

Bring the World Into Focus

VOSH - Indiana Chapter™

Volunteer Optometric Services to Humanity



Africa - The Trip of a Lifetime

by Jeff Marshall, OD

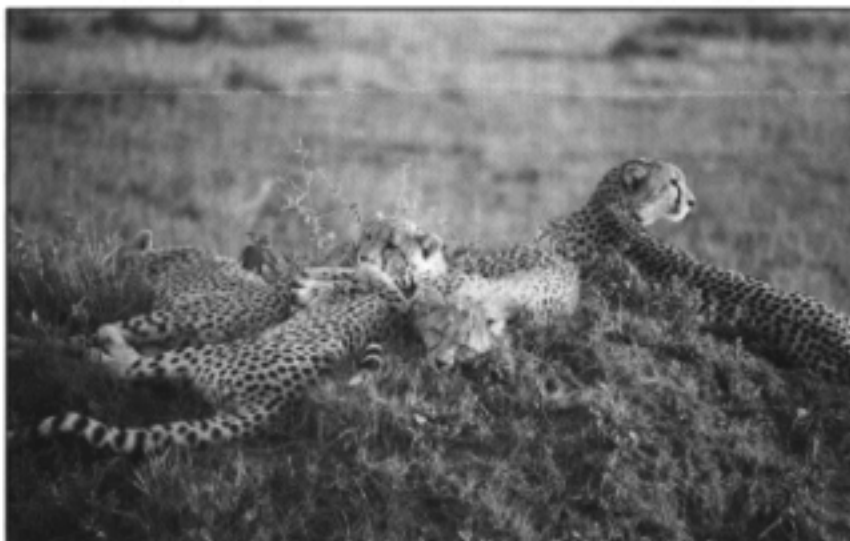
Plans for our two week African adventure began more than two years prior to our departure last November. For the 35 member team, it was an extraordinary experience that paired eye care service with a safari.

Our adventure got underway with a charter flight from Indianapolis to Milan, Italy. Since we weren't able to check in for a few hours, our tour company arranged a tour of that beautiful city. Monday morning we departed for Nairobi, a "short" 10 hour flight! Our hosts, District 411 Lions Clubs were at the airport to greet us. On Monday morning we went to the work site, set up and then got our clinic underway. We saw over 3,700 patients in 4 days.

It rained - Oh, my goodness, did it rain. I've never seen so much mud, but neither the rain nor the mud dampened the spirits of the team or patients.

We left the clinic on Saturday for a five-day safari including one night at the Mountain Lodge built around a watering hole. The next night was spent at the elegant Mt. Kenya Safari Club. From there we went to Kichwa Tembo, where we saw an amazing array of animals, took a hot air balloon across the Masai Mara and roughed it in tents.

We then flew from Kichwa Tembo back to Nairobi, then to Rome. Saturday morning we had time for a bus tour of Rome, ending at the Vatican where the Pope made an appearance that morn-



Seeing Cheetahs in the wild is a very different experience than seeing them at zoo, and one you won't forget for years to come.

ing to bless the crowd.

Then it was back home to America with scores of memories of what truly was the trip of a lifetime.

District 411 Lions were so pleased with the project they'd like to host up to three groups a year. If interested contact Jeff at drjcm@att.net.

Dale Cole, OD, took part in the mission. He was so impressed with how well the travel company handled the arrangements that he is planning to lead a similar clinic/ safari back to Kenya in November 2002. Contact Dale via email at dcole@midkan.net for more information.

(More photos of the people and animals of Africa inside.)

From the Desk of the President

In 1971 Dr. Franklin Harms founded VOSH-Kansas. Word of this new organization reached my father, Dr. Walter Marshall in late 1972. He went with VOSH-Kansas to Honduras in 1973. Following that mission, he founded VOSH-Indiana and was its president until his death in 1987. I then assumed the duties of President.

VOSH-Indiana, and the other state chapters, now boast 90+ missions a year. In the past year, VOSH-Indiana went on 3 missions to Honduras, Peru and Kenya, delivering eyecare to almost 10,000 patients.

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I urge each of you to think about joining a VOSH-Indiana mission, or at least consider becoming a member. Money raised from dues and donations help to cover the expenses of running these missions.

