

Insight

St. Vincent & the Grenadines Association of Toronto Incorporated Quarterly Newsletter

October 2005

FROM THE PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Greetings to all members and readers.

As we move towards the end of the year we tend to set our gears and attention on the events to celebrate the anniversary of the independence of our homeland. This issue outlines all activities for the Association up to December and beyond.

The Independence Anniversary Coordinating Committee headed by Audrey Lewis has put together the usual events – Church Service, Banquet and Town Hall meeting but this year the committee has a line up of artists or presenters not usually seen at these celebrations. We look forward to the many Vincentians and friends in our community supporting all the events. Please make an effort to attend at least one of the events. All information regarding the celebrations could be found on several pages of this publication. The committee is excited to have Mrs. Betty Boyea-King as the guest speaker at the banquet as well as having young Miss Andrea Lewis from DeGrassi performing songs from her newly released CD.

We are pleased that responses have been received for the various awards and competitions. The various committees who will determine winners have a tremendous responsibility on their hands and we ask that you respect the decisions of the committees and congratulate those who have been chosen for awards or recognitions. At the banquet the first recipient of the Association's scholarship will be announced and presented with a cheque and we expect that a logo would be chosen from the submissions presented for consideration. In addition to those the winner of this year's Dr. Allan Liverpool Award will be announced.

It is encouraging to see that the monthly meetings of the Association are well attended. This may be in some measure due to the presentations put on by the Education Committee that follows most of these meetings. At the September meeting Ms Sandra Sutherland of Suthern Immigration and Paralegal Services conducted discussions on the subject of Immigration. A summary of Ms Sutherland's presentation is found later in this publication. On behalf of the executive and general membership of the Association we sincerely thank all those individuals who give us their time to make their services available to us.

The committee is also pleased that Insight is reaching more and more people each quarter both by regular mailing and by way of the Internet. We continue to encourage those who have email addresses to provide us with your address so that we can reduce the cost of mailing through the Post Office. Please remember to

visit the Association's website, www.vincytoronto.com to read more of what is taking place in our community. There is a message board on the website where we can discuss matters relating to our community on an ongoing basis.

The PR Committee would like to thank those persons who contribute articles for our publication as well as those businesses that advertise. We encourage you to support these businesses when and where possible.

The October issue of Insight is normally the last issue of each year, however, the PR Committee would like to produce a Special Christmas Issue due out in mid December where our members and readers are encouraged to use the newsletter to send greetings to their loved ones. For a contribution of \$20.00 you would get up to a business card size space to send your greetings. Please contact any of the following committee members to get your space for the greeting: Cordel Telfer - 905-789-9731; Fred Williams - 905-821-7954; Gerry Wolkowski - 416-283-2355; Gideon Exeter - 905-831-1814; Grafton Bibby - 416-496-1029 or Yolande Lewis - 416-809-9820.

With all good wishes.

Yolande Lewis,
Public Relations Officer

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Thanksgiving Service

***Sunday October 16th, 2005 @ 4:00 p.m.
Rosewood Church of the Nazarene,
657 Milner Ave, Scarborough***

The President Writes

YOUR ASSOCIATION ...YOUR ROLE, RESPONSIBILITY...VOLUNTEER YOU SAY

Our society is built on the contributions of volunteers. The current Hurricane Katrina relief effort showcases the value of the contributions of volunteers. Every non-profit organization embodies the work of volunteers. More than seventy percent of their work force is often made up of volunteers. Their (the organizations') survival is contingent on the presence and participation of volunteers. Politicians see the great value in volunteer efforts but use this as a front to reduce spending, citing the responsibility of the community – a definite mis-use. Volunteerism is everywhere; it permeates our whole lives.

The organizations that benefit most from volunteers are the ones that (a) clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the volunteer; (b) engage in a selection process that will match volunteer to tasks/roles (c) provide training/support to volunteers as a regular part of its program development and mentoring service; (d) channel the skills of each volunteer for maximum results. And most importantly, treat them as an indispensable commodity – because they simply are.

Where do we, SVGAT, as an organization fit? We are certainly a volunteer/non-profit organization. As a matter of fact, we symbolize the purity of the meaning of the term "volunteer organization". There is no one in the organization that is paid. What else holds true in our organization? Let's examine each section more closely.

Through our Constitution, we have attempted to define the roles and responsibilities of each of the role players – executive in its component parts, committees, and membership. But similar to other constitutions, it only defines these roles in broad terms. Obvious advantages of the structure of the constitution are to allow creativity and sponsorship of ideas for the benefit of the organization. Every Committee should, therefore, be very specific in their function within this structure. They should develop "Terms of Reference", "Goals and Objectives", and "Action Plans" – long term commitments. When fully developed, it is through these vehicles that the constitution is best showcased and the membership is given maximum opportunities for participation and the embracing of the visions and goals of the organization. The work of the committees – including the executive – should be well guided, guarded and supported. It is your individual responsibility to encourage the best work from the membership of these groups through our endearing support for the work that they do. Our "let me jump in and help" attitude should be primary over any criticism we may have to offer.

