



INSIGHT

THE ST. VINCENT AND GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC. (SVGAT)

P. O. Box 80066 – Don Valley Village P. O., Toronto, ON, M2J 0A1 Email: svgat@vincytoronto.com

KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY INFORMED THROUGH COMMUNICATION

Quarterly Newsletter

SPRING ISSUE

April 2023

GREETINGS FROM NEW PRESIDENT

Corporation News

Dear Members,

Greetings to all of you! It is always a pleasure to reach out to you through our newsletter. I hope this message finds you all in good health and high spirits.

As we move forward into the coming months, I am excited to announce four upcoming fundraising events that we have planned for our community. The first is our annual Vincy Unity Picnic, which will be held on the 15th of July, followed by our joint boat cruise with the Toronto SVG Support Group on the 11th of August. The annual walkathon will take place in September and finally our Independence celebration will take place in October. The chair of this year's Independence Committee is Ms. Natalie Watson. These events will not only help us raise funds but also provide opportunities for us to come together, socialize and have fun.

But our community is not limited to just these events. I encourage all of you to be creative and come up with other fundraising and community engagement activities. Let us work together to make our community stronger and more vibrant.

Remember, each one of us has the ability to make a difference. It is only through our collective efforts and contributions that we can achieve our goals and aspirations. So, let us all do our part and work towards making our community a better place.

Thank you for your continued support, and I look forward to seeing you all at our upcoming events.

Best regards,
Cordel Telfer

CHANGES TO MEMBERS' MEETINGS

Effective January 2023 the monthly members meetings were discontinued and instead members meetings will be held on alternate months in March, May, July, September and November. The other months will be used for special programs and discussions of interest to the community.

In February, Mrs. Christine Allum on behalf of the Ontario Securities Commission presented on Fraud Prevention and Cyber-Security. In April, Mr. Dennis Bucchan led discussions on Money Management. Persons who attended the sessions expressed satisfaction and encouragement to the continuation of these presentations. Members are encouraged to suggest topics that they would like to be presented and discussed.

Meetings and other presentations are being held virtually on Zoom unless otherwise indicated.

TENTATIVE 2023 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday, Apr. 30 – Special Presentation on Money Management

Sunday, May 28 - Monthly Members General Meet

Sunday, June 25 – Special Presentation - TBD

Saturday, July 15 - SVG Unity Picnic Crysler Park,

Sunday, July 30 - Monthly Members Meeting

Friday, Aug. 11 - Toronto Harbour Boat Cruise

Sunday, Aug. 27 – Special Presentation - TBD

Sunday, Sept. 24 - Monthly Members Meeting

Sunday, Oct. 22 - Independence Church Service

Saturday, Oct. 28 - Independence Gala

Sunday, Oct. 29 - Special Presentation - TBD

Sunday, Nov. 26 - Monthly Members Meeting

December 17 to 23 Christmas Hamper Distribution

**Non-stop Flights to/from
St. Vincent and the Grenadines on Air Canada**

Once weekly – Thursdays until June 3, 2023

BOARD MEMBERS & COMMITTEES

Current Board of Directors and Officers include:

President & Director: Cordel Telfer (647-717-9731)
VP & Director: Dennis Bucchan (416-402-1978)
Secretary & Director: Prudence Morton (416-254-3774)
Treas. & Dir: Delcina Jardine-Reckley (647-464-3355)
P.R.O & Director: Gideon Exeter (416-992-4253)
Director: Erline Granderson (416-788-5163)
Director: Kenneth Farrell (416-822-3601)
Director: Francine Burke (647-772-3683)
Director: Jim Lewis (416-459-2462)

Committees to Assist the Board of Directors

In order to effectively provide the services of the Corporation a number of committees are being established and volunteers are required to serve. The following are so far proposed:

Fundraising: D. Jardine-Reckley, G. Exeter

Independence Planning 2023: Natalie Watson

Scholarship Planning: P. Morton, K. Farrell

By-Laws Review: E. Gabriel, W. Cole, Ed Bernard

Unity Picnic Reps: J. Lewis, C. Garraway, A. Lavia

Unity Picnic Bus Coordinator: C. Telfer

Social Engagement: F. Burke

Seniors Outreach: Needs chair & volunteers

Public Relations: G. Exeter, D. Bucchan, C. Telfer

Update on House Repair in Owia



Front section of house with materials

Work has begun on repairing the house of Ms. Zoe Ann John and her daughter, Anjell at Owia. It is expected that the cost of repairs will be about EC\$30,000.00 in order to bring the building in a habitable manner. The SVGAT has contributed EC\$9,900.00 from funds it received to assist with relief efforts in St. Vincent and the Grenadines as a result of the 2021 La Soufriere eruptions. Board members Jim Lewis, Kenneth Farrell and Gideon Exeter visited the premises on May 3 in order to get



Zoe Ann John, Monty Cupid & Anjell in front of house.

a first-hand look. They were accompanied by Mr. Montgomery Cupid, the liaison between the Johns and the SVGAT and met on site Ms. John, her daughter Anjell and the builder.

INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY ACTIVITIES

The following events and activities are planned for this year's celebrations:

Sunday, October 22 – **Thanksgiving Church Service** – Venue to be determined

Friday, October 27 – **Flag Raising** at Toronto City Hall – Time to be determined

Saturday, October 28 – **Independence Gala**, Estate Banquet & Convention Centre, 430 Nugget Avenue, Scarborough (McLevin & Markham Road)

Sunday, October 29 – **Community Discussions** – Venue to be determined

More information to follow on the above.

ADOPT-A-CHILD PROGRAM

The Adopt-A-Child Program began in 2008 to assist some less fortunate students in primary schools in St. Vincent and the Grenadines financially in their desire for a good foundation in their early years. The assistance is CDN\$600.00 per year for 5 years and begins from their second year in school. To learn more about the program, please visit [St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto - Adopt A Child \(vincytoronto.com\)](http://St.VincentandGrenadinesAssociationofToronto-AdoptAChild(vincytoronto.com)). If you are interested in sponsoring a student, please contact any member of the board of directors.

The current cycle of the Adopt-A-Child Program that began in 2018 ends this year, 2023. The Corporation is looking for volunteers either individuals or groups to sponsor new students for another 5-year period.

The students in this cycle of sponsorship are attending the Buccament Government School, Calliaqua Anglican School, Lauders Primary School, Lodge Village Government, Marriaqua Government School and Bequia Seventh Day Adventist School. In this and the next issue of Insight we will provide you with a caption of each of the students who are currently in the program.

XAVIER BOWENS



Xavier is one of 6 students sponsored by the St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto's Adopt-A-Child program in 2018. His sponsorship is one of two students financed by the Toronto SVG Support

Group.

He resides in Vermont with his mother and siblings, is 10 and a half years old and attends the Buccament Government School in Dubois in the Vermont Valley area of mainland St. Vincent. Xavier's sponsorship began while he was in Grade 1 and he is currently in Grade 5 with one year left for him to complete his primary school program.

According to his school reports, Xavier is a well-behaved student, attends classes regularly and has a grade performance of 58% that places him in the middle of the class. He likes playing sports and aspires to be a teacher when he completes his schooling. Since the program is for a 5-year sponsorship Xavier will need additional sponsorship to complete his primary school journey. Both Xavier and his class teacher, Mr. Keith Ollivierre expressed gratitude for the support that has been provided to Xavier over the years.

IMARI PAULS

Imari lives in Calliaqua and is a Grade 6 student at the Calliaqua Anglican School. He lives with relatives following the passing of his mother a few years ago. Imari is the second student whose sponsorship is financed by the Toronto SVG Support Group. Imari was selected as a replacement for another student who was initially sponsored but migrated.



According to the rules of the program, if a sponsored student from a school leaves the program for any reason, the school is entitled to replace that student with another student.

In his final year at his current school, Imari is writing his CPEA exams and hopes to attend the Thomas Saunders Secondary School in the next school year. He aspires to be one of the top athletes representing SVG in the near future. School Principal, Dr. Corselle Charles-Smith and Class Teacher, Mrs. Cheryl John on behalf of Imari and family expressed thanks to the SVGAT for initiating the program and to all who support it.

