



President's Message by Kirsten van der Meer

Greetings to all of our Sombrilla friends,

Sombrilla is kicking off a new year and looking forward to working with our partners in Canada and Latin America to build community and improve access to basic needs such as primary education. Our projects are going strong. The Yurac Yacu project in Peru has hit a major milestone with the recent opening of the expanded Community Centre which will house preschool classes, adult learning classes, and small businesses owned by community members. Our Tierra Colorada project in Guatemala is gaining strides- new classrooms have been added to the school and soon a junior high program will be added to the ongoing elementary school program. Sombrilla has joined forces with el Cunen Teacher's College and a small group of dedicated Edmontonians who built the school. Sombrilla and our dedicated volunteers will provide ongoing support for the school's operational costs with the goal to raise enough money for an endowment fund so that the school can operate indefinitely.

As you can see, education is a strong focus for our organization. We believe that education is a source of empowerment that can improve the lives of not only the students, but also their families and their communities. Unfortunately, education is not accessible to everyone in our partner countries- indigenous families and especially girls often do not have opportunities to attend school. We are working with our partner communities to create educational opportunities- whether it is creating paying teacher salaries, providing student scholarships, or building school infrastructure. As Nelson Mandela has said 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world'.

25th Anniversary for Sombrilla

2012 is Sombrilla's 25th year working in Edmonton and in Latin America. The organization was incorporated in October 1987 and was then called Sombrilla Refugee Support Society. Sombrilla was formed in response to the civil war in Guatemala and at first was bringing refugees from the war to live in Edmonton. Later we changed our focus to international development projects in various Latin American Countries. We have recently changed our name to reflect this and are now Sombrilla International Development Society.

We are excited to be celebrating our 25th year and are planning a fiesta/reunion for October. Look for details in the next newsletter.

ACGC Development in a Box Youth Tour

We are very excited to announce that Sombrilla has been selected to host the 2012 ACGC "Development in a Box" Youth Tour.

At the end of July 5 Alberta Youth and two leaders will be travelling to Peru where they will visit the projects of three Albertan NGOs. They will spend the first 10 days at Sombrilla's Yurac Yacu project where they will be joined by 5 Peruvian youth from the Yurac Yacu project area. As well as seeing Sombrilla's projects the youth will be going on an overnight hiking trip into the nearby Huascarán National Park and will be participating in a family stay in another Andean Community.

The Youth will also be visiting Rainbow of Hope for Children's projects in Chíncha Baja and CUSO's projects in Lima. The group will be making a video of their trip to share with other Albertan's on their return.

Alberta Council for Global Cooperation's 30 under 30 Magazine



Catalina Rivera Zuniga - One of ACGC's 30 under 30

Sombrilla is proud to announce that Catalina (Catty) Rivera Zuniga has been selected as one of the Alberta Council for Global Cooperation's (ACGC) 30 under 30. This award recognizes 30 people under the age of 30 who have played an active role in making a positive difference and are models of civic engagement globally and/or within their local communities.

Those selected will appear in a magazine published by ACGC to tell their stories. To view the magazine go to <http://acgc.ca/pages.php?pg=1017&sec=2001>

Catty lives in the community of Chajul, Guatemala where she has worked with the Guatemalan organization Asociacion para el Desarrollo Integral de Multiservicios (ADIM) in partnership with Sombrilla. The organization of ADIM represents several indigenous Ixil communities displaced by Guatemala's 36 year internal armed conflict. Through the 1997 Peace Accords, these displaced populations (CPR) were given land in order to re-

establish permanent settlements throughout Guatemala. In 2002, ADIM began receiving funds from Edmonton's Sombrilla to support the establishment of these permanent settlements through projects involving human rights and primary health care. Catty officially managed and accounted for the project funds.

Catty has been friend to everyone and was always able to create harmony between the Ixil community, ADIM, and the Canadian volunteers on the ground.

She is an excellent communicator, a valuable advisor and an indispensable contact to the Canadian volunteers and representatives who visit the projects. We congratulate Catty in being selected and look forward to working with her in the future when we start a new project in partnership with ADIM.

Project News - Tierra Colorada Project

The construction work that has been going on at the Tierra Colorada School is now finished. A new Junior High program, the Basico Institute, has been started at the school. There are 34 students registered in the Basico Institute in this first year. Project manager Nancy Cowle will be in Guatemala soon and will have more information and photos for the next newsletter.



Work near completion on 2nd story of Tierra Colorado school

Project News - Yurac Yacu Project

By Sarah Cashmore

On Sunday January 29th the Yurac Yacu community opened the second building of the Yurac Yacu Community Centre. Sombrilla provided funding for this building and I was very happy to be at the project and able to attend the opening.



The activity started in the morning with many of the women of the community gathering outside the community centre to cook massive amounts of food in the biggest pots I have ever seen. They prepared a feast including wheat soup, potatoes, cuy (guinea pig) and a spicy salsa. They also made chicha morada, a drink made from purple corn.

The festivities started with a visit from the mayors of Huaraz and Marian. Lots of speeches were made, and a Padrino (godfather) and Madrina (godmother) were chosen for the building. The Padrino chosen is Carlos Solano, who has long been a leader in the community and has worked very hard to bring this project to life.



Carlos Solano addresses crowd

I was honored to be chosen as the Madrina and to be given a traditional outfit, which I wore for the rest of the party.

After the dinner the dance started and went on until dark. Everyone danced, even the smallest children. Throughout the event there were bottles of beer circulating as well as chicha morada and soft drinks. The tradition here is to drink almost all of what is in your glass, then to pour whatever is left on the ground for Pachamama (“Mother World”).



Opening of the Yurac Yacu Community Centre.

It felt wonderful to be with the people of the Yurac Yacu community at this celebration and to see the progress of the project. Sombrilla provided money for the construction but the very committed community here has supplied the labour and I know they have worked very hard to complete this part of the project.

The work will continue in the dry season, June through September with the addition of water and sewer lines and the construction of the business terrace.

Volunteers Needed

We are presently in need of volunteers both for Sombrilla here in Edmonton and for Andean Alliance in Peru.

In Edmonton, Sombrilla needs volunteers to sit on committees such as the project committee, the public engagement committee, the policy committee. We also need volunteers from time to time to work on events such as fund-raising dinners and concerts. If you are interested in volunteering with Sombrilla please contact us by e-mail at sombrillahome@gmail.com.

In Peru, Andean Alliance runs education programs year round for the children of the community. The classes are taught by volunteers who live at Lazy Dog Inn. The volunteers will need to have good Spanish skills, experience working with children and will need to make a commitment of at least 3 months.

If you are interested in volunteering with Andean Alliance please look at the website, www.andeanalliance.org and contact Diana directly. Sombrilla Calendar of Events

Sombrilla Calendar of Events

Sunday, March 18 **Seedy Sunday**

Sombrilla will be displaying at from 11 AM to 4 PM at Alberta Avenue Community Hall.9210 – 118 Ave. Come down and buy some seeds and find out how gardening plays a big part in food security in developing countries.

Saturday, May 5th **International Dinner**

Starting at 6:30pm Sombrilla will be holding our annual International Dinner. The event features food from around the world, and a Silent Auction of arts and crafts. As in previous years tickets for the event are \$30/person, and the event will be at Holy Trinity Anglican Church, 10037 – 84 ave, Edmonton.

For more information or to purchase ticket you can email: sombrillahome@gmail.com or call Sarah at 780-988-2976

Adopt a Community - YURAC YACU



Sombrilla Refugee Support Society, in partnership with Peruvian NGO Andean Alliance, has recently finished raising funds to complete construction of the Yurac Yacu Community Centre. The work on the Community Centre will continue through the summer 2013. We continue to raise funds for educational projects in the community and we will soon be developing a plan for our next Yurac Yacu project. When you contribute monthly through the Adopt a Community fund you will be helping us to continue to support this community.

About once every two months you will receive an update from the community with news and photos. You may choose to receive your updates by e-mail or regular mail. You will receive a tax receipt for all contributions.

To make a contribution to the Adopt a Community fund: Choose one of the following methods.

- Online: From our website, www.sombrilla.ca, under donate, click on the Canada Helps button and choose donate monthly. Type Yurac Yacu Project in the text box
- Mail a cheque payable to Sombrilla, 11424 - 77 Ave, Edmonton, AB, T6G-0L8 Using postdated cheques (Please complete the form below and return.)

Yes, I would like to support the Yurac Yacu project through the Adopt a Community fund

Contribution, check one

\$10 per month ____ \$25 per month ____ Other Amount
\$50 per month ____ \$100 per month ____

Name.....

E-mail address:.....

Mailing address:.....

.....
Please return to

Sombrilla Refugee Support Society
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For more information go to www.sombrilla.ca, call Sarah at (780)988-2976 or email sombrillahome@gmail.com

