

Spring 2014

SAHAKARINI



SAHAKARINI APPROVES NEW PROJECTS

The Projects Committee has been busy reviewing and analyzing a number of new project requests. The Board has approved two new projects on the recommendation of the Projects Committee: the **Socota, Colombia Agro-Forestry Project** and the **Iryango Widows Self-Help Project, Phase II**.

The **Socota, Colombia Project** was referred to us by Dittmar Mundel and will be implemented by the Colombian Evangelical Lutheran Church Diaconal Ministry. It will establish five protected areas for reforestation which will regulate water flows for

the whole municipality, train community leaders in organic agriculture, silviculture and environmental education, and secure food self sufficiency for 15 families through establishment of gardens. The total project cost is \$26,969.00, of which we have applied for a matching grant of one half the amount from the Community Initiatives Program of the Government of Alberta. In a related matter, Sahakarini has approved an internship in Colombia for Leah Johnson, and she will be spending part of her time in Colombia at the project location to study and monitor the project.

The Board has approved the second project, the **Iryango Widows Project, Phase II**, to proceed to the contract stage. The first phase of the project was begun in 2010 and has been continued over the past three years. That project enabled some 120 members of the group to receive one goat each and to rent small plots of land to raise crops. Though there have been challenges due to drought, the project has generally been successful, and we have decided to move to Phase II. Phase II will provide the group with \$10,000.00 to be allocated to the members by small loans, and

\$5000.00 for goat-rearing. The project will again be administered by the Africa Community Technical Service (ACTS) and overseen by Elly Nankunda. Our local contact for this project is John Pattison of Kingman, AB, who continues to be a liaison for the project. Sahakarini members Don and Chris Rebus visited the project area a year ago.

We are excited to be a part of these new initiatives and look forward to their successful implementation. In the past year we have approved and funded the **Kya Kimwe Sand Dam Project in Kenya** in the amount of \$15,564.00. Our project partner is the Utooni Development Organization, and our local contact is Barb Stolee of Calgary (formerly of Bawlf). More about the project can be found elsewhere in this newsletter.

After a number of years of collaboration Sahakarini has decided to conclude our involvement with the projects of the **Kaqchikel Presbytery**. We are grateful for their work with the women of a number of villages in the **Chimaltenango, Guatemala** area, and wish them well in the future.

Alan Fielding

Chair, Projects Committee



Opposite: Kya Kimwe Sand Dam Project in Kenya.

LOAVES AND FISHES LIVELY AND FUN

Loaves and Fishes 2013 was a lively affair with young children, students, middle agers, and people who have been dedicated to helping the vulnerable and marginalized for over sixty years. Mother son team Barb and Scott Stolee gave an excellent presentation on the construction and benefits of sand dams all the while inspiring us with their own passion. Several tables of Augustana students got into the act - a fair bidding war in fact - over the chance for a canoe trip. There were high fives all around at Dean Berger's table when they finally won the bid. In the end, four trips were auctioned off.

We look forward to hearing about those adventures when the ice melts. The Eriksson/Foged family will take a journey of a different kind when they mount their bicycles for an outing and lunch at Dried Meat Lake. (See photo)

The sandals are set for an epic journey to the 2014 Olympics with their new friend, Les Parsons. Les will speak about his adventures at the Sahakarini supper (provided) and annual meeting June 9 at Messiah Lutheran Church.

In all, the Loaves and Fishes event raised approximately \$20,000 represent-

ing close to 40% of our year to date funds, for Sahakarini projects. Loaves and Fishes is Sahakarini's major fundraiser. This year, we were delighted to be able to tell donors that they could make their gifts electronically any time through ATBCares, a program of the Alberta Treasury Branch. There is no deduction or fee and ATB will match 15% (to a limit on their part of \$1000) of a donation. Since last fall that has meant an addition \$2200 for Sahakarini

Thanks to ATB and those who made their donations through them.

We thank all those who participated, organized, cheered, gave, and showed their desire to walk in solidarity with the poor.



The Eriksson/Foged family

SAHAKARINI AND COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING STUDENTS

Community Service Learning Students are Augustana Faculty students who have chosen to work with an organization in our community to the mutual benefit of the themselves and

the organization. The program has been in existence since 1986 and Sahakarini has been involved for some years. Last term Sahakarini was fortunate in having eight such stu-

dents! Seven of those students were fourth year management students who learned about our organization and current projects. We benefited from their energy and enthusiasm as well as their help with publicizing our fund raising dinner Loaves and Fishes. They also built models of sand dams to show how our project in Utooni, Kenya helps benefit the lives of the villagers and they were on hand at the dinner to discuss this with attendees. They took turns serving refreshments and selling items at our Market Place during Loaves and Fishes while some also helped out at Augustana's

SCORE event! !

One CSL student majoring in Global Development Studies has been sitting on our board for two terms offering her insights based on her studies and experience working internationally as a volunteer. She is currently assessing how Sahakarini communicates its work to the public and how we engage our public, the people of Camrose and area. We hope to see how we might do better. Natasha also took a prominent role as hostess and seller of items at the Market Place at the Loaves and Fishes Dinner last term, helped with the Film and Speaker Series on campus as well as shared our stories about Sahakarini to students and the public at SCORE.



