

GUYANA CHRISTIAN CHARITIES (CANADA) INC.

805 Middlefield Road, Unit 5, Scarborough, ON M1V 4Z6 -- Tel. No. 416-293-8622

Website: <http://www.gcccanada.org> Email: gcccaninc@gmail.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/GuyanaChristianCharities>

Registration No. 89096-5643-RR0001



VOLUME 54

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John O'Connor

My respect to Sir Walter Raleigh four centuries later, but his discovery -- and mine were egocentric. This land of many waters was there before either of our discoveries. I have come to love the country... Well, to be more specific: the Guyanese people who live there and the expats here in Canada. (To be honest, I am still trying to adjust to a Caribbean beach with brown water).

In September and October, I worked at the School of Nursing -- St Joseph Mercy Hospital, St Ann's Girls Home and the Department of Psychiatry, Georgetown Public Hospital. This was my 15th effort since 2002 to use my skills to help others. I receive much adulation for my volunteer work; I enjoy them all.



John O'Connor with his students



When one of the board members asked me to write what was significant about my 2017 trip. I hesitated because I do write a blog each week I am there (www.revjoc.blogspot.com). What would be significant that I didn't write about already?

Like 17th century Walter, I have come relatively late to be concerned for Guyana. And, as with him, my going overshadows those who quietly support the adventure. There are many who do this for me, starting with my family and friends.

And ... to the natives who had "discovered" Guyana and its needs long before I made my discovery (rumor -- Joe Castanheiro might have been there to welcome Sir Walter when he sailed

Contd. on Page 3.....

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 organizations, individuals and others in need

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (2017-2018)

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Rahana Khan
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HONORARY DIRECTOR

DESMOND DE BARROS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings to all our readers!

Dear Members, Volunteers, Supporters and Friends:

I am honoured to have been appointed President of GCC at our Annual General Meeting held on May 2017. My trepidations have vanished since I have found all of you willing to help me when I have asked for your assistance. My most sincere thank you.

We are a great organization. I am amazed at the care and love with which you all take it into your stride to ensure that the organization is able to keep its mandate. I hear your laughter and teasing, and sometimes challenges, but I am glad I too belong to GCC.

Our outgoing President Elizabeth Abdool has served in this capacity for several years. During her tenure GCC continued to expand the number of organizations that we assist in Guyana. Her untiring efforts and the overwhelming support we receive at all of our fundraising events made this possible. Thanks Elizabeth for a job well done!

As President, I will do my part to ensure that we continue to assist those who are less fortunate. It is my hope that with your support we will move ahead positively towards addressing some of the crucial needs of Guyana. The involvement of each of us is needed to maintain the continued existence of our organization.

Since our last newsletter we raised over \$6,000 from our "Spring Dance" held May 20, 2017 and over \$5,000 from our "Fall Dance" held on September 23, 2017.

Our four major fundraising events are our Valentine Dance, the Spring and Autumn Dances and our ever popular Bake and Food Sale. Our gratitude goes out to all of our wonderful GCC members, volunteers, and supporters, including our donors, etc. who are always ready to assist and support us.

Special thanks to John O'Connor (*GCC member*) for his continuing dedication to the work he does in Guyana for various charitable organizations and in particular training Nurses at St Joseph Mercy Hospital, as well as to Sister H (*GCC member*) who goes there yearly to take GCC's "Cheers" to needy families, especially for Christmas.

Shipping costs are an essential major expenditure in our budget and we are deeply indebted to our donors for their contributions; and also to our dedicated packers and volunteers who continue to give their valuable time and service to accomplish this objective.

It is sad to report that we lost two of our oldest and stalwart members, Francine Stevenson and Theresa (Terry) De Freitas. (See Tributes later in the newsletter)

Again, I would like to close by expressing my deepest appreciation to our members, volunteers, donors and supporters. It is only through your generosity that we are able to continue with the various activities that make a great difference in the lives of many.

God Bless.

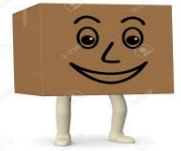
Sincerely,

Dexter Gonsalves

President



PACKING & SHIPPING UPDATE



Our last shipment for 2017 arrived in Guyana early October and the 825 pieces/boxes of donations valued at \$21,000 were distributed to over 60 organizations across Guyana in time for the Christmas Season which assisted in making the Festive Season more enjoyable.

