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## Welcoming our Guatemalan partners



***Similox with women's micro-credit group focussed on weaving and sewing.***

Guatemala is a land of paradoxes: exquisite natural beauty and proud cultural identity contrasted with serious social challenges. Widespread poverty and low education rates among the majority rural indigenous Mayan population are serious problems.



***Women meet together to discuss their projects.***

There is a pressing need for development support in Guatemala following the aftermath of several decades of civil war and natural catastrophes, including earthquakes, hurricanes, and volcanoes.

Sahakarini first learned of project opportunities in Guatemala through local resident Hans Olson who was a CIDA intern in Guatemala in 2006. Hans identified an economic and community development project taking root with a network of 20 communities. It was led by the Kaqchikel Presbytery, a fully indigenous organization which, like Sahakarini, supports local health, education and community development projects, working primarily with women. Dr. Ronaldo Similox, a Pastor and Mayan healer, is the Director of the Kaqchikel Presbytery and Sahakarini's key contact.



***Vegetable raising is another small enterprise.***

The match seemed like a good one, and now Sahakarini has embarked on a partnership with the Kaqchikel Presbytery.

Two micro-credit projects have now been completed and a third is set to begin with yet more women's groups. Two stove and water filter projects have also

been completed and a third is about to begin. New in 2010 will be a campaign to raise awareness about domestic violence and put in place medical, social and legal supports for women in abusive situations.

Ronaldo and his wife Noemi, visited Camrose from February 4 to 10, 2010.

Ronaldo proved to be an outstanding speaker who customized his messages to a diverse range of audiences, and connected with each audience in a warm and meaningful way. Key functions included a presentation at University of Alberta Augustana Campus International Week, lectures at five University of Alberta Augustana classes, a meeting with Aboriginal leaders in Hobbema, Q&A following a Sahakarini's Global film presentation on Guatemala, speaking sessions at both Camrose Rotary clubs, a meeting with University of Alberta Augustana aboriginal students and Amnesty International



supporters, speaking at Camrose and Edmonton church services, and being introduced in and touring the Alberta Legislature with Wetaskiwin-Camrose MLA Verlyn Olson.

Said Ronaldo, "We enjoyed our visit to Canada. I loved the cold and snow – it was so fantastic. Your friendship and kindness give us hope and energy to go on walking beside you and our Kaqchikel family here in Guatemala. Thank you very much for your effort and support."

The visit of our Guatemalan partner was part of our film/speaker series, a public engagement project made possible by a Government of Alberta Community Spirit Grant.

## Kudos for Where Credit is Due

*Where Credit Is Due*, the Sahakarini film directed by Hans Olson, was judged as "Most Impactful" by the Human Rights DocFest 2009 panel at the University of Victoria last year. Said one of the festival organizers Emma Agopsowicz, "We were proud to include *Where Credit Is Due* in our film lineup. It was very well received by both our panel of judges and the audience. Films were judged on their quality of production, ability to tell a compelling story and relevance to a human rights

issue. In addition, your film brought to light an international subject, which broadened the scope of Human Rights DocFest to a global level."

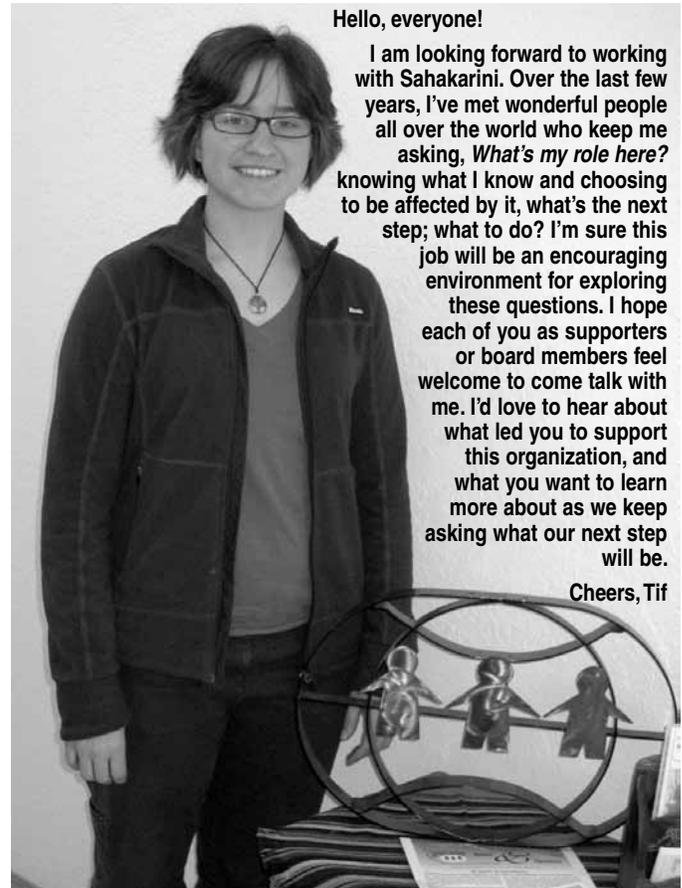
*Where Credit Is Due* has also screened at the Global Visions Film Festival in Edmonton and at the Augustana Faculty's International Week. It will be shown in high school classrooms through the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation's "Development in a Box" project.

