



# FOCUS

WORLD CATARACT FOUNDATION  
helping the world to see

Spring 2004

www.worldcataract.org

*The focus of the World Cataract Foundation is helping the world to see by eliminating cataract blindness especially in developing parts of the world through surgery, training and international exchange programs.*

## MEXICO

### *Patience, Perseverance, Progress*

They came, hundreds of the poorest of the poor, women with children who couldn't see, men blinded by cataracts hardened by the harsh Mexican sun. Some had walked for days through the rough hills to the Hospital de la Amistad and the Hospital Regional of Ometepec in the southeastern part of Mexico at the edge of the state of Guerrero. They came to be helped by the World Cataract Foundation's international medical team in the fall of 2003. For nine days, November 16-25, an estimated 2,300 people were helped to see. Doctors from U.S., Spain, and Mexico performed 356 eye surgeries of various kinds. The optical team provided eyeglasses

356 surgeries:  
151 cataracts  
143 pterygiums  
13 strabismus  
12 plastic surgeries  
37 YAG lasers

and sunglasses to all that needed them.

For the first time in the 33 year history of these missions to Ometepec the ophthalmologists were able to add laser surgery thanks to the generous loan of a YAG Laser machine by Eyesight Technologies of Cordova, Tennessee.

A second medical team traveled to Ometepec February 15-22, 2004 to offer follow up care for patients treated in November and to provide free eye surgery for many more. An estimated 500 people were eagerly awaiting the team's arrival.

*Please see Mexico, page 4*



*The first YAG laser procedure in Ometepec: From Left: Dr. Stewart Galloway, Crossville, TN, assisted by Maritza Edmiston, translator, Memphis, TN, Aristo Guevarra Rayon, the patient, and Alicia Bond, COT, Memphis.*

*Letter from the Founder*

## CHINA

In my previous letter I described our first experiences entering China in 1976 as a new relationship was developing between our two countries. After that trip I asked the Chinese government for permission to bring a delegation of ophthalmologists and their families representing the International Intraocular Implant Club (IIIC). The members of the IIIC were among the pioneers in advancing the art and science of intraocular lenses to be inserted inside the eye after successful cataract surgery.

The IIIC at its meeting in Nagoya, Japan in 1978 had adopted as a five-year goal to develop a very high quality but low cost intraocular lens for developing countries that would cost \$10 or less. I was appointed

*Please see China, page 2*

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*China, continued from page 1*

Chairman of that committee. At the time intraocular lenses were costing some of the patients in America up to \$350-400, and I knew of no lens that was less than \$60-70. Most of the ones I brought back from Germany, Holland, and England during the early and middle 70's to implant into our patients in Memphis were at least \$55 -75.

During the IIC's visit to China in 1978 the stimulating challenge of a low cost lens for developing countries was the subject of much conversation while we were riding on trains and buses around the country.

In Shanghai, when we met with Dr. Lu Dao-Yan at the Xin-Hua Hospital, the IIC group shared with him our goal of developing such a low cost lens. I could see that he identified with this

Dr. Lu was invited to Memphis to work with us and the World Cataract Foundation (then the World Lens Project) in 1980. He studied with us at MECA and at the University of Tennessee for several months. When he went back to China, he and his engineer, Gao Jinbang, in their lab at the hospital, developed an intraocular lens according to the more modern designs that we had shared with him, a lens which seemed to be very successful in the human eye. It was a plano convex lens made of PMMA (polymethyl methacrylate) Dr. Lu obtained from Taiwan.

Our five-year goal for the IIC lens was for the cost to be under \$10.00. In China they had manufactured this lens in their laboratory for a total cost of approximately \$5-6.00! The historical record should show that Dr. Lu Dao-Yan, MD of Shanghai, China along with his engineer, Gao Jinbang, were the first people in the world to manufacture a high quality, low cost IOL for the cataract poor costing under \$10.00 .

