

Volunteers Bring Smiles All Across the Globe

A group of 500 school children patiently wait for the arrival of the “tall fire lady.” Named so for her tall stature and red hair, Uruguay native Dr. Jeanette Grauer closes her Union, NJ practice for two weeks every August to bring much needed dental care to families along the Amazon basin in Peru.

The program she has founded and leads, the *Amazon Dental Project*, seeks to deliver dental care to children via the remote school facilities in the Amazon region of Peru. Beginning in the Andes Mountains of Peru, the Amazon River flows nearly 300 miles before it reaches the border of Brazil on its way to the Atlantic Ocean. Along its path, for several miles inland on both sides, there are many towns, villages and small tribes in need of basic dental care.

“They can’t come to me, so I go to them,” said Dr. Grauer. “The mission of our project is to engender sustainable healthcare through resources that are culturally and environmentally respectful in partnership with the native Amazon people.”

Dr. Grauer has been volunteering annually in Peru since 2002, beginning in the town of Ayacucho (about 200 miles SE of Lima). First, she went alone and then she began to meet dentists in various villages and dental students at the county’s only dental school, *Universidad Nacional De La Amazonia Peruana-Facultad De Orthodontologia in Iquitos*. Now, with a core team of four, she has started the *Amazon Dental Project*, based out of a medical clinic, to bring quality sustainable dental care to the children of the region. She commends companies like Colgate and Henry Schein for their generosity in helping the project with supplies.

“The idea is to create a fund where students at the dental school can adopt a school of children and regularly deliver dental care to them,” said Dr. Grauer. “The dentists, dental students and nurses are talented, skilled and committed. They simply lack the resources to get care to the remote regions.”

On her most recent trip, Dr. Grauer taught a nurse how to treat class A cavities and make dentures. She says he learned extremely fast and was able to treat his own mother, by refitting her dentures, in just a few days. It is necessary to give basic dental skills to teachers, nurses, and other village persons because of the remoteness of these areas.

“We had to travel for three hours by plane, the an hour and a half by boat and then hike inland,” said Dr. Grauer. “For an hour of the plane ride all you see out the window is jungle.”

Dr. Grauer sees nearly 1,200 children on each trip, and it is evident how deeply she believes in the mission of her program.

“It is a very spiritual experience, and I am committed to an ongoing relationship with the community,” said Dr. Grauer. “This is my vision, but I am just a conduit. It’s the people in Peru who are the real heroes. My long-term goal is not to do the dental care, but to help them to take care of themselves. That’s what they want, and, like other programs, we want assure that empowerment is supported on a continual basis.”



Dr. Grauer received a hug from a thankful child in Peru.

AMAZON DENTAL PROJECT

Taking Care of Earth's Caretakers

MISSION

Engendering sustainable healthcare through resources that are culturally and environmentally respectful in partnership with native Amazon peoples.

HEALTH CARE SERVICES

The clinics treat patients from the Amazon Basin and from far away, arriving by dugout canoe or on foot.

Services include preventative, exodontias, caries and palliative treatment.

GOALS

The long term goals are to expand the dental services to create a prosthesis clinic and laboratory, to encourage preventive dentistry and involve locally trained people in the operation of the clinic.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer dentists and individuals are welcome. Lodging is provided by Explorama Lodge (a nearby eco-tourism center) at discount rates, For more information, contact Dr. Grauer at (908) 688-8111.

Next trip leaving on August 18, 2006 and returning September 4, 2006

FUNDING

The Amazon Dental is a grassroots project supported by Dr. Jeannette Grauer's family and friends, health care professional, and business associates.

EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES NEEDED

1. Dental chair portable. Ultralite Patient Chair (\$800 per chair) from DNTLwork Equipment Corp. at Englewood, CO 80112 (303) 693-1410
2. Portable Dental System. This is the unit that has the high speed, air syringe and suction. (\$1,695.00) From Aseptico (www.aseptico.com)
3. Pocket able and handy Battery Operated Micro Motor (\$986.40). This is a rechargeable battery operated hand drill to do prophylaxis, and cavities preparation. Bell International, San Mateo, CA 94401, 800-523-6640.
4. Supplies, gloves, masks, needles, gauze, prophylactic paste, prophyl angles, Fluoride gel, Fluoride trays, Fluoride tablets. Restorative materials (glassionomer, composite, ect) Alginate material, Prosthodontics impression trays, dental acrylic. Others.

HOW TO MAKE A DONATION

If you want to send donated supplies to Amazon Dental, the tax-deductible way to do so is to send it to:

AMAZON DENTAL
C/O Jeannette Grauer DDS
1317 Morris Avenue
Union, NJ 07083

If you want to make a contribution to Amazon Dental, the tax-deductible way to do so is to send it to:

AMAZON DENTAL
C/O Amazon Medical Project
Kim Strokes, Administrator
P.O. Box 194
Mazomanie, Wisconsin 53560

WEBSITES : www.amazondental.org www.amazondental.orgYanamono

Dr. Jeannette Grauer has a private practice located in Union, NJ. For more information, please call (908) 688-8111