

**PRESIDENT**  
Bernard Gonsalves  
905-683-1030

## GUYANA CHRISTIAN CHARITIES (CANADA) INC.

Registration No. 89096-5643-RR0001

**SECRETARY**  
Elizabeth Abdool  
(416) 499-1528

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
Kumar Singh  
(416) 498-9962

**Website:** <http://www.gcccanada.org> **Email:** [info@gcccanada.org](mailto:info@gcccanada.org)  
1612 Arathorn Court, Pickering, ON L1X 2B9

**TREASURER**  
Joseph Castanheiro  
(416) 286-1956



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### OUR MISSION

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

**Come and Join us  
at our upcoming  
fundraising event**

## Valentine Dinner & Dance

**SATURDAY,  
February 9, 2008**

SEE PG. 5 FOR DETAILS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2007-2008

<b>President</b> Bernard Gonsalves	<b>Vice President</b> Kumar Singh
<b>Secretary</b> Elizabeth Abdool	<b>Treasurer</b> Joe Castanheiro*
<b>DIRECTORS</b>	
Rahana Khan	Philip Gulab
Michael Gonsalves	Gerry Gouveia
June Ann Sealey	

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR**  
Joan De Barros  
\* Past President

### CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF SERVICE AS A REGISTERED CHARITY TARGETED TO PEOPLE IN NEED

The year 2007 marks 20 years of service as a Registered Charity. As many of you may already know, it all started in the late 1960s, when a group of past pupils and parents closely connected to the nuns who operated the St. Ann's Girls Orphanage in Georgetown and the St. John Bosco Boys Orphanage in Plaisance, learned that these two facilities were experiencing great difficulties obtaining funds to maintain their services and buildings. To help cover some part of this deficit, a group of ladies organized and held a "**Bring and Buy Sale**" (typically Guyanese). The proceeds assisted with Christmas parties for the orphans. This became an annual feature and with increasing support from the Guyanese community in Toronto, attendance rose. This increase ensured the funding of additional special projects.

Following a further appeal from the Ursuline Sisters in 1977, Vera Lopes (decd.) and Anne Marie Reigber formed an enlarged group which assumed the name "The Alleluia Committee of Guyana". These committed individuals expanded their efforts to raise and collect money for the maintenance of both the Georgetown and Plaisance Orphanages. Vera remained a dedicated supporter and benefactor till her death a few years ago.

In 1978, the group held what had become its Annual Bake Sale at Holy Spirit Parish Hall on Sheppard Avenue. Remittances to the Orphanages expanded to include items like food, clothing and school supplies.

Meanwhile, about 1980, another group of Guyanese, under the leadership of Mannie da Silva (decd.) was also organizing. Mannie had received an urgent appeal from Fr. Harold Wong SJ for funds to replace the aging Organ for the Brickdam Cathedral. This new group was appropriately named The Organ Committee. Their first endeavour was a successful fundraising dance. This successful event became the forerunner of our very entertaining and popular "Valentine" Dance.

Eventually, these two groups which were comprised mostly of the same persons decided they would be more effective if they merged. Out of this merger Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc. was created and Desmond De Barros assumed the role of first President. The organization was established as a Registered Charitable Organization in 1987 and complies with the rules of the Canada Revenue Agency.

In 1985, due to the critical shortage of medical and other supplies in Guyana, the first Valentine's Dance was held. The funds raised paid for a much needed shipment of donated medical items that was sent to St. Joseph's Mercy Hospital. This annual event continues to be well received and hence, very successful. Two additional dances have been added, one in May and the other in September. The proceeds from the Spring and Fall Dances are utilized primarily for humanitarian health efforts.

Our Food and Bake Sale event, held annually in late October, has steadily grown in popularity since the early efforts. The locations have changed as the numbers of supporters have increased. From the earliest days at Holy Spirit Parish Hall on Sheppard Avenue, Scarborough, we moved to L'Amoreaux Community Centre in 1994. When this facility became inadequate, we again moved to the much larger and well appointed facilities of Sts. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Church Banquet Hall at Markham and Milner Avenue.

(Contd. on page 2)....

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



**Dear Supporters, Friends, Members and Volunteers:**

This year, we recognize an important milestone, as we celebrate our twentieth year as a registered charity here in Canada. While this is indeed reason to be proud of our achievements over this period, in actuality our pioneering work dates back to the mid seventies.

GCC has a rich history, and one of our greatest strengths is the people we have attracted to assist us in our ministry. We have indeed been blessed with an astonishing group of members, volunteers and supporters -- people who refuse to ignore the needs of the poor and the deprived that exist in our motherland. These very special devoted people willingly sacrifice their valuable time, energies and resources in assisting us to fulfill our Mission: **“dedicated to providing aid and assistance to Guyanese, — children, families and individuals. — and others in need”**, regardless of religious or ethnic backgrounds.

Looking back over the many years, and recognizing the need to adjust to the changing times in order to deal with the many challenges and pressures facing us, we have intensified our methods in providing aid and assistance to the underprivileged and the needy through: -- *increased support to various organizations, individuals, families and communities; -- enhanced participation to persons seeking urgent medical attention, individually, as well as jointly with other organizations both in Guyana and Canada; -- aided victims of natural disasters in Guyana and internationally; -- assisted youths in their endeavours in Guyana, as well as youths who are interested in volunteering their time to work in Guyana; -- and instituted a program for educating children in Guyana.* Incorporating these activities, without losing the high caliber teamwork we have achieved, was a major challenge -- thanks to the full participation of our members.

Although tremendous progress has been made, we are under no illusion that what has been accomplished is sufficient. We are also aware that in future years the following will assist us in becoming a stronger organization - internally and externally: **1) technology** -- *we have created our own website -- <http://www.gcccanada.org>*, which is constantly being renewed and updated, as well we are able to transmit shipping documents to our sub-partner/s in Guyana; and **2) members/volunteers/supporters** -- we continuously seek to enroll *new and younger members, volunteers and supporters;* they are needed to revitalize and maintain our existence, so that we could continue with our mandate. At this time, **I would like to extend a warm welcome to our new members, volunteers and supporters.**

Our journey thus far has been gratifying through your continued support of our many annual fundraising events, and I would like to express my personal gratitude to all members, supporters, volunteers and donors for their time, effort and generosity, including those who assist and support our many other endeavors.

I thought it would be interesting to our readers to highlight some financial statistics over the twenty-year period of our

registration in Canada, which also show where the funds you helped us to raise have been spent.

*Statistics of 20 Years in the life of Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc.*

Freight – on shipments to Guyana	272,000
Medical assistance/Care items etc.	172,000
Financial aid & Educational Sponsorship	166,000
Warehousing & other operating expenses	109,000
Donations – Orphanages, the poor etc.	<u>106,000</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 825,000</b>

During this period, we shipped fifty containers to Guyana with an estimated value of contents totaling approximately \$2.5 million Canadian dollars. It is to be noted that we did not incur any expenditure in remunerations or auditing, as these services are provided **free of charge**. We are eternally grateful to this group of volunteers and members for their continued assistance, which is truly priceless, as well as the generosity of those who provide free storage for donated items awaiting packing and shipment. We have also strived to ensure that a minimum of **95 cents of each dollar find its way into Guyana** in one way or the other, in satisfaction of our goal. I am happy to report that to date we have been successful in attaining and continuing this objective.

Where did the Summer go? We now face the Fall and Winter with great enthusiasm -- As we continue to work together, our intention is to generate even better results than that of the past 20 years, so that we can continue to provide charitable programs in communities from coast to coast in Guyana and wherever needed if feasible.

God's Blessings to you and your family for a happy and healthy Fall and Winter seasons.

*Bernard Gonsalves*

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## **CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF SERVICE AS A REGISTERED CHARITY TARGETED TO PEOPLE IN NEED ..... (CONTD.)**

The mandate of Guyana Christian Charities continues to be a commitment to help the needy and the sick in our beloved Guyana. The need remains as great or greater today as on our earliest days. Our efforts have attempted to keep up and to expand gradually. Assistance is being provided to an increasing number and variety of other charities and organizations.

While our name might suggest that we are entirely focused on one segment of the community, this is not the case. Our assistance is totally transparent and reaches the neediest in the community and has no regard to Religious affiliation. Our assistance extends to about 100 charities, with no regard to race or creed.

Shipping costs consume most of the funds raised. For this reason we are always seeking willing hands and generous souls to help at our functions and to make them even more successful. Some of our members and dedicated volunteers give generously of their time year-round sorting and packing the many donations of clothing for all ages, medical and other supplies, wheel-chairs, toys, shoes etc. etc. **We welcome all and any help that is offered. The harvest is ready but, alas, the workers are too few.**

**Won't you please join us? The pleasure and satisfaction are immeasurable.**

## CO-OPERATIVE EFFORTS ENABLES THE ACQUISITION OF MERCY TRUCK

Anne Treadwell

Readers may remember Rev. John O'Connor, a volunteer who is currently in his 6th stint of teaching and other activities with the St. Joseph Mercy School of Nursing in Georgetown. "Rev. John", as he is known to his students in Psychology, Sociology and Nursing Ethics, reported recently on an impressively successful fundraising effort, which has resulted in a new "Mercy Truck".

The old truck had been on its last legs for years. Sister Sheila (CEO of St. Joseph Mercy Hospital) had tried hard to find some individual or group who would donate one but, as with so many projects, co-operative "I will if you will" efforts turned out to be the most productive.

Sister Sheila had received an offer from Loyola Foundation, a Catholic charity, that they would pay for half a truck. But alas, half a truck doesn't run! So the other half? Here, says Rev. John, is where the co-operation comes in. There was some donated money left over from an earlier project he'd spearheaded, the construction of a new Faculty Flat for visiting short-term teachers. Sister Sheila and Bernard Gonsalves asked if John, who had raised the money for the flat, would be willing to use the leftover funds to be put towards the truck.

John thought this was a good idea and agreed, but there still wasn't enough for a whole truck. He says, "Sister Sheila's prayers were answered doublefold when the Frank J. Lewis foundation sent an unexpected grant towards the project. Two individuals also contributed, but the total was still not quite what was needed ..... *This is where my favourite group became vital*: Guyana Christian Charities! They agreed to match the leftover Flat donations, and presto: there was the remaining half of the truck! See the photos below for evidence of its reality -- and the fact that it was duly blessed by a priest!"

The truck is much bigger and more reliable than the old one, and is on the road everyday picking up essential products for the running of the hospital. Adds Rev. John, "I know everyone here really appreciates your generosity. I am amazed that with an initial offering of \$5,000, Sister Sheila managed to have that amount transformed into sufficient funds for a 'brand-new reconditioned' vehicle. I think she may have missed a Wall Street career."

Or perhaps it's just that old and always astonishing miracle of turning small things into large, goodwill into real achievements!

In the truck are Wilton, a John Bosco graduate, Mr. Williams, the Director of Maintenance, and Michael, the Hospital driver

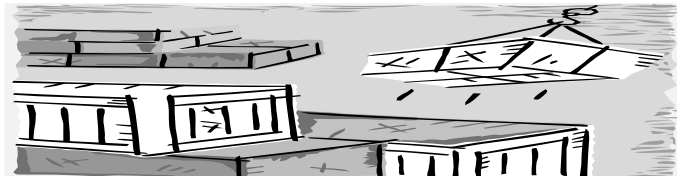


Father Malcolm Rodrigues blesses the truck. A small ceremony of blessing started the truck on its endless trips for supplies for the patients and staff at Mercy

Sister Sheila, etc. ... A Happy Sister.....thanks everyone for their support.

People have been known to achieve more as a result of working with others than against them. Dr. Allan Fromme

## PACKING AND SHIPPING UPDATE



Since our May 2007 newsletter, GCC has received a wide variety of donations and has shipped two 40ft. containers to over 80 different organizations across Guyana. The first container arrived in Guyana in July 2007 and the second will arrive on October 30 for distribution in time for the Christmas Holidays.

Thanks to all our donors, volunteers and members for making this operation successful. Included in these shipments were bicycles, hospital bed mattresses, cribs, wheelchairs, clothing and shoes for all ages, toiletries, medical supplies and equipment, kitchen utensils, bed linens, crafts and sewing materials, stationery, school supplies, toys and Christmas decorations.

A special thank you to Mr. Justin Shulman, V.P. of the Orthotic Group who donated 600 pairs of orthotic shoes. Approximately half of these shoes were included in the last shipment.

GCC has expanded an area in which it provides assistance to include Ogle, Industry and Vryhiedlust on the East Coast of Demerara. We have shipped thirteen boxes to the Guyana Presbyterian Church to cater to the needy in these areas.

For these two shipments, GCC used computer technology to send the shipping documentation to Bill Fernandes in Guyana. We are pleased to report that the pilot projects were successful and we will continue to use this technology in future shipments.

We need your help on an ongoing basis to assist in future shipments. If you could help, please call one of the following members for information:

Terry De Freitas	--	416-438-5992
Gerry Gouveia	--	905-623-2034
Joan de Barros	--	905-837-0135
Kumar Singh	--	416-498-9962

**CHRISTMAS  
IS IN THE AIR  
THE GUYANA BURN  
CARE UNIT**



is once again inviting you to.....

Join in the fun and enjoy the feel of Christmas in the Caribbean at its Annual Caribbean Christmas Variety Show & Brunch for the Family

**Sunday, December 16, 2007  
12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m.**

**Thornhill Community Centre  
7755 Bayview Avenue, Thornhill  
(Corner of Bayview Avenue & John Street.**

**Melody by:**

**\* Victor Shim \* Mike Marks \* David Singh**

**\* Steel Band Music \* Masquerade band Music \* Children Entertainment \* Young Dancers \* Santa \* Great Caribbean Cuisine \* Brunch is provided with Admission**

**\* Bake Sale \* Auction \* Toy Sale \* Photographs with Santa \* Raffle**

**ADMISSION:**

**ADULT: \$20 • CHILDREN: \$10 (5 – 15 years)**

**Under 4 years – Free**

**(includes a Loot bag from Santa)**

**TICKETS MAY BE OBTAINED FROM:**

Pamela Harakh	--	(905) 737-3368
Geeta Singh	--	(905) 201-5802
Noel Denny	--	(416) 281-2837
Robin Persaud	--	(416) 759-4998
Sherman Del Sol	--	(416) 368-4993 x191
Joan Or Des De Barros	--	(905) 837-0135

**CHRISTMAS**

**EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM  
THE MARIAN ACADEMY  
– Now in its 9<sup>th</sup> Year!**



In addition to its continued students' success at the CSEC Exams, from a recent report, we learned of the introduction in the last School Year of Counseling Services for the benefit of their students to assist with issues they may be struggling with; - *in managing their stress, improving communication skills, building their self esteem -- and setting appropriate academic and personal skills goals.* Also on staff is a Nurse who attends students having some health difficulties.

There is also exposure to the Spanish Speaking Language and countries through DVDs beginning in the Preparatory classes and assistance from Spanish speaking parents. *In addition to the Computer, Cooking and Sewing Classes, the school has also established - a Computer Lab where they are*

*given their theory and practical lessons, a Biology Lab and a Food & Nutrition Lab to help students in their academics.*

**The IT Class Room**



Students are given their theory and practical lessons

In September, their "Sports Day" was held which showcased students' athletic talents, the parents' and teachers' races that were from all accounts a grand success and students were accepted to participate in the Under 15 Cricket Tournament. In the month of October the students and the Staff pray the Rosary together in the mornings

GCC continues its commitment to encouraging scholarships for children of low-income families. This includes totally sponsoring a child for participation in our "Group Scholarship" program. This entails a commitment of \$100 per year for 5 years for which income tax receipts are issued and covers the student up to graduation. Currently, *there are five individually sponsored children and six through Group Scholarships.* We encourage our readers and friends to participate in our Group Scholarship. You will be helping to transform the life of another child with a good Marian Academy education. Just give **June Ann Sealey at (416/283-4818) -- Bernard Gonsalves at (905/683-1030) - or another member a call."**

**Thanks**

**Extracts of some letters of Appreciation for our assistance**

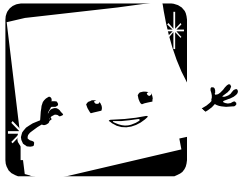
*Shaheed's Boys & Girls Orphanages- Badruddin Hassan--* I would like to thank you for your generous gift ..... Your commitment to helping us care for the children is sincerely appreciated ..... At present there are 21 boys and 12 girls at the Orphanages. With the help of donations from supporters such as you we will continue to see improvements in the lives of the children. Thanks again for your generous support.

*Buxton-Friendship Golden Age Seniors' Group-- M. Hamer --* I wish to inform you ..... boxes of items ..... were received and distributed. The Club observed its 14<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on the 16<sup>th</sup> September, 2007 ..... Thirty members are on roll with an average attendance of 23. There are another 15 members .... classified as 'Shut-Ins'. Two Sick Visiting Groups pay periodic calls on these Shut-Ins and render assistance. Thanks for your donation. Please extend our gratitude to members of your organization.

*Mahaica Hospital Sister M. Noel Menezes, RSM"--* "I do hope all you wonderful members of GCC are as well as ever, busy I know you always are, as you continue to work so devotedly for us all here. I am enclosing two bills for foodstuffs purchased for the patients at Mahaica Hospital. Again, with our warmest thanks for all your generous help enabling us in turn to give some goodies to the patients. We also supply them with rice, sugar, flour and milk powder, kindly donated, as we always did, through the orphanage. May God's richest blessings be with you all and on all your endeavours



**It is always in your power to help those in need**



2008

## UPCOMING EVENTS

... Mark your calendars  
... Book your tickets early

### VALENTINE DINNER & DANCE



**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2008**

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

**Music: Triple Play and DJ**

Joe Castanheiro -- 416-286-1956

Mike Gonsalves -- 416-501-1497

Des De Barros -- 905-837-0135

Theresa Gonsalves -- 416-284-2496

Bernard Gonsalves -- 905-683-1030

or any GCC member

For Tickets  
- call



# LOOK

for our



*Spring* Dance  
May 17, 2008

*Fall* Dance  
September 20, 2008

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

**Music: Will be announced later**  
**For Tickets: See above (same persons as Valentine Dance)**



### Guyana's History – You thought you knew

**Q:** The German botanist Robert Schomburgk came upon an impressive plant on the Berbice River in 1836 and sent specimens back to Europe. Name this plant.

**A:** The Victoria or Victoria regia or Victoria amazonica the famous giant water-lily. The English botanist and horticulturist John Lindley established the genus Victoria and named the species regia in honor of Queen Victoria. Interestingly, in 1850 the year after botanists were able to get the Victoria to flower in Europe, Queen Victoria, accompanied by the French president (later Napoleon III), went to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew to view the flowering.

**Q:** How did Brickdam in Georgetown get its name?

**A:** Brickdam street was the main and middle and best surfaced street of the infant capital of Georgetown. Paved with bricks (hence its name) and with lamps on each side, it ran from the ferry stelling (then called King's Stelling) going east. Later, it was surfaced with burnt earth and in 1921. It was hastily macadamized for the visit of the Prince of Wales from England.

**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).

A receipt will be mailed.

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 our website:**  
**<http://www.gcccanada.org>** (through CanadaHelps.org)

#### NEWSLETTER MAILING LIST

**I would like to be on your Newsletter Mailing List**

**My address has been changed**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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

1612 Arathorn Court, Pickering, ON L1X 2B9

#### FRIENDS OF GUYANA CHRISTIAN CHARITIES (CANADA) INC.

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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**



## How Can you Help? ..... Anyone can get involved!

- **B**ecome a member or volunteer of our Organization.  
*(We hold meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at 7.00 p.m. at 4544 Sheppard Ave E, Scarborough, ON M1S 1V2).*
- **S**upport our Annual Food/Bake Fair and Fundraising Dances. The proceeds from our Spring and Fall Dances are used primarily for humanitarian health efforts.  
*(Willing hands to bake, prepare food items and help us with these events are always needed).*
- **A**ssist with sorting and packing of items for shipment.
- **C**ontact donors of medical supplies, hospital equipment, clothing, shoes, hotel sheets and towels (being replaced), household equipment, detergents and other needed items.
- **U**tilize our Registered Charitable status that permits Income Tax receipts for donations.
- **U**se our Memorial Cards when available at funerals of relatives or friends or leave a lasting legacy such as charitable gift annuity while realizing significant tax benefits.
- **D**irect your United Way contributions to Guyana Charities (Canada) Inc. -- Contact your Human Resources Department.
- **C**onsider participating in our Group Scholarship Educational program for children of low income families who are deserving of financial assistance.