitment
Calm
Accepting
Compassion
Passion
Photos
Mercy
Boldness
AWANA/OANSA
Endless Energy
Fearless
Friendships
Relentless love
Interpreting
Gentleness
Observant
Driven
Servants Hearts
Tears
New relationships
'I'm good'
Never complained
Prayer
Supplies
Opportunities
Prosthetics
Surgeries
New beginnings
Patient
Kindness
Bodies mended/lives renewed
Bendable
Internal changes
Unity
Humble
Bug bites

Bruises
Prayer
Devotion time
New Mission Clinic
Life changed by prosthetic
Coffee (anytime)
No moments wasted
Behind the scenes direction
Trust gained
Lives laid down for Him
Joyful
Tireless
Covered by God's protection
Glorified God

Of Peru & Events Experienced

Missionaries
Jungle Tribes (Shipibo people)
Traffic
Dirt roads
Pilots
Shanty town
Cultural Music (very diverse)
Dancing
Beauty
Pain
Children's Hospital
Patients
Surgeries
Lost souls
Hopelessness
Clinic
Land occupation
Doctors hands - Gods hands
Helicopters (every night)
Ocelot (small tiger)
Assistants hands - Gods hands
Monkeys/Alligator
Local Does
Street handicap taken in
Broken arm
Club feet
Wrist lengthened
Infection cleaned

Legs straightened
Amazon River
Patient society
3-wheel Taxis
Missionaries attacked
Local artwork-amazing Police
Prosthetic clinics
Prosthetic fittings
Gentle people
Beauty in the midst of poverty
Dirty town - clean clothes
Traffic
Day long hospital waits - yet patient patients
Heavy hearts
Jungle logging
Pisco Sours
Church
Colorful people
Jungle sounds
(God's creatures playing an incredible symphony - every night)
Eyes looking at you (great pain)



Through His Eyes

by Theresa M. Mancuso, April 2009 Mission Team Member

When I first heard there was a medical mission trip going to Peru, I got very excited. I had been on several mission trips, but this one would be different. Would they accept a non-medical team member? What would I do? They did accept me and my sponsorship funds came in quickly. So God wanted me to go. I did not know what to expect, but I did know that God always has a plan.

What I had not bargained for was the plan God had for me on this trip. He had stilled my voice. All those who know me, although a listener, I am also quite a motor mouth, at least to everyone except the team on this trip. I do believe that sometimes I am so busy talking I miss much of what God may be trying to show. As the trip went on, during the day hours, I literally seemed not to be able to voice many thoughts. For once I was forced to be still, to observe, to notice, to see..... what I had asked for but had forgotten until I returned home. I had prayed "to see with His eyes."

I plugged in where there were holes; unpacking supplies, cooking, praying over families of patients and missionaries who I met in the hospital with painful stories to share. We visited a children's hospital witnessing heart-wrenching situations of child after child with missing limbs, many there alone, with no parent because they came from various villages too poor to afford to stay. There are so many stories to be told, but my focus was given a different direction.

With each person on this team I saw the Lord behind, his hands on top of each- guiding. His presence in each moment. No hesitation to serve and love the people of Peru. One body - serving - some seen, some unseen.

I would like to add one last note. Each person on the team was planned by God. His plan is always different than ours, and always bigger than our minds can ever imagine. As time goes on, it will be interesting to see all that unfolds. To have Him unveil the wonderful pieces that He has set in motion...yet to be seen. Each one of us has already most likely experienced things that have come out of this, and have noticed God's hand in our lives-- ever changing us to be more like Him, and to see through His eyes.



A look inside at the new Scalpel At The Cross Clinic in Cashibò Cocha.



Patients waiting to be seen by the Scalpel doctors at the opening of the Scalpel At The Cross Clinic on Monday, April 6, 2009.

for 3rd world countries which cannot afford the implant systems we have in the United States , and can be placed in patients without fancy radiographic guidance.

