



**THE ST. VINCENT AND GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC. (SVGAT)**  
KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY INFORMED THROUGH COMMUNICATION

Quarterly Newsletter

**INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY ISSUE**

October 2010

**From the President's Desk**

Welcome back from a wonderful summer vacation. I hope you have enjoyed the sunshine as we prepare for the autumn and winter months ahead.

In September the Seniors Group took a journey through the Underground Railroad with a Trip to Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site, the Chatham-Kent Black Historical Society featuring the Black Mecca and the Buxton National Historical Site and Museum. Everyone enjoyed the experience and is looking forward to the next trip.

Thanks to all who participated in this event and special thanks to the committee members which include Edna Hunte, Adina James, Ivan Richards and Grafton Bibby for their committed efforts in making this trip possible.

We will now prepare for our Independence Celebrations activities which will commence on October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010 with our Annual Thanksgiving Church Service at the Rosewood Church of the Nazarene located at 657 Milner Avenue in Scarborough, starting at 4:00 p.m. All are welcome and encourage to attend.

Following the Church Service, the Independence Banquet will be held on Saturday, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010 starting at 6:00 p.m. at the Riviera Parque Dining, Banquet & Convention Centre, 2800 Hwy 7 West, Concord, Ontario. The Right Honourable Dr. Alvin Curling will deliver the feature address. Among other invited guests is Sophia Young, WNBA professional basketball player with San Antonio Silver Stars who will join us in this year's celebration.

Ms. Young will also be our keynote speaker on Sunday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010 at the Community Symposium at the York Civic Centre, 2700 Eglinton Avenue West, Toronto. All are invited to attend this very special event as we discuss the future of our young men and women. Other panel members for the evening's event include Sergeant Theron Mounsey of the Durham Regional Police Services and Dr. Bob Sutton of the Hospital for Sick Children.

Our next event is the Children's Christmas party to be held on Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010 at the Northwood Community Centre. Please register your children early by contacting any member of the executive. Registration closes on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

The SVGAT continues to support families in our community during the Christmas Season by distributing several gift baskets to homes in need. This program has greatly impacted the lives of many Vincentian Nationals here in Toronto. If you would like to contribute to this program please contact any member of the executive with your donations.

Please take a look at our Calendar of Events on Page 4, or visit our website to see how you can contribute and participate in upcoming events.

I encourage your continued support and we look forward to working closely with you as we continue to make strides in moving the Association forward.

Sincerely,  
Audrey Lewis, President

**SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING NOTICE**

Financial members of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto are hereby notified of a Special General Meeting of the Association to be held on Sunday, November 7 from 4:00 p.m. at Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court, Toronto.

This Special General Meeting is called to discuss the Proposed Revised Constitution and the new Policies & Procedures Document to be adopted by the Association.

All financial members and other interested persons are invited to attend.

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# ASSOCIATION NEWS

## THE EXECUTIVE

Here is a list of the executive members just in case you would like to contact any of them:

**President** – Audrey Lewis; Tel: 416-829-6201

[president@vincytoronto.com](mailto:president@vincytoronto.com);

**Vice President** – Vere Palmer; Tel: 416-286-8145

[vicepres@vincytoronto.com](mailto:vicepres@vincytoronto.com)

**Executive Secretary** – Petra Hutchinson; Tel: 416-652-5207

[execsec@vincytoronto.com](mailto:execsec@vincytoronto.com)

**General Secretary** – Zakiya Hutchinson; Tel: 416-652-5207

[gensecretary@vincytoronto.com](mailto:gensecretary@vincytoronto.com)

**Treasurer** – Wendel Cole; Tel: 905-792-1248

[Treasurer@vincytoronto.com](mailto:Treasurer@vincytoronto.com)

**Assistant Treasurer** – Cordel Telfer;

[assisttreas@vincytoronto.com](mailto:assisttreas@vincytoronto.com)