CONTACT INFORMATION

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Words matter and language changes. For many years we have described our mission as helping "the poorest of the poor to help themselves." We have understood that to mean finding ways that are sustainable and empowering to assist those who, for a variety of reasons, do not have the basic, necessary means to improve their situation. The causes are seldom simple - economic

poverty, lack of education, and healthcare, lack of access to capital, discrimination or oppression based on gender, caste, class or religion and so on. At the same time, we realize that the people we serve may be very rich in community, culture, spirit, and tradition with things to teach us. As a board we have been discussing whether there is another way to describe what we

do that more clearly recognizes and respects the strengths and resourcefulness of the people we help and avoids the possible negative connotations of "poorest of the poor". One alternative might be to say helping the "vulnerable and marginalized". Whatever the words we use, we trust that our actions speak louder than words and that we truly work in partnerships that create

healthy, sustainable change for those in need.

Gail Stolee, President



INTERN TAKING HER SKILLS TO COLUMBIA



In May of 2014, Leah Johnson will begin a six month sojourn as an intern with Sahakarini in Colombia. The internship is a joint project between Sahakarini and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Colombia (IELCO). Sahakarini and IELCO are also partnering in a project to preserve water and wetlands in a high Andes region and to train local residents in sound agroforestry and gardening practices. Leah will share her time between the Environmental Deacon and the Human Rights Deacon of IELCO. She hopes to ground her

research on violence and human rights including gaining the perspective of religious groups. Her main questions will be how people experience such situations and how communities are collectively responding to issues in the environment and human rights, and how local and national governments respond and work in communities with such issues. In her time at the Socota land and water management project she will learn about the people there and how the project measures are benefitting them.

Although she goes with a great sense of humility, Leah is, in fact, well prepared. She is fluent in Spanish and has had a number of cross-cultural teaching and leadership experiences. This will not be her first time in Colombia. After graduating from Augustana, Leah travelled to Colombia to follow up on her senior undergraduate research project on the impact of violence in Co-

lombia on democracy and citizens' perceptions of democracy.

Since returning to Canada in 2012, Leah has worked for the Learning and Beyond Office at Augustana which coordinates experiential learning opportunities for Augustana students. In her words, "learning in a classroom, while valuable, is like a photograph or snapshot of an issue. Experiential learning and getting out into the world is like the 3-D version; it's much more dynamic." The next months will be her own excellent experiential learning process.

From Sahakarini's perspective, interns are a wonderful investment in both our work on the ground and the future of international peace and development. Leah will share what she is learning through regular updates to us and will be the featured speaker at Loaves and

Fishes on November 15, 2014.

Expenses for the internship program are covered by a special designated grant from another organization and special fundraising. For example, Leah raised over \$500 selling her knitting and other items at the Augustana Fair Trade Local Made sale in January. Anyone wishing to support Leah in this journey may make donations to Sahakarini designated for "Internship program - Colombia".



UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2014

BICYCLE WORKSHOP

Saturday May 10 @ 10 – 12 noon or 1 – 3 p.m. @ 4210 – 63 Street
Refreshments provided
Check Website for details

SAHAKARINI ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday June 9 @ 5:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall @ Messiah Lutheran Church, Camrose
Supper provided
Guest Speaker: Les Parsons, ***“Sandals in Sochi and Beyond”***

LOAVES AND FISHES FUND RAISER DINNER

Saturday November 15 @ 5:30 pm @ Norsemen Inn, Camrose
Guest Speaker: Leah Johnson, Sahakarini Intern

FILM AND SPEAKER SERIES

The Film and Speaker Series used the theme of *Moving Forward*. We showcased films that, while being hard-hitting and moving, inspired and left people with a sense that there is hope amidst difficult situations. We showcased “Sins of My Father”, “Solar Mamas”, and a compilation of critical, yet hopeful, TED Talks. We provided a Colombian dinner before the first film as a way of introducing people to the series with Leah Johnson, our intern, as the hostess and guest speaker.

NOTICE OF MOTION TO REVISE BY-LAWS

The Board of Sahakarini Inter-world Education and Development Assoc. is recommending the following Special Resolution to the Annual General Meeting to be held June 9, 2014. It is a motion to change the current quorum for a Board meeting from 7 to 5 members.

Article 5 currently reads in part “Seven members of the board shall constitute a quorum”.

Special Resolution: That Article 5 be changed to say “Five members of the board shall constitute a quorum”.

Rationale: Because this is a volunteer board with many members often away, the change will ensure that the business of Sahakarini can continue in a smooth and orderly fashion.

SAHAKARINI DONATIONS

Donations can be made three different ways.

1. Canada Post @ Sahakarini, Box 1685 Camrose T4V 1X6

2. ATB Cares website @ <https://www.atbcares.com/donate>.

Your donation will be forwarded to Sahakarini plus a 15% matching donation from Alberta Treasury.

3. CanadaHelps website: @ <https://www.canadahelps.org>

Your support makes change possible and thank you for that.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Sahakarini would like to thank those who have supported our project work through financial donations and volunteer time. Thank you to the *Augustana Community Service and Learning* students who continue to provide assistance to Sahakarini in a variety of ways. We also say thanks to the Augustana Chaplaincy for their invitation to participate in SCORE which resulted in matching funds from monies raised through donations and silent auction items.

Thank you to the Government of Alberta for grants received and to the work of our international partners.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

- ☐ Please change my address
- ☐ Please add my name to the mailing list
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NAME _____

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Enclosed is my gift of \$ _____

Donations can be made online at www.CanadaHelps.org or through www.atbcares.com