Scalpel At The Cross and its laborers, feel indebted to each one of you, for your prayers and financial contributions. We feel we have just landed upright on a sun-soaked beach after having ridden an awesome wave packed with blessings far exceeding what we had imagined in such a short period of time. How often we underestimate God's power and mercy! This Scalpel's Edge edition features many of these gifts, and we trust it will in turn, be a small blessing to you.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Spirit. - Romans 15:13

In Memoria - Tommy Head

Scalpel At The Cross was saddened to learn of the passing of a dear friend, Tommy Head, who served as a missionary with the Living Waters Ministry. He was a big part of the Moto-Cross Outreach Ministry in Peru. Perhaps fittingly, our beloved friend was killed during a moto-cross accident... dying for the same passion he was living – using moto-cross to win cyclists to Christ. Tommy was an icon of sorts, having grown up a hard-living child of the 60's, who took his born-again life to the Amazon with his wife, Angela, to start over by dedicating his life to the Lord.



Tommy Head

More than anyone, he proved to us that missionaries don't necessarily fit a mold, and in some respects was a large part of the heart and soul of our beloved SAM-Air family down at Cashibo. Our prayers are lifted up for warm and equally passionate wife, Angela. Tommy's smile and life-zest gave you the impression that he was somehow wired directly to heaven. We rejoice that he is there now with His Lord.

Prayer & Praise Points

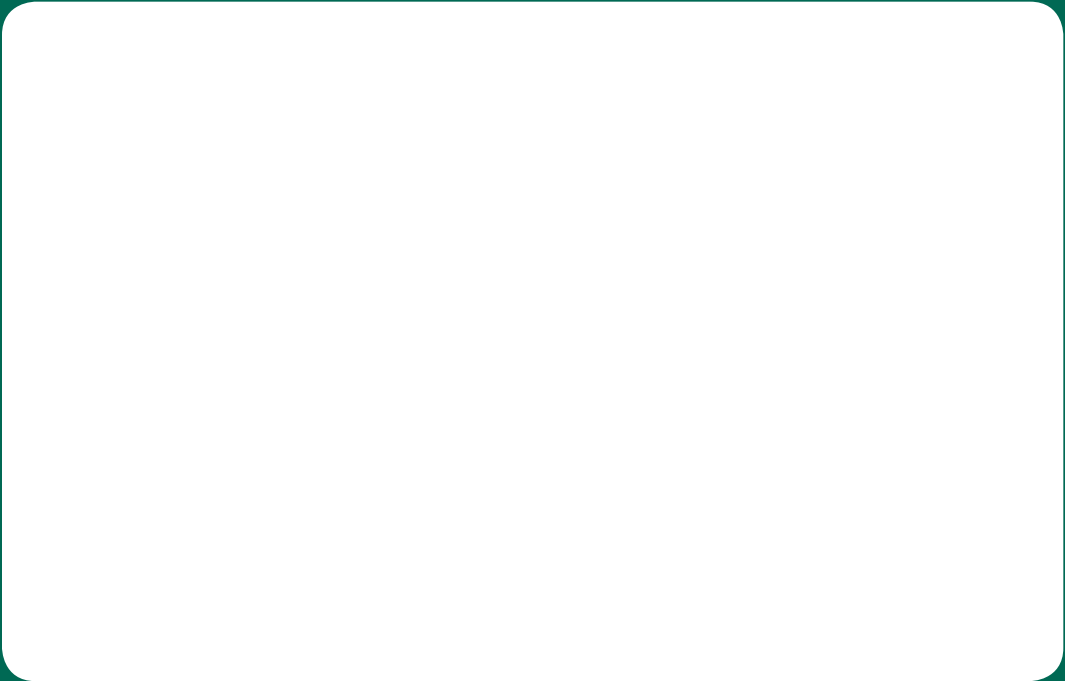
Scripture instructs that God inhabits the **PRAISES** of His people:

- for traveling and relational mercies extended to Scalpel's mission team during April's Peru trip as well as Scalpel's board of director's recent meeting in Chicago
- over the welcomed addition of Dr. Jason Caron's time/talents to Scalpel's board
- for the resources which have been provided to the mission through our new clinic, the donations of wound care products and supplies in stocking our clinic, and the SIGN Nail system for improved tibia fracture surgeries in remote conditions like ours
- for the abundance of opportunities in testifying to God's goodness because of His work through the mission

We are also told that we have not when we ask not, so we **PRAYERFULLY REQUEST:**

- continued success in maintaining regular follow-up contact with our patients for both medical and evangelical purposes through the diligence of Peruvian based Dra. Rosita Escudero
- guidance in assembling future teams, that these short-term mission experiences might provide meaningful growth and ministry opportunities to medical and non-medical team members alike
- our full entrusting of God with the ministry's finances during these lean economical times

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A Christian Medical Mission to the Peruvian Amazon