I consider this to be somewhat of a triumph for the relationship between charitable organizations such as the World Cataract Foundation, and the free market. After the goal has been established and the need demonstrated, oftentimes free market forces come into play to meet that need.

It is this critical combination of the need being recognized and organizations like the World Cataract Foundation, in cooperation with the technological abilities of our various nations, that can meet so many of our world's needs.

Your contributions to the World Cataract Foundation will continue to lead the way to fulfill the need of sight, of helping the world to see.

--Jerre Minor Freeman, M.D.

P.S. I was fortunate that there was enough room for my wife, Anne, and our three children, James, John, and Ashley on the IIC trip to China in 1978. It proved to be an important event in their young lives.

.....  
: Long-time WCF friend, Betty Goff Cartwright :  
: called to clarify that the group responsible for :  
: the WCF's first encounter with China in 1976 :  
: when Dr. Jerre and Anne Freeman went was the :  
: Memphis Council for International Visitors. Af- :  
: ter the group returned to Memphis, the U.S.- :  
: China Friendship Association was formed. :  
.....

### **Board Member to Meet with Officials in China**

**Mr. K.C. Lam**, long-time WCF Board member, is meeting with Chinese government officials in Beijing in June. He will attempt to smooth out the process of obtaining visas for Chinese ophthalmologists to come to the United States for specialized advanced training in the Medical Personnel Exchange Program of the World Cataract Foundation. Since it began in 1980 the WCF's Medical Exchange Program has enabled 43 of the leading cataract surgeons and nurses in China—from X'ian, Beijing, Nanjing, Shanghai and elsewhere—to receive advanced training. But in the recent past many of the candidates who have been selected to come to America have been having trouble getting their visas approved.

**Our medical missions would not be possible without the generous donations we receive throughout the year.**

*FOCUS is edited by WCF Board Member  
Dr. Gerard Vanderhaar and produced by  
Lori Hudson, Executive Director*

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## **AFGHANASTAN**

Dr. Herb Friesen, who worked in our MECA office in Memphis for a year, established the first and only Department of Ophthalmology in Afghanistan, at Kabul, the N.O.O.R. Eye Institute. We have supported Dr. Friesen and his program by sending textbooks for his use in the training of residents. Our own Dr. Tom Gettelfinger was able to visit and work for several months with him in Kabul in the late 1970's. Although Afghanistan is changed now and Dr. Friesen is living in America, his heritage carries on.

—*Dr. Jerre Freeman*

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## **EGYPT**

Dr. Mounir Khalifa is one of the first WCF Fellows from Egypt we trained in Memphis. He spent two years with us in the early 1980's, learning modern cataract surgery. He also participated in developing some highly accurate intraocular lens power selection formulas. Before he returned home, he worked in Saudi Arabia for several years, where he saved enough money to set up his own private practice in Alexandria, Egypt. To this day, he is sensitive to and serves the needs of poor patients in his area.

We have had another Egyptian connection in Tanta. If the WCF had the time and means, it would be great to continue our relationship with the University of Tanta. They are most eager to continue an exchange with us.

--*Dr. Jerre Freeman*

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## **HONDURAS**

World Cataract Foundation Drs. John and Lily Van Dyck will be accompanying the North Jackson, TN Church of Christ's medical mission to Tegucigalpa, Honduras June 11-18. This group has been traveling there for many years to work in the Moody-Amicus Clinic.

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## **PAPUA NEW GUINEA**

Dr. Louis Carter of Chattanooga, Tennessee will once again lead a medical mission down the Sepik River to the Huana Village in Papua New Guinea, August 20-September 3. Dr. John Van Dyck will be performing cataract surgery and will be assisted by his wife, Dr. Lily Van Dyck. This is the fifth year that WCF will join this expedition. A scrub nurse is needed for this trip. If interested, please call 901-379-0405.

