

# Roots of Change Source de développement

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A partnership  
for hope in  
Nicaragua

Un partenariat  
pour  
l'espérance  
au Nicaragua

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## Giving and Learning the Nicaraguan Way

Every year Roots of Change assists with logistics for delegations to Nicaragua so supporters can see firsthand the daily challenges faced by the poor and help to alleviate suffering with their own labour. Delegates learn how Roots of Change and FUNDACCO are working to empower the poor to take control of their lives.

In turn, the Nicaraguans help the Canadians shed their North American perspective and come to

understand life and community the Nicaraguan way.

In this issue we feature stories about the experiences of three Alberta delegations



A student from Falher finds friendship

that traveled to Nicaragua in the spring of 2013. The 30 adults and 25 students worked cooperatively to construct latrines, remodel a church and visit schools. In the process they learned lessons about humility, dignity and patience. In the words of one delegate "Helping a handful of human brothers who, by their resilience, their simplicity and their love, gave me an unforgettable life lesson."

## La pique du Nicaragua

C'est la quatrième fois que j'y vais. Pourquoi? Pas pour l'exotisme, ni pour pratiquer un espagnol approximatif, ni pour le soleil ou le besoin d'évasion... Alors, vraiment, pourquoi?

La première fois que je suis allée au Nicaragua, en 2009, c'était pour vivre une expérience unique avec un groupe d'élèves privilégiés. Je voulais voir comment ils évolueraient durant les longs préparatifs d'un tel projet, puis dans un environnement qui ne leur serait en rien familier: J'y ai découvert des jeunes prêts à travailler, à construire, à collaborer et à penser à autre chose qu'à leurs petites

misères quotidiennes. J'y ai aussi découvert l'équipe du Père Denis Hébert et de FUNDACCO à Managua, une famille d'accueil aimante à Cinco Pinos, et un peuple bon, chaleureux et humble.

L'année suivante, je n'ai pu résister à l'envie de joindre un groupe d'employés des conseils scolaires francophones: il y avait peu de préparation au voyage que nous financions individuellement. Nous allions travailler et j'allais retrouver «ma» famille d'accueil.

La troisième fois, en 2011, j'y retournais pour revivre une expérience avec des jeunes où persistance, résistance

par Chantal Grégoire, enseignante

et patience se frayaient un chemin malgré les embûches. Je n'avais pas oublié les mois de préparation, de réunions, de campagnes de financement et de coopération. Notre projet commençait aussi à faire parler de lui et une équipe de Radio-Canada nous y a accompagnés. Ils y ont réalisé plusieurs reportages poignants sur la réalité de la vie quotidienne dans cette contrée du monde, et sur les bienfaits qu'une personnalité comme le Père Hébert peut y apporter.

J'ai souvent pensé à eux dans mon monde matérialiste et compliqué. Je me préparais ainsi à y retourner... Quand

## La piqure du Nicaragua (cont.)

il fut question de former un nouveau groupe pour 2013, et sachant que mes partenaires habituels ne feraient pas partie



Une déléguée apprend une nouvelle compétence et se fait un ami

du voyage pour des raisons familiales, j'ai relevé le défi que je savais immense... et pourtant si petit comparativement à ceux que relève le peuple nicaraguayen jour après jour. Et me voilà

repartie pour d'autres mois de préparation, avec un nouveau groupe de jeunes et une nouvelle équipe.

Que dire de plus? Je n'oublierai jamais le travail de construction que nous avons fait en collaboration avec des bénévoles de la communauté de Cinco Pinos. Ce fut une leçon de grande humilité personnelle: vaincre mes faiblesses physiques et psychologiques pour aider temporairement une poignée de frères humains qui, par leur résilience, leur simplicité et leur amour, me donnent une leçon de vie inoubliable.

Et comme enseignante, il n'y a rien de plus formateur que guider des jeunes à organiser des activités de financement selon

leurs moyens et leurs idées, les sensibiliser à une autre réalité que la leur, les sortir de leur cocon plus que confortable, les connaître et les comprendre pour pouvoir mieux les orienter et les aider dans la réalisation d'un projet hors norme, impliquer leurs parents dans une partie de l'organisation et savoir que le contact avec ce coin du monde changera leur vie à jamais.