*Jeffrey C. Marshall, OD
President, VOSH-Indiana
President - VOSH International*



Dr. Jim Nolan and his wife, Bernice, accept the Lifetime Achievement Award from Jeff Marshall at ceremonies held in Honduras.

A Lifetime of Service

At a farewell party in San Pedro Sula, Honduras in February, Jeff Marshall, OD, organizer of annual eye clinics in this area for more than twenty years, presented Jim Nolan, OD, and his wife Bernice, a "Lifetime Achievement Award" for their ongoing efforts. Jeff made the presentation on behalf of both VOSH-Indiana and VOSH-Honduras.

The Indiana couple has a 30 year history of helping people in Central America. At times their efforts have been a family affair, especially a year ago when a grand sum of thirteen Nolans turned out to help in Tela and held a family reunion at the same time. It was a special week for Jim and Bernice.

Besides participating in VOSH clinics, the Nolans continually collect used eyeglasses, hospital

equipment, medicine, school supplies and stuffed animals for missions. They are frequently called on to present slide shows of their missions.

Jim Nolan's motivation to help may stem from his childhood in Loogootee, Indiana where his family didn't have enough money for food or clothing. "I learned that you should never look down on anyone," says Jim.



Feeding Giraffes at eye level!

Human Resources

Bob Johnston wrote a letter about his first VOSH trip that says it all....

"Hi Jeff, I just sent my reply card for the Honduras trip for next year. I would very much like to participate if you can use me.

Jeff, I just can't begin to tell you how much of a difference that trip has made in my life. I wish now that I had accepted your invitations in previous years. When people hear about a missionary trip, they talk about the help that the needy receive. While that was my motivation prior to the trip, I just didn't anticipate the benefits that I would receive. To see how little people in another area of our world have to live on - very good people, not unlike myself in many ways - really puts things in perspective. I'm so much more thankful for the blessings in my life. Things that I had considered problems now seem more like petty annoyances. I have had a smile on my face for the last month. Yet, there is also a sadness deep inside for the hardships I saw in Honduras. To think that much of the rest of the world lives under similar, or worse conditions!

I realize that you have to make the best use of the available space for necessary human resources for the trip next year. I will, of course, not be offended if the space that I would take is necessary for someone with other capabilities - but if you can use me, I'd sure like to go!"

Bob, you are exactly the "human" resource we need on our missions. See you at the airport.



This is no zoo. A wild African elephant herd was one of the exciting sights the VOSH participants enjoyed.

Seeking Mission Participants

Haiti in 2002

Dr. Tom Troutman, OD is looking for 1 or 2 optometrists and 1 or 2 ancillary people who would be willing to accompany him to Haiti on a mission trip the last week in Feb. or the first week in March of 2002. Dr. Troutman has been part of a medical mission to Belledere, Haiti the past couple of years and is hoping to expand the eye care part of the mission. Anyone with interest or questions can contact him during the day at his office at 219-223-3916, evenings at 219-223-5712, or by mail at 1327 Main St. Box 286, Rochester, IN 46975. Email him at taaaj@rtcol.com

Honduras 2001

The February 2001 VOSH-Indiana mission to Honduras was a resounding success. Working in the town of Pimienta for the third time a record number of team members delivered eyecare to over 4000 patients.

Our friend Ruth Berkling and her group from the Fundacion Para Servicios Medicos Voluntarios arranged for a great work site, negotiated a good rate at the hotel and in general made our stay in San Pedro Sula very comfortable. Ruth has made all the arrangements for our group since 1978.

We worked four days at the school in Pimienta. There were still a couple of teachers at the school who remembered our last visit in 1987. It was on that mission where the temperature each day soared above 115 degrees. A record not broken since then. This year a record was set when 68 people made the trip.

Our group will be returning to Honduras in February 2002 working in a village near the Mayan Ruins at Copan.



You will meet some wonderful people on a VOSH Mission.



Ambassadors for Children / VOSH Joint Mission to Vietnam

September 19-28, 2002

A direct commercial flight to Saigon begins the mission. Work will be at a local hospital.

Following three days of mission work, several tentative itinerary options are offered. You can enjoy a cruise on the Saigon River and a Vietnamese music concert. Or, participants can explore the tunnel network of the VC guerrillas, visit Reunification Hall, History Museum, Notre Dame Cathedral, Chinatown and a wholesale market.

An optional excursion to Mekong Delta is offered, along with a boat trip along Mekong River to the Unicorn Island. Visit a farmer's house, enjoy southern folk music performed by villagers, and take a rowboat along the canals.

There is also an option to stay with a local family and enjoy the local culture.

Accommodations are based on double occupancy and include airport transfers, daily breakfast, four lunches and four dinners. Cost is approximately \$2500 - \$3000 and will depend upon airfare.

For more information, contact Jeff Marshall at drjcm@att.net.

Upcoming Missions

Honduras 2002

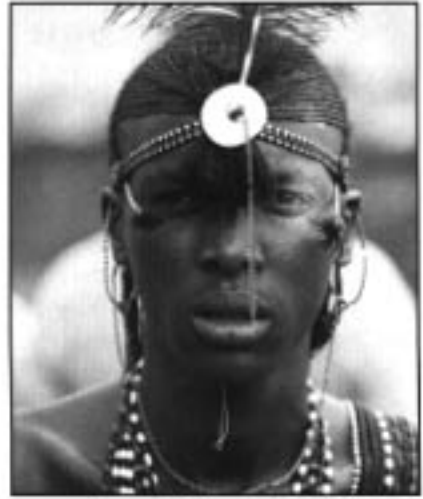
February 23 - March 2
Contact Jeff Marshall
317-357-8534
email: drjcm@att.net

Honduras 2002

March 2 - 9
Contact Bob Merriam
270-683-7564
email: rhmerriam@juno.com

Vietnam 2002

September 19 - 28
Contact Jeff Marshall
317-357-8534
email: drjcm@att.net



Meeting the people of Africa was a fascinating experience. Their colorful clothing and intricate beaded jewelry was of special interest to the Lady VOSHers!

A Reminder... Annual Dues

Your support is crucial to continuing our mission work throughout the world. Please send your \$25 annual dues to Jeff Marshall, President, VOSH-Indiana PO Box 19028, Indianapolis, IN 46219 today.

Cusco Peru Mission 2001

Bob Merriam lead a VOSH-Indiana team of 26 members to Cusco Peru, a city that offered many unique attributes to an eye mission.

Cusco is in the Andes at an elevation of 11,000 feet, and provided us with pleasant, "sweater" weather. Cusco is an ancient Inca capital and is now the "gringo" capital of South America. After work there were Incan ruins aplenty, beautiful churches, and a town steeped in history to explore. The scenery was stunning.

Four of the Lions Clubs in Cusco joined forced to host our team in the Cusco Lions "clubhouse" just 1/2 block from our hotel. "Clubhouse" is a loose term for this 200 year old massive home surrounding a large courtyard. Our dispensing room was about 40' by 30'. The large team of Lady Lions served us excellent midday dinners and light suppers. This Lions

building has ongoing clinics serving dental, eyecare and other health needs.

Our patient needs were extraordinary. At sites such as Honduras, Jamaica or the US, of all the kids screened, 10% need to see an OD. Of those, less than half need glasses. In Cusco, 56% of the kids needed glasses, and 45% needed sphere and/or cylinder correction from 1.25D up to 8.00D. These challenges were met by a special library brought by the three VOSH-Ohio participants. They supplied 1800 pair with cylinders of -1.25D or higher. (Stuff we usually throw away!) Cusco's population of 300,000 can supply an endless number of needy patients.

After noting some particularly poor "picking" on several previous missions, we took special pains to extensively train several of the pickers in a month-long correspon-

dence course. Analysis of the Cusco "picks" showed great improvements with many startlingly close matches to many of these difficult Rx's. For the few we couldn't match, the Lions will have the glasses made.

In 4 days, with 5 OD's and 2 autorefractors, we examined 1800 patients and had the smallest amount by far of "no Rx's." Virtually everyone needed help. In the examination rooms, we had 4 OD's and one 3rd year optometry student. Two team members ran autorefractors, an OD examined the printout and wrote prescriptions directly for many of the patients. Three team members did fitting and final wash, 4 ran visual acuity lines, 2 did registration, and the last 8 held down dispensing.

This area offers wonderful sightseeing with Machu Picchu, a world-class destination, just a few hours away.