Clearly, our selection process needs to be re-looked. Our General Election - at least over the last three years that I have been a member of this Association - does not speak well for the Membership. On the day of the election too many positions are filled by "Let's see if 'John Henry' could be coerced into taking it". There is undoubtedly too many very capable (enthusiasm, dedication, team player) members who, for some reason or

another, are not more meaningfully involved in the business of the Association. A Nominations Committee should be an integral part of the process of the election. This Nominating Committee, its structure and membership, its role and responsibility, its term of office, etc., should be clearly defined and enshrined in our Constitution. In the mean time it is the duty of the current Executive to appoint a Nominating Committee whose tasks include promoting the work of the Association, publicizing the coming election, calling for nominations, fervently seeking candidates, and presenting a slate of candidates to the membership for their consideration at the next election. This responsibility of seeking candidates to run for election is not confined/limited to the Nominating Committee. Each Member of the Association needs to participate fully in this search for candidates. We also need to offer to serve on executive, or as committee chairs, or on committees, or to participate in any of the programs offered, etc. Each of us should be seen as an ardent advocate of the Association and its function within the community. Get to know our membership and their capabilities and encourage them to seek office or to participate on committees. I am not suggesting that we form alliances/groups for the election, as this will only cultivate cliques – which, often, become an obstacle in the progress of the organization.

Participation on committees – including on the executive, or as chair - of any volunteer organization should be given the same value as an employee entering a new employ. Progressive organizations provide a period of orientation for its new employees so that there is some socialization into the ideology of the workplace. Therefore, somewhere in our Constitution or our Policy, should be some provision for orientation of new Executives, of Committee Chairs, and of committee members to the scope and work of this organization (more than what has been loosely talked about in conversations). That is, well-planned, well-developed and well-presented orientations should be a necessary part of the growth development of the Association. Our Education Committee should have as one of its key objectives, "Providing Professional Development for Members". Its task is to do extensive search and find capable individuals who will provide the service. Amongst us are teams that can do this exceptionally well. The team(s) can also serve in a consultative/mentoring role to the Association.

Volunteer work can be quite rewarding both for the donor and the recipients. That's why so many capitalize on it. But we should remember that volunteerism should not be used as a vehicle to promote one's self-interest – a selfish indulgence. And yet, our active participation in volunteer work provides opportunities for networking – opportunities for others to showcase us. The "best" volunteers are a special breed. Not all of us are outstanding volunteers – some are inhibited by time, or work, or family, or combinations of these and other factors and as a result apologize for the low level participation/support. Many of us recognize our shortcomings and very responsibly give way to those who take on the challenge. We recognize the efforts of these volunteers and support their many creative ideas. We make time to offer occasional contributions to their many efforts. We go lightly on criticisms and heap up a lot on "How can I help?"

The next time you come face to face with another volunteer, think of these questions --: "If I were in that volunteer's position what would I have done?" "How much time would I have spent in problem solving and developing/working at the particular activity?" "What support would I want from any one who knows about what I did?" "How could I show I appreciate the work that volunteer has done?" If you have a positive answer to each of these questions you have been or have become an excellent contributor to the work of volunteers and consequently in the growth of the organization. Remember to say thank you to any volunteers that you encounter. If you are one of those volunteers, a special thank you goes out to you.

Jason Jones, President, SVGAT

ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS TO VINCENTIANS

Our sincere thanks to those companies that have provided assistance to this publication by advertising with us again. Please support them.

To place your Ad, please email us at svgatoronto@vincytoronto.com, or contact any member of the Executive.

Meetings and Contacting Us

The Association meets on the last Sunday of each month at Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court, (Keele & Sheppard area) North York. Time 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. One can get in touch with the Executive either by writing to P.O. Box 392, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2L8, or by e-mail at svgatoronto@vincytoronto.com.

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS ISSUE OF INSIGHT

We invite you to use the Special Issue of Insight to extend Christmas Greetings to your loves ones. Your greetings will be expressed in a business card size box for a small contribution of \$20.00.

Please note that the Special Christmas Issue of the Insight will also be placed on the website.

Please contact any of the members listed below to place your ad by December 4, 2005.

Cordel Telfer - 905-789-9731; Fred Williams - 905-821-7954; Gerry Wolkowski - 416-283-2355; Gideon Exeter - 905-831-1814; Grafton Bibby - 416-496-1029 or Yolande Lewis - 416-809-9820.

Make a contribution to the Association

You can now donate to any of the following: the Relief Fund, the Scholarship Fund, the Children's Christmas

Party, the Christmas Hamper to Families In Need and/or to General Operating Funds by contacting any member of the Executive or the Chair of the Committee you wish to support.

