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*P*RESIDENT'S *M*ESSAGE



Dear Supporters, Friends, Members and Volunteers:

Fall 2005 is here! It is amazing how quickly the good weather disappears. I hope that you all had a productive summer, with some opportunities for rest and relaxation, taking advantage of what has been recorded as the warmest summer in several years. Though I know for many of you within Canada, it has been chaotic and stressful and this does not preclude our members, volunteers and supporters of GCC.

Much is happening globally that is challenging including places like Guyana. There is a greater urgency for the acceleration of humanitarian aid to society, so as to assist the needy and help them to regain their abilities to be self sufficient.

One of the good features of GCC is its ability to adapt and change in response to the changing needs it encounters. Over the years, GCC has enhanced its mode of support to various organizations, individuals, families and communities in Guyana, as well as increase its participation to persons seeking urgent medical attention, aiding victims of natural disasters and assisting students who volunteer their time to do work in Guyana.

Members of GCC are cognizant of the fact that there is a great need for increased funds, and urge your continued support of our four major annual fundraising events. These include our Valentine Dinner/Dance, our two dances in Spring and Fall and our popular Bake and Food Sale. The funds generated from these events enable us to carry out our mandate. This past year, because of your continued generous support, we were able to attain most of our goals.

This year GCC was the proud recipient of an award, presented by the Guyana Government and the Guyana Consulate, Toronto, ON, in recognition of "*Most Outstanding Contribution to the Flood Relief Effort*" (2005). The four other awards the organization received were: "*Selfless Service to Guyana and the Guyanese Community in Canada for over three decades*" (2003); "*Longest Serving Guyanese Organization*" (2002); "*Support towards rebuilding the Health Care System*" (1995); "*Valuable Contribution to the Health Care System*" (1994). The success of our endeavours is mainly

due to the dedication of our members, volunteers, supporters and friends. I thank you for your commitment.

It is with sadness that I report the death of two of our most vibrant founder-members, Compton Callender, a past Vice President, and Vera Lopes one of our first members. Both Compton and Vera will be remembered for their dedication, influence and valuable contribution to the development of GCC. We have also recently lost one of our dedicated packing volunteers Leon Folkard, and an ardent supporter, Camille de Freitas, -- both of whom have been associated with us for many years. May their souls rest in peace, as well as those we have all loved and lost.

Iwould like to express my personal thanks and gratitude to all of you. We have accomplished much over previous years and we want to keep our organization strong and growing. Together, I believe that we can make it happen. Special thanks to those friends, family members and supporters who have responded positively to our appeal to provide scholarships to assist children to attend Marian Academy. New members, volunteers and supporters are always welcome.

Please accept my best wishes for a happy and healthy winter season! May God Bless you always.

Bernard Gonsalves

Our Mission

Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc. is a volunteer, non-profit charitable organization, registered in Canada, dedicated to providing aid and assistance to Guyanese -- children, families, individuals, -- and others in need.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 2005-2006

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Secretary Elizabeth Abdool	Treasurer Joe Castanheiro*
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UPDATE ON THE FLOOD RELIEF/ POST-RELIEF FLOOD FUND:

Our activity in the Flood Relief Program continues following the aftermath of the disaster. I am happy to report that Revenue Canada's approval was obtained to further our efforts, by working together with the R.C. Bishop of the Diocese of Georgetown. Recently, we met Fr. John Persaud, S.J. Vicar General of the diocese, who was visiting Canada. He accepted the role of administering the terms of the agreement to provide financial assistance to the *most needy of the needy*, in the affected areas, irrespective of their religious or ethnic affiliations. These are folks who have lost their ability to maintain financial support for their families, having been deprived of their sources of income by the ravaging flood waters.

The dollars raised and spent to date are as follows:

<i>Total Funds Raised</i>	\$38,957.75
<i>Total disbursements</i>	23,701.12
<i>Remaining balance</i>	15,256.63
<i>Advance sent to RC Bishop re agreement</i>	10,256.00
<i>Balance withheld for future disbursements</i>	5,000.63

We accept the responsibility of accountability, and will keep you apprised as developments unfold in the months ahead.

It was reported recently, due to flooding caused by a succession of seawall breaches from extraordinarily high tides, several East Coast and West Coast Demerara communities had to relocate to homes of friends and relatives.