To read Chantal's story in English, go to [www.rootsofchange.ca](http://www.rootsofchange.ca)

### Volunteers Needed

Do you have the time and interest to assist with event planning, artefact sales, fundraising, bookkeeping and other activities?

If so, contact Eugene Malo at 780 438-4930.

You can help to reduce costs and save a tree by signing up for the electronic version of this newsletter. To sign up send a message to [mail@rootsofchange.ca](mailto:mail@rootsofchange.ca).

**FUNDACCO**, our partner organization in Nicaragua, is a nonprofit charity founded in 2007 to develop and deliver humanitarian projects.

[www.fundacco.org](http://www.fundacco.org)

## Learning the Language of Service and Love

by Marcel Lizotte

Two schools from the Conseil scolaire centre-nord (CSNO) – École Héritage in Falher and École Nouvelle Frontière in

Grande Prairie – sent a group of high school students and adults to San Benito for a humanitarian experience from March 28 to April 8, 2013.

The seven high school students and five adults had collected \$9,700 to build wash-room facilities for the poorest families. In addition, over 400 "Ziplock" bags for the children at San Benito

primary school were assembled with donations from the community.

The delegation was headed by Superintendent Marcel Lizotte and Sylvette Fillion, vice-principal at École Héritage.

Father Denis welcomed the group and introduced them to the local families in whose modest homes they were billeted. Villagers and delegates alike opened their hearts as they worked on projects and participated in village life.

The delegates worked on three projects: assisting with activities and projects at San Benito primary school (K-6); assisting with the building of toilets and the development of hygienic and sanitary toilets for poor families outside of the small village, and; assisting farmers cultivating watermelons, melons,

cantaloupes, and other crops.

The delegates also visited historical and geographical sites and listened to speakers on the political situation of the country, its history and its political and governmental challenges. Communication was sometimes difficult given the group's limited Spanish, but it was evident that service and love of others is an international language understood by all!

The departure from San Benito was difficult for the students and the host families. Plans were made to keep in touch and nurture new friendships.

For the 2013 delegation it was an unforgettable learning experience!



Students from Northern Alberta help with the commercial crops

## "Watch and Learn" from the Heart

by Angy Spiller

For the 16 members of the Olds delegation, April 2013 is etched on our hearts and minds. Our group ranged in age from 12 to 67 with varying personalities, skills and backgrounds. We arrived with open hearts for God's plan in our work in Nicaragua, unaware of how this would forever change our lives.

As we shared a welcome lunch with Father Denis, his wisdom and passion for missionary life unfolded like a gift before us. His advice to "watch and learn" struck a chord in most of us, and for the next nine days our group pondered and took to heart this insightful advice.

Touring Managua, we were astounded by the richness of the culture and history. Our interpreter recounted a story that opened our hearts to the Nicaraguan people; the story continued during the five hour drive to El Carrao. As we traveled we were struck by the extent of poverty in this rich and diverse country. Our hearts ached with sadness, curiosity and a desire to somehow make a difference.

Arriving after dark, our host families met us at the chapel where we would be undertaking a renovation project. Nervous excitement filled the room as one by one we met the strangers who

would soon become our friends. Walking along the dirt roads to our temporary homes, the excitement was tinged with frustration as we struggled to communicate with our limited Spanish -- full immersion into the community was not without its challenges.

The first night we became acquainted with the calls of roosters, dogs and other local animals, along with the rustic accommodations. We awoke to the sights and sounds of daily life -- wood smoke, a crackling fire, children playing outside and meal preparation underway. Seeing the community in the daylight brought a new kind of awareness filled with uncertainty. Touring the village, our senses were overwhelmed and our emotions mixed as the heat of the day quickly set in.

We met in the shade for a briefing on our projects, learning about the old chapel and the profound faith of the community leaders as they challenged the villagers to commence the rebuilding with only hope and prayer as their tools. Their "build it and they will come" faith in God was inspiring.

We also learned of a family that needed much but asked for so little. As our day unfolded, doubts were quickly replaced with an eagerness to know, to learn and to do.

With God's grace we slowly let go of our preconceived ideas of how we could make a difference in this community. Without our being conscious of it, the villagers' faith and attitude began to have a deep impact on each one of us.



