

# NEXUS

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INCLUDES 2013 - 14 ANNUAL REPORT



Ordinary people can make an  
extraordinary difference



## Dear Supporters and Friends:

Rainbow of Hope has a significant presence in El Salvador helping people to improve their conditions, the most recent a scholarship program for youth who cannot afford advanced education. The story of gang violence that took the life of a scholarship student, Denis Vladimir Rivas, is featured in this edition. The reality of El Salvador being the second most violent country on the planet raises questions - what is the source of gang violence in El Salvador; how rampant is it; why is it escalating astronomically; how are authorities trying to reduce it; and how can governments and international agencies help in transforming El Salvador to a more secure and peaceful society?

According to Oscar Martinez, New York Times, Oct 5, 2013, the roots of gang violence extend back to the 1970s in southern California where many Salvadorans took refuge from their war torn country. Clashes between rival gangs exploded in the 80s when Latinos banded together to protect themselves from local gangs. In the late 80s and after the Peace Accord in 1992, massive numbers of Salvadorans were deported back to El Salvador. No employment nor educational opportunities led to a culture of feeding off existing poverty and adversity, the result an escalation of clashes. Today there are an estimated 60,000 gang members and a half million people with links to gang activities.

In 2004, the government introduced a zero tolerance *mono dura* (iron-fist) policy with massive police and army force. Whether motivated for ideology or rational reason, that policy has failed, as gang violence increased in proportion to the over crowded prison population and extended sentencing. In 2011, there were 4,371 murders, averaging 12 a day in a population of 6 million. In March 2012, a truce between the two largest rival gangs was brokered by a bishop and civil leaders and, depending on the sway of opinion, government. Truces are controversial because they infer power to the negotiating parties, in this case gangs. Rightness or wrongness of the truce, the murder rate plunged to half after signing and held at that level for a year and half. Then dwindling support for the truce and programs led to increased homicides this year, back to pre-truce averages.

Economic and social poverty continue to be the reality in El Salvador, a breeding ground for gangs who grow up on the street with no hope for the future - no jobs, no education, nor sufficient food with the escalation of inflation. The elite in El Salvador must tear down their walls and embrace the whole of Salvadoran society in the economic and social life of their country. It is time to face the issue head on - what is, not only who is, responsible for such sheer neglect of youth in El Salvador today, and they must not evade finding and initiating solutions now. You cannot launch solutions for such a massive culture of violence when governments, civil society groups, church groups, and policing authorities are fractured and wallowing in the pot of blame and boiling bash. It can happen only with strong leadership and will of legislators, police authorities, and social advocates to come together in common purpose and action. Few youth would choose street life with its ever present violence if they had a glimpse of hope for a future. May that reality be the focus of discussion, negotiation, legislation, and resolution.

- George Bunz, President

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## WHAT CAN YOU GIVE TO A PERSON THAT CAN IMMEDIATELY CHANGE HIS OR HER LIFE FOREVER?

Bali, 3.5 hours by air from Australia, is a small island of 4.2 million people. It's one of 17,508 Islands of Indonesia with 250 million people speaking 300 languages. After 350 years, it received independence from the Dutch in 1945. The economy is low, primed by tourism and agriculture. The majority live hand-to-mouth. The mountainous terrain and valleys lend themselves to small farms, versus large mono crop plantations. Thus there is sufficient food, rice, vegetables and fruit for people to eat, but there are little for export.

Our Rainbow of Hope for Children monitoring team arrived on this beautiful island November 8, 2014 to visit the eye health care team at the Yayasan Kemanusiaan Indonesia Foundation who are implementing our "Reducing Avoidable Blindness" project and to develop a relationship with them and the beneficiaries.

### Visit to Yayasan Kemanusiaan Indonesia/John Fawcett Foundation Headquarters

Indonesian law requires that all medical treatment be given by Indonesian professionals. Yayasan Kemanusiaan Indonesia is the local implementation arm of the John Fawcett Foundation, which is an Australian government-registered not-for-profit NGO.

John Fawcett founded the Sight Restoration and Blindness Prevention Program in 1991. It is an innovative eye health care delivery system bringing free, full-service eye health care and treatment directly to low income Indonesian men, women and children in towns and villages remotely located in Indonesia.