Sadly, the destruction caused by Hurricane Maria seriously affected the lives and health of the population in a large section of the Caribbean Islands. Consequently, members of the Caribbean Consular Corp in Toronto sought assistance in the form of money, goods and services to help the large number of people affected.

GCC responded to this request by offering a quantity of medical supplies, some of which were for shipment to Guyana. Five pallets of medical supplies were picked up for shipment to Dominica and Barbuda.

Thanks for your support in making donations, your attendance at our fund raising events, and volunteering, to help us execute our mandate. Please continue to do so and keep in touch by calling any of the following persons:

Anne Marie Reigber	416-755-6958
Stephen Choo-Wing	905-420-2789
Dexter Gonsalves	416-293-8622
Kumar Singh	416-498-9962

Hope you had an enjoyable Christmas and Best Wishes for 2018.

STUDENTS
VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED!



GCC is always looking for student volunteers to lend a hand. This will give you an opportunity to get involved in a diverse range of activities on Saturdays. Being part of our GCC family will allow you to develop skills and make connections with other student leaders, and engage with members of GCC in numerous ways.

Volunteering at GCC provides you with a unique opportunity to interact with persons who previously worked in various sectors of businesses, while performing a vital role in our organization.

Perks of volunteering include: A welcome letter; T-shirt; Bag pack; letter of reference with complete 40 hours; Volunteer Certificate with complete 40 hours; appreciation party and socials at our dances and bake sale; opportunity to learn to work with other volunteers in baking – cooking – packing - admin work, etc.

Contact: **Kumar Singh 416-498-9962** for further information.



Together we make a difference

A team is more than a collection of people. It is a process of give and take.

Barbara Glacel & Emile Robert Jr.

GCC Volunteers' Fun Talent Show

Karen Heifa

GCC is able to achieve its goals through the kindness and generosity of its many volunteers. We have discovered our volunteers **not only have talents in.... baking – cooking – packing – shipping – organizing and coordinating events, but also in entertaining.**



To everyone's surprise, GCC volunteers rose to the occasion when asked to perform at a "Talent Show" hosted by yours truly in the summer of 2017. It took a bit of arm twisting and coercing to get them on stage but once there, all hell broke loose as they displayed their "hidden" talents. There was no stopping them.

Needless to say, folks were howling with laughter and cheers to see their fellow volunteers "expound" themselves to the delight of all.

GCC certainly appreciates their dedication and hard work and it was rewarding to see the volunteers having so much fun.



Kumar Singh

RAHSAAN ABEL'S SURGERY: Rahsaan Abel, a 16 year old boy from Guyana was born with a collapsing spine (Scoliosis). As he grew older this condition became progressively more painful and worse.

Desmond Abel, his father approached the Guyana Christian Charities Canada Inc. (GCC) seeking assistance for his son. GCC referred this case to The Caribbean Children Foundation Inc. (TCCF) whose mandate is to help children from Guyana and the Caribbean to receive life-saving surgeries which are not available in those countries. TCCF arranged for and paid for this surgery (\$10,000 Cdn.) in Texas, USA by doctors from the International Children's Heart Foundation and Spine Hope. GCC donated \$1,000. to partly pay for the incidental expenses incurred by the parents.

Rahsaan had his surgery successfully on Sept. 28, 2017 in Texas, returned home on Oct. 10th and is doing very well. In a letter to GCC. Desmond Abel had this to say:

"Our family, especially Rahsaan is very grateful for the love, support and prayers extended to Rahsaan and our family during this very challenging time of Rahsaan's surgery and recovery. Your selfless, benevolent, charitable contribution is indeed invaluable. Thanks to all the members of GCC Inc."

The caring actions by GCC, TCCF, the Guyana diaspora and organizations in Canada certainly succeeded in a big way to save the life of Rahsaan.

