# NEXUS 

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FALL / WINTER 2012

## Includes 2011-12 Annual Financial Report Summary



Ordinary people can make an extraordinary difference

## THE STRUGGLE OF THE MYAN PEOPLE IN GUATEMALA

Santa Maria Cunen district is 230 km northwest of the Guatemala City. Over 30,000 people live in 40 communities within its 177 km 2 territory, and $95 \%$ belong to the K'iche ethnic group. The K'iche people confront serious problems of illiteracy, malnutrition, infantile deaths, and poverty. There are very few technological services for agriculture, drinkable water, and electricity, only a few junior or senior high schools, and no universities. The government only supports primary and elementary education. It is a huge burden to families of low income to send their youth to a public high school and university with expensive tuitions.

In 2007-08, with funding from Rainbow of Hope for Children and the Wild Rose Foundation, the people at Cunen built a state-of-the-art 15 classroom bilingual/bicultural high school/teachers college, which they named Rainbow of Hope for Children College.

It is the staff, students, and programs that really make a first class college. With a focus on teacher training and technical skills, the graduates have a 95 success rate finding employment. Staff members volunteer most of their time after teaching primary or elementary levels for their subsistence. Notwithstanding the people here face many financial, political and socio-economic struggles, the college has thrived and enrolment almost doubled to 420 students in these few short years. They are starting to build 3 additional classrooms on a third floor. Director (Principal), Miguel Cabrera, sent this picture of his staff. What an impressive team of professionals!


Ethnic and cultural diversity tend to be linked to social inequality and poverty, and that is the case in Guatemala, where the indigenous peoples historically have struggled for equal opportunity and citizenship in the economic, political and social fabric of their country. The stories the Mayan grandparents tell us about the civil war years, 1965 to 1995, speak to their suffering and exclusion, much of which continues to the present. That long war started as a grassroots response to the military takeover of the state institutions and the disregard of the dictatorship for the human and civil rights of the majority.

Little has changed in that regard since the war. The Mayan people continue to struggle for inclusion and human rights today through peaceful expression and peaceful resistance. In protecting their culture and lands, their treatment recently, by what appears to be individuals associated with the mining industry, is shocking. Also just this October, hundreds of K'iche from Totonicapán gathered to protest 3 issues: elevations in the costs of electricity; changes to the education system; and constitutional reforms that would eliminate government recognition of indigenous ancestral authorities. It is reported that when military and national police arrived, what was to be a peaceful indigenous protest resulted in the death of 7 men and 34 injured. And so, the Mayan struggle continues.

A strong national policy of "Equality" in legislation and praxis is essential to cultural and ethnic peaceful coexistence and reducing poverty in any country. The international community needs to open its eyes and ears to the historical and current struggles of the Mayan people in Guatemala. It needs to encourage local and national authorities to seriously look at the structures that cause ethnic and cultural marginalization with a view of transforming policies that affirm "unity in diversity" and empower all citizens with equal respect and opportunity.

Congratulations to Rainbow of Hope for Children College for your growth and efforts for self-sustainability. Your labour of love to improve the future of your youth, the K'iche culture, and your county is commendable.

- George Bunz, President


## A VISIT AL GERWING'S BELOVED PEOPLE IN BRAZIL by Rita Frank

On April 9, 2012 my husband, Murray, and I embarked on a two-week visit to Rainbow of Hope for Children (ROHFC) projects in Brazil. George, my brother, is president of ROHFC and was making this journey to monitor these projects. ROHFC was dear to Al Gerwing, who, before he passed away, was a director and helped to fund many projects in Brazil. On several occasions we were reminded of Al and inspired by his work. We visited the projects he began and met the people with whom he worked so tirelessly. Al would be so proud to know many of these projects are becoming self-sustainable.

It was a shock to arrive in Sao Paulo, the largest city in the southern hemisphere, with a total population of 20 million in the greater metropolitan area. We flew north to Salvador in the state of Bahia where we met our bus driver, Edmeilson, and our interpreters, Marivone and Douglas Lier, directors of ROHFC. We were surprised to learn Marivone was born and raised in Palmeira dos Indios, north where we were headed.