THANKS TO RELIANCE MEDICAL FOR DONATING TWO STATIMS. THEY'VE ALREADY BEEN USED ON THE MISSION FIELD.
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## **Individuals and companies that have generously donated much-needed items or services during 2003. Our sincere thanks.**

2M Eye Instruments  
Abbott Laboratories  
Advanced Medical Optics, Inc.  
Akorn, Inc.  
Alcon Laboratories, Inc.  
Allergan Pharmaceuticals  
American Airlines  
American Regent  
AmeriCares  
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Bartlett United Methodist Church  
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Storage USA  
Cindy Thompson's 5th Grade Classes at Briarcrest  
Craig Thompson  
Robert Williams  
Mark Johnson, Trinity Ridge Partners  
Valleylab  
Judy Wurstner, St. Francis Hospital

# GUERRERO: LET THERE BE LIGHT

The WCF's project of making the state of Guerrero cataract-free has taken an important step forward. On November 20, 2003 a productive and positive meeting was held at the Government Hospital in Ometepepec between WCF representatives and government officials. Attending the meeting were: Dr. Jerre Freeman, WCF Founder; Lori Hudson, WCF Program Director; Dr. Ariel Ramirez, President of WCF Mexico; Vicky Vasquez, Secretary of WCF Mexico; Dr. Fernando E. Abarca López, Director de Servicios Médicos Asistenciales – DIF; Dr. Celso del Carmen Ayala, Coordinador de Especialidades Médicas – DIF; M.V.L. Francisco Espinoza Hilaro, Presidente Municipal of Ometepepec; Elvira Dominguez Azorta, DIF Representative in Ometepepec and three medical and health officers of the local and regional government. Participants identified five areas of responsibility and seven target cities:

## Five Areas of Responsibilities

### Staff

Those needed to perform this critical work  
(Supplied by the government of Guerrero)

### Space

The area where this task will be performed.  
(Supplied by the government of Guerrero)

### Surgical Equipment

All necessary equipment to perform the cataract surgery including microsurgical instruments, cataract machines, OR tables, surgical microscopes, stools, equipment, tables, etc.

**\$180,000 to set up one operating room**

(To be supplied to WCF through donations and grants.)

### Supplies

All necessary supplies needed to prepare the patient for surgery, and to cover the care needed in the postoperative period.

**\$59,000 for 6 months**

(To be supplied to WCF through donations and grants.)

### Salary Supplement

Although the government workers are receiving a regular salary, if we increase the volume of the surgery for this project, they will be performing 5-10 times more surgeries than normal. A minimum of \$20 a case will give not only the Mexican surgeon a reward but also the nurses and supporting staff.

**\$10,000 for six months**

(To be supplied to WCF through donations and grants.)

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE  
WORLD CATARACT FOUNDATION  
CAN BE SPECIFIED FOR ANY  
OF THESE GUERRERO NEEDS.**

## Seven Target Cities

The state of Guerrero is divided into seven regions. One city within each region has been designated as the place for people of that region to go to receive surgery. The seven regions and the cities that were identified as places that would help people from the surrounding areas are:

- ◇ Acapulco Region – **Acapulco**
- ◇ Norte - **Iguala**
- ◇ Centro - **Chilpancingo**
- ◇ Costa Grande - **Zihuatenejo**
- ◇ Tierra Caliente - **Coyuca de Catalan**
- ◇ Montaña - **Tlapa**
- ◇ Costa Chica - **Ometepepec**

Some supplies and equipment and medical personnel are already in place in Acapulco and Ometepepec. These need to be obtained for the other five cities as well.

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*Mexico, continued from page 1*

Dr. Ariel Ramirez left his busy practice in Acapulco to travel to Ometepepec with three assistants, and performed 33 cataract surgeries. Dr. Ramirez, President of WCF Mexico is devoted to the "Guerrero: Let There Be Light" Project. Dr. Howard Beale's plastic and pterygiums team performed 179 surgeries. Dr. Beale said, "The need is so great, we performed twice as many surgeries as last spring and have the potential of doubling the amount next year." He complimented his team, "I'm indebted to Luke Driscoll for his translating skills, Linda Storey for her efficient surgical skills, and to Josie Young for her organizational skills and coordinating each day's events to run so smoothly."