"A nation is formed by the willingness of each of us to share in the responsibility for upholding the common good." Jordan, Barbara

HELPING HANDS AID A GUYANESE CHILD NEEDING MEDICAL ASSISTANCE



Wendy Nedd, a 14-year old child from Linden, needed to have an operation to remove a huge growth from her nostrils so that she could breathe normally, and to correct the consequent facial disfigurement she had lived with from birth. When GCC heard of Wendy's situation, we offered to help in whatever way we could.

It was a coordination of efforts that enabled Wendy to come to Canada for the necessary operations:

- ⇒ **The Caribbean Children's Foundation** willingly arranged for the operation at the Toronto Hospital for Sick Children;
- ⇒ **GCC members, Joan and Des de Barros** transferred to Wendy and her mother, Karen Nedd, two return BWIA tickets won at a function;
- ⇒ **GCC/CCF members, Kumar and Jean Singh**, provided accommodation, transportation and guidance for the consultation with the doctors and hospital visits; and
- ⇒ **GCC** financed post-operational and all other incidental costs.

Three operations were necessary and Wendy will now continue her teen years breathing normally, and happy to be free of her discomfort and facial disfigurement. **Good Luck to you Wendy! We are happy for you.**

SHIPPING:



In our May Newsletter, we gave you a vivid picture of the outpouring of generosity -- termed "Flood Relief" for Guyana, both in the form of monetary donations and household utensils, clothing, medical and school supplies toiletries, etc., to be sent to replenish the losses suffered from the floods by so many living in the below- sea-level coastland of our homeland, and to control the spread of infections from the polluted flood waters. You are undoubtedly familiar with the damages, sustained and the gradual recovery that is taking place.

At our end, instead of 20 ft. containers, 40 ft. ones have come regularly into use this year mainly because of the amazing lot of medical supplies and hospital furnishings we have received. Following the generous donations from the St. John Rehabilitation Centre as we previously reported, we received in May from the Health Sciences Lab of Centennial College, mostly in quite large quantities -- General Dressings supplies, a Variety of Latex and Sterile Gloves, Catheters, Glucometers, Eye Pads, Surgical Scissors, 500 Professional 2 ply Towels, Paper Gowns, Medical Books, cases of Ultra Sound Scanning Gel and much, much more enough that we could send supplies to all of the 8 hospitals on our list. An unusual gift consisted of a moulded body form and others of various organs. These were sent to the Mercy Hospital Nursing School. Another 40 ft. container was necessary and dispatched on June 22, 2005.

To accommodate a number of items that did not fit into the container and further packing of items still in storage, which included clothing and shoes, really needed especially in the areas that had been flooded, toys, games and books especially for institutions with children, a 20 ft. container was sent on July 04.

To our great surprise, by mid July we were contacted by the staff of the Biomedical Technology Section of the Hamilton Sciences Services Chedoke Hospital offering another bonanza of hospital furnishings from their storage area which was scheduled for renovations. Much needed Manual Hospital Beds, suitable for the Georgetown Public Hospital, Guerneys, Medilifts, Commode and other Chairs, Wheelchairs and Walkers. We collected these items in early September and shipped them to Guyana on September 23. As you can imagine, a 40 ft. container was necessary and this has now arrived in Guyana. Many of our regular boxes of clothing, computers, household items, etc remained in storage and another shipment was being assembled and sent off in the middle of October. Included were a complete set of school books, computers and other items for a new school, the Santa Rosa Secondary School in Moruca, and additional toys, plus the sharing of a generous gift of beautiful Teddy Bears from a company in Brampton. A veritable variety of books was sent -- Science and Medical Journals, Art and Creative Writing, Other Skills Training and School Text Books.

We are now working on reorganizing our packing area at 10 Budworth and will then be able to collect the items offered that have been waiting for space to become available. What can we say but repeat once more to the donors, our faithful volunteers, to those who provide storage, those that undertake the immense amount of local transportation, and for the support given by the staff of our Shippers -- "Our deepest gratitude for all the assistance you give -- without you all of this could not happen. -- God Bless".....Joan De Barros

NURSING EDUCATION FACILITY:



The renovation to the Mercy Hospital faculty flat, undertaken by Rev. John O'Connor, has been completed. It is now ready to accommodate health professionals who volunteer their time to assist. John in his tasks of developing the standard of nursing education in Guyana to the acceptable Caribbean level. John is currently back in Guyana. So far, two Nurse Practitioners have been scheduled to teach an intensive course on Critical Care during October and a psychiatrist should be arriving in November.