Association Sub-Committees

Since the elections a number of sub-committee chairs have been named with the intent of carrying on the business of the Association. Those committee chairs include:

Public Relations/Membership Committee - Ms Yolande Lewis

Unity Picnic Committee - Mr. Claudius Samuel

Independence Committee - Mrs. Audrey Lewis

Constitution Review Committee - Mrs. Grace Stephens

Finance Committee - Mr. Wendel Cole

Seniors Committee - Mr. Ivan Richards

Sports & Recreation Committee - Mr. Jimmy Lewis

Education Committee – Mr. Ken DeLecia & Mr. Fred Williams

Scholarship Committee - Mr. Gideon Exeter

Relief Committee – Veronica Timm

If you are interested in serving on any of the above committees please feel free to contact the chair of the committee or the President, Mr. Jason Jones.

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Celebrating Independence 2005

This year St. Vincent and the Grenadines nationals in Toronto celebrate the 26th Anniversary of Independence of their homeland with the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto hosting three events in commemoration under the theme, The Oneness of a Unique People. For all three events we have tried to utilize as many of our nationals here as we can.

Thanksgiving Service

Over the years the Association has joined with other church congregations for the annual Thanksgiving Service. This year the Association is proud to announce that we will be having a Thanksgiving Service organized by and all participants from our community. Our Guest Speakers will be Mr. Henry Stephens and Pastor Trudy White. Ms. Lydia Dennie and Ms. Tammy Taylor will perform in praise. The service will be held at the Rosewood Church of the Nazarene, 657 Milner Ave, Scarborough, on Sunday October 16th, 2005 @ 4:00 p.m. Join us for refreshments following the service.

Independence Banquet

On October 22nd, the SVGAT will host the banquet at The Spectacular Embers, 781 Warden Avenue, Scarborough, starting with cocktails at 6:00 p.m. The emcees for the evening will be Ms Marci Ien of CTV News and Mr. Thereon Cumberbatch.

The prestigious Allan Liverpool Award will be presented to a well deserving recipient in our community. This award honors diligence and dedication to our community at large.

The Student Recognition Awards will also be presented to students who have graduated high school in 2004/2005 and have gone on to higher learning.

The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association Inc. is proud to announce the launch of its Scholarship Program benefiting students living in Ontario of St. Vincent and Grenadines heritage. This year a \$500.00 bursary provided by Western Union will be awarded to a qualified student. From the next school year, 2006/2007 the scholarship amount will be \$1,000.00.

Our Guest Speaker for the evening will be Ambassador Betty Boyea-King, former U.S. Representative to the United Nations Economic & Social Council. For more

information on Mrs. King you can visit our website, www.vincytoronto.com.

Tickets for this event are available at a number of Vincy-owned businesses as well as from various members of the community. Please call Audrey at 416-829-6201, Yolande at 416-809-9820 or Jason at 905-999-1771 to find out who has tickets in your area.

We will be entertained by the elegant Andrea Lewis (Hazel Arden) of Degraasi: The Next Generation as she sings from her newly released CD. Miss Kathleen James "Strong" will hold us together with her poetry. You can read more of Kathleen's poetry at http://www.vincytoronto.com/profiles_kathleen_james.htm

The evening will end with music from DJ Fusion and performances from Roger Clarke and "Storm", the 2004 SVG/Toronto Independence Calypso King.

Town Hall Meeting

On Sunday October 23rd, 2005 @ 4:00 p.m. the Association will host an Open Forum at the Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court, North York. The topic of discussion will be **"Challenges facing black youths in North America"**. We have a team of expert panelists to lead us in these discussions. Up to press time panelists include Mr. David Mitchell, Superintendent with Corrections Ontario; Mr. Beresford Richardson, Superintendent with Peel District School Board; Mr. Tony Browne, Officer with Toronto Police Services; Ms Yvonne Castello, Principal with Peel District School Board; Dr. Cheryl Prescod, Social Worker; Ms Ulpia Stephens, Kinesiologist and Ms Andrea Doweia, Youth Counselor. Please make a special effort in attending and encouraging our youths to attend this very important dialogue. Refreshments will be served.

Contributions of food, cash or your time to assist in any of the aforementioned events are welcomed.

I encourage you as St. Vincent and Grenadines nationals to continue supporting the association in our endeavors. We are dedicated to helping all St. Vincent and Grenadines nationals in every way possible. Once again, thank you for your continued support over the years. For more information about SVGAT visit our website at www.vincytoronto.com

Audrey Lewis
Chairperson, Independence Committee
Tel: 416-829-6201

The Annual SVGAT Children's Christmas Party will be held at Northwood Community Centre, Sunday, December 4 from 4:00 p.m. Please contact Audrey at 416-829-6201 to register children up to 12 yrs old.

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Association Briefs

Scholarship Program Launched

The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Scholarship Program is intended to assist our young people to pursue their educational goals. The program kicks off this year with a \$500.00 bursary for one recipient from Western Union. From the 2006/2007 school year the successful recipient will receive \$1,000.00. Please visit the Association's website www.vincytoronto.com for more details and the application form.

Past Presidents Council

Efforts are being made to establish a Past Presidents Council of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto. Since its inception in 1969 there have been 25 persons who have served as presidents of the Association with the majority of them still being active members. It is felt that these persons could put their combined experiences together to continue their service to the Association in the areas of counseling, consulting and guidance. More news on this will be reported soon.

2005 Vincy Unity Picnic

The hard work put in by the Organizing Committee for the 2005 Unity Picnic paid off. This year's attendance was higher than 2004 with official estimates showing close to 7,000 persons. It was a glorious day at Brown's Bay Provincial Park, 1000 Islands for a picnic and the large crowd really enjoyed themselves. With sponsorship from BWIA, KLC/Eastern Caribbean Freight Lines and Western Union the Toronto Association was able to stop the trend of subsidizing travelers on buses from Toronto from its operating funds.

For those persons living in areas served by the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Associations of Montreal, Ottawa and Toronto who have never attended one of these picnics and to those outside of the country who are planning to be in Ontario next summer, please mark Saturday, July 15, 2006 on your calendar as that is the date for **Vincy Unity Picnic 2006**.

Congratulations and thanks to all those who contributed to making it a success.

Association Seeks Logo

Another long sort after project is soon to become a reality. The Public Relations and Membership Committee has launched a competition to choose a logo for the Association. The logo will be used to identify the Association and will be seen on letterheads, Insight, the website and all promotional material for the Association. We trust that a suitable submission could be

chosen from among those that will be submitted. If one is selected it will be announced at the Independence Banquet.

Committee Reviews Constitution

The Constitution Review Committee headed by Grace Stephens is currently reviewing the Association's constitution. Visit www.vincytoronto.com to view the current copy. Your contribution could help in shaping the constitution your Association will have for the future. Please contact Grace at 416-755-8184 or by email to "gracetoney@hotmail.com" to submit your recommendations.

Independence Anniversary Celebrations

This year's Independence Anniversary Committee headed by Audrey Lewis is hard at work finalizing the details for the celebrations. The Thanksgiving Church Service will be held on Sunday, October 16 at Rosewood Church of the Nazarene, 657 Milner Avenue, Scarborough. The Banquet will be on October 22 at Spectacular Embers Banquet Hall, 781 Warden Avenue and tickets will be on sale in due course. The Town Hall Meeting with the visiting government representative will be held on Sunday, October 23 from 4:00 p.m. at Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court, North York.

Dr. Allan Liverpool Award

The Dr. Samuel Allan Liverpool Award is given by the Association in honour of one of its founders and the first president. The award is to be presented annually to one or more individuals whom the Association feels has made considerable voluntary contribution to the Association and the community.

This is the fifth year that the award will be presented. Past recipients of this award were:

- 2001 - Mr. Edson Huggins
- 2002 - Mrs. Monica (Nola) Smith
- 2003 - Mr. Elvin Pompey
- 2004 - Miss Kathleen James

We look forward to congratulating this year's winner and encourage you to consider persons whom you feel are deserving of this award for future years.

MONTHLY GENERAL MEETING

Please bring along a friend to the next meeting of the Association on Sunday, October 30 at 4:00 p.m. Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Crt, North York (Keele & Sheppard)

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The Individual Firm...It's Importance.

MARKETING

Responsible marketing should be the most critical factor guiding all short and long-range planning in any firm, for two reasons. **First**, the core of marketing is customer want-satisfaction, and that is the basic social and economic justification for existence of virtually all organizations. **Second**, marketing is the revenue-

generating activity in a firm - nothing happens until somebody buys something.

Too often, unfortunately, business the world over has been oriented towards production. Products are designed by engineers, passion, a dream, manufactured by production people, your brother-in-law, a close friend, priced by accountants, your daughter graduating from U of U, your last years tax person, and given to a sales manager, a vendor selling products out of their product category, or a store not knowing your product. That procedure generally won't work with today's intense Toronto, Canadian and world competition. You face constant change, local rulings environmental concerns. Just building a product will not result in a company's success, nor will it have much bearing on consumer welfare. Your product be marketed to consumers in a responsible way before its full value can be realized. The consumer of 2007 (yes months ahead) demands this.

Today a company first determines what the 2007 customer wants and then builds and develops a product and marketing program to satisfy those wants, with a profit in mind. Many individual firms have essential areas of growth, but marketing is still the sole revenue-producing activity. This fact of marketing we all have over looked if you are a production minded person, or bean counter that use revenues to operate your firm.

Real Products are For Real Users.

A production orientation in business is illustrated by not responding to the attention of the customer or other people upon whom the firm rely if it is to prosper. For example, when a company develops a new product in a professional food test kitchen, they normally go through a series of research projects to determine whether the test products are acceptable to a target customer. Failure to do so and a final testing to only Aunts, buddies, close friends can result in no negative feed back to correct your product testing. This will give negative marketing orientation. Yes, it means including the product testing in your projected finances. This product testing applies to a tool/device, hot pepper sauce, an industrial or residential complex, a new clothing line, or a rum flavoured beverage.

Research - Planning - . Being Open Minded - and Documentation are paramount in marketing. A large portion of this is your minimum charge sweat equity. Take your time you can succeed by using your three brains -**YOUR HEAD - YOUR HEART - YOUR GUT.**

More next INSIGHT- Gerry Wolkowski

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Thanks to all those who assist in one way or the other to make the production of Insight possible. We invite others to join in sharing their articles with our readers.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Help a child in your homeland to a brighter future.

An old saying reminds us that children are the future of every country. Each of us can help to build the future of St. Vincent and the Grenadines by helping the children. As little as Cdn\$1.00/day per month will give at least EC\$50.00 per month. This small amount can help to keep a young child in school and contribute to his or her development in the community. If you are interested in learning how you can go about sponsoring a child in St. Vincent & the Grenadines, how to get such a child and how to ensure that your sponsor money is used for the development of that child, please enquire in confidence by writing to the Association either through regular mail or e-mail. You can also contact any member of the Executive.

HIGH COMMISSION FOR ORGANIZATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES

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website: www.svgconsulate.org

Email: consulategeneral@svgconsulate.org

The Office of the Consulate General in Toronto is here to attend to the needs of Vincentians. It also strives at strengthening its ties with organizations looking to do business in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

www.svgconsulate.org functions as an effective tool in assisting us to reach our goals. Visit our website.

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***Independence Banquet
Saturday October 22nd, 2005***

**SPECTACULAR
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Summary of Presentation on Immigration

Conducted by Sandra Sutherland

Outlined below is a synopsis of the topics discussed relating to various types of immigration application categories:

- ✓ Family Class Sponsorships - which family members are considered as family class members, definition of a dependent child, which family class members are excluded from sponsorship, low income cut-off (LICO) exemptions, length of undertakings.
- ✓ Spouse, Common-Law Partner in Canada Class - conditions that apply to the nature of the relationship, new amendments relating to out-of-status applicants.
- ✓ Humanitarian and Compassionate - ability to prove hardship of applying outside Canada, who can provide sponsorship support, relevant H&C grounds.
- ✓ Live-in-Caregiver - definition, qualifications, requirements for permanent resident status.
- ✓ Independent/Skilled Workers - definition, validity of occupation, minimum requirements.
- ✓ Self-employed - eligibility criteria (applicable to cultural performers, athletes, farmers).
- ✓ Refugee/Person in need of Protection - definition of a Convention Refugee and the fact that it relates to an individual's personal fear of returning to their country (**any** country).

Other topics discussed include Citizenship, Permanent Resident Cards, Removal Orders, and Authorized Representatives. There was a discussion relating to Study Permits and how they may be used as a stepping-stone to gain permanent resident status. The issue relating to the bleak situation faced by skilled undocumented workers was addressed with a view towards encouraging the workers (specifically construction workers) to approach their employers so that the employer may pursue routes that could lead towards obtaining authorized work permits for these undocumented workers. Ms Sutherland stressed on the fact that black and/or Caribbean employers in the construction industry should venture out of their comfort zone and go the extra mile to assist their undocumented Caribbean employees, in a similar fashion that members of the European communities do.

Ms Sutherland expressed her gratitude to the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association, specifically to Gideon Exeter and the Education Committee, for inviting her to give the presentation to members of the SVG community. She said that she was encouraged by the welcome from a receptive and fervent audience.

Sandra Sutherland is an accredited Immigration Consultant. She may be contacted through her office Suthern Immigration & Paralegal Services Inc., 1920 Ellesmere Road, (416) 431-2829.

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER NOTICE

Please consider renewing your membership now if you have not paid for 2005. If you are not yet a member, then please consider becoming one. Registration Fee is \$2.00 (New Members) and the Annual Fee is \$20.00.

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Sandra Sutherland

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Calendar of Events

<u>EVENT</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>VENUE</u>
Independence Church Service	October 16, 2005	Rosewood Church of The Nazarene
26 th Independence Banquet	October 22, 2005	Spectacular Embers Banquet Hall
Town Hall Discussions	October 23, 2005	Northwood Community Centre
Monthly General Meeting	October 30, 2005	Northwood Community Centre
Monthly General Meeting	November 27, 2005	Northwood Community Centre
Winter Games Evening	December 3, 2005	TBD
Children's Christmas Party	December 4, 2005	Northwood Community Centre
Community Sing-a-long	December 18, 2005	Northwood Community Centre
Christmas Hamper Distribution	December 23, 24	

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ANNUAL CHRISTMAS OUTREACH PROJECT

Each year the Association reaches out to some members of our community that are in need of help by donating food baskets to help them over the Christmas Holiday Season.

If you know of someone whom you feel need this assistance from the Association please contact the President, Mr. Jason Jones at 905-999-1771. Names of recipients are never published and are kept in strict confidence.

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NEWS FROM SVG

(Courtesy of The Vincentian and Searchlight Newspapers)

Cuba/SVG Relations

Twenty-five years ago an Education Revolution began with the first of hundreds of students having the opportunity to

further their education pursuits in a country that had no formal relations with St. Vincent and the Grenadines. During those days, Cuba was not welcomed by many Caribbean governments but it opened its doors and its citizens opened their hearts to strangers. The hundreds who took advantage of the opportunity are much better off with the scholarships they got at the expense of the Cubans. Some of these former students are now either in government or are in numerous decision making positions in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The relationship came about through a small political party, Yulimo (Youlou United Liberation Movement) and carried on by its successor party, the United People's Movement. Today, the government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines has diplomatic relations with Cuba with the recently appointment of Mr. Dexter Rose as the country's first Ambassador to Cuba. Mr. Rose is a graduate of the University of Havana's School of Journalism and one of the first Vincentians to benefit from the Education Revolution.

In recent months, hundreds of Vincentians with vision problems were flown to Cuba at the expense of the Cubans for treatment to their eyes. It is expected that this program will be ongoing.

Election Heat

General Elections are constitutionally due by March 2006 but the heated activities of the political parties would give the impression that elections are going to be held prior to Christmas. There are mass meetings and rallies and three of the parties recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding relating to their behaviour during the campaign period. The government has embarked on announcing a number of projects which opposition parties are labeling as "government trying to fool the people to get votes".

The United Labour Party headed by Dr. Ralph Gonsalves has 12 of the 15 seats in Parliament and it vows to take all seats on the mainland this time around increasing its toll to 13. The main opposition party, the National Democratic Party is headed by former Prime Minister Mr. Arnhim Eustace.

SVG/Taiwan Relations

September 28, 2005 marked a historic occasion in the relationship between the governments of Taiwan and St. Vincent and the Grenadines. On that day, President Chen Shui-bian of the Republic of China on Taiwan became the first of that country's Head of State to visit St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

The president spent two days during which time he addressed the House of Assembly.

This visit is expected to deepen the ties between St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Taiwan, one of this country's closest allies. Relationship between the two countries span about 25 years with St. Vincent and the Grenadines receiving substantial financial benefits from the Taiwanese government and people.

Ambassador Elizabeth Chu is the resident representative in St. Vincent and the Grenadines for Taiwan.

Cash for Students

The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines lived up to its promises and handed out cash to students who were successful in recent examinations. Students who obtained passes in the A Level and CXC Exams received cash up to \$500.00 each. In addition, the government is on its path to ensure that all young Vincentians have an opportunity to at least a secondary school education. A number of new Secondary Schools were opened at the beginning of the 2005/2006 school term.



How much do you about SVG?

A National Quiz to test your knowledge about the history of SVG as we approach our country's Independence anniversary. Check it out in our Independence Anniversary Souvenir Brochure.

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OPINION COLUMN

(We invite members and our readers to share their opinions with other readers in matters of interest to the development of the Association and our community.)

School Success

Fall is here and the children have started a new school year. It is very important that parents help their children to succeed in school. Successful students have parents who know how or are willing to learn how to help their children succeed. The old days of non- involvement of parents (until there is a

problem) are over. Here are some tips that will help your children succeed in school:

1. Turn off the TV on weekdays and Sunday evenings. As parents we need to prepare our children for the future by helping them to succeed in school. The time spent preparing for their future is more important than the time spent looking at television. Which master are you serving by watching endless television?
2. Children should eat a proper breakfast. Do not rush breakfast. The brain requires high quality food as fuel. Eliminate high sugar cereals from your children's diet. Provide protein, good carbohydrates and healthy fat. Protein choices include fish, eggs, cheese, and milk. Good carbohydrates include high fibre, oatmeal, fresh fruits, and vegetables. Olive oil, nuts, avocado and pharmaceutical grade fish oil are all healthy fat. Every meal should be high quality fuel for the brain. Children should not go more than 3-4 hours without a healthy snack or meal. Learning performance (brain function) decreases beyond 3-4 hours without a snack or a meal.
3. Children need a good night's (deep and restful) sleep. Teenagers need as much as 10 hours sleep. Young children may need even more sleep. The brain develops regenerates and processes information during sleep. Sleep is very important to good health and learning.
4. Teach your children punctuality by example. Help them to wake up early enough to be at school on time without stress. Shouting, and violent words upon awaking adds to the children's stress. Train your children to get to bed at an appropriate time.
5. "Big Up" your children. Praise them. They are your pride and joy. They are valued and loved. They are our future. Praise them. Kind, thoughtful and loving words mean so much to all of us and more so to children. Kind, loving words of encouragement lift their spirits and urges them to achieve even more. Be your children's biggest cheerleader. Spur them on when things get rough or in their words "boring". Praise them with every accomplishment no matter how small.
6. Create a study routine for your children. Do not shout at your children to do homework or use words such like "go to your room and do your homework" as punishment. Homework is not punishment. Use homework as a time of liberation, joy and fun. Share this sacred time together. They will get the message that it is important and share the joy with you. The good results in school will be rewarding.

7. Avoid getting into power struggles with your children. They may use not doing homework as a way to assert their power.
8. Go over homework together. If the child's homework is beyond your capability hire a high school student, older neighbourhood child or a retired teacher as a tutor. A help with homework service is available from the various public libraries in the Greater Toronto Area (Toronto, Vaughan, Peel, etc.). Phone your public library for details. The number for Yorkwoods Library near Jane & Finch is (416) 395-5990. (private note: Confirm with the Yorkwoods Library contact Rosalind Bryce, she's Trinidadian)
9. Create a stress free environment at home for your children (or minimize the stress). A stress free child is a child that is secure in the nurturing love at home. Secure and happy children do better in school.
10. Start training your children young. Some would say that education starts in the womb with soothing music and loving talk.

Think about it. Many of us say our family is very important yet most of us spend more time working overtime or in front of the television set than with the most important people in our lives: our children and spouses. How much time do you devote to your children without the interruption of the television, the telephone or other activities? Keep a log book of how you spend your time over a 7 day period and see how much time you spend with your children. Our precious children deserve more. Make yourself a loving influence in your child's life. Vow to spend more nurturing time with your children this school year. The challenges our children face in school and society are great. Our children desperately need us.

Veronica Timm is a Senior Computer Network Specialist at York University, Toronto. You may contact her at vtimm@sympatico.ca.

TOWN HALL DISCUSSIONS
Sunday October 23rd, 2005, 4:00 p.m.
Northwood Community Centre
15 Clubhouse Court, North York
(Keele & Sheppard)



From the desk of Eddie Bernard

THE UNITY AND LEADERSHIP WE SEEK

The Unity We Seek

There is a familiar saying – “united we stand and divided we fall.” There is also the saying - “How good it is to dwell in

unity.” What then is the unity we seek? The unity we seek is about people. It is about being one. It is about touching people's lives. It is a movement. It does not stand still. It is about bringing people together. The unity we seek encompasses the whole. It is all inclusive. It is not a separate part nor a faction thereof. It embodies everyone. In unity all must be equal. We must unite as one.

The unity we seek is knowing who we are and what we stand for. It's about what we can do together as a team and in unison. It is about why we are here and what we can do as a group – one people. The unity we seek must be transparent. It cannot be sought in a vacuum based on the unknown. It must be genuine. It cannot be a camouflage. We cannot like some and hate others. We cannot succeed with barriers between. The parts cannot be exclusive. Unity must flow and be in harmony. The unity we seek must be permanent. It cannot be a part time thing or an occasional fling. It cannot be evasive. It must be captured and nurtured. Unity is not temporary. The unity we seek must come from within. We must be wholly united and complete within ourselves.

The Leadership We Seek

There is an anonymous saying – “not all can lead but all can follow.” What then is the leadership we seek? To answer this question I refer to the futurist Richard Worzel in his book entitled “Who Owns Tomorrow” and I quote – “Leadership is not about maximizing the abilities of the top person. It's about creating an environment where everyone reaches their maximum potential.”

The leadership we seek emerges and becomes those persons whom others would want to follow. You must know yourselves. Understand clearly if you want to play the role. You must have values. Know your values and reflect on them. Judge your own values.

The leadership we seek must have broad visions and goals. You must be your own brand. Set the stage so that others who follow can buy into and sell these visions and goals. Leadership is bringing people along. It is empowering people.

The leadership we seek must have strength of confidence. Manage and leverage your own emotions. Be cognizant of your self awareness, motivation, empathy and social skills. Be optimistic and positive. Network and keep yourself current, and knowledgeable. Understand the Constitution and rules of order. The leadership we seek must build relationships and bond with the membership. Learn to be better players and play by the rules.

The leadership we seek must create an environment for everyone to participate. Be prepared to embrace or manage change. Nurture what sustains you. The leadership we seek must be prepared to mentor, to mediate and to resolve conflicts. Participate in the teaching and learning cycle.

The leadership we seek must have peoples' skills. Be able to unite.

+++++

Building bridges.....The missing link.

I attended the St Vincent and the Grenadines Building Bridges Forum and was very pleased that I attended. Congratulations to the organizers for coordinating a productive exercise. The Vincentian Community was invited to share ideas towards building bridges. As much as it was a positive experience, I feel that there was something missing. Due to time constraint, there were many people (including myself) who wanted to share their ideas but did not get the opportunity. I left the meeting with an urgency to do something regarding my thoughts so I jumped at the chance to share my opinion when I was asked to submit an article for the SVGAT newsletter, Insight.

As I looked around the room that day I was not only reminded that we are an aging community, I was also confronted with the fact that there were so few young people in attendance. As a community we need to reach out to our young people in a way that they will want to be connected. They are the ones who are going to take this community into the future. They are the ones with the skills and knowledge to keep up with the dynamics in our society and they are the ones who must build our bridges into the future.

In this industrialized country and age of technology, we cannot continue to educate our children with only the knowledge we gained when we were growing up. If we do, we will be putting them at a disadvantage. We need them to take us into the future. Therefore we need to harness the energy from these intelligent and gifted young people and put passion (Vincentian passion) into their existence. I am so very proud of the young people in our community. I feel that they do not get enough respect and acknowledgement and many of them will agree with this statement.

As parents and role models we first need to look at our community and our children in a unique and different light. Many of our young people were not born in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and some of our families have integrated with non-Vincentian cultures (by choice). Therefore our role is to accept the changes, merge the diversity and educate our young people in our Vincentian heritage. By doing this, no matter where they go, they will always feel connected to their Vincy roots. By supporting, showing respect and acknowledging to their uniqueness, we will be showing unconditional acceptance.

The young adults in our community are very special people. It is time that we give them ownership and responsibility in our community. It is time to pass the torch on to them for leadership. They will not wait around for us while we bicker and argue among each other. They will move on while we are left here still trying to build bridges. I urge you to give them a solid foundation as they move on and most of all move on with them through support and encouragement.

Yes, we are and will always be Vincentians. However, we have to accept changes in our chosen family structure, lifestyle and diversity. We need to take back the role that parents were

given by God; we are their first educators. Let them learn what richness it is to be an African/Caribbean, a Vincentian/Canadian and most importantly their Vincentian heritage. Teach them how to be proud and patriotic without losing their own identity.

Education is knowledge. Knowledge is power and power is the ability to create and direct their own futures. Brothers and Sisters, let us empower our young people and give them wings to fly. Let our history be a map to their future and their passion, (Vincentian Passion) be a link to their past.

Recommendation to the Planning committee

There should be an event like this one for all young people of Vincentian parentage. It should also be planned and implemented by Young people.

..... By Earla Labban – Dalzine

This poem is dedicated to the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines

The Richness of Our Culture

It is hard to say . . . don't argue.
It's even more difficult to say . . . don't fight.
So much negative force is against us
We must come together and unite

The richness of our culture will carry us to esteem
It captures our kindred spirits and empowers our very being
The legacy of our ancestors teaches us to be proud of our race
History is a map to our future, but passion will define our place

We are God's special people with pride in our soul
With faith, hope, and charity we endeavor to reach our goal
In a society filled with violence and people going to war
Our strength and compassion will reflect who we are

Our children are our future, a direct link to the past
Let us guide and protect them with a connection that will last
Let's teach them our true history, of royalty . . . and pain
So the richness of our culture will forever remain

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Contacting the Executive

Here is a complete list of all Executive Members and how to contact them.

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 Vice President – Elma Gabriel; Tel: 416-282-4557
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adclarej@sympatico.ca;
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wendelc@yahoo.com;
 Assistant Treasurer – June Ellis; Tel: 416-261-5399

juneellis_2@sympatico.ca;
 Public Relations Officer – Yolande Lewis; Tel: 416-809-9820
ylewis@sympatico.ca;
 Immediate Past President–Kenneth Farrell; Tel: 416-762-8283
farrell4180@rogers.com;
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Sunday, December 18, 2005
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 15 Clubhouse Court, North York.

Please contact Audrey Lewis at 416-829-6201,
 Jason Jones at 905-999-1771, or
 Yolande Lewis at 416-809-9820

YOUR HELP IS NEEDED

The Organizing Committee for Independence
 Anniversary Celebrations is seeking your
 assistance to provide refreshments and to
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 Sunday, October 16.

Please contact Elma Gabriel at 416-282-4557
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Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc.

Membership Registration Form

Be a Member!
Join with us in achieving our goals.

Mission Statement

The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association (SVGA) of Toronto is a non-profit community based Association. We are committed to providing assistance and support to groups, institutions in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Ontario and wherever the Association deems fit. To provide an anti bias forum for Cultural, Educational, Social and Recreational enrichment and to maintain a network of communication through information and referral.



Objectives

- To maintain a high level of volunteerism through recruitment, training and effective utilization of skills.
- To provide a forum to promote leadership and advocacy for the enrichment of Culture and Education.
- To provide an anti bias environment for the discussion of matters of general interest to its members.
- To plan, implement and participate in fundraising activities to meet urgent human needs.
- To promote social and recreational events to enrich the lives of Children, Youth, Adults and Seniors.
- To maintain a network of communication through information and referral.

Our membership meetings are held on the LAST SUNDAY IN EVERY MONTH from 4:00 p.m. at Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court (Keele St. & Sheppard Ave. W), North York.

We hope to see you there!

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