"Somewhere along the way, we must learn that there is nothing greater than to do something for others." - Martin Luther King Jr

Guyana's History You thought you knew	
Q.	What do Peoples Temple Agricultural Project, ER Braithwaite, and the air strikes on D-Day have in common?
A.	These three items all put the little country of Guyana on the front of the world stage: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The allied planes were almost all constructed using the bauxite mined in Linden [It didn't get much press. Some speculate that without Guyana bauxite the war might have ended differently]; 2. Peoples Temple Agricultural Project, better known as Jonestown where over 900 mostly Americans were massacred [Now unfortunately everyone connects Guyana with the tragedy]; and 3. Guyanese born Eustace Edward Ricardo Braithwaite wrote his autobiography <u>To Sir with Love</u> while he was teaching in London. [Everyone's seen the movie and few know the author was Guyanese.]
Q.	What prickly fruit is eaten instead of potatoes?
A.	Breadfruit is grapefruit-size and shape, rich in starch, pale green fruit that grows on a tree. It has creamy white flesh when ripe.
Q.	Edgar Allen Poe wrote El Dorado about what place? 'Over the Mountains Of the Moon, Down the Valley of the Shadow, Ride, boldly ride,' The shade replied, — 'If you seek for Eldorado!
A.	Trick Question... California. Poe wrote it in response to the 1849 Gold Rush!

My Discoverie of the Large, Rich, and Bewtiful Emphyre of Guyana (Contd.)

into the Orinoco): the people who drive the Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc. (GCC) have my admiration for their decades of dedicated work to improve the lives of all Guyanese. They don't get the recognition of adventurers but they deserve more for all the dances arranged, all the foods baked and sold, all the containers packed and shipped, all the really boring meetings attended.

So what is the most significant insight from my 2017 adventure? It has to be that the GCC has welcomed and supported this pretend Guyanese, ME! I thank you for helping me steer the ship of my discoveries.

The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." - Mahatma Gandhi



TRIBUTE

Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc. (GCC) is saddened at the passing of two of its loyal and dedicated members, who have given so much of their time to support various sectors of GCC. They surely will be missed.



Francina Stevenson has been a longstanding and devoted volunteer member and supporter of GCC until her demise, which occurred on November 20, 2017. She was very active in GCC since its inception and participated in various ventures, in particular she coordinated the smooth management of the Sweet Tooth Stall at the Annual Food and Bake Sale. In her involvement with GCC, she included her family, who are still the mainstay of her stall.

Francina loved her family fiercely and kept them loving and caring. Francina, an only child, was dedicated to her family and lovingly shared her compassion, love, memories, her wisdom and kindness with her eleven children, twenty-nine grandchildren, twenty-nine great-grandchildren, one great-great-granddaughter, as well as her entire family.

She is predeceased by her mother Claudina Fernandes, her loving husband Harold Forrest Stevenson, her son Richard Forrest Stevenson (Monica), her grandson Ryan Garnet Hicks and her son-in-law David Andrew Valladares (Tessa).

To Francine's family, we offer our prayers and sincere sympathy as we share in their loss.



Theresa (Terry) Genevieve De Freitas was longstanding and compassionate volunteer member and supporter of GCC who passed away on Wednesday January 3, 2018. She is predeceased by her loving husband Claude (January 13th 2016).

Mourning the loss of their beloved mother are Melissa (Paul), Peter (Bob) and Michelle (Michael). Proud grandmother to Matthew (Alex), Leslie (Mark), Stuart (Nancy) Brennan and Emma. Devoted aunt to Nancy (Imtiaz) and cherished Gigi to Halle and Jack. She will be forever missed by her loving sisters Carmen, Aileen and Phil.

Terry and Claude brought their young family to Toronto from Guyana in 1966. They made their home in Scarborough and other than her role as a loving mother, Terry spent her working years in the payroll department at Scarborough General Hospital.

Terry and Claude were enthusiastic supporters of fundraisers and charities that benefited Guyana. In this vein, Terry volunteered with Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc. for some years as a packer and later with newsletter distribution.

Terry loved her Guyanese cultural heritage and became a founding member of the Soprano Seniors steel band, playing with the band until very recently.

Terry was a caring, wonderful support to anyone lucky enough to call her friend. As mother, grandmother, great grand mother, sister, aunt or friend, she will be sorely missed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to her children, grandchildren, family and friends. May she rest in peace.

WITH SYMPATHY
Eternal Rest Grant unto them O Lord

Members would like to express their sympathy to the families of members, volunteers, donors, supporters and friends of GCC, who have passed since our last newsletter, and in particular:

Audrey Chapman
Noel Chung
Theresa Genevieve De Freitas

Neville Gomes
Yvonne Gouveia (Guyana)

Vibert Perreia
Francina "Mary" Stevenson
Frank Terrill (Johnny)

The families of our deceased brothers and sisters thank you for your prayers and expressions of sympathy.