In the heart of


Salvador, we visited Our Lady of Grace School, a 3 story 3010 sq. ft. facility. You would never know it had been a priest's rectory. ROHFC funded the purchase and conversion to a school. It was bright, cheerful, and meticulously kept. Situated in a high crime area, our bus driver parked in a safe spot and stood guard over the bus. Five dedicated, meagrely paid teachers taught 130 students 3-7 years old. These beautiful children sang and performed Capoeira (a martial art dance brought to Brazil by their ancestors - slaves from Africa). Salvador had been the entry port of the largest slave trade in North America with double the number of slaves to Brazil than to the United States. Murray and I enjoyed sitting with the children while they ate their lunch (chicken and rice). Then they prayed, brushed their teeth and scurried to class. We got a BIG hug from each student when leaving.

The next day
 travelling 400 long km into the interior Sertao (big desert), we met Fr. Leroy Paulo Ehle, originally from Pierceland, Sk. He had worked over 30 years as a missionary in Brazil and knew Al well. He took us to a local tavern for pizza and beer - a welcome relief from the scorching temperatures. In the morning, we meandered 30 km on dusty trails to the School of Family Agriculture. It was the most severe drought anyone could remember. Not a drop of rain for the past six months, temperatures soared into the 40 's. Two tankers were pumping water to save the livestock. Two new dugouts were bone dry and the gardens parched, so ROHFC agreed to fund a well and pump water to the school.
 offering education as incentive for graduates to make a living as small producers. The school has 6 teachers, an agronomist and several support staff. In a two-week live-in cycle, students study core curriculum, vegetable and fruit gardening, livestock husbandry (pigs, poultry, goats) and bookkeeping in a lifestyle similar to that of their small home farm. During the two-week home cycle, they are given academic and farming tasks that involve family and community and the teachers visit their farms. At the garden, students dug up a cassava plant to show us what one of the leading food and feed plants in the world looks like. The plant, a perennial, takes about a year to establish. Its long tubular root is boiled, fried, or dried and ground into powder to sprinkle on other foods. The leaves can be eaten but are mainly used to feed livestock.

We then travelled 12 hours north and east across country sometimes off the main roads to make up time, and at night crossed the San Francisco River (referred to as Old Chico, local nickname for St. Francis) on a ferry to Penedo. The city was under Dutch occupation for eight years back in the 1600's. Our bus driver kindly arranged for a boat ride on Old Chico to the Delta. It was a beautiful excursion, 32 degrees. We saw the straw huts and fishermen with only a line on a stick. At the Delta we swam in water as warm as a bath tub. After snacking on crackers, homemade cheese and Cerveza (beer) that Edmeilson's wife sent for our journey. We ended the day at a beachside restaurant savouring local fish.

Next morning, over dusty roads, we visited the little village of Cajueiro Nova. ROHFC built a small Technology Centre, computers and sewing machines, sustained now by the municipality. They were proud to inform us that several graduates of the computer courses were employed and many women were thrilled they were able to earn income for their families because of the sewing skills gained at the centre.

Several books garnished a tiny library not much bigger than a dresser. It was a major source of pride. Again more food - baking and juices from fruits and leaves of native trees.


> A full day on the road the next day, we arrived in Maceio and Marechal Deodoro where Al did most of his work. Here we stayed at the Pousada do Aconchego by a beautiful beach which was one of Al's favourite places. From here we made various day trips out to visit more projects.

The women of the MMTRP-AL (Movement of Rural Women Workers and Fishers of Alagoas) speak of Al as "Santa Tomas" because of all the support he gave. The organization is a rural feminist movement that struggles for social justice as a means to achieve gender, racial and ethnic equality.


Maria Jose da Silva (ZEZE), the MMTRP project coordinator, especially loved Al who would phone her often to see how she was doing. She had recently lost her young son, Tiago, in a violence related tragedy. George and Marivone consoled her, presenting to her a wood carving of her hero, Al Gerwing. It was donated by Robert and Joan Rajotte, who travelled with Al to Brazil in 1999.

With ROHFC support, the MMTRP-AL expanded to five regions with 680 women working to create jobs and generate income for rural women, consequently providing benefits for their families and communities.


