

“A Dream Come True”

Latin Fiesta to Help SchoolBOX Reach 100th Classroom

Affectionately known as ‘the little charity that could’, SchoolBOX started with little more than a notebook and a pencil, and a dream to educate children in Nicaragua. At this year’s annual Latin Fiesta on November 4, community members will rally together to support the construction of SchoolBOX’s 100th classroom in the remote community of El Caracol in early 2018. Executive Director Sarah Kerr says, “the fact that our 100th classroom is within sight is truly a dream come true. We simply would not be able to reach this goal without the constant support and love from our hometown of Almonte.”



By attending the Latin Fiesta on November 4, you can help SchoolBOX reach their goal of building their 100th classroom in 2018

SchoolBOX Founder Tom Affleck and Executive Director Sarah Kerr built the first SchoolBOX classrooms in the community of San Santiago on Big Corn Island in 2008, with the help of friends and family from Almonte. Replacing a crumbling old structure that had been severely damaged by hurricane Mitch, the new classrooms provided fifty children with the opportunity to go to school. At the time, they had already begun giving out simple school supplies to students. Tom and Sarah recognized the impact that the supplies had for Nicaraguan families who no longer had to choose between feeding their kids or sending them to school with notebooks and pencils. Together they envisioned the possibility that one day SchoolBOX would be able to build 100 classrooms in Nicaragua and equip thousands of deserving kids with the supplies they needed to get an education. What seemed like an “impossible” dream in 2008 is about to become a reality in 2018!

Fiesta guests will get an exclusive chance to see SchoolBOX’s brand-new documentary short film as part of the night’s festivities. “This new film tells the life stories of our Nicaraguan Director Ronald Chavarria and our Programs Manager Jazmin Lopez”, explained Kerr. “These two are really the heartbeat of SchoolBOX. Born into extreme poverty, they could have had the same fate as nearly half of Nicaraguan children who are not able to complete elementary school. Instead, through incredible perseverance and the gift of school supplies from some unlikely mentors in their lives, they both beat the odds and

not only graduated from elementary school but also high school and university. Ronald and Jazmin were able to overcome poverty in one generation through education, and they now oversee the construction of classrooms, the installation of libraries, the delivery of reading days, and they host our international volunteers. They are amazing role models, and together are raising up a new generation of young, educated Nicaraguans.”

Kerr hinted that documentary stars themselves may make a “red-carpet” appearance from Nicaragua at the Fiesta. Fiesta Chair Brad Weir and many dedicated volunteers on the Fiesta Committee have

also put together a silent auction with unique items and experiences donated by local businesses, artists, and community members, as well as a live auction which will feature a trip to Costa Rica. To cap the evening off, guests can expect spicy tunes from the live Latin band Azucar Jam and salsa demos from Silver Steps. Get your dancing shoes ready, and invite your family and friends. This is going to be the most festive Fiesta yet!

Tickets are \$20 in advance (\$22 at the door, \$15 students, free for kids under 13) and can be purchased at Baker Bob’s, Mill Street Books, and Equator Coffee Roasters in Almonte, or online at <schoolbox.ca/fiesta>. Check out the event on Facebook at SchoolBOX Latin Fiesta.

About SchoolBOX

SchoolBOX is committed to “Making Education Possible” for the children of Nicaragua and the world. They implement cost-effective programming by

building schools, providing school supplies, libraries, washrooms, and teacher training. They have built 93 classrooms and 67 libraries in Nicaragua, and serve over 18,000 students and teachers in over 100 communities on an annual basis. Since 2006, they have put over 500,000 notebooks into the hands of kids. In 2017, SchoolBOX will implement its first library project in a Northwestern Ontario Indigenous community.

The SchoolBOX community is united in love for the children they serve and the belief that education can defeat poverty. SchoolBOX is comprised of thousands of people from different faiths and socioeconomic backgrounds. They empower educators and students, who in turn empower their communities and change our world.

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