CHILDREN' EDUCATION FUNDS
 -- helping kids to a better future



GCC, through the generosity of its members, their families and supporters, was able to maintain its group and individual support of nine students for a further five year period. Marian Academy, a fine educational institution, continues to produce an admirable percentage of graduates, generating improved hope and aspirations for Guyana's youth. Here is a look at the results of the progress of the students that we collectively support, as at June, 2005:

Name	Promoted to Form
1. Sarah Swain	4F
2. Ashti Stephens	5
3. Clifton Garraway	4F
4. Danielle Swain	5
5. Rondell Enmore	3S
6. Ariel Haynes	3S
7. Alan Lowe	4F
8. New Student	} Not currently available
9. New Student	

How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because someday in your life you will have been all of these."

George Washington Carver



INTRODUCING
THE PRABHU SHARAN
BOYS & GIRLS ORPHANAGE

This Orphanage was opened in August 2005 in Cornelia Ida on the West Coast of Demerara. Its name means "**God's Compassionate Home**". The Mission of its founders is to nurture 39 disadvantaged boys and girls between 5 and 14 years of age, and to include opportunities in education, both academic and spiritual, to enable each child to develop her/his potential to the fullest. To this end, computer training will be included in their school curriculum.

In response to a request for assistance, we were pleased to be able to send them 22 boxes of kitchen and other household items, including 25 bed sheets and pillow cases and just about everything from the overwhelming donations we had received this year, as well as computers, a printer and a Television specifically donated for this institution.

It is nice to know that a home for orphaned children or those who have no one to care for them has been established in that area.

We wish the children happy days and their caregivers God's Blessings and the success in all of their work.

Children are our most valuable natural resource.

† **TRIBUTE TO FOUNDING MEMBERS** †

COMPTON CALENDER -- REVERED, RESPECTED & REMEMBERED

As a close, personal friend of Compton for many years, I was given the privilege of writing a tribute to him and to express our sincere appreciation for the service he gave to our organization as Vice President for many years and a great participant in all our activities.

With his qualifications, our legal matters fell naturally within his portfolio, one of great importance being our induction by Revenue Canada into the ranks of Registered Charitable Organizations permitting Income Tax Receipts to be issued for donations received.

His was a life of achievement and also dedication, -- not only to his beloved wife, Mary, who pre-deceased him, his loving children and grand children, but unstintingly to numerous charitable, parish and social services organizations. Both in Guyana with the Boy Scouts, the Lions Club and many others, and in Canada, as Vice President and Legal Advisor to the Guyana Canada Forum, Lions, St. Barnabas Church Lector and other Ministries.

God called him to **HIS** home on May 27, 2005, exactly one year and a day after Mary passed away. I am sure his welcome was "Well done My Good & Faithful Servant".

Desmond De Barros

VERA LOPES -- A WOMAN OF TREMENDOUS FORESIGHT!!

Shortly after Vera Lopes immigrated to Canada, she got word that the Ursuline Sisters in Guyana were experiencing difficult times, particularly with maintaining St. Ann's Girls Orphanage. She immediately recruited assistance from other Guyanese with connections to the Ursuline Sisters in an effort to remedy the situation. Along with these contacts, a list of Guyanese living in Canada was compiled and a letter was sent out requesting donations. \$1,700.00 was collected ... an excellent response back then! Vera named her group "The Alleluia Committee of Guyana" and along with Anne Marie Reigber organized a "Bring & Buy Sale" (very Guyanese). The first of these sales was held at Holy Spirit Church on Sheppard Avenue, Scarborough. This event has since developed into what is now the Annual Food & Bake Sale, which is organized by Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc. Until a few years ago Vera Lopes had attended most of these sales and contributed tremendously to the ongoing success of this event.

We are grateful to Vera Lopes for her foresight, inspiration, determination and support over the years.

We would also like to thank her family for listing Guyana Christian Charities as an organization to which donations could be made in her memory. May she rest in peace.

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF SERVICE



GCC would like to congratulate

St. Joseph Mercy Hospital on their **60 years of service** to the Guyanese people in the health care field. A Musical Gala was held on Sunday, October 2, 2005, at Brickdam Cathedral. According to Sister Noel, the program was really good -- the Woodside Choir, as always, was excellent. A group, including the Sisters, sang a few "oldies" which were really enjoyed by all. The Police Band in their own great style, played "Jesus Christ Superstar" at the finale. Other groups taking part were the Marigolds, the Cathedral Choir, St. Stanislaus College Choir, along with a few soloists and organ renditions.