Mr. Gede from the Foundation drove us to the headquarters, and we were immediately taken with his warmth and knowledge. We were welcomed by John Fawcett, 83 years of age and still passionate about the work of the Foundation. John donated the property so the Foundation would always have a good home. The office was endowed with pictures of the people treated. He showed us a record book 2 inches thick of 80,000 patients served since the program started.

John then showed a video of the work of the



Foundation and a wall map pointing to the islands they have delivered their service. They have 5 mobile clinic buses fully equipped, often loaded and delivered by the air force to remote islands on a donated Hercules aircraft.

We learned that Indonesia, particularly Bali, has one of the highest cataract rates in the world. Due to genetics, some babies are born with cataracts and others develop cataracts in their 5 year. A child with cataracts should have surgery within 24 months to prevent permanent damage.



Rural women can get cataracts because they injure their eyes pitching rice. Spears fly off and sometimes hit fellow workers in the eye, causing cataracts to occur. The

majority of the people cannot afford to pay for professional eye care services. There is a backlog needing screening and treatment - 3.5 million Indonesians requiring cataract surgery today.

In some cases, culture influences opposition to being treated, especially surgery. People tend to fear the term operation, so they call it cleaning up the eye. Some blind people believe that God wanted them to be blind because God made them blind, so they must live being blind. John talks to them that if they got their eyes cleaned up and if they were able to see, would it not then be that God wanted them to see at this point in their life. Then John popped a question, "What can you give a person that can immediately change his or her life forever"? VISION.

He expressed sincere appreciation to ROHFC for its project, emphasizing the number of lives we are touching is big time - 5000 screened, 2500 receiving eyeglasses and medicines, and 100 cataract surgeries, as well as teachers being trained to teach about proper eye care and related resources. It is the first time the Foundation has been able to completely service a sub-district with one program - the whole sub district of Bebandem.

John thanked Rainbow of Hope supporters including the Government of Alberta CIP-ID Grant for the gift of vision we are giving to the people of Bali. Our visit to Yayasan Kemanusiaan Indonesia/John Fawcett Foundation and the superb orientation given by John Fawcett set the stage for our on-site visits to 3 communities and school children who at this moment were being touched by our project.



## Visits to Macang, Banjar Abiansan, Banjar Beje and SD Negeri 1 Bungaya Kangin School

Gede picked us up each morning at 7:30. We glided and braked on extremely narrow roads and switch back curves, climbing higher to these villages, marvelling at paradise - terraced fields of rice, fruit trees and gardens. Thousands of motorbikes mingled with cars and trucks, nary a horn blowing; if it did, it was a gentle warning or friendship, never impatience, an indicator of deep respect people here have for each other.

When we arrived each morning, returning to see results of yesterday's surgery or visiting a new community, the clinic was always a beehive of activity. The clinic engaged local leaders to inform people about the service and the leaders were on site registering their residents, sometimes 200 by the time we arrived. Local participation gives comfort to those who feel anxiety, and it is an important contribution.

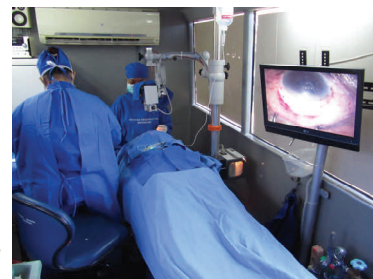
All were given a number when registered and had their eyes screened. The screening team used fingers and direction charts rather than letters, since many cannot read. If needed, the patients then received more detailed screening with optometry equipment, hand held or larger stationary microscopes.



Some received medicines for sore eyes. Patients fitted with glasses almost always radiated a smile at their improved vision. They gave us a pair of male and female glasses and we thought they were quite fashionable.

At Macang, we were given gown, caps and slippers to enter the surgical theatre in pairs. The surgery is manual extraction and the implantation of lens. It is the preferred method where large numbers of people require treatment because it is affordable and effective.

"Costs escalate with some technologies because they can make money. Technologies such as laser surgery are far too costly and fewer patients can be treated with funds available".



Leroy Hollenbech, CEO, told of the economic benefit of our "investment". Every blind person who's vision is restored frees up 3 people to become economic contributors to society. This translates into a net contribution of \$7.39 per person per month or with Rainbow of Hope's project, \$26,604 (100 cataract surgeries x 3 x \$7.39 X 12 months), - a return of 20.9% on \$22,000 invested. Now how about that?