## Introducing our new Executive Director

The Board of Sahakarini is pleased to announce the appointment of Tiffany (Tif) McNaughton as Executive Director of Sahakarini. She replaces retiring Executive Director Gail Stolee.

Tiffany is a graduate of the University of Alberta, Augustana Faculty with a major in Development Studies. While there, Tiffany was a student chaplain for several years, chair of Augustana Against Aids, and assisted in the Rural Development Exchange and with Canada World Youth. She has also worked and volunteered with a variety of social agencies in Camrose and Prince George. The executive director position is part time, allowing Tiffany to pursue her long term goal of training to be a deaconess working in international development.

The executive director works closely with the Board and its committees providing continuity and background, prepares reports and proposals, and is the primary link to donors, volunteers, and project partners. Tiffany's energy, enthusiasm, and ability to be a good listener as well as a generator of ideas and relationships promise to make her an outstanding fit for the future of Sahakarini.



Hello, everyone!

I am looking forward to working with Sahakarini. Over the last few years, I've met wonderful people all over the world who keep me asking, *What's my role here?* knowing what I know and choosing to be affected by it, what's the next step; what to do? I'm sure this job will be an encouraging environment for exploring these questions. I hope each of you as supporters or board members feel welcome to come talk with me. I'd love to hear about what led you to support this organization, and what you want to learn more about as we keep asking what our next step will be.

Cheers, Tif

## Tell me a story - Loaves and Fishes 2009

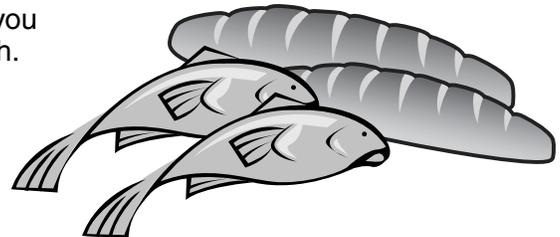
Stories stir our hearts, waken our imaginations, lighten our burdens, connect, astonish, delight, and humble us. Thank you everyone for listening to stories - from a poor Dalit woman in India as portrayed by local storyteller Glenys Smith to the student bootdancers whose thundering high energy performance echoed the only way slaves in the mines of South Africa were able to communicate with one another.

A member of our projects committee ends his email with these words. *If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.* Every stomp, every story that evening reminded us of

why and how we need to work together to bring change around the world.

The dinner is one of our main fundraisers and this year was no exception. Despite harder economic times, approximately \$33,000 was raised for projects to help the poorest of the poor.

Thank you so much.



## Coming Events

Annual General Meeting – May 31, 2010

6:00 p.m. Potluck followed by meeting

Hike for HOPE – September 19, 2010

Loaves and Fishes Dinner – November 13, 2010

## President's Message

White Woman Coming. I can't get the phrase out of my mind. Rod Haney, who was a senior manager for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) until he retired recently, uttered these words in the context of partners in developing countries who see first world NGOs as inexhaustible sources of money.

This is precisely what Sahakarini is NOT, and we have to be vigilant to ensure we are not creating a dependency in our project partners. Our goal is sustainability in all cases. We can offer initial seed money for viable projects, but ultimately the projects must be self-supporting. Right from the outset we make clear to our partners that we are not going to be there indefinitely, and they must show us how and when they will be able to continue the project with their own resources.

Yes, we want to respond to human needs. That's why we are in international development. As good stewards of the resources our friends and donors entrust to us we want to support only sound, efficient and sustainable projects. We certainly don't want to create unreasonable expectations or a dependency relationship. As the saying goes, "A hand up, not a hand-out", and we take this very seriously every time we consider whether to fund a project.

Alan Fielding  
President

## Thank you

For the past ten years it has been my privilege to serve as Executive Director of Sahakarini.

My initial impression of Sahakarini, gained at my first meeting at the home of Gordon and Mina Schieck, was that it was an astonishingly dedicated crew of friendly people passionate about making a difference to the poorest of the poor around the world. That impression has not changed. I hope that you will embrace our new Executive Director, Tiffany McNaughton, as you did me. I will continue on the board, eager to be part of what I know will be an exciting future. Much has been accomplished, but much more remains. Thank you to each of you who through your friendship, support and partnership has made my time as Executive Director so fulfilling.

Peace be with you,  
Gail Stolee

### Earl Rasmuson

It is with great sadness that we mark the death of Sahakarini board member Earl Rasmuson. Earl joined the board in 2009. He passed away February 24, 2010. We will remember him for his intelligence, friendliness, humility and dedication to making life better for others not only through Sahakarini but also through numerous community, farm, and political involvements.

I would like to become a member of Sahakarini (no fee)

Please change my address

I would prefer to receive information by email \_\_\_\_\_

Please send me information about \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to make a gift of  \$50  \$100  \$150  \$200  \$500  Other \_\_\_\_\_

Gifts can be made:  one time  monthly for \_\_\_\_\_ months (by post-dated cheques)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Please use it for \_\_\_\_\_

Sahakarini is a registered charity Business number 11913 1936 RR0001

Spring 2010

Sahakarini is registered with CanadaHelps.org for donations on-line.

***Helping the poorest of the poor transform their lives through partners we know and trust.***