GOOD OL' FASHION CARIBBEAN CHRISTMAS FUN -- FOR CHILDREN & ADULTS

THE GUYANA BURN CARE UNIT
invites you

to their Caribbean Christmas Celebration

Saturday, December 10, 2005, 3pm – 7pm,

**at Thornhill Community Centre,
7755 Bayview Avenue, Thornhill, ON L3T 4P1,
(corner of Bayview Avenue and John Street)**

Join in the fun and enjoy the feel of
Christmas in the Caribbean with
Steel Band Music -- Mother Sally -- Magician
-- Young Dancers -- Santa and of course good
Caribbean Cuisine.

Price:

Children 5-15 years **\$10** with free pizza and pop,
along with a Loot Bag from Santa.
Under 4 years old is free.

Adults: **\$20** with snacks.

**Food and Drinks Bars
are available.**

Dancing is available immediately after
for adults with great musicians
at no extra cost.

**THANK
YOU!**

MAIL BOX

Extracts from some letters of
appreciation for our assistance

Sister Sheila Walsh, RSM, St. Joseph Mercy Hospital:

"Your wonderful shipment arrived.... There was a question as to who the 3 skids of gloves and the disinfectant were to go. I suggested he send it to me and we will distribute. So far I have brought it to Cheshire Home, Mahaica Hospital, St. Ann's, John Bosco, Hope Home for Children, Public Hospital, Davis Memorial, local vets who spade dogs for GSPCA for free, Palms, Uncle Eddies Home and of course Mercy Hospital who will use it in nursing units, housekeeping, maintenance, dietary, and give some to patients in the HIV/AIDS program. You see it will be used far and wide.

Some of the toys are being given to the children who come for Cleft palate/lip surgery. It gives them something to hold on to in a strange environment. Some we will use at Christmas. The heavier clothes are going to the Northwest and I saved some children clothes for a needy family at Mahaica.

I want you all to know how precious your gifts are to a number of people. Blessings on you and yours."

Sister Christa Sevika MC, Missionaries of Charity:

"We would like to thank you in the name of the poor we serve for your contribution to serve them in a better way. We appreciate your love, compassion, and generosity to the poor by all you donate. The items we received were all very useful: clothing, shoes, toys, candles, books, cups, slippers, socks, table cloths, window curtain, and the wheelchair which is very useful for our Grannies"

Sister Noel Menezes, RSM: "Boys' Home news. Anthony Archer has begun his final year at the Carnegie School of Home Economics where he is studying to be a chef; he has high hopes of opening a restaurant one day. Julian Welch who works at Mercy Hospital has now begun classes at Critchlow College, taking Maths and English this year. It will be difficult as he has to stagger his work times at Mercy Hospital".

Sister Marie Harper, OSU, Principal: "Greetings from Marian Academy. Thank you for the Printer and books which we received a few weeks ago. We are most appreciative of these. Our Junior Library has benefited as well as the Computer Lab. for the Primary classes. The students are doing well in work and in conduct."

Sr. Sheila Walsh (for Patients at the Mahaica Hospital)

"The boxes arrived without incident. ... Thank you too for the generous donation which we will use to buy sheets, underwear, notions and other individual needs for Mahaica".

It is always in your power to help those in need

The person who tries to live alone will not succeed as a human being. His heart withers if it does not answer another heart. His mind shrinks away if he hears only the echoes of his own thoughts and finds no other inspiration.

Pearl S. Buck



2006 UPCOMING EVENTS

... Mark your calendars **and**
... Book your tickets early



VALENTINE DANCE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2006

Sts. Peter & Paul Ukrainian Church Hall
1490 Markham Road
(North of 401 – Entrance on Milner Avenue)

Band: Triple Play and DJ

For Tickets: Call: Joe Castanheiro -- 416-286-1956
Des De Barros -- 905-837-0135
Theresa Gonsalves -- 416-284-2496
Bernard Gonsalves -- 905-683-1030

SPRING DANCE

SATURDAY, May 6, 2006

Pickering Recreation Complex
1867 Valley Farm Road Pickering
(Liverpool and Highway 2)

Band: Will be announced later
D.J. -- Raymond "Bake" Perreira

For Tickets: Call: Joe Castanheiro -- 416-286-1956
Des De Barros -- 905-837-0135
Theresa Gonsalves -- 416-284-2496
Bernard Gonsalves -- 905-683-1030

LOOK

for our

Autumn Barn Dance
Annual Bake & Food Fair



Guyana History - You thought you knew

- Q:** Name the Amerindian tribes of Guyana.
A: There are nine tribes: Arawaks, Caribs, Warraus, Macusis, Wapisianas, Akawaios, Patamonas, Arecunas and Wai Wais.
- Q:** What month is Amerindian Heritage Month in Guyana?
A: September. The first such month was observed in 1995 and is intended to showcase and promote Amerindian culture and contributions as Guyanese.