# MEXICO

## *It's a Small World*

I recently received an e-mail from Dr. Susan Smith, Director of Caminamos Juntos Para Salud y Desarrollo, A.C. (Walking Together for Health and Development). She said that this Canadian based team is working in Tlamacazapa, a poor indigenous village located in the mountains of Guerrero. Their program works to improve the conditions of contaminated drinking water, sanitation, and income generation to increase the people's self-sufficiency. Susan mentioned that there is much need for eye care in their village, and asked if we would be providing it any time soon. One of her team members, Nigel, did bring a patient to Ometepec to see Dr. Howard Beale. Jose Luis needed a prosthesis for his eye and Dr. Beale was able to provide it for him. Susan said that Jose Luis was "thrilled with his eye prosthesis." After observing our team at work in Ometepec, Nigel told Susan, "Great to hear that something is brewing with World Cataract Foundation; a great bunch who can make such a significant difference in such a short time. It's encouraging!" The people are eagerly waiting the time when they have a local ophthalmologist to help them.

--Lori Hudson



February 2004 Ometepec Team - Top Left: Carmela de la Cruz, Irene Reyés Arcineaga, Dr. Howard Beale, Josie Young, Orquidea Ríos Carmona. Bottom Left: Leovardo, Oscar, Linda Storey, Luke Driscoll, and Dr. Ariel Ramirez.

Dr. Howard Beale's demand for excellence in the surgery room has affectionately earned him the nickname, "El Torro." He spends all year working with his staff carefully collecting and organizing all the supplies for his trip. His huge heart and genuine concern for people that need help has resulted in his participation in ten WCF medical missions to Ometepec. He has already recruited his team for next year.

—Lori Hudson



November 2003 Ometepec Team

## Help Coming?

For many years people in Memphis have been supporting a ministry among the Tlapaneco Indians, who live in the Mountain Region of Guerrero state, Mexico. One of those supporters, Hickman Ewing, a Memphis attorney, recently volunteered to visit the General Hospital in Tlapa on our behalf. The health and medical officials in Tlapa had heard of Dr. Freeman's work in Ometepec and the Guerrero Project. They were excited at the prospect of WCF equipping an operating room there. The government has promised that if WCF provides equipment and supplies, they will supply the ophthalmologist. The hospital staff wanted to know, "when are they (the WCF) coming?" The need is there. Hopefully, World Cataract Foundation can soon help provide eye care for the people.

—Lori Hudson



On his recent visit to Tlapa, **Hickman Ewing** took this photo of a blind man playing the flute.

**Lori Hudson**, Program Director for five years, has been named Executive Director of the World Cataract Foundation.

**Congratulations, Lori!** —G.V.

***World Cataract Foundation Contributors—September 31, 2003– March 31, 2004 Thank you for your belief in our efforts to eliminate cataract blindness worldwide through your generous contributions.***

Alcon Laboratories, Inc.	Germantown Lions Club	Toby Redshaw
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<b>In honor of .....</b>	<b>Given by</b>	<b>In honor of.....</b>	<b>Given by</b>
Chris and Rodney Ballard	Dorothy Martens	Paula Martens	Dorothy Martens
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David Cuicchi	Gerard and Janice Vanderhaar	Janet Sisco	Janice and Gerard Vanderhaar
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Betsy and Gary Long	Dorothy Martens		
Janet and Chuck Lorenz	Dorothy Martens		
Jonathan Martens	Dorothy Martens		
Lois Martens	Dorothy Martens		

A note of gratitude to the Memphis White Station Lions Club. Their club donated funds to WCF to purchase a microscope for our missions! THANK YOU!

## Development/Marketing Subcommittee

A meeting on March 22, 2004 planned activities that will help raise funds for World Cataract Foundation.



