

NEXUS

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SPRING/SUMMER 2016



HEALTH, NUTRITION AND SANITATION PROGRAM, PAMBE GHANA

Dear Friends of Rainbow of Hope for Children,

In late January 2016, our Treasurer, Richard Forer, passed away suddenly. We are dedicating the centrefold of this publication to him. We also include a little feature on Cliff Hagerty, who is replacing Richard temporarily until we can find a the long term treasurer. Each year at its Annual Meeting, Rainbow of Hope elects directors and officers. We are pleased to include in this NEXUS an invitation for new directors and officers and for anyone interested to come to the Annual Meeting June 25, 2016 (details on page 8) and consider standing for election to the board. Kindly email me at rohfc@telus.net or chairperson of our nomination committee as shown on the back cover. I hope you enjoy reading this edition of the NEXUS and thank you for your support which is making a big difference in the lives of so many people in several countries.

-George Bunz, President

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

ROHFC in East Africa	2 & 3
Farewell Richard Forer	4 & 5
Volunteerism	6 & 7
Welcome New Treasurer	7
Income Tax Receipts	7
Annual Meeting	8
Invitation New Directors	8

RAINBOW OF HOPE IN EAST AFRICA

by Connie Gerwing

“It’s not what I expected after years of watching National Geographic specials,” and “The animals were interesting but what I really liked was meeting the people.” The two volunteers who accompanied me on this monitoring trip had never been to this part of Africa before and it was an eye opener. Most Canadians have little idea of Sub-Saharan Africa and what we get from the media is stories of ugly wars, genocides and mysterious and deadly diseases. But the real story of East Africa is not those. Yes, there are issues and the problems of poverty are immense, but there is a strong sense of family and community and a desire for education that is boundless.

The main purpose of our visit to Kenya and Tanzania was to monitor the progress of our projects at Kinyambu Primary School in Kenya and in the Ussongo area of Tanzania. We also visited other communities and schools in the Kinyambu and Ussongo areas to assess their needs and how we might help them to improve their conditions.

After a day in Nairobi to sleep off some jet lag (nine hour time difference) and organize our money and supplies, we headed off to Kibwezi, about 200 kilometers east. Over our short three days at Kinyambu we managed to visit four schools, meet with the Kinyambu Rural Education and Community Development (KRECD) committee, our partner there, and meet many members of the community.

Yes, there are issues and the problems of poverty are immense, but there is a strong sense of family and community and a desire for education that is boundless.



Julius Kotu, Henry Mutiso, Calvin Loth, Roy Bukowsky, Simon Ngumbi, Eunice Wavinya, Felix Muli, Connie Gerwing and Beth Muendo.



Simon Ngumbi, the chairperson of the committee, hosted us several times at his *shamba* (small farm). His wife, Beth, teaches at the Thange Primary School nearby. They are very welcoming to visitors, sharing chai and Kenyan dishes at their *shamba*. Rainbow of Hope’s library project at Kinyambu Primary School is now complete and it is being used. The fence is also complete except for the gate. Desks have been purchased but arrived only after we left. Primary education is free but there are still costs like uniforms. Uniforms have been purchased for students whose families can’t afford them. This will especially help girls who are the ones who must stay home if there are not enough funds.

Much of the time was spent thinking about future needs that we can help them meet. Nzavoni Primary School has a great need for new classrooms since their classrooms have cracking walls and rafters eaten almost through by ever present white ants (termites). The nearby schools, like Kinyambu and Thange, have overcrowding problems because parents are pulling their children out of Nzavoni due to the hazardous conditions. Thange School, nearby, has better classrooms but is very crowded (over 50 students per class) and has a ground water problem due to a leak in a petroleum pipeline that passes nearby.

The KRECD committee wants to involve students in some projects to improve agricultural production in the area. They are planning a project where school students will apply to get improved chicken breeds and small fruit trees. They will manage these on their home *shambas* and this will hopefully stabilize the local food supply.

This year we decided to drive to Ussongo in Tanzania, which takes two days. We skirted Mt. Kilimanjaro, drove through the well-watered agricultural area on the south side of the mountain and spent four days in Ussongo staying with Father Francis Chuwa at his mission. The compound has several guest rooms. He is a great organizer and builder, establishing St. Thomas Aquinas Secondary School, a boarding school educating 600 boys and girls. Fr. Chuwa hosts many visitors from Canada and other countries. Norm Duerr from Humboldt joined us there as part of the monitoring team.

The Daughters of Mary (nuns from Tabora) operate a medical clinic and convent nearby. They asked Rainbow of Hope to help them fill needs they saw in the community. Rainbow of Hope partnered with them and, with financial support from Alberta Community Initiatives Program (CIP), built two classrooms. One is already being used for the pre-school program.

The second will house a life skills program for disadvantaged local girls who can't go on to secondary school.

I cut the ribbon at the inauguration, and the students, their parents and the sisters sang, cheered and ululated with joy.

The buildings are of sturdy block construction and will serve their purpose well. The

final installment of the funding had just arrived and will be used to purchase sewing machines, computers and furnishings. They hope to begin programming in a month or two.

After the opening we met with a delegation of the sisters from the mother house in Tabora to discuss the next steps and offer some ideas to improve their planning. The preschool already is such a success that they are considering expanding it into year one and two of the primary grades. They will teach in English which is not currently available in the area.

We also visited Ussongo Primary School in the village a few kilometer walk from the Convent and met with the principal, staff, and students. Rainbow of Hope had built two new classrooms and an office there in 2012-13 and they are brimming full of students.

Although the Ussongo primary school is part of the country's public school system, the funding is insufficient for new construction and does not cover basic needs such as desks, books and water supply.

Water wells are few and far between, and this school, like most, rely on harvested rainwater as their prime source. They asked Rainbow of Hope to help them build a large underground storage tank with a filtration system. Since safe drinking water is critical for the children, we invited the school to send a proposal with engineering details and budget.

We toured St. Thomas Aquinas Secondary School and spent one day driving to four different primary schools and a secondary school in the rural vicinity.

We felt like politicians, each of us making a speech, listening to theirs, watching the children sing and dance. We were laden with gifts and stuffed with food and drink by the end of the day. Esther Cheyo, the deputy

district education officer, was our guide for the day, and Kulwa, husband, was a great translator.

Our time in East Africa flew by. It is very gratifying to observe the difference that Rainbow of Hope is making in the lives of the people who have been touched by the

caring outreach of Canadians. The warmth of the people, their pride in their culture, their strong sense of community and desire to improve their lives should bring us all back again and again.

The marathon of the homeward bound journey began early in the morning on March 10. We drove to Mwanza on Lake Victoria, flew to Nairobi and then Amsterdam, Toronto and home. The travel took 48 hours and filled with fond memories of the people we visited in East Africa, we were happy to land safely in Saskatoon and Winnipeg!

Thanks to all the supporters. We look forward to continuing our help in East Africa and visiting the communities and schools again in the near future.





MEMORIES OF RICHARD

What I remember best is his visit to El Salvador. He was a committed participant and a thoughtful companion. Our daily recapitulation of our day was enriched by his participation. I sensed that he truly lived the experience and was deeply moved by our meetings with the people we met.

- Cecily Mills

My comment for Richard is that he was, evidently, a person of huge capacity, dedication and organization skills.

- Cliff Hagerty

Richard was very hospitable and considerate. I remember the many times I spent at his home during my trips from Edmonton to Victoria. His trademark was a bowl of rolled oats for breakfast. I admired his care and concern for Bernadette during her final days. He was a great help in keeping my project accounts in order and correcting all my mistakes. He was very patient with me. I miss his friendship and his kindness. May he rest in peace.

-Joe Gubbels

FAREWELL RICHARD FORER RAINBOW OF HOPE FOR CHILDREN SOCIETY TREASURER 2007 TO 2016

It is with great sadness that we announce our treasurer, Richard Forer, entered eternity suddenly January 23, 2016. First, Richard was a dear friend, someone who was there for all the directors and a big support to those coordinating international projects. In shock of losing such a friend, we could only imagine what it was to his family. We extended our sincere sympathy and then faced the question: How do you replace such a force with the qualifications and capacity to give extensive volunteer time and energy to the responsibilities of a registered charity involved in international projects?

It was a question our Society faced 8 years earlier on the retirement of Treasurer, Leo Page. Reflecting back, within a few days of announcing our need in the NEXUS, Richard Forer contacted us that he was interested. He had already been a supporter and admirer of the work of the society, and was eager to be part of the team. Having had a distinguished careers with the Federal government and as financial administrator with the Saskatoon Catholic School system. He also was a founding member of Habitat for Canada in Salmon Arm. Richard was indeed a gift and his service meticulous and outstanding.

During the years that Richard was Treasurer, he was the heart and soul of our financial management and policy development, lifting Rainbow of Hope for Children Society into the new age of international development at the time. He initiated and revised project partner agreements to assure accountability of both the society and international organizations. He initiated and drafted a dozen policies to improve consistency in operations and consideration of issues such as gender, environment, fairness and justice.

The policies now guiding the Society include: Anti-Corruption; Code of Ethics; Project Guidelines; Disaster Relief; Fundraising Guidelines; Gender Equality; Out of Canada Volunteering; Public Engagement and International Guests; Investment; and Monitoring. Richard also was instrumental in updating Rainbow of Hope for Children's by-laws and Objectives approved in 2014.

Of the many partners and projects of Richard's attention, he was particularly impressed by the exceptional work of our El Salvador partners: Centre for Friendship and Exchange (CIS) and Association of United Communities of the Usulután (COMUS), a community based organization in one of the poorest regions, San Francisco Javier, Usulután. With a little encouragement, in 2011, he joined the monitoring team and visited Central America.

A few years earlier, Rainbow of Hope funded a beautiful one room school at La Loma (Hill). The only access at the end of the municipal road was by walking or horseback 4 or 5 kilometers up a steep slope through shrubs and small farming plots. The destination was a plateau with a breathtaking panoramic view of the ocean and vast hills and valleys. Suffering a massacre and flight of remaining citizens in the war of the 1980's, it took generations for families to come back and rebuild their lives.

In this community of 60 children, only 2 had ever attended school after the original school had been destroyed in the war. In only one year, the new La Loma school was overflowing with students and Richard mobilized his family to build another classroom in honour of their parents. The residents of La Loma invited Richard to inaugurate the facility. He was touched by the warmth and hospitality of the people as he was visiting all communities.

As a tribute to Richard and what his visit to Central America meant to him, we share his experience in this photo album.



On left front, Richard meets for the first time the CIS Executive Director, Leslie Schuld sitting next to him, whom he admired for her superb management and reports. Centre, Richard enjoys his first ride in back of a pick up since his early days in Saskatchewan. Right, Richard takes a breather after trekking midway up the slope to La Loma asking, "Are we there yet?"



Left, Richard addresses the people of La Loma in their new school. On right, COMUS agronomist, Jami Coutts, explains the significance of coffee seedlings in the nursery funded by Rainbow of Hope and Global Affairs Canada).



Jami and Richard discuss the water well funded by Rainbow of Hope to irrigate the organic mini-farm training centre at El Sauce School. Richard was fascinated by how the students converted their school yard into a bountiful organic garden by double digging, organic fertilizer, selective planting, producing food to eat and marketing produce. The garden has received international and university visitors to learn about bio-intensive agriculture techniques.



Community organizer, Lito, walks the team through the streets of *Arcoris-Espania*, (Rainbow-Spain). Richard saw first hand the harsh conditions of the poor and was taken by the hospitality of the people despite their conditions. Fare thee well, colleague and friend. Thank you for all you have done. We miss you!

TRIBUTE TO VOLUNTEERING AND A DEDICATED VOLUNTEER by Joe Gubbels

To be a volunteer in a developing country is a challenge. However, once a person experiences volunteering, he or she is often enthused to continue volunteering. This is what happened to Maureen Grimmer from Victoria, B.C. After five trips as a volunteer to Chincha Baja, Peru, at her own expense, she is anxious to return for another stint. Her work has become a second lease on life for her.

Reflecting on the importance of volunteering reminds us of the many sayings of people who have experienced sharing their time and resources. Helping others has its own reward. Volunteering gives hope and inspiration to those in need and shows that others care about them. It is true, though, that volunteering helps the volunteers themselves. It makes one feel good!

The intrinsic personal value of volunteering is recognized in many service organizations. The motto of Rotary International is, "Service Above Self" and Gandhi said, "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others". It is the need to make a difference that matters, which gives joy, purpose and great personal satisfaction to the volunteer. Proverbs reads, "Those who refresh others are themselves refreshed". With all the goodness and benefits that we have received in our lives, is it not time to "pay it forward" by sharing with the less fortunate?

It is true that most people in the developed world are unable to travel or endure the hardships of volunteering in a developing nation. However, most people can support volunteers and donate funds for projects in the developing world. In addition, most people can become members of Charitable Organizations and volunteer for fund raising activities.

Maureen, not only, has the time to travel to Chincha Baja, but also, has the health to be of service. Needless to say there are hardships, accepted as part of the deal. The food is quite different from what she is accustomed. She has been served soup with a chicken foot and entrails (inner organs) as well as *cau cau* (pronounced Cow Cow), which is tripe, while a dog or two with beady eyes are close to the table waiting for a morsel. Then, there is arriving at the work site early at 7:00 am, after travelling over rough, dusty, non-paved roads. However, the most difficulty is seeing, first hand, how the people live; the lack of sanitation; lack of adequate housing and above all the lack of nutritious food.



Chincha Baja is still recovering from the 8.2 Richter scale earthquake of 2007. For 10 years Rainbow of Hope, has completed a number of development projects. Maureen assisted in the Roof Top project, that taught the people to rebuild their bedrooms so they can

"The greatest good you can do for others is not just to share your riches, but to reveal to them their own."

continue building the rest of their home. She worked with community representatives to build 82 Ecological stoves for the "Cup of Milk" program for children, sponsored by the municipality.

During evening adult classes, she assisted the teacher in the "Ludoteca", a place for children to play and learn while their mothers are taking classes in the Public Education Complex "Tony Gubbels". In addition, in the COMPLEX, Maureen assisted in the production of PaneTonys, the Peruvian Christmas cake, which is an initiative to make the COMPLEX self-sufficient.

At Christmastime, Maureen was involved in the distribution of gifts to children in the rural communities. On a very special occasion, she went to a cotton



field to experience how difficult and hard it is for the women to pick cotton for in the hot sun several hours per day for CAN\$8.00 to CAN\$10.00 dollars.

The people love Maureen (*Marina*, in Spanish). When she enters a community, all the children come running to her. Although she does not speak Spanish, the women converse with her, as if she does. They could be talking about different subjects, but the conversation keeps going on. It is a real art to work alongside the women and an inspiration to be involved with them while they rebuild their homes and lives. "The greatest good you can do for others is not just to share your riches, but to reveal to them their own." By working with the people of Chinchá Baja and eating their food, Maureen has become identified with the community and her great joy is knowing that together they are making a difference.



WELCOME OUR NEW TEMPORARY TREASURER, CLIFF HAGERTY

Shortly after Richard Forer, passed away, Cliff Hagerty was willing to serve as treasurer through to our fiscal year end and annual meeting June 25. For many years he has had great admiration for the volunteers and projects of ROHFC and the benefits to people in many countries. Cliff grew up in Humboldt, Saskatchewan and attended St. Peter's College in Muenster. He received his Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Saskatchewan and became a chartered accountant in 1973 with Coopers & Lybrand, now PwC Canada. Cliff left public practice for business, with ownership in three businesses, the last being a shareholder, Director and Vice-President - Finance for Doecker Industries Ltd., a manufacturer of semi-trailers. Cliff retired in 2001. He and his wife, Faye, live in West Kelowna and have two daughters. They will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary next year. We thank Cliff for helping us as Treasurer get through our fiscal year end, and we thank Faye for the sacrifices she will make because of the volunteer work load Cliff is doing right now.

We invite our supporters to inform anyone whom you feel qualified and interested in serving as a volunteer Treasurer to contact us at 780-842-6091.



INCOME TAX RECEIPTS

We wish to inform those of you who have sent donations since January, after the death of Richard Forer. We were delayed in getting income tax receipts issued to you because of the priority giving to keeping our projects going, financial management and preparing our fiscal year end (April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016) for the annual audit. The income tax receipts are now being processed by our new Treasurer and should arrive in a few weeks.

RAINBOW OF HOPE GRATEFULLY ACKNOWLEDGES THE SUPPORT OF:



Foreign Affairs, Trade and
Development Canada

Affaires étrangères, Commerce
et Développement Canada



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

Government of Alberta
CIP - International Development

Thank you all for your support

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

JUNE 25 AT 1:15 PM

ST. JOE'S HIGH SCHOOL

10830 - 109 STREET

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

**Come and meet the Board of Directors
and join in the discussions about the
work and operations of Rainbow of
Hope for Children Society.**

INVITATION NEW DIRECTORS & LEADERSHIP

Have you ever given thought to becoming a director or an officer of a volunteer organization helping those who struggle for dignity, justice, education, and even basic necessities of life? It can be an intrinsically rewarding experience. Rainbow of Hope directors are elected at the Annual Meeting for a 2 year term, and they can stand for re-election. Rainbow of Hope has openings for new directors and officers. There are exciting opportunities to serve on committees and other leadership roles. If you would like to serve as a director or officer, please contact our nomination chairperson, Mary Anne MacDonald 780-469-3286 or email: dmmacdo@shaw.ca or you can contact any director.

APRIL 1, 2015- MARCH 31, 2016 FINANCIAL REPORT

The annual audit is currently taking place and will be presented at the Annual Meeting. The statement of operations will be published in the Fall/ Winter NEXUS.



With love from Ussongo, Tanzania

RAINBOW OF HOPE FOR CHILDREN PROGRAMS

1. MMTRP-AL (Rural women workers and fisherwomen in Alagoas), Brazil
2. School of family agriculture, Bahia, Brazil
3. El Sauce School organic agriculture, El Salvador
COMUS sustainable coffee cooperative, El Salvador
4. CIS Scholarship program, El Salvador
5. Disaster reconstruction & education, Peru
6. Kinyambu Primary School projects, Kenya
7. Building Nzavoni Primary School classrooms
8. Water project at Ussongo Primary School, Tanzania
9. Preschool, Daughters of Mary, Ussongo, Tanzania
10. La'Angum Primary School, Pambe Ghana
11. Disaster relief fund
12. Undesignated: where most needed

We thank you for offering a gift to one of these projects and are pleased to acknowledge your donation with an income tax deductible receipt. Kindly send your donation to:

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

**Registered Charity No: 889160172-RR0001
www.rainbowhopeforchildren.ca**

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