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GUYANA CHRISTIAN CHARITIES (CANADA) INC.

Registration No. 89096-5643-RR0001

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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
Dance*

**SATURDAY,
February 14, 2009**

(SEE PAGE 5 FOR FURTHER
DETAILS)

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2008-2009

President Bernard Gonsalves	Vice President Kumar Singh
Secretary Elizabeth Abdool	Treasurer *Joe Castanheiro
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ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
Joan De Barros

* Past President

SUPPORT FROM NOVA SCOTIA

Dr. Julie Chandler (one of our newest members) and her students have been involved for over a year in supporting and praying for the Girls at St. Ann's and John Bosco's boys Orphanages. She is a gerontologist who lives in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia and is the head of the Anglican Church Sunday School in Yarmouth. Her students (including some visitors) have been making cards and bracelets for the children at St. Ann's and John Bosco's. This year, because Nova Scotia had so much snow just after Easter, the children sent paper snowflakes, since they couldn't send real snow.

Dr. Chandler has also received a request for assistance from King of Glory Lutheran Church in Bel Vue (an underserved area on the East Bank of Demerara), where parishioners have gathered resources to build and furnish a community centre. This centre will provide for the social needs of the area and to this end Dr. Chandler is donating a sewing machine for the sewing program, as well as supporting their youth program.

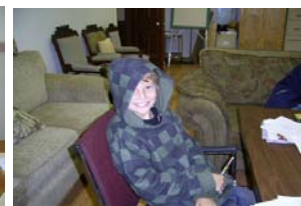
Met some of Dr. Chandler's helpers:



Kelsey Trotter putting bracelets for the St. Ann's girls in the envelopes



Emily Trotter making cards for the John Bosco boys



Walter VanBuskirk working on cards for the John Bosco boys



Devin Leinweber who helped make cards for the John Bosco boys



Martina and Marilyn Mitchell (twins) decorating envelopes



Claire Hendrickson decorating envelopes for St. Ann's girl's

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS -- FULFILL YOUR COMMUNITY SERVICES

We welcome High School Students who are willing to assist us with our fundraising events, sorting and packing for the underprivileged and/or write an article for our newsletter, etc. **You can use these hours towards your community service requirements.**

Please contact **Elizabeth** email: elizabeth_abdool@hotmail.com or **Bernard** 905-683-1030 email: bernard.gonsalves@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Supporters, Friends, Members and Volunteers:

Welcome to the autumn edition of GCC's newsletter. This past year has been a very active and busy one. The demand for our services is forever present, along with the challenge to support these never ending requests. It would be remiss of me not to recognize, and show appreciation, to the special mix of dedicated volunteers, members and supporters, whose unselfish contribution is assisting us to enhance the quality of life for the poor and needy in our troubled land.

I know that over the past few months many of us have experienced difficult and trying times health wise, while others have lost a dear one through prolonged illness. **Please be assured that our prayers are always with you during these distressing periods of your lives.**

In order to keep up with the continuing demand for our services and recognizing the fact that many of us are becoming increasingly unable to maintain the physical activity required to get the job done, the urgency to attract younger members is becoming more and more evident as time rolls on. This opens the door to many other very important questions that need to be answered to define the path we must follow, that will ultimately determine our future. **I believe there are talents and connections that can be leveraged in our community that will assist us in this regard.** We invite you to submit ideas to us in this area for review by our Directors and Membership.

Being a non-profit organization, we can only offer volunteers the satisfaction of "A job well done". I would also like to **thank each of you for the role you play in supporting our various annual fund raising events. A great deal of the credit for our many successes goes to those who have worked tirelessly and quietly behind the scenes.** Their "can do" attitude, reliability and enthusiastic efforts are forever valued and appreciated.

With your ongoing participation and support, we can make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

This year saw the reintroduction of our long-service award program; we presented plaques and certificates to our volunteers and members, (some semi-retired) with a five-year tenure and more. It gave me great pleasure to hand out these awards to a most deserving group of people, who has given yeoman service to our organization on a consistent basis, over many years.

The Christmas season is right around the corner. With this in mind, I extend my best wishes to you and your families for continued good health, happiness and God's Blessing in the New Year.

Bernard Gonsalves

You must be the change you wish to see in the world.
...Mahatma Gandhi

PACKING AND SHIPPING UPDATE



As we approach the end of 2008, a reflection of GCC's activities in this area show that we continue to make a significant impact on the lives and welfare of a wide cross-section of the Guyanese communities across the land. Letters and photographs from the recipients of donations are gratifying to our members, volunteers, and donors.

Weather conditions earlier in the year adversely affected our activities but thanks to our dedicated volunteers, and members, we performed "double shifts" and were able to catch up. GCC shipped two (2) 40-ft. HC containers for distribution in 2008, as well as a co-shipment of medical items for Mercy Hospital and the Burn Care Unit at the Public Hospital. The first shipment arrived in Guyana in August and the other is expected to arrive in time for the Christmas distribution. Over sixty-five (65) recipients including, community groups, individuals, hospitals, centres, etc. are the beneficiaries of the donations we received from you. The shipments included **medical appliances and supplies, clothing, shoes, crafts and sewing materials, sewing machines, bicycles and wheel-chairs, toys and Christmas decorations, school supplies, bed linens, kitchen utensils, books and stationery.**

For the first time in a long while our storage is almost bare of items for distribution. We need your help to replenish our stock.

If you have items such as clothing, shoes, household items, books, school supplies, etc., we will be pleased to accept them on behalf of the less fortunate in Guyana. **The items must be useable and clean.**

Please call one of the following members if you have such items for drop-off or pick-up:

Terry De Freitas	-	416-438-5992
Gerry Gouveia	-	905-623-2034
Ann Marie Reigber	-	416-755-6958
Stephen Choo Wing	-	905-420-2789
Joan de Barros	-	905-837-0135
Kumar Singh	-	416-498-9962

Thank You

To: Harry and Pam Harakh re sterilizer/autoclave

Dear Pam and Harry,

Last Thursday we picked up the truckload from the John Fernandes' wharf. As soon as the pick up arrived we unloaded the sterilizer/autoclave we had Maintenance check it out and brought it up to the OR where it was "enthroned" in OR #1. We also immediately brought the blankets used to pack the sterilizer to housekeeping. We have badly needed blankets for the OR recovery room and the ICU. We are thrilled. We are thrilled. Saturday the Materials Management staff came in especially to open and inventory the remaining boxes. There are many or I should say all very useful and badly needed items. We are so very grateful to you for these wonderful treasures. God bless you for your generosity.

Sister Sheila Walsh, RSM

MARIAN ACADEMY CELEBRATES TEN YEARS OF EDUCATION SERVICES

The tenth year of the establishment of Marian Academy was celebrated with a Mass held at the Brickdam Cathedral by Bishop Francis Alleyne. Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc. (GCC) would like to **congratulate the management and staff and to wish them continued success in the future.**

The school was formulated as a religious private school to assist students in their educational pursuit in the secondary school process and holistic development. With assurance, encouragement and support from religious communities and other friends abroad, along with a sizeable bank loan and the introduction of school fees, the Marian Academy came into being, with an enrolment of 227 students in rented premises, which has now increased to 747 students.

The school provides students with a full curriculum of subjects and an opportunity to succeed in all aspects of life.

Since its commencement, GCC has started a program, which promotes scholarships to students of low income families (that includes boys and girls from both St. John Bosco and St. Ann's Girl Orphanages). The funds are provided by **some members and their families, generous individuals and supporters** who sponsor a child or two independently or by joining in a group sponsorship program, by contributing \$100 per year for five years for each scholarship. Currently, there are seven (7) fully sponsored students by individuals, as well as eight (8) group scholarships. A recent analysis of the final progress reports received from the Academy on students we collectively sponsor, show an overall average performance rating of 78%, with very high conduct and attendance evaluations.

Thanks to all contributors for their continued involvement in this very worthwhile student education program. **Contributions can be submitted for these scholarships to GCC each year by April 30.**

Education is the movement from darkness to light.
~Allan Bloom

NOTE

We have been asked to include in our newsletter the impending need for a new Principal, **who ideally but not necessarily** should be a practicing Roman Catholic with an academic degree from a recognized university and at least 10 years of experience in classroom teaching. This person is to replace Sr. Marie Harper, who is needed to serve elsewhere in the Caribbean.