From left: **Diana Threadgill**, Board Member, **Corinne Byers**, MECA, **Vicky Vasquez**, WCF Mexico, **Anne Freeman**, WCF Founder and Board Member, **Janice Vanderhaar**, Board Member and hostess, and **Lori Hudson**, WCF Executive Director

### World Cataract Foundation Board

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 Gerard Vanderhaar, S.T.D., Secretary  
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William T. Harrell	Mark Ruleman
William C. Johns, DPh	Diana Threadgill
K. C. Lam, C.L.U.	Janice Vanderhaar
Lawrence E. Madlock, M.D.	

Lori Hudson, Executive Director

## Meet the Board



**Thomas Gettelfinger, M.D.**

**C**o-Founder of Memphis Eye and Cataract Associates (MECA), Dr. Tom Gettelfinger is an honors graduate from the University of Notre Dame and received his M.D. degree from Harvard Medical School. He has served as a national committee member of the American Academy of Ophthalmology, has received its National Honor Award, as well as the Good Samaritan Award for his international volunteerism.

He founded the Tennessee Ophthalmic Personnel Society, an organization active in training ophthalmic assistants, has served as President of the Tennessee Academy of Ophthalmology, and is currently on the TeleMedicine Advisory Board for Project ORBIS. Dr. Gettelfinger is a Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology at the University of Tennessee, Memphis. He has been active in teaching and training in Ophthalmology programs in developing countries, including Afghanistan, India, Mexico, Zaire, Brazil, Peru, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Myanmar.

He is an avid photographer, and espouses an interest in Tango dancing.



**Dr. Alexander Hatsis** from Rockville Centre, New York with his patient in Ometepe.



**Dr. Fred Hidaji** from Memphis, Tennessee performed strabismus surgery on this little girl.

**T**hanks to a Rotary International matching grant from the Ghent, Belgium Rotary Club, the World Cataract Foundation Mexico and Acapulco Icacos Rotary Club purchased a Topcon microscope and an A-B scanner. This equipment was placed in the *Centro Estatal de Oftalmologia*, the clinic that serves the blind poor in Acapulco, Mexico.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

The World Cataract Foundation is happy to accept any gift, large, or small. If you would like your contribution to be in honor of a friend or as a memorial, please include their names and addresses with your donation. Each person you honor will receive a note acknowledging your gift.

The WCF now offers a convenient way to make donations. We have partnered with Enterprise National Bank to accept contributions through automatic deductions. If you are interested in becoming a regular contributor to WCF's mission of helping the blind poor regain their sight, the process is simple. First, call or write us to receive a form. Complete the form and mail it back. Automatic electronic withdrawals will be made from your checking or savings account according to your specifications about how often and when.

Together we can make a difference in helping cure cataract blindness worldwide.

## MISSION TRIP NEEDS

The World Cataract Foundation will accept donations of new or slightly used equipment. We will be equipping five operating rooms in the State of Guerrero.

Microscope (teaching microscope)	\$27,000.00
Teaching System for Microscope	\$ 3,542.00
Video System	\$ 2,160.00
A-Scan	\$ 8,050.00
Direct Ophthalmoscope	\$ 380.00
Indirect Ophthalmoscope	\$ 1,200.00
Autoclave and Cassettes	\$ 6,000.00
Instruments	\$12,000.00
Honing Machine	\$ 290.00
Laser	\$28,000.00

The equipment must be in optimal condition to provide the best possible care for the people that we serve. If you are interested in helping the world to see by providing funds for these equipment needs, please contact Lori Hudson, Executive Director at 901-379-0405.

***As a nonprofit, charitable 501 (c) (3) organization the WCF is supported solely by those who believe in restoring sight to the cataract blind. Gifts to the WCF are tax deductible. Please send your gift to World Cataract Foundation, 6463 Poplar, #101, Memphis, TN 38119 or call 901-379-0405 for more information.***



**WORLD CATARACT FOUNDATION**

helping the world to see

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