Sincere thanks to those who listed Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc. to receive donations in lieu of flowers.

Bake and Food Sale

Pansy Hsan



Our Annual Bake and Food Sale is held on the last Sunday in October every year. This has been a great event to sample some Guyanese home cooking at its best. *"It all started back in the 60's when a group of ladies came together to host a 'Bring and Buy Sale' to raise funds for the St. Ann's Orphanage and St. John Bosco Boys Orphanage in Guyana".* This became an annual event from then and this tradition continues on. Through the generosity of our donors from the Guyanese and West Indian community who donate both their expertise in cooking and baking and/or by providing monetary donations for ingredients, we now provide a wide range of traditional Guyanese cooking to a large crowd of repeat patrons who come every year to get their "Guyanese Food Fix".



There is always a wide range of food and baked goods sold, such as: *Souse, Cook-Up Rice, Black Pudding, Chow Mein, Fried Rice, Roti and Curry, Guyanese Fudge, Sugar cake, Matai, Pine Tart, Patties, Black Cake, Fruit Cake, Bolo De Miel (Portuguese Honey Cake), Mauby, Ginger Beer, Sorrel, Homemade Pepper Sauce and Pickles, Pepper Plants, Potato Balls, Pholourie, Salt Fish and Bakes.*

This event is successful due to the dedication of the donors and volunteers and is one of our fundraising events throughout the year. The funds raised go directly to several charities in Guyana. (Contd.)

THANK YOU

We.... here a big "Thank You" for the thirteen (13) boxes of foodstuff and clothing sent to us from your organization. Be assured of our prayerful support for you and your Boardthose generous people who donated, collected, packed and shipped the boxes to us.appreciate what you are doing for us. May God who is not outdone in generosity continue to bless each one of you. **Sr. Antoinette Dickie, Manager, St. Bernadette's Hostel**

A happy prosperous and successful 2018 to the members of GCC. The Administrator staff and children of Joshua House wish to express sincere appreciation to you for your continued support and generosity through the years. May God continue to bless your members and their loved ones. Thank you for your most recent contribution of 19 boxes of items. Once again we thank your organization for your valued support. **Gladys Accra, Administrator, Joshua House Children Centre**

We want to express our deep gratitude for joining with us to see Jesus in the poorest of the poor and helping us to serve them by your generous and cheerful sacrifice of your heart in offering the best of yourself and what God has bestowed on you in his bountiful providence. Our gratitude and appreciation is our prayer for you and your families and may our dearest Mother Saint Teresa of Calcutta bless you and pray for you always. **Sr. M. Florette M.C., Missionaries Of Charity, New Amsterdam.**



let all
you do be
done in
love

The Legend of St. Valentine. The history of Valentine's Day – and the story of its patron saint – is shrouded in mystery. We do know that February has long been celebrated as a month of romance, and that St. Valentine's Day, as we know it today, contains vestiges of both Christian and ancient Roman tradition.

Valentine's Day, also known as Saint Valentine's Day, originated as a church holiday on February 14th to honor martyrs of the faith -- saints whose names were Valentine or Valentinus. It is believed that the first heart valentine note was sent by a Valentine who was in prison for a girl he loved. Valentines notes have been recorded for as far back as the middle ages. While the meaning and celebrations of Valentine's Day has changed, it has remained as a special day to shower with love to those we hold close.



"Kindness is tenderness. Kindness is love...Kindness is good will....Kindness says, I want you to be happy." **Randolph Ray**

Bake and Food Sale (Contd.)

The volunteers who help at the event often have quite a lot of fun interacting with patrons and meeting old friends for a "gaff". If you would like to join in the fun with lots of Guyanese all together in one big room and hear our Guyanese accent at its finest, mark the date of our next bake sale on your calendar -- October 28, 2018. Come on out for some great Guyanese 'eats' and a good time amongst your fellow ex patriots.

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Come Join us and EnjoyOur yearly Events



Spring Dance

Saturday May 19, 2018 @ 7.30 p.m.

Pickering Recreation Complex

1867 Valley Farm Road Pickering

(Between Liverpool & Brock Rds. -- South of Highway 2)

Band: Triple Play -- D.J. TeeCee



Fall Dance

Saturday September 22, 2018 @ 7.30 p.m.

Pickering Recreation Complex

1867 Valley Farm Road Pickering

(Between Liverpool & Brock Rds. -- South of Highway 2)

Band: Victor Shim & Surefire -- D.J. Dynamic Sound

Secure your Tickets for these dances early

Joe Castanheiro 416-286-1956

Mike Gonsalves 416-420-0565

Dexter Gonsalves 905-428-3883

Dennis Choy 905-839-0434

Karen Heifa 416-720-6902



or.... any GCC member or.... email: gcccaninc@gmail.com



Annual Bake & Food Sale

Free Admission

SUNDAY OCTOBER 28, 2018

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Pickering Recreation Complex

1867 Valley Farm Road Pickering

(Between Liverpool & Brock Rds.)

South of Highway 2

New Donors ← Please contact: Pansy Hsan 905-426-6099



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You can request that your United Way contributions be specifically designated to Guyana Christian Charities (Canada) Inc. - Kindly contact your Human Resources/Personnel Department.

Give a Helping Hand

THREE EASY WAYS YOU CAN HELP
Guyana Christian Charities

1. PRAY FOR OUR CONTINUED SURVIVAL;
2. Volunteer with ONE of our many AREAS of NEED;
3. SUPPORT US financially - OUR ORGANIZATION DEPENDS ON YOUR GENEROSITY.

☒ **YES! I WANT TO HELP**

☐ \$100 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ Other

☐ GENERAL

☐ BERNARD GONSALVES MEMORIAL FUND

☐ IN MEMORY

☐ St. JOSEPH MERCY HOSPITAL FUND

☐ TRIBUTE

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805 Middlefield Road, Unit 5, Scarborough ON M1V 4Z6

Donations may also be made through our Website:
<http://www.gcccanada.org> (through CanadaHelps.org)

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☐ I would like to be on your Newsletter Mailing/email List

☐ My address has been changed

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email: _____

Phone: _____

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

805 Middlefield Road, Unit 5, Scarborough ON M1V 4Z6

COULD YOU HELP GCC?

☐ 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 ☐ PACKING for shipments

☐ DANCE ☐ TRANSPORTING donated items

Name _____

Address _____

Postal Code _____

email _____

Phone _____

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

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We publish two newsletters each year
(February and October)

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New Year's Resolutions for a Happy and Healthy - 2018



1. **Practice mindful eating** -- Slow down and pay attention to your food, pausing between bites. "When you eat mindfully, it's easier to notice when you feel full, plus you're more likely to enjoy the foods you eat."
2. **Chill out and rest up** -- Turn the thermostat down to 68 degrees or lower before can help you sleep better. Darken your room by drawing the curtains or dimming the display on your alarm clock to really get those quality Zs.
3. **Adopt an attitude of gratitude** -- Reflect and keep a grateful journal to shift your focus and minimize distorting influence of stress. Helps to develop a sense of balance and perspective that can enhance well-being."
4. **Find 30 minutes a day to walk** -- Take three 10-minute walks throughout your day. "That's 10 minutes before work, 10 minutes at lunch and then 10 minutes after work. Make it fun. Grab a partner, friend or family member for strolls.
5. **Take the stairs** -- Use the stairs instead of the elevator may seem minor, but it can make a big difference for your heart in the long run. "Individuals who are physically active are much less likely to develop cardiovascular disease
6. **Commit to a 30-day fitness challenge** -- Pick a fitness activity that's easy and doesn't require equipment, and commit to it for 30 days. Whether your goal is to lose weight, lower cholesterol or have more energy to play with young ones, -- make a change.


Celebrating our 30th Anniversary



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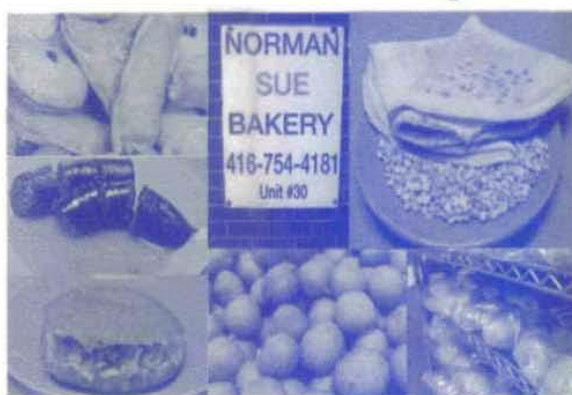
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