It should be noted that **the Principal is supported by Coordinators at each level of education, an efficient treasurer, and committees who deal with arrangements for extra-curricular activities (including parent/teacher meetings) and special events like the annual Fair and Year Book.**

Applications are invited from those willing and able to accept the challenge. For more information, please contact: **Sr. Marie Harper, Chairperson Board of Governors**
Email: mpngui@yahoo.com -- Tel.: (592) 226-5016

RECOGNIZING OUR VOLUNTEERS

On July 27, 2008, for the eighth consecutive year, Members of the Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc. (GCC), paid tribute to the many Volunteers, past and present, who donate their time unselfishly every week, to sort and pack clothing, books, shoes, toys, household items, medical supplies and equipment, that are donated by various individuals and companies to GCC. These items are all sent to the many needy Charities, orphanages, the Ministry of Health, the Burn Care Unit, hospitals and other outreach areas of Guyana. **All denominations are included in the distribution of items shipped to Guyana by GCC.**

The Members of GCC once again, showed their immense generosity and appreciation for these dedicated Volunteers, by reciprocating with the provision of food, desserts, drinks and other refreshments to make this occasion a great success.

The Members of GCC use this event annually to show their appreciation and to say **"Thank You"** to these Volunteers, without whom GCC would be unable to meet its mandate. Recognition Certificates and Award Plaques were handed out to several Volunteers. Recognition is done on a 5 – 10 year term.

The President of GCC – Mr. Bernard Gonsalves and Vice-President Mr. Kumar Singh reiterated the goals of GCC, thanked the Volunteers for their continuing support, and everyone else for their attendance and input in making this a successful event.

Guest speaker, Mr. Danny Doobay – the Honorary Consul General of Guyana, thanked GCC for its many and varied contributions to our fellow Guyanese in our homeland, Guyana.

The event was emceed by Mr. Frank Bettencourt with his usual witty sense of humor, which added flair to the proceedings.

This annual event is hosted by June Ann Sealey and Robert Gibson, in Scarborough, assisted by the very competent members of the Volunteer Appreciation Committee, and is always well attended.

Musical entertainment was provided by: **The Soprano Seniors Steel Pan Band, headed by Mike Marks, The Vintage Band, coordinated by Andrew Zitman;** other entertainers were **Victor Shim and Dick Lochan.** The willingness of these entertainers to return yearly is welcomed and admired by all.

A special Thank You to *Mr. Arthur Veerasammy* for his undying contribution of barbecuing the many, many pieces of chicken!!!.

Plaques, Appreciation Certificates and Gifts, were handed out to the following individuals who have contributed to GCC's success as a Charitable Organization:

Loretta and Pat Bourne, Stephen Choo Wing, Jean and Dennis Choy, Muriel (Liz) DeFreitas, Cecil Farinha, Joyce Foster, Stella and Gordon Gonsalves, Jackie Gonsalves, Wendy Grenada, Lauren Harry, Pam and Harry Harakh, Allan Hing, Janet and Ernest King, Bernice and Bernie Lopes, Shirley Mootoo, Joachim Reigber, Justin Rodrigues, Jeanette Rutherford, Mary Ann and Gus Seide, Inez Steaman, Francina Stevenson, Desiree Thomas, Maureen and Lyder Tiam Fook, Arthur Veerasammy, Orlean Williams and Andrew Zitman.



BY JOHN O'CONNOR

This time of year, I would usually be at St. Joseph Mercy Hospital, Guyana; but I am not. I got a little selfish and decided to go in our winter. I am not much of a snow fan and I can't take the pain of reading about travails of the Toronto Maple Leafs. When I do go, **Mercy will not be the same because it will be missing a big piece of its heart.....Sister Sheila Marie Walsh, R.S.M. is leaving in December.** After "retiring" as the CEO of two large hospitals in Buffalo, New York, she requested to go where she had wanted to go for her first assignment – overseas. She has been the 'boss' at Mercy for seven years. Actually, **she has been almost everything at Mercy.** It was not unusual to see her mopping up after a flood, moving furniture, picking up garbage at the Christmas Fair, kicking the backup generator when it wouldn't start, walking a new patient to the right clinic, always calling everyone by their name and knowing something about their lives. She was always on the go: the first administration staff there in the morning – and often the last to leave, or on a Sunday trip with other Sisters to the Leprosy Hospital in Mahaica to deliver care packages and encouragement.