VICTOR HENRY COMPTON

Victor was selected by a family that decided to assist with his education without revealing their identity. The family learnt about the program and contacted the organization and provides the sponsorship through the corporation. At the start of the sponsorship Victor lived in Bequia and attended the Bequia Seventh Day Adventist School. His mother, who is a nurse, is on study leave, and over the years they both have moved from SVG to Puerto Rico and now to Maryland, USA where Victor, now 15 years old, attends Atholton Adventist Academy in Maryland. He is currently in Grade 10 and is an exceptional student with high grades. His favourite subjects are science and mathematics and he aspires for a career in archeology or medicine. He likes public speaking. Victor's mother recently wrote, "Your investment in Victor and your input has helped him to reach another milestone. Your interest in his education is invaluable and we are greatly indebted to you. We look forward to your continued support, the power is in your hands to create the change and invest in the future that the world needs to see."



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 Consul General
 Tel: (416) 398-4277 Fax (416) 398-4199
 Email: consulategeneral@rogers.com

CARI-ON Holds Community Meeting

CARI-ON SVG Disaster Preparedness, the Toronto-based organization that was charged with coordinating the volcano eruption relief efforts in Toronto held a virtual meeting on April 11, almost two years since the eruptions, to bring the community up to date with its undertakings.

The meeting was addressed by Consul General Fitz Huggins who expressed his satisfaction in how the organization accounted for the funds and supplies collected and shipped to SVG.

In delivering the report, CARI-ON's chair, Hayden Jones outlined that just over CDN\$142,000.00 was collected through several sources – GoFundMe, E-transfers, and Direct Deposits along with numerous food items, clothing, tools, power washers, wheelchairs, vegetable seeds and water hoses, hand sanitizers, face masks and medical supplies. The organization shipped 17 forty-foot containers of which KLC Freight absorbed the cost for 5 of them while the others were paid from



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the funds collected by CARI-ON. Fourteen of the containers were shipped to the National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines corporation charged with coordinating the use of all available resources (local, regional and international) to ensure that all the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines are better able to mitigate against disasters, prepare for disasters, respond to disasters and recover from the impact of disasters in the shortest possible time.

The other shipments were sent to the Rotary Club South, Lions Club South, WINFA and the Ministry of Health.

Claudia Sutherland walked attendees through the financial report outlining how much money was collected for disaster relief and how those funds were spent by tying expense to either projects undertaken in SVG or to get the shipped goods there.

CARI-ON partnered with organizations in SVG – Rotary Club South, Lions Club South the Central Leeward Impact Project (CLIP) to provide care and support to those who were affected. The funds were used in programs to assist farmers, vulnerable families, and students in the red zone areas – the areas that were mostly affected during the volcano eruptions.

Both Mr. Jones and Mr. Huggins used the opportunity to thank all those who supported the relief efforts and special mention was made of KLC Freight which not only assisted with the shipping costs but allowed its warehouse to be used for storage, sorting and packing the goods. Morningside Christian Assembly also got notable mention as its doors were opened to allow for

storage, sorting and warehousing the collected items.

The Toronto SVG Support Group and the St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto were recognized as partners with CARI-ON and special thanks were extended to other Caribbean communities including Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, and Trinidad & Tobago who sent groups of persons to assist during the relief period.

The presentation was the third virtual one held by CARI-ON which has stated that it will continue to provide regular updates as necessary on the activities by way of emails to persons on its contact list and to the supporting organizations.

Editorial Notes

The delayed publication of this issue of Insight was merely due to material not being available on time.

We again appeal to members and other readers to provide material/stories that they feel would be of interest to others.

We also invite persons who have services and business to advertise to our readership, to use Insight as a medium to reach persons who might be interested. Your services/businesses can be advertised both in Insight and the annual Independence Magazine produced by the Corporation. Please contact pro@vincytoronto.com for information and rates.

ST. LUCIA ACCEPTED IN CARIBBEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

The Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ) officially welcomed Saint Lucia to its fold after Governor-General Errol Charles assented to the Constitution of St Lucia Amendment Act, which was passed in that country's parliament in March earlier this year.

The amendment means that Saint Lucia now recognizes the CCJ as its final appellate court, and not the Privy Council in London. St Lucia now becomes the fifth Caricom nation to take this defining step and joins the four countries currently sending appeals to the CCJ – Guyana, Barbados, Belize, and Dominica.