**Public Relations Officer** – Gideon Exeter – 905-831-1814

[pro@vincytoronto.com](mailto:pro@vincytoronto.com)

**Immediate Past President** – Elma Gabriel; 416-282-4557

[ipp@vincytoronto.com](mailto:ipp@vincytoronto.com)

**Nominated Member** - Carmen Parsons;

[cparsons1@sympatico.ca](mailto:cparsons1@sympatico.ca)

**Ass'n General Email address:** [svga@vincytoronto.com](mailto:svga@vincytoronto.com)

### **General Meetings**

Meetings are held on the last Sunday of each month with the exception of December. They are usually held at Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court from at 4:00 p.m.

For the month of October there will not be a general meeting due to the Town Hall Discussions held as part of our Independence Anniversary Celebrations. This event will be held on Sunday, October 31 from 2:30 p.m. at York Civic Centre, 2700 Eglinton Avenue East, Toronto (Eglinton just west of Keele Street).

### **Independence Celebrations 2010**

As is customary, three events will be held to celebrate the anniversary of St. Vincent and the Grenadines' independence. *The Independence Church Service* will be held on Sunday, October 24 at Rosewood Church of the Nazarene. SVG National, Pastor Raymond Burnett will be the preacher at the Church Service and there will be a number of performances by talented members of our community.

*Independence Banquet* will be held on Saturday, October 30 at Riviera Parque Banquet and Convention Centre. A full-course dinner with open bar along with an exciting entertainment package awaits you. The successful applicants for the scholarship program will also be announced and given their first half of the bursary.

Guest speaker at the event will be the Hon. Alvin Curling, the first Black Canadian to hold a cabinet-level position in Ontario and the co-author of "Roots of Youth Violence." Dr. Curling has been a senior Canadian Government official for

many years and will share his vast array of experiences that can benefit our community.

Music by EJ the DJ, Mr. Earl Jack.

Tickets are still available. Purchase yours before October 23 and SAVE \$10.00. After October 23 ticket prices will be \$85.00.

*The Community Symposium* will be held on Sunday, October 31 at a York Civic Centre beginning at 2:30 p.m. Miss Sophia Young, a SVG national currently playing with the San Antonio Stars in the WNBA will be the guest speaker at this event.

Please see flyer on page 11 for further details.

### **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 or have made considerable voluntary contribution to the Association and the community.

To be eligible for the award, the person's name must be submitted to the Association outlining his or her contributions in serving the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto, the Vincentian community in the Greater Toronto Area, the wider Vincentian community and the Canadian community at large. Members and friends of our community are encouraged to forward the names of any individual they feel merit this award to:

St. Vincent and the Grenadines Ass'n of Toronto Inc.  
P.O. Box 392, Station F  
Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2L8

Please submit your nominations to [execsec@vincytoronto.com](mailto:execsec@vincytoronto.com) and copy to [president@vincytoronto.com](mailto:president@vincytoronto.com).

THE ST. VINCENT AND GRENADINES  
ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC.

### **OCTOBER GENERAL MEETING CANCELLATION**

*Due to the Symposium as part of our Independence Anniversary celebrations there will not be a general meeting of the Association this month (October).*

*Please join us York Civic Centre, 2700 Eglinton Avenue West  
from 2:30 p.m.*

*Please bring along a friend with you.*

### **Revised Constitution, Policies & Procedures**

Due to circumstances beyond our control the scheduled September 12 meeting to further discuss the Draft Revised Constitution as well as the newly drafted Policies and Procedures document was not held. The executive committee is committed to having the necessary meetings to conclude the discussions so that these documents can be finalized. The November 7 meeting is going ahead as planned and if necessary other meetings will be arranged before the term of this executive ends. The November 7

meeting will be held at our usual meeting place, Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court from 4:00 p.m.