You know how they have a 'Miss Congeniality' in beauty contests? Well, I do not recall ever seeing her in a bathing suit, but she'd sure get the award at Mercy; there would be no debate that she personified the meaning of hospitality. An example: new or old volunteers would be greeted by Sister Sheila at the airport almost any time day or night. It was cheaper - and probably safer – to have a limousine driver do it, but that was not the impression that Sister Sheila wanted all of us to have. She was welcoming.

One volunteer remembers for many of us: **"When I arrived in December one week before Christmas, she was there with open arms and I just had this calmness and solidity about my decision. She embraced me and every time I see her I still get that sense running through my body."**

And here comes the usual punch line: No one is irreplaceable; life goes on. She was going to leave quietly, but I don't think that's right. **While she will leave many memories and scores of accomplishments, I believe she should have something special to celebrate her leaving.**

[She'd be embarrassed if she knew I was doing this and probably be mad at me; however, she won't be there when I get there in January.] **Right now the School of Nursing is in need of some new desks and chairs as well as some final renovations, like an elevated sidewalk and overhang.** [The two classrooms have had their floors raised to stop the rains from flooding them.] An initial estimate for the costs is about \$9,000 to \$10,000 Canadian. I would

like to think that there are enough Canadian Guyanese who could make this possible. It seems fitting to have a walkway named after her as she managed by "walking about". It could be called "Walsh Way" or "Sister Sheila's Street".

And if we did accomplish this, I know she'd like it and might even forgive me for doing it. **If you wish to contribute, please send your donation to the "Sister Sheila Fund" care of Guyana Christian Charities.**

Update: Sister Sheila corrected me again! She told me not to speak of her "retiring". "I am only **relocating,**" she said. **I guess she has a new ministry planned, with people who will also be blessed by her.**

Who are we assisting?

GCC continues its wide assistance to Guyana through the list of Charities we have on file in the following areas, all being run by different denominations:

- Orphanages
- drop in centres for Street Children
- Missions
- National Commission on Disabilities, Ptolemy Reid Rehabilitation Centre in Carmichael St.
- Homes -- all types in various parts of the country, i.e. Convalescent Homes, Shelter Homes, The Palms, etc.
- Seniors Groups
- Outreach Programs in depressed communities and Street Prisons
- Hostels and Churches -- through support groups including St. Vincent de Paul Organizations
- Youths -- vocational Skills Training for Teens and Young Women; assisting with Medication for AIDS
- Counselling Centre -- reintegrating a number of children into the regular school system and some with their families
- Education -- through Schools, Libraries, Colleges and the University of Guyana
- Food -- through food supply and food hampers to families who cannot afford the necessities
- Hospitals
- Canadian University Students who volunteer their time in Guyana
- Joint Ventures with other organizations to assist someone in need including health and disaster situations

Do You Know

You can make donations on-line at our website <http://www.gccanada.org> through CanadaHelps



2009

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

VALENTINE DINNER & DANCE

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2009

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
Tentatively
April 18, 2009

Autumn Dance
September
2009

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

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

Guyana's History You thought you knew

Q How did Brickdam in Georgetown get its name?
A: Brickdam, the first paved road, was built by the French, and was known then as Middle Dam. Paved with bricks (hence its name) and with ramps 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 for the visit of the Prince of Wales from England.

Q: How many regions are there in Guyana?
A: There are **10 regions** in Guyana: (1) Barima-Waini; (2) Pomeroon-Supenaam; (3) Essequibo Islands-West Demerara; (4) Demerara-Mahaica; (5) Mahaica-Berbice; (6) East Berbice-Corentyne; (7) Cuyuni-Mazaruni; (8) Potaro-Siparuni; (9) Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo; (10) Upper Demerara-Berbice

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

email: stanandmarg@yahoo.com



Ways of giving a helping hand

- **B**ecome a member, volunteer or supporter 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)
- **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.
- **C**onsider giving a donation in honor or use Memorial Cards 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.