YES! I WANT TO HELP

\$100 \$75 \$50 \$25 Other

Name _____

Address _____

_____ City _____

Postal Code _____ Phone: _____

Your donation is tax-deductible Charitable (No. 89096-5643-RR0001)

Please **send your cheque and this form to:**

Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc.

1612 Arathorn Court, Pickering, ON. L1X 2B9

Donations may also be made through the website: CanadaHelps.org

FRIENDS OF GUYANA CHRISTIAN CHARITIES (CANADA) INC.

- Yes, I wish to become a member of your organization
 Yes, I wish to assist with the donation of items/supplies
 Yes, I would like to help with the:
 Food Fair dance packing for shipments
 transportation of donated items

Name _____

Address _____

Mail form to: Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc.

1612 Arathorn Court, Pickering, ON L1X 2B9

NEWSLETTER MAILING LIST

- I would like to be on your Newsletter Mailing List
 My address has been changed

Name _____

Address _____

Mail form to: Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc.

1612 Arathorn Court, Pickering, ON L1X 2B9

Thank you for your generosity and support

CALL US TO ADVERTISE

We publish two newsletters each year
(May and October)

If you would like to advertise....
Please call **Stan Niccols**
416-651-2482



Christmas in Guyana



Christmas has a special meaning for all Guyanese, Christians as well as non-Christians. Even though the way in which it is celebrated differs due to a diversity of religions and cultures, the spirit of Christmas bonds everyone. The mutual respect that diverse ethnic and religious groups show toward Christmas and their participation in the holiday is reciprocated at other times of the year towards Hindu and Muslim holidays.

A few months before Christmas people will start redecorating the home, e.g. painting, sewing new curtains, laying linoleum, polishing furniture, etc. Crushed ginger and mauby bark were boiled and fermented to produce ginger beer and mauby drink respectively. The ingredients for the Christmas cake, raisins, currants and prunes were soaked in rum and wine. Some families decorated homemade or local trees with lights, tinsels and cotton wool, to simulate snow. Apples, grapes, walnuts, almond nuts chocolates, dates, biscuits and cheese are imported and available during this season. Many Guyanese associate Christmas with many odours in a store or in the home. Of course there is a greater emission of odours in a tropical climate.

Most of the churches will display nativity scenes some of them live, and conduct several programs to celebrate the season. Starting with Christmas Novena. -- all in all it does not matter what religion you are, everyone celebrates the season. Normally a few nights before Christmas, folks start going from house to house and sing carols and there are lots of office and school parties, meanwhile various organizations sponsor parties where gifts are exchanged. Some parents take their kids to see "Father Christmas" at a department store in the city. The kids will normally get a small gift. There are also lots of parties and dances planned for the season.

Christmas Day begins with pepperpot/garlic pork/ham for breakfast. Gifts are exchanged after breakfast on Christmas Day. Then there is a late lunch made up of baked chicken or turkey, stuffing, vegetables/rice sometimes garlic pork, curry, homemade pickled onions and numerous other delights. Desert is the famous black cake and the Christmas beverage is ginger beer, mauby, or sorrel drink. There are lots of eating and drinking among the men folk, at this time. Regardless of their financial position, people make an effort to be well dressed during the Christmas season.

The streets will bustle with activities. Groups of masqueraders with fife and drum, dressed in African costumes perform for a large crowd. People will rush to the streets to the sound of the drums. Two interesting sights are the "long lady" on stilts and the "mad cow". Steel bands will parade through several of the main streets and there are spontaneous "jump-ups". Unlike Canada where it is a quiet day for one's family, Christmas Day in Georgetown is vibrant and lively. Music is played loudly until late in the evening. Boxing day is a continuation of the celebrations. New Year's Eve is the time for the biggest dance of the year, -- for dancing and "feting" all night and into New Year's Day. New Year's day is one the days for recuperation from a "hang-over" or for relaxation and hope for a successful year.