### **Underground Railroad Trip**

The trip to the Underground Railroad Exhibitions on September 25 went ahead as planned and persons who journeyed to Eastern Ontario had an experience they will never forget. Thanks to Adina, Edna, Grafton and Ivan for their hard work in organizing this event. Thanks too to all those who attended and supported the event.

### **CHRISTMAS HAMPER OUTREACH PROJECT**

Our tradition of reaching out to the less fortunate members of our community at Christmas time will continue. Assistance in the form of cash and food items will be made available to those individuals or families who qualify. Please see Page 5 for the eligible requirements then send your request to: The Executive Secretary, St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc., P.O. Box 392, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2L8 or email to: [execsec@vincytoronto.com](mailto:execsec@vincytoronto.com).

***St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc.***

***Annual Children's Christmas Party***  
*(For children up to 12 years old)*

***Sunday, December 5, 2010 from 2:00 p.m.***

*Northwood Community Centre  
15 Clubhouse Court, Toronto  
(Sheppard & Arleta)*

*To register your child(ren) please contact any of the executive members by phone or email or simply write to:*

*St. Vincent & the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc.  
P.O. Box 392 Station F  
Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2L8*

***Registration closes on November 15, 2010***

### **Make a contribution to the Association**

Your donation to any of the following can help the Association meet its objectives: the Emergency Fund, the Scholarship Fund, the Adopt-A-Child Program, the Children's Christmas Party, and the Christmas Hamper to those less fortunate and/or to General Operating Funds.

### **CONSUL GENERAL APPEALS TO SVG NATIONALS IN CANADA**

Mr. Steve Phillips, St. Vincent and the Grenadines' Consul General to Toronto has made an appeal to SVG nationals living in Canada to exercise better options in applying for residency in Canada and for obtaining new SVG passports. Mr. Phillips made the appeal as he was addressing the audience at the Union Island Cultural Association's Thanksgiving Brunch on October 11, 2010.

The Consul General noted that St. Vincent and the Grenadines was second to Haiti on the list of persons requesting Refugee Claims for stay in Canada. This growing number of applicants claiming refugee status has long been a concern to the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. Currently, St. Vincent and the Grenadines is one of the few Caribbean countries whose nationals do not require a Visitor's Visa to enter Canada. The growing number of applicants poses a threat to our nationals continuing to have this privilege. Mr. Phillips is appealing to our nationals to discontinue this practice as it will cause those SVG nationals who wish to travel to Canada for legitimate visits undue and unnecessary inconvenience.

With regards to passports, Consul General Phillips noted that there are a considerable number of our nationals that are applying for SVG passports outside of the Toronto Consulate. He indicated that this was an illegal process as the Consulate, located at 601 – 333 Wilson Avenue, Toronto, is the only location in Canada through which applications for new or renewal of passports for persons living in Canada can be made. According to Mr. Phillips, passports sent by way of mail, courier or on the person of someone else beside the person named in the document will be confiscated by Canadian immigration authorities if discovered.

The Consulate can be contacted by telephone at 416-398-4277.

### **TORONTO CONSULATE OFFICE**

Consulate of St. Vincent and the Grenadines  
333 Wilson Avenue, Suite 601  
Toronto, Ontario, M3H 1T2

**Mr. Steve O. Phillips**  
Consul General

**Tel: (416) 398-4277 Fax (416) 398-4199**

**Email: [consulategeneral@rogers.com](mailto:consulategeneral@rogers.com)**

### **St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc.**

### ***Independence Thanksgiving Church Service***



***Sunday, October 24 at 4:00 p.m.***

***Rev. Raymond Burnett, Guest Preacher***

***Rosewood Church of the Nazarene  
657 Milner Avenue, Scarborough  
(Morningside & Milner)***

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(Jim Lewis and Kevin Padmore)

### News

Tuesdays: 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

### Urban Griots

Every 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays: 3:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.

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### Calendar or Events for 2010

Sunday, October 24, 2010	Independence Church Service, Rosewood Church of the Nazarene, 657 Milner Ave, 4:00 p.m.
Saturday, October 30, 2010	Independence Banquet, Riviera Parque Banquet Centre, 2800 Hwy #7 West, Concord, 6:30 p.m.
Sunday, October 31, 2010	Community Symposium, York Civic Centre, 2700 Eglinton Avenue West, Toronto, 3:00 p.m.
Sunday, November 7, 2010	Constitution Review Meeting, Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court, 4:00 p.m.
Sunday, November 28, 2010	Monthly General Meeting, Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court, 4:00 p.m.
Sunday, December 5, 2010	Annual Children's Christmas Party – Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court., 2:00 p.m.



### **FLAG RAISING CEREMONY AT TORONTO'S CITY HALL**

*St. Vincent and the Grenadines' Consul General to Toronto, Mr. Steve Phillips is extending an invitation to nationals of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, their friends and other well wishers to join him for a Flag Raising Ceremony to commemorate the 31<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of the independence of St. Vincent and the Grenadines from Great Britain.*

*The event will take place at Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen Street West, Toronto, Ontario on Wednesday, October 27, 2010 at 10:30 a.m.*

*St. Vincent and the Grenadines became an independent nation on October 27, 1979.*



#### **HIGH COMMISSION FOR ORGANIZATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES**

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High Commissioner  
**His Excellency Mr. Brendon C. Browne**

#### **SPONSOR AND SUPPORT A CHILD IN YOUR HOMELAND.**

**LET THIS BE THE YEAR OF ASSISTING A CHILD**

#### **BEREAVEMENT NOTICE**

During the past few months a number of members of our community have passed on including former members of the Association. News of these deaths does not always reach the PRO Committee or the Executive Members in time to circulate the information as we would like to.

The Executive and Members of the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. would like to extend condolences to all members and friends of our community who have lost loved ones.

Since the last publication we learnt of the passing of Mrs. Ena Anderson-Williams, Rev. Emelius Barnwell, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Fred Providence, Reyal Jansen Jardine-Douglas and Mr. Jeffrey Providence.

*We wish the families God's blessing as they cope with their loss and we trust that those who have departed will find rest in the Lord.*

#### **SVGAT CHRISTMAS HAMPER PROJECT**

As part of its outreach to the community, SVGAT has over the years been assisting a number of less fortunate individuals and families at Christmas time. If you are aware of someone who could benefit from this assistance please send a note either by mail to: Executive Secretary, St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc., P.O. Box 392, Station F, Toronto, Ontario, M4Y 2L8; or by email to: [execsec@vincytoronto.com](mailto:execsec@vincytoronto.com). Your request should include:

- Name, address and telephone number of the person/family you are requesting the assistance for;
- State your relationship to the person/family; If a family, number of persons;
- Your name, address and telephone number;
- State whether you are a member of the Association.
- Provide a brief description of why you feel that this individual or family needs the assistance.

**The St. Vincent and Grenadines  
Association of Toronto Inc.  
Celebrates**

SVG's



**31<sup>st</sup> Independence Anniversary**



*'Theme' of the evening*

*"Loyalty and Love Embrace the Welfare of our Children's Future"*

**Independence Banquet**

*Under the distinguished patronage of the Consul General of  
St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Mr. Steve O. Phillips*

Riviera Parque Dining, Banquet & Convention Centre Inc.  
2800 Hwy 7 West (East of Jane St), Concord, Ontario  
Saturday, October 30, 2010

Cocktails 6:00 pm, Dinner 7:30 pm,  
Open Bar, Cultural Extravaganza,  
Fashion Show, Dancing

**Tickets are \$75.00 each if purchased by Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup>  
\$85.00 after October 23<sup>rd</sup>.**

Guest Speaker



**The Right Honourable Dr.  
Alvin Curling**

**TICKET CONTACTS**

Elma Gabriel (416) 282-4557 (Scarborough)  
Grafton Bibby (647) 405-9209 (Scarborough)  
Thelma Charles (905) 571-4766 (Durham)  
Audrey Lewis (416) 829-6201 (Brampton)

**TICKET OUTLETS**

**Hairoun Bakery** (416) 754-3854  
2256 Birchmount Road, Scarborough  
**Ruby's Beauty Salon** (416) 736-7896  
1280 Finch Avenue West, North York

**Independence Thanksgiving  
Church Service**

**Sunday, October 24, 2010 @ 4:00 p.m.**

Rosewood Church of the Nazarene  
657 Milner Avenue, Scarborough

Sermon by Pastor Raymond Burnett

Join us for light refreshments  
following the service

**Community Symposium**

*Featuring Vincentian professional  
basketball player, Sophia Young of the  
San Antonio Silver Stars*

York Civic Centre

2700 Eglinton Ave. West

Sunday, October 31, 2010  
2:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Join us for light refreshments  
following the Symposium





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### Elected Leaders of St. Vincent and the Grenadines Since Adult Suffrage

George Charles: 1951 -

#### Chief Ministers of Saint Vincent, 1956-1969

Ebenezer T. Joshua: 1956 - May 1967

R. Milton Cato: May 1967 - 27 October 1969

#### Premiers of Saint Vincent, 1969-1979

R. Milton Cato: 27 October 1969 - April 1972

James Fitz-Allen Mitchell: April 1972 - 8 December 1974

R. Milton Cato: 8 December 1974 - 27 October 1979

#### Prime Ministers of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

R. Milton Cato: 27 October 1979 - 30 July 1984

James Fitz-Allen Mitchell: 30 July 1984 - 27 October 2000

Arnhim Eustace: 27 October 2000 - 29 March 2001

Ralph Gonsalves: 29 March 2001 -

# NEWS FROM SVG

(Courtesy of SVG Today News, The Vincentian & Searchlight)

## FLIGHTS TO AND FROM CANOUAN RESUMED

Regional airline LIAT announced the resumption of flights to and from Canouan on Wednesday, September 22. The Company suspended services to the island on August 26 due to a downgrade of the fire services at the Canouan Jetport. The fire service, which had been downgraded to category two, is now upgraded to category 5, which is the minimum requirement for LIAT to fly to any destination. LIAT operates a total of six flights to Canouan each week – two on Fridays, two on Saturdays and two on Sundays. The flights all originate in Barbados.

## PLEA FOR HELP FOR KIDNEY PATIENT

by Denika Compton (Searchlight)

An urgent cry for help has come from the male medical ward of the Milton Cato Memorial Hospital. The cry comes from 42-year-old Kenvert Cyrus of Mt. Bentinck, Georgetown, who is suffering from End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD). This means that his kidneys are not functioning at the level that they are supposed to, due to shrinkage.

Cyrus said that he first saw symptoms on April 12, 2009. At first, he underwent peritoneal dialysis to clean his blood, but he is no longer able to do this as he picked up an infection in the tube used for peritoneal dialysis, and it cannot be replaced at the moment. He now has to do haemodialysis, which is more costly and requires him to go to Trinidad where he would have the procedure three times a week.

He said that he has been teaching for the past 20 years and is thinking about asking the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Teachers Union (SVGTU) for help. He is also encouraging the government to get the diagnostic centre, now under construction in Georgetown, up and working. In his view, it will be easier to access and less expensive, given that patients would not have to go out of the country for treatment. He also said that it would give kidney patients a little more satisfaction.

Hannif Sutherland, a friend of Cyrus, said that he is doing all that he can to make sure that Cyrus' quality of life is bearable. He has set up a website: [www.kennycyrus.com](http://www.kennycyrus.com) to raise awareness about Cyrus' plight and to help to raise funds. He has also started a Face book campaign and will be setting up a blog which Kenvert will be able to update.

Anyone wishing to donate to this cause can do so through an NCB account #1101997, or by contacting Kenvert or his fiancé, Annis Lavia at 527-6225 and 532-7904, respectively.

## Bequia Social Organisation supports kindergarten students

Staff Reporter - Searchlight

Kindergarten students on Bequia are now thankful after receiving free book bags and school supplies. This special

donation came from the Bequia Social Organization, based in Canada, and is done on an annual basis. The recipient schools were the Paget Farm Government School (PFGS) and the Bequia Anglican Primary School (BAPS).

According to retired principal of the BAPS Denise Niles, president of the group Terrence Peniston is very interested in children's education and feels the need to support them.

The teachers and parents, as well as the students, expressed their appreciation for the thoughtfulness of the president and members of the Bequia Social Organization. (DC)



### AGENTS IN ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

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#### MARRIAQUA COOPERATIVE CREDIT UNION

Mesopotamia Post Office, Mesopotamia, Tel: 784-458-5269

#### KP COMMUNICATIONS INC

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#### K P COMMUNICATIONS

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#### KP COMMUNICATION INC

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#### GENERAL EMPLOYEES COOP CREDIT

Commercial Road, Georgetown Tel: 754-458-6476

#### GENERAL EMPLOYEES COOP CREDIT

Clifton, Union Island Tel: 784-485-8214

#### GECCU

Port Elizabeth, Bequia Tel: 784-458-3535

## VINLEC Emphasising Safety

(Jeff Thompson – The Vincentian)

This country's electricity provider is placing emphasis on safety. Chief Executive Officer of the statutory corporation, Mr. Thornley Myers, highlighted this approach Sunday 19 September at fifth annual safety week opening.

“Your life is valuable, safety is advisable” was the theme of VINLEC's 2010 Safety and Health Week.

Myers told those present that the company spent close to EC\$2M this year towards employee safety and the assets of the company.

“This year alone, we have spent in excess of EC\$1M in fire protection. Those of you, who are familiar with our operations, would know over recent years, we had a few incidents that highlighted some of the weaknesses in our structure – in our protection of our assets. And in 2010, we dedicated over a million dollars towards greater security and safety to our assets.”



Myers said: “we’re talking about the protection of life – the protection of human resource – but also we must look to protect the physical assets that we have because they are a part of what keep this business going.”

While exhorting VINLEC staffers to strive for zero accident, Myers implored them to employ better safety measures at work and at home. He pointed out that in the 1990s the company introduced a safety officer as part of its organizational structure.

### **Regional collaboration**

VINLEC was collaborating at the regional level to ensure that its employees were properly trained and equipped. “We have been working with the Caribbean Association of Electricity Companies (CARILEC) in developing a standardized linesman programme, which will roll out very early in the New Year,” Myers interjected. He pointed out that VINLEC’s employees travel to neighbouring utilities to restore lines damaged by hurricanes.

VINLEC as a member of CARILEC had been trying to get the regional association to regularise its programme so that when VINLEC linesmen and other personnel travel to other member territories “they know that they are going to work with people, who are as trained or better trained than they are. It is an important aspect of our safety and safety of our employees”.

### **Life valuable**

Deputy Director of the National Insurance Services, Minerva Glasgow, stressed that that safety was advisable because life was valuable. She said lives should not be a cost for working. According to her, persons leave for work with the intention of returning home safely after work.

“Occupational health and safety is about preserving and protecting the lives of your employees. It is about the human costs. When one worker in St. Vincent and the Grenadines gets seriously injured, it does not only impact on that worker, his immediate family and the potential for future work, but it also affects workplace productivity, competitiveness and ultimately, the welfare of society at large. There is a cost involved,” Glasgow said.

### **SVG IN ELECTION MODE**

Although general elections are not constitutionally due until March 2011, it is safe to state that St. Vincent and the Grenadines is in election mode. The two major political parties, United Labour Party (ULP) which has governed the country since 2002 is looking for a third term while the New Democratic Party (NDP), the Opposition in the House of Parliament that ruled the country for 17 years prior to 2002 is looking to unseat the ULP.

Currently, the country is divided into 15 constituencies but there is a move by the government to have it increased to 17. The matter is in court as the opposition party is trying to block the increase.

*For more news from SVG visit: [www.searchlight.vc](http://www.searchlight.vc),  
[www.thevincentian.com](http://www.thevincentian.com), [www.svgtoday.com](http://www.svgtoday.com)*

## **CDF TO SUPPORT NEW INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT CONSTRUCTION**

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados -- The board of directors of the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF) has approved a country assistance programme (CAP) to the government of St Vincent and the Grenadines for US\$4,210,000 to be used by the Argyle International Airport Development Company.

The CAP makes provisions for a grant of US\$1,640,000 and a concessional loan of US\$2,570,000.

In announcing the board’s decision, the chief executive officer, Ambassador Lorne McDonnough, noted that the funds approved will allow for the acquisition of equipment to facilitate the runway paving works, which will commence in the first quarter of 2011.

The CDF, he said, will also provide US\$1,000,000 for the supply and installation of runway lights and emergency generators.

The new Argyle Airport will provide St Vincent and the Grenadines with direct regional and international jet air access to CARICOM, North America and Europe.

This development, McDonnough said, will reduce a disparity that places the people of St Vincent and the Grenadines at a disadvantage within CARICOM and could constrain their economic development and their ability to participate effectively in the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME).

## **IMMIGRATION MATTERS**

### **Changes to Immigration Policies and Procedures**

Contributed by: Sandra Sutherland, CCIC

There has been a lot of media attention regarding changes to immigration regulations, policies and procedures during this 2010 year. These changes range from the reduction of national occupation (NOC) list for the Federal Skilled Workers program, amendments to the Foreign Workers program, imposed limitations for employers hiring a living a live-in-caregiver under the Live-in-Caregiver program, redefinition of the term “bad faith ” relationships as it applies to the sponsorship of spouses, common-law partners and adopted children, and most recently, a new Refugee Reform.

The new Refugee Reform received royal assent on June 29, 2010 and imposes new refugee rules, which should be implemented in the next few months which is expected to speed up the refugee process. Generally a Refugee claim takes an average of 18 months to finalize. Jason Kenney, our immigration minister, would like to have the entire processing period reduced to about 90 days.

The new Refugee Rules will be implemented to overhaul the current system and set up a new system. The new system

will bring about the creation of a Refugee Appeal Division (RAD) that is similar to the Immigration Appeal Division whereby sponsors can appeal the decisions of immigration officers. The RAD would allow failed refugee claimants to appeal their negative decision of the deciding member/judge. The decisions for these appeals are expected to be rendered in about 120 days.

Another critical change involves the designation of certain countries as a Safe Country of Origin (SCO). At present, it is uncertain exactly what criteria shall be used in defining determining what constitutes safety. Claimants from these SCO's will very likely have their claims and appeals expedited. So instead of the average 90-day processing period, refugee claims will be finalized in about 60 days and appeals in about 30 day instead of 120 days. Will St. Vincent and the Grenadines be classified as a SCO? If so, claims from SVG may drastically decline.

Humanitarian and Compassionate cases will also be affected by the implementation of the new refugee rules. With the implementation of the new refugee rules, come changes to the assessment of personalized risks (to a person's security and life upon his/her return to their home country) as a hardship factor in Humanitarian & Compassionate (H&C) cases. Currently, a failed refugee claimant could submit an application for permanent residency under humanitarian and compassionate grounds by expressing fears relating a risk to his life and/or security upon his return home. Once the new rules have been implemented, a H&C applicant would be barred from having this fear considered as a hardship in returning home because immigration officials will no longer assess this factor.

Our immigration minister has been hard at work in 2010. Why did Citizenship and Immigration introduce so many changes and in such haste? What do these changes mean to you? How will they affect you and our community? What other changes awaits us in 2011? Talk to your politicians, get the real facts, stay informed, and lobby in support of or against any further changes. Take a stance and be proactive in the redefinition of our immigration and refugee system.

Sandra Sutherland is a Certified Canadian Immigration Consultant (CCIC). She can be reached at (416) 431-2829 or via e-mail at [ssutherland@suthernimmigration.com](mailto:ssutherland@suthernimmigration.com). View her advertisement in this copy of the *Insight*.

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### **Sandra Sutherland, CCIC**

Immigration Law Practitioner (Honours Certification)  
Commissioner of Oaths & Member of CSIC

*1941 Weston Road, Suite 207  
Toronto, Ontario, M9N 1W8  
and*

*2175 Sheppard Ave. E, Suite 224  
Toronto, Ontario, M2J 1W8*

Tel: 416-431-2829; Toll Free: 1-877-230-9451

Fax: (416) 431-4036

Website: [www.suthernimmigration.com](http://www.suthernimmigration.com)

Email: [ssutherland@suthernimmigration.com](mailto:ssutherland@suthernimmigration.com)

### **Notes on St. Vincent and the Grenadines**

It became an Independent Nation on October 27, 1979.

Area: 150 square miles; slightly less than twice the size of Washington, DC. The Grenadines include 32 islands, the largest of which are Bequia, Mustique, Canouan, and Union. Some of the smaller islands are privately owned.

*Capital -- Kingstown.*

*Other Towns - Barrouallie, Calliaqua, Chateaubelair, Georgetown and Layout*

Mainland St. Vincent is divided into 5 parishes – Charlotte, St. George, St. David, St. Patrick, and St. Andrew.

### **THANK YOU**

The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto acknowledges the contributions of those businesses and individuals who support the production of *Insight* by promoting their businesses and services through advertisement in our newsletter. We kindly ask our readers to support these businesses and individuals when and where possible.

### **LEADERSHIP FOR 2011 AND BEYOND**

As the end of the year approaches it is time for us to reflect on the leadership team that we have to put in place to do the work required in order for us to have a good working organization. Quite often many of us criticize those who take on the responsibility but we do not come forward to try to make things better. Our organization and community need the support of those who can make them more effective. Please give it your prayerful consideration and assist in building both your organization and community. A new leadership team is to be elected on January 30<sup>th</sup> at the Annual General Meeting.

**ST. VINCENT AND GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO, INC.**  
31<sup>st</sup> Independence Celebrations

## **COMMUNITY SYMPOSIUM**

OUR CHILDREN'S WELFARE - GENERATIONS PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Featuring

*\* appearance and keynote address by \**



**SOPHIA YOUNG**

Vincenitian professional basketball player with San Antonio Silver Stars in the WNBA

Also

- \* Community personnel who work with children \*
- \* Audience participation and discussion \*

York Civic Centre, 2700 Eglinton Avenue West, Toronto  
Sunday, October 31 – from 2:30 p.m.

*BE A PROUD VINCENITIAN – JOIN OTHER SVG NATIONALS IN CELEBRATING  
ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES'  
31<sup>st</sup> INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY ON OCTOBER 27.*

# The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc.

## Membership Registration Form

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***Become a Member!***  
***Join with us in achieving our goals.***

### **Mission Statement**

The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. (SVGAT) is a non-profit community-based Association. We are committed to providing assistance and support to groups and institutions in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Ontario, and wherever the Association deems fit. We are also committed 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 OF EVERY MONTH** from 4:00 p.m. at Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court, (Keele St. & Sheppard Ave. W. area), North York

***We hope to see you there!***

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

FAMILY MEMBERS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NEW MEMBER OR RENEWAL: \_\_\_\_\_

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (\$2.00 for new membership registration, \$20.00 annual subscription)

*Please make cheques payable to THE ST. VINCENT AND GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC. and mail to:*

**THE ST. VINCENT AND GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC.**  
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