The biggest return was the sheer joy of post surgery patients discovering they could see, like 91 year old Nyum TecTec, when he identified the third line on the vision chart after 40 years of blindness. He danced.

This is a good program, well run and giving a huge lift to many people in Bali who could never receive this service otherwise. We left them valuing the connection we made with them, and we learned from the respect they had for each other.



tion we made with them, and we learned from the respect they had for each other.

We thank John and all the doctors, nurses and staff for the work you do and for sharing your time with us.

# SCHOOL FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND DISADVANTAGED SECONDARY SCHOOL AGED GIRLS USSONGO, TANZANIA, EAST AFRICA

November 2013 ROHFC visited Ussongo, a remote village in Tanzania, to inaugurate a school addition it funded (See Spring/Summer 2014 Nexus).

Our team accepted an invitation to visit the Daughters of Mary's Convent near the village and were overwhelmed with the services they provide - a health clinic as well as in-patient and out-patient health care. Sr. Angela and Sr. Fabiola are certified medical doctors who, assisted by the convent, provide the only professional health care services in the region. The people of Ussongo and the surrounding rural communities within a 100 km radius depend on them for health care education, prevention, and treatment. A high portion of their labour of love is dealing with malaria and HIV/AIDS.



A Saskatoon Rotary Club had recently funded a medical lab and cold storage for drugs. It included an industrial refrigeration room and a generator in event of a power failure, common here. An impressive facility and impressive women of service, a fitting partner for Rainbow of Hope for Children.

## HOW CAN WE BEST HELP THE PEOPLE HERE?

Build a small 2 classroom school to enable us to educate pre-school children and disadvantaged adolescent girls unable to attend a secondary school.

## WHY BUILD THIS TYPE OF SCHOOL?

The standard of living in Ussongo, as in most rural regions of Eastern Africa, extremely low, a hand-to-mouth primitive agrarian society, few jobs and little income.



For many, poverty has led to the effects of living in these difficult conditions and lack of education opportunities. There are 30 pre-school children in Ussongo orphaned because their mothers and/or fathers have died from AIDS or other diseases. These children have no safe place to learn social or cognitive skills and thus are delayed in their holistic development when they enter Standard 1 at the primary school.

Poverty and some cultural traditions have taken their toll on older children too. The average income of the families is less than a dollar per day (one of the lowest in the world) and consequently youth unemployment is high, especially that of girls. Cultural and environmental conditions do not favour girls being educated.

Most adolescent girls in Ussongo never attend secondary school because there is no public secondary education offered and socially some people still believe girls are to marry, do the housework and not go to school.

For families that think otherwise, most do not have the financial resources for girls to attend private or public secondary schools far from home. The cost of tuition and boarding prohibits families from sending all their children, so if any youth do continue on with secondary education it is usually one of the boys in the family.

Most girls have to stay home and help the family eke a living off the land and work around the home until they are married and raise children of their own - **and the cycle goes on.**



Since there is little to do in the small village of Ussongo and girls have little support or education beyond primary school, many are taken advantage of. Those who migrate to the city often have problems because they have few life skills to make healthy life choices and end up on the street suffering severe poverty and serious health issues.



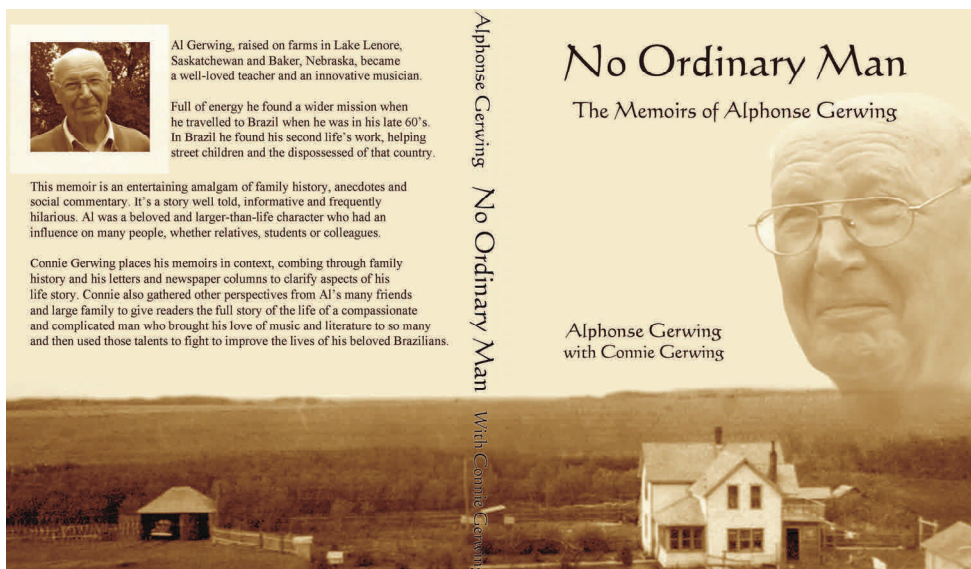
## WHAT DIFFERENCE CAN WE MAKE?

1. Well educated children physically, mentally, psychologically, and morally in this village.
2. A generation of children who will have education and skills to improve their conditions and to participate in development of their community.



Many children have no chance to advance their social, educational, and cultural skills. With a school for pre-schoolers and disadvantaged secondary school aged girls, they will have an opportunity to contribute to the social and cultural growth in their community, and, in a broader perspective, their country. One might ask, the objectives are gallant, but can I really make a difference? Then again one might think, if these were my children or grandchildren would a “hand up” help and be appreciated. To the children of Ussongo, it matters. Be the bridge of hope that changes the cycle of poverty in Ussongo and East Africa.

## MEMOIRS OF AL GERWING NOW AVAILABLE



Congratulations Connie Gerwing on your completion and publishing of the memoirs of Al Gerwing (Tomas in Brazil). Al was a director of Rainbow of Hope for many years, dedicated to Brazil and social justice wherever oppression existed. It is wonderful to have you his niece, Connie, serving on the board of directors today.

You can purchase a copy for \$20 at the McNally Robinson stores in Winnipeg and Saskatoon after Nov. 24 or order it online at [www.mcnallyrobinson.com/home](http://www.mcnallyrobinson.com/home).

All proceeds go to the Al Gerwing Charitable Foundation supporting the continuation of his work, mostly through Rainbow of Hope for Children Society.



Rainbow of Hope for Children is in its first year supporting a scholarship program in El Salvador for youth from low income families to attend high school and university. Our program is implemented by our long time partner, Centre of Friendship and Solidarity (CIS). Though Denis's scholarship was funded by another organization, we are deeply saddened and extend our prayers and sincere sympathy to his family, his friends and CIS. His life was brutally taken at age 23.

Denis Vladimir Rivas, from a humble background in the community of San Judas in Mejicanos, led an exemplary life. He was always kind and considerate of others and wore a sincere and calm smile. In his spare time, he worked with the San Francisco de Asis Parish youth council to help guide high risk youth at high risk from engaging in or being victimized by violence. He loved to play soccer/football with his friends.

Denis had a strong desire to learn but lacked financial resources to continue higher education. He was awarded a CIS scholarship because of his outstanding leadership and his dedication to giving back to his community.

He had a bright future and brought tremendous inspiration and hope to his family, friends, CIS. and to his colleagues at the Architectural Engineering Department of the University of El Salvador. His life was a symbol of hope for youth in high risk areas of the country and to youth in El Salvador with few economic resources.

On September 2, after his classes, Denis stayed late to play soccer at the sports arena with his friends and his university professors. He took his usual bus after which he would normally walk a short distance home. When he got off, he took another bus. It appears he decided to visit his thesis partner who lived in a neighbourhood controlled by a different gang than the gang that controls the area where Denis lived.

Denis did not have his DUI (identity card) on him when found. People speculate that the gang asked to see his DUI, and when they saw the address of a different gang zone, they killed him. Gang members kill people as part of their initiation and take the DUI as a trophy. Dennis was shot with a fire arm in the cranium.



In El Salvador these days one cannot go to another neighbourhood without securing permission first. While the CIS can secure protection when we visit, it is a different reality for the people who live there. Most need to ride a bus and/or walk because they can not afford a vehicle. It's time they be protected by the authorities.

***If the daughters and the sons, grandchildren or relatives of the legislatures – a privileged class – had to ride the bus daily, would the same insecurity exist?***

**RAINBOW OF HOPE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF:**



**Foreign Affairs, Trade and  
Development Canada**

**Affaires étrangères, Commerce  
et Développement Canada**

Government of Alberta  
CIP - International Development

**Thank you all for your support**

**All our donors, several Rotary Clubs and Knights of Columbus, Edmonton Community Foundation, and the Al Gerwing Charitable Foundation. Special thanks to Miss Sharon Romanow and her leadership students at Blessed Sacrament School in Wainwright for helping with the NEXUS mail out.**





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## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

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Wainwright, Alberta



### To the Members Rainbow of Hope for Children Society

We have audited the accompanying financial statements of Rainbow of Hope for Children Society, which comprise the statement of financial position as at March 31, 2014, 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 not-for-profit organizations, 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.

### Auditors' responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. We conducted our audit in accordance with Canadian generally accepted auditing standards. Those standards require that we 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, we consider 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.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our 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, our verification of these revenues was limited to the amounts recorded in the records of the society and we were 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 our 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, 2014 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.

*Finch and Company LLP*

Certified General Accountants

Salmon Arm, BC  
June 16, 2014

## NOTES

1. Volunteers donated 5,943 back to administration costs.
2. Volunteers donated 11,945 back to monitoring costs.
3. Volunteers donated 12,338 back to public participation.

If you wish a copy of the complete Auditor's Report please contact our Treasurer, Richard Forer, at:  
250 832-5454 or  
email: forer711@shaw.ca.

## THANKS VOLUNTEERS

Rainbow of Hope has no paid staff. All are volunteers. Thanks for donating not only your time, but often your expenses. Your generosity enables more funds to go to the people internationally who need a hand up to improve their conditions, bringing the world closer together.

**THIS CHRISTMAS  
THE PRESENTS  
YOU GIVE HELP  
CHANGE THE  
WORLD**

1. Reducing avoidable blindness, Bali, Indonesia
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 sustainable coffee cooperative, El Salvador
8. High School & University Scholarships, El Salvador
9. Disaster reconstruction & education, Chinchá Baja, Peru
10. Kinyambu Primary School, Kenya
11. School for early childhood and disadvantaged high school aged girls, Ussongo, Tanzania
12. Bilingual Bicultural College, Cunén, Guatemala
13. Future water infrastructure for schools in East Africa
14. PAMBE mother tongue bilingual School, Ghana
16. Disaster relief fund
17. Undesignated: where most needed

## Rainbow of Hope for Children Society Statement of Operations and Net Assets For the year ended March 31, 2014

	2014		2013
	Unrestricted	Projects	Total
<b>Revenue</b>			
Donations (Note 3)	\$ -	\$ 362,121	\$ 362,121
Interest and other income	-	2,363	2,363
DFATD	-	-	-
Provincial government grants	-	-	-
	-	364,484	364,484
<b>Program expenditures and allocations</b>			
Bali	-	18,873	18,873
Brazil	-	18,152	18,152
El Salvador	-	92,625	92,625
Ghana	-	10,981	10,981
Guatemala	-	140	140
India	-	6,036	6,036
Jamaica	-	70,762	70,762
Kenya	-	4,649	4,649
Nicaragua	-	2,490	2,490
Peru	-	68,599	68,599
Philippines	-	222	222
Tanzania	-	5,968	5,968
Unrestricted	-	10,585	10,585
Project administration	-	19,570	19,570
Project monitoring	-	24,494	24,494
Public participation	-	10,338	10,338
	-	364,484	364,484
<b>Other expenditures</b>			
Amortization	-	-	-
	-	364,484	364,484
<b>Expenditures over revenues for the year</b>	-	-	-
<b>Net assets, beginning of year</b>	4,583	-	4,583
<b>Net assets, end of year</b>	4,583	-	4,583

## MAKE A DIFFERENCE

We invite you to offer a gift to one of our programs and we will acknowledge your gift with an income tax deductible receipt.

Kindly send your gift to:



**RAINBOW OF HOPE  
PO BOX 2883  
WAINWRIGHT, AB T9W 1S7**

Registered Charity No: 889160172-RR0001  
www.rainbowofhopeforchildren.ca

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.