We visited the headquarters of the MMTRP-AL in Macieo, the capital of Alagoas, purchase by ROHFC and Alberta Wild Rose Foundation. Zeze, had arranged for us to meet 15 of the 36 women who are the trained leaders in their affiliate communities. Some of their work in action include the Sunflower for Knowledge (library and reading reinforcement), Production of Cocada (fruit sweets, crafts with banana fibre, and coconut bars), and capacitation workshops. Sr. Clair Novecosky and Sr. Louise Hinz (Ursuline Sisters of Bruno working for the Saskatoon Diocesan Mission) joined us to visit Fundanor. Fundanor is a home for boys living on the streets of Palmeira dos Indios. It was founded by Dona Lourdes Montiero, a retired teacher who dedicated her retirement to working with street children. Al helped ROHFC to build classrooms, a wood carving centre and dormitories for the boys, and with funding from CIDA, a home for girls. The operation of Fundanor has not been without challenges. When Dona Lourdes retired, Fundanor was managed by the municipality that left much to be desired. We were told they wanted to take Fundanor's computers from the Girls' home and install them in the city library.

Dona Lourdes flatly refused to let this happen as the computers were funded by the generosity of Canadians.

Today, with changes in municipal leadership, we are pleased to see that Fundanor is being modernized. Its social programs have improved to allow for children after two years at the institution to be integrated back into a family structure where family counselling has been provided.


Fundanor is bustling with happy, healthy 3-5 olds in 5 classrooms. They looked so sweet taking an after lunch nap.

The municipality is paying salaries for 5 qualified teachers and 2 certified counsellors. Dona Lourdes enjoys visiting with them and the children. Additional funding is provided by the Rotary Club whose president is very dedicated to Fundanor. We visited a bakery that Fundanor started for its
 use. It now produces enough baking to sell at local markets, thereby providing income for Fundanor. ROHFC's financial support is no longer necessary for Fundanor.

Dona Lourdes graciously invited us into her home where she showered us with hospitality. We had lunch with her and Cicero Pinto, the first graduate of Fundanor, now a certified teacher, who works at the University of Maceio.

Yet another project we visited was Grota da Alegria (Valley of Joy) on the outskirts of Maceio. It is one of the most violent places in Brazil (labelled Valley of the Skeletons as it was common for criminals to dump bodies over the cliff into a steep ravine below). Strong local leaders refused to allow the community die from within. With help from ROHFC and Wild Rose Foundation, they began rejuvenating their community through education for life programs, literacy, citizenship, income generation, culture, and sports programs. Here again, the children were eager to perform for us. ROHFC is funding this project and any donations are matched $2: 1$ with available funds from the Alphonse Gerwing Charitable Foundation.

April 23, after 32 hours travelling, we were home to our comfortable life in Saskatchewan. We are back home with the realization that we can all make a difference. We feel heightened responsibility in caring for our neighbour and saw firsthand that love doesn't stop at a doorway or at a border.

## ACGC: CHANGE YOUR WORLD TOUR 2012 PERU: Youth Visit to Rainbow of Hope Projects

OUR EXPERIENCE: By Julie Le, Kianna Dewart, Ross Anderson, Chance Roasting, and Sarah Carr

Last summer, we five youth from across Alberta, received the privilege to travel to Peru for two weeks. It was sponsored by Alberta Council for Global Cooperation (ACGC) and Sombrilla with support from the Alberta Community Initiatives Program. We were able to visit projects and campaigns initiated by Canadian organizations working in Peru. One such organization was Rainbow of Hope for Children, where Joe Gubbels hosted us and toured us around the area of Chincha Baja. Within Chincha, there were three specific projects that we visited under the umbrella of ROHFC.

The first project was the rebuilding of a school. In 2007, an earthquake had destroyed the school. The school was originally planned to be built by the government, unfortunately before completion, the government pulled out and cancelled their plans to create the school. It was fortunate that Rainbow of Hope for Children had intervened and aided in rebuilding the school and opened it for the students.

The school welcomed us with a terrific marching band and the students sang the Peruvian national anthem. After they sang, we, Canadians, sang our anthem for them. Sarah was given
 the privilege of giving a scholarship to one of the students that attend the school. It really felt like we were being welcomed into the community. We got the chance to play with the kids in soccer (for the boys) and volleyball (for the girls). It was amazing to see the children able to have so much fun with the few resources


> It really put things into perspective and made us realize not to take our opportunities of education and schools for granted.


Here we are with Joe Gubbels, director of Peru projects for Rainbow of Hope. Left to right: Chance, Kianna, Sarah, Joe, Ross, Julie and Joelle.

After visiting the school, Joe brought us to tour the community and to view the rooftop projects. The devastation of the earthquake was seen throughout the community, but what was so amazing to see was how happy the people were. Rainbow of Hope had helped to rebuild homes for the community by teaching them how to build the houses, which promoted sustainable development. Another aspect that was phenomenal to see was the sense of community that was present. The project required every family to send a member to aid in

building houses if they wanted their own homes, which was terrific. The people welcomed us into their houses and were very proud of the houses that they built with their community. It was fantastic to see, so inspiring, and such an eye opener. We had to the chance to eat special fried dough with fig syrup that was only made on special occasions and Sundays. It was such a treat to be able to be given it, and the children were absolutely delighted that they were able to eat it. It was delicious, and more importantly it reminded us of the small things in life. Julie even got to help fry some of the treats on the outdoor stove.

The stove was required to be outside due to the smoke that with long exposure in a closed area harmed lungs. This was one of the issues that needed to be looked into, and Joe explained to us the dire lifestyle that the people would have if Rainbow of Hope for Children had not come in to aid them.

The last project that we had the opportunity to visit was the Adult Education Centre. This beautiful centre funded by Rainbow of Hope with the support of CIDA and Alberta Community Initiatives Program allowed for adults and teens that have to work during the day, or want extra schooling, to get the opportunity of education. Education is the base foundation for development and this centre allowed for the enhancement of the community and a second chance for many. There was one man, he was 83 years old, and he had just completed grade 2. It was so inspiring to see. They welcomed us with dancing, performances, games and a delicious Peruvian dinner of rice and potatoes. Kianna and Ross even performed a song together for all of us. We had brought over musical instruments from Canada and it was astounding to see the joy that was evident when the school received the instruments.


It was also astounding to see that even with the barriers of language and culture, both Peruvians and Canadians were able to have an amazing time that night due to the commonalities of music, dance and just having fun regardless of being able to communicate through speech.

Having had the amazing opportunity of visiting Rainbow of Hope for Children's projects in Chincha Baja was just an eye opener. We learned so much from this experience, and it was really inspiring to see that Canadians, just like us, were able to make such a large impact, and it has really motivated us to do more and support in sustainable ways when we arrived back in Canada. Seeing the results that non-government organizations had on the community, and more importantly, on the people, on a personal level, was very encouraging to see. Due to this, we are forever grateful to Joe and to Rainbow of Hope for Children for allowing us to have had the opportunity to have these experiences.


Romulo Carbajal (83) and his wife, Juana (64) are in the literacy program and have been an inspiration to others to study at the Complex.



On a snowy evening in Wainwright, the Men's Chorus, a group of 26 seemingly regular gentlemen, came together to create an extraordinary evening of song that lifted the roof off of a packed theatre. It was standing room only, with people from all over who had come to be, in one moment, moved to tears, and then in another, lifted out of their seats by the beauty of the men's voices joined together bringing us songs of our youth, songs of love, and songs of life. Through his adept choral conducting George Bunz drew the magnificence out of each voice in the group and guided the men through the magnificent ebbs and swells of each piece.
 Joining the Festival were the wonderful ladies of the River Hill's Chorus, admirably directed by Connie Coleman. Their acappella harmony wowed the audience. And no one will forget Dr. Ruan Venter who blew the doors off with his powerful solos. All this for free - all that was asked was a donation of any amount to Rainbow of Hope. The beauty of the voices and generosity of the souls attending and behind the making of this evening is beyond compare.

Over 300 music lovers donated over $\$ 10,000$ for two projects, Grota da Alegria, Brazil and COMUS Coffee project, El Salvador. Grota da Alegria gifts are match 2:1 by Al Gerwing Charitable Foundation, and gifts to the COMUS Coffee project are matched 3:1 by CIDA. So the value of funds raised was $\$ 25,000$. We thank the gracious audience, the singers, Bryan Perkins the MC, Theatre 75 for sound, and all the helpers. BRAVO!

NEXUS Page 5


## VOLUNTEER WONDER WOMAN

The life of Ida Rawluk of Whitecourt, Alberta changed radically as a retired septuagenarian. It happened after her first experience volunteering in Chincha Baja, Peru. In Spring of 2007, she met Joe Gubbels, on an airplane and he described, briefly, his work as a volunteer in Chincha Baja, Peru, constructing two schools. He gave her his business card for Rainbow of Hope for Children.

Ida never thought anything more about this encounter, until she saw news about the terrible earthquake of August 15, 2007 in Peru, with the epicentre close to
 Chincha Baja. She sent a donation to Rainbow of Hope for Children and an email to Joe Gubbels to become a volunteer in Peru.


Percy Baxter School in Whitecourt, Ida's family, and friends provided support to purchase much needed books and school supplies for the children of her classes. The children just love her for her excellent teaching techniques, humour, and dedication. The teachers appreciate her assistance, as English is an obligatory course and none of them speaks English. Similarly, the adults registered in her class lack pronunciation and communication skills in English.

In addition, Ida is involved in other projects developed by Rainbow of Hope for Children, such as, the Community Kitchen, Senior's Centre, Rooftop Repair, and other activities related to the reconstruction of Chincha Baja.


At the inauguration of the Public Education Complex she directed a choir of her students singing "Oh Canada" in English. This impressed the Canadian Ambassador, 4 Canadian MPs, a Senator and other dignitaries, as well as the local people.

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Rainbow of Hope for Children salutes Ida Rawluk!

## RAINBOW OF HOPE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF:



Our donors, Rotary Clubs, Knights of Columbus, and the Al Gerwing Charitable Foundation. You are a rainbow of hope for people in despair in several countries.


Canadian International Development Agency

Government of Alberta Culture and Community Spirit Program

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Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable.
Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle - the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.

- Martin Luther King, Jr.


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## To the Members

Rainbow of Hope for Children Society
I have audited the accompanying financial statements of Rainbow of Hope for Children Society, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2012, and the statement of operations and net assets and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information.

## Management's responsibility for the financial statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with Canadian generally accepted accounting principles for mrivale enterprises, and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

## Auditor's responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on my audit. I conducted my audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that I comply with ethical requirements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my
qualified audit opinion.

## Basis for Qualification

In common with many non-profit organizations, the society derives revenue from donations and fundraising, the completeness of which is not susceptible to satisfactory audit verification. Accordingly, my verification of these revenues was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the society and I was not able to determine whether any adjustments might be necessary to donation revenues, deferred contributions, excess of revenues over expenditures, and net assets.

## Qualified Opinion

In my opinion, except for the effects of the matter described in the Basis for Qualification paragraph, these financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the society as at March 31, 2012 and the results of its financial performance and its cash flows for the for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian accounting standards for not-for-profit organizations.


Certified General Accountant
Salmon Arm, BC

## STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND NET ASSETS For year ending March 31, 2012

## NOTES

1. Note 5 of the Audit Report lists cost of administration at $\$ 18,085$. Volunteers donated $\$ 6,555$ back to administration, so net cost of administration was $\$ 11,530$.
2. Of the $\$ 9,817$ cost of monitoring programs, volunteers donated $\$ 4,162$ back. So the net cost of monitoring was $\$ 5,655$.
3. Of the $\$ 20,947$ cost of public engagement, volunteers donated $\$ 15,292$ back. So the net cost of public engagement was $\$ 5,655$.

If you wish to have a copy of the complete Auditor's Report please contact our Treasurer, Richard Forer: 250 832-5454 or dbforer2@primus.ca


## RAINBOW OF HOPE FOR CHILDREN PROGRAMS - Now in 11 Countries

1. Sight to the blind, Trivandrum, India
2. MMTRP-AL (Rural women workers and fisherwomen in Alagoas), Brazil
3. School of family agriculture, Bahia, Brazil
4. Education and citizenship, Grota da Alegria, Brazil
5. PREDA protecting children, Philippines
6. El Sauce School organic agriculture, El Salvador
7. COMUS Organic coffee cooperative, El Salvador
8. Women's Entrepreneurship, EI Salvador
9. La Loma community projects, El Salvador
10. Building citizenship with music, Nicaragua
11. Rainbow of Hope College Cunen, Guatemala

We thank you for offering a gift to one of these projects. Your donation will be acknowledged with an income tax deductible receipt.

Registered Charity No: 889160172-RR0001
12. Reconstruction \& education, Chincha Baja, Peru
13. Kinyambu primary school library, Kenya
14. Visit to Canada teachers from Kenya
15. Building Ussongo School in Tanzania
16. PAMBE mother tongue bilingual School, Ghana
16. Community capacitation in Jamaica
17. Disaster relief fund
18. Undesignated: where most needed

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NEXUS: Produced at Rainbow of Hope for Children's Head Office in Wainwright, Alberta, Canada. The views of the authors expressed are not necessarily the views of the NGO.