The Board of Directors and Members of the St. Vincent and Grenadines of Toronto Inc. herewith offer sincere condolences to all those members of our community who have lost their loved ones. We wish you God's blessings during your period of grief.

May the souls of the departed Rest In Eternal Peace.

Primary School Students Write CPEA

Just over 1700 Grade 6 students across St Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG), wrote the Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA) on May 4 and 5 at 18 centres. The 1702 students wrote their Social Studies and Math papers on Thursday, and on May 5 wrote the Language Arts and Science papers.

The Caribbean Primary Exit Assessment (CPEA) is an assessment of the literacies required by all pupils exiting the primary school system. The focus of this assessment is on a set of literacies, which are common to all primary curricula across the region and are necessary for students to achieve at higher levels of education.

IMMIGRATION MATTERS

THE HIGH RISK OF DOING IT YOURSELF (DIY)

Contributed: Sandra Sutherland, RCIC-IRB

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) assert that applicants do not need an immigration representative to help with their application. Many couples presume that applying for immigration status is a simple procedure so there is no need to waste money by hiring a representative. After all, it is just a simple matter of filling out some forms, right? Think again.

One couple acted on this presumption and found themselves in a serious predicament. This married couple resided together in Canada. The wife (the sponsor) was attempting to sponsor her husband (the applicant) for permanent resident status in Canada. They used the sponsor's information to answer questions that were applicable to the applicant and vice versa and incorrectly filled out the application forms. They applied truthful information to the wrong forms and the wrong sections on the forms. To compound the confusion even more, the forms they submitted did not match the category they intended to apply under, thus causing them to submit the wrong sponsorship application package to the inappropriate immigration case processing centre. Rather than returning the entire application package to the sponsor for correction, the case processing centre processed the application as submitted and forwarded it to the Port of Spain visa office for further processing. The application was subsequently refused. This situation could have been even more detrimental if the application was processed within Canada or if the couple was investigated with a finding of misrepresentation.

The applicant (the husband) left Canada to attend an interview at the Port of Spain Visa Office. Upon his return to Canada, the immigration officer permitted him entry but only granted him a maximum visit of one month. He was compelled to leave Canada at the end of his one-month authorized stay, which he did. The sponsor (the wife) retained me, a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant (RCIC), to appeal the negative decision to the

Immigration Appeal Division. I was tasked with rectifying the situation. I was successful in "righting the wrongs" and bringing clarity to the case in addition to submitting evidence to prove the bona fides of their relationship. Instead of the case going to a full appeal hearing, which it should, it was diverted to the less stringent Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) proceeding. Fortunately, after a fifteen-minute attendance at the ADR at the Immigration Appeal Division, my client was successful in getting the immigration officer's negative decision overturned and had her husband's application processing correctly completed, thus resulting in her husband's ability to be granted permanent resident status.

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Immigration officials use the information provided in each application package to formulate the nature and circumstances of a case and to evaluate the merits of the case. Sponsors and applicants need to know what and how much information should be provided and which documents they should submit to support their case. It is imperative that confusing and/or doubtful information be avoided so as to avoid a refusal. The onus is on sponsors and applicants to submit sufficient information and documentation to demonstrate the true facts of the case to immigration officials.

The above noted sponsor holds a university degree yet experienced confusion in presenting a correct and comprehensive application package. The money spent in retaining a competent authorized representative at the onset could have helped to avert a more costly and time-consuming appeal process.

Since making it mandatory for most permanent resident applications to be submitted online, the process and procedures still seem complicated. Retaining a competent authorized representative who truly enjoys the challenges of handling complicated immigration cases and has the passion of really making a positive difference in their client's life is a wise decision. Choosing an authorized representative who is not afraid to serve clients with a dose of reality instead of sugar-coating responses to queries by using the infamous catch phrases "don't worry, everything will be fine" or "no problem, I'll handle it" or "you'll get through" is important.

Sandra Sutherland is a competent authorized immigration representative and counsel who can represent clients at all divisions of the Immigration and Refugee Board. She specializes strictly in immigration and refugee matters and is licensed with the College of Immigration and Citizenship Consultants (CICC) as a Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant-IRB (RCIC-IRB). She can be reached at **(416) 431-2829** or via e-mail at ssutherland@suthