

# The Boulder-Mante Cooperative Dental Project

**Initiated July 2005  
With special thanks to:**

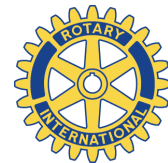
**Boulder Community Hospital  
Boulder/Broomfield County Dental Society  
Boulder-Mante Sister Cities Committee  
Rotary Clubs of Boulder, Boulder Valley, Broomfield,  
Broomfield Crossing and Coal Creek**



Boulder Community Hospital



BOLDER/BROOMFIELD COUNTY DENTAL SOCIETY



### Mission Statement:

To improve the dental health of the people of Mante, México and its surrounding communities through an ongoing cooperative volunteer program.

### Vision Statement:

That all people in the Mante, México region have access to dental care; that local Doctors learn additional dental skills, oral hygiene improvement and maintenance, resulting in a sustainable, self-sufficient clinic capable of fulfilling local dental needs.

### History:

Boulder has had a Sister City relationship with Ciudad Mante, Tamiipas, México for many years. For the past 16 years, a medical team under the sponsorship of Boulder Community Hospital, First Presbyterian Church of Boulder and the Boulder Rotary Club has gone annually to Mante in February and has supplied much-needed medical care literally worth millions of dollars to its citizens, the majority of whom are indigent.

BMCDP was started in 2005 when the mayor of Mante, Jose Luis Castellanos Gonzales, asked Boulder Community Hospital for help in starting a Mante dental program. Dentists Rod Tuenge, Jack Rummel, Bob Murphy, Joe Mazzola, and Andrew Fiscus from Boulder and Broomfield counties formed a committee and collected funds from Rotary clubs in those counties and also from local Boulder/Broomfield County Dental Society members.

When those funds were matched by a grant from Rotary International, a fully equipped mobile dental van, portable dental equipment and stationary dental equipment were purchased in Mante and/or sent down from Boulder. Several possibilities for treating patients with modern dental equipment now exist in Mante. Our hope is to have dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, and others who care visit Mante in order help improve the oral health of the local citizens. Drs. Joe Mazzola and Bob Murphy have completed preliminary missions. Now, the stage is set for regular 1-2 week volunteer missions by dentists and hygienists from Colorado and beyond.



## Proposed Mission Strategy

One or two dentists will go to Mante for a one- to two-week dental volunteer mission. There might be three or four of these missions per year. The dentists will provide their own transportation to and from Tampico International Airport. A representative from Mante will meet the dentists at the Tampico airport and transport them to Mante.

One dentist might spend his/her week(s) with Jean-Louis Lacaille in the mountain region of El Cielo while the other might work side-by-side with a Méxican social services (DIF) dentist, probably in the dental van, providing dental services to the area villages surrounding Mante.

The city of Mante will provide room and board (housing and food) for the dentist working in and around Mante. Jean-Louis will provide the same for the dentist serving in the mountainous areas around Mante. Eventually, we hope that Mante-area dentists will provide room and board for the visiting dentists. It will take time to establish this rapport.

The city of Mante will provide an assistant and a translator for the visiting dentists in the Mante area. Jean-Louis will be our translator/assistant in the mountain villages.

The city of Mante will provide the same supplies (dental burs, gloves, face masks, restorative materials, etc.) to the visiting dentists as are used by their Mante dental counterparts.

This is simply an initial format. We are open to your suggestions.



## NOTES FROM DR. BOB MURPHY

### Travel and Accommodations

Travel to Mante, Tamaulipas, México is generally by air traveling from Denver to Houston then Houston to Tampico, México on Continental Airlines. There is only one flight scheduled a day which leaves Denver around 11:00 am and arrives Houston 3:00 pm and then leaves Houston 5:00 pm and arrives Tampico after 7:00 pm.

Have your passport ready. You will be asked to fill out a Mexican entry form and you will be given part of this form to keep. **DO NOT LOSE THIS PART OF THE FORM!!!** Mexican passport control will ask for this form back when you depart the country and if you do not have it they will not allow you to leave on your scheduled flight. This has already happened to one of our dentists.

When bringing dental equipment and supplies into Mexico it is best to fax, in advance, the complete list of the equipment and supplies you are bringing to your contact person. The contact person can then, hopefully, talk to the customs people in advance and help ease you through customs. You need to have with you a complete list of all the equipment and supplies that you are bringing into the country. I have had very cursory checks and also very detailed checks by customs officials.

In advance, through your contact person, you will want to make arrangements to be picked up at the airport and driven to Mante. This is about a 100 mile, 2 hour drive.

The Hotel Mante is a very solid place to stay. Dependable air conditioning, swimming pool and a good restaurant with very pleasant people running the place. If staying at the Hotel Mante you will find everything you need within reason. If you are staying up in the mountains (i.e., El Cielo rainforest) then you should bring a sleeping bag. You will be sleeping in beds with linens but there is a possibility of bed bugs so it is wise to sleep in your sleeping bag.



The Hotel Mante



Mountain accommodations

### Dental Mission in Mexico

There are three different venues at which you can deliver dental services in Mexico through our organization:

1. In the city of Mante (80,000 people) we have a two chair dental clinic that is located in the DIF (Department of Infants and Families) clinic.
2. There is a two chair dental van, based in Mante, that can travel out to one of the 100 villages that surround Mante. This could be up to 60 miles away.
3. There are two portable dental units (large suitcase size) that can be used to travel up to the rainforest region 50 miles northwest of Mante and provide services in villages that the dental van cannot access due to rough roads.

### Dental Equipment and Supplies

Every patient you see usually needs several extractions, some restorative work and their teeth cleaned (massive amounts of tartar). It is a great idea, but certainly not mandatory, to bring a dental hygienist down with you. There is a strong possibility that you are going to be doing dentistry without the benefit of any radiographs.

The portable units (DENTLWORKS) work well and are basically an electric handpiece, air/water syringe and suction. One of the units also has a Piezo handpiece for doing scalings although I would recommend bringing a small cavitron unit as a backup.

The dental units in the Mante clinic is used equipment that was donated by Project Cure. We have not used it yet. The dental equipment in the dental van is used regularly by Mexican dentists using the van.

I would recommend bringing a small cavitron unit with you to do scalings. The calculus on most patients is massive.

If you are going to be doing amalgams you will need to bring a triturator. If you are going to be doing composites, bring at least two curing lights (in case one stops working)

We have at least 70 oral surgical instruments in storage in Mante. Forceps, elevators, curettes, etc. If you have favorite oral surgical instruments please bring them.

Look around your operatory when you do a restoration in your office. Every hand instrument you use, every disposable you use-----you need to bring with you to Mexico. You cannot depend on any hand instruments or disposables to be available. This even means bringing your own anesthetic. You have to bring everything!!! These places are desperately poor and do not have any resources. The city of Mante does have a large Costco-type store at which you can purchase paper goods, Clorox, etc.

You cannot depend on using sterilizers in México. You need to bring sterilizing fluids that will sterilize your instruments or use Clorox purchased locally. Also take Tupperware containers to use in the sterilization process.

The portable equipment does not have an overhead dental light source so you will need to bring a dental headlamp and the charger to keep it functioning. The dental clinic and the dental

van have overhead dental lights although you may want to bring dental headlamps as a backup.

### Donated Dental Supplies and Equipment

We have found that your local dental suppliers (Schein, Patterson, Burkhardt, etc) can be very generous in donating supplies. They can also put you in touch with product reps (Crest, Colgate, Midwest, etc) to get toothbrushes, toothpaste, burs, etc. Ask and give these folks a chance. Tell them about your trip and they will be happy to contribute.

We have been fortunate to have local Mexican medical clinics give us antibiotics and analgesics to give to our dental patients. Hopefully this will continue.

### **Photos from Dr. Bob Murphy**



View of mountain location



A flossing session



Dr. Murphy and two happy patients



## NOTES FROM DR. JOE MAZZOLA

### Suggestions for Dentistry in the Mobile Van

- Bring light clothes, preferably scrubs. If you sweat easily, bring headband and wristbands. Bring comfortable shoes for standing.
- Check with front desk at the hotel for inexpensive laundry service, or check with the maid. Breakfast is at the hotel. Lunch is supplied by the villages you will visit. Dinner is on your own, either at the hotel or at nearby restaurants. Hotel rooms are \$40-\$60 per night.
- Keep all necessary entry/exit visas for travel. Bring as few personal items as possible, due to lack of security. Watch all personal items in the field, including any personal and/or intra-oral cameras. Bring all personal medications, as they may not be available in México.
- The van must be hooked into the main grid of the town's/village's power supply, not just plugged into a socket.
- For sterilization, buy Clorox at the local discount store. Otherwise bring your own sterilant. Tape a trash bag behind the dental chair.
- Bring a headlamp; bring loupes.
- If you are doing surgical extractions, bring some bone drills, resorbable sutures and a scalpel with blades.
- You will be unable to scale all calculus unless you have a Cavitron, but don't worry because doing something is better than doing nothing.
- Drivers will be furnished. There will be a driver for the mobile van and a driver for the dentist in an air-conditioned "city car."
- Things don't always run on time, so don't be concerned if they run late. Remember *mañana*.
- Instead of taking small gifts for the coordinator, drivers and translator/assistant, it might be better to find out what they could use and send those items with the next volunteer.



Van exterior



Van interior

**Photos from Dr. Steven Markowitz**



The Spring 2009 dental team



Dr. Markowitz at work



A hygienist and her patient



Happy school children