Delegates from Olds work with villagers to construct a ramp leading to the chapel in El Carrao

We took breaks to explore the history and culture in the area. The people of Nicaragua have suffered much as a result of wars, natural disasters and a life of poverty, yet they are resilient and determined, filled with hope and desire to end suffering in their country. They not only opened their doors to receive the goodness of strangers, but opened their hearts to God's desire to share the beauty and riches of their lives.

It became very evident that "great works" can be accomplished when we are prepared to "watch and learn".

## *Merci - Thank you for your support*

- Contributors to the June 8<sup>th</sup> fundraiser: Knights of Columbus for the meal; MC Hervé Durocher; painter Jacques Martel; musicians Shawn McDonald and Victor Mendez; auctioneer David Frechette; donors of items for the raffles, silent and live auctions; guests who opened their wallets; and volunteers who helped organize and run the event
- Saint City Rotary Club and Rotary Interact Club of St Albert Catholic High School
- United Way of Calgary, Donor Choice Program
- Hébert family and friends in Vancouver for hosting the 3rd annual fun-raiser in the BC lower mainland
- École La Prairie in Red Deer
- Richard S Fowler Catholic Jr High School
- Assumption Parish
- Northern Sunrise County in Peace River
- Cybertech Automation Inc.
- Carstar Edmonton North Ltd
- Les Soeurs de l'Assomption de la Sainte Vierge
- Les Filles de Jésus
- St. Joseph's General Hospital
- Donors contributing through Telus Charitable Giving Program and through United Way
- Donors contributing through CanadaHelps.org
- Donors directing their contributions to the Roots of Change Planned Giving Program



## Levée de fonds à l'École La Prairie à Red Deer

Les élèves et le personnel de l'École La Prairie à Red Deer sont fiers d'appuyer les œuvres du Père Hébert au Nicaragua. Ils ont organisé deux activités de collecte de fonds au cours de la période du Carême.

La première activité a consisté à la création d'une grande mosaïque. Les donateurs étaient invités à acheter une ou plusieurs tuiles de la mosaïque. L'image a graduellement pris forme et l'émerveillement des enfants lors du dévoilement de l'œuvre était beau à voir.

La deuxième collecte de fonds encourageait les élèves à apporter de la monnaie pour remplir un gros contenant tout au long de la période du Carême. Les membres du personnel s'étaient pour leur part engagés à doubler la somme amassée par les élèves. La somme de 825 \$ a été amassée. Bien fait!

What type of activity raises the spirits and stimulates the generosity of your family and friends? If you would like to book a speaker or representative to attend your special meeting or fundraiser, contact Raymonde Schile at 780-459-8680 or email [raymonde.schile@rootsofchange.ca](mailto:raymonde.schile@rootsofchange.ca).



FUNDACCO representatives with Falher delegation and San Benito hosts

## Calendar September - November 2013

Sept 20	Board meeting
Nov 28- Dec 9	Edmonton delegation to Nicaragua
Nov-Dec	Sunday artefact sales at Holy Family Parish, St. Albert

## Awakening to Need

St. Albert High students pulled off a hugely successful fundraising event when they collected an impressive \$24,000 for Roots of Change at the school's Wake-a-thon in April.

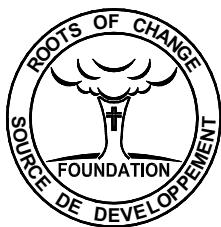
The event was coordinated by the school's Rotary Interact Club, which was spearheaded by student Lindsey Johnson who participated in a Rotary Leadership Camp in 2012.

Two hundred students raised at least \$100 apiece to qualify as participants in the Wake-a-thon. The funds are earmarked for a community centre in Belén.



Father accepts a cheque from SACHS students

## Please help by supporting this ministry of hope



Roots of Change Foundation  
Source de développement  
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President: Eugene Malo tel 780 438-4930  
[Eugene.Malo@rootsofchange.ca](mailto:Eugene.Malo@rootsofchange.ca)

The goal for our 2013 campaign is \$200,000 and the estimated cost of this publication is \$2000 (printing and mailing costs combined).



Online and monthly donations can now be made by credit card through [CanadaHelps.org](http://CanadaHelps.org)

I would like to contribute the sum of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to help the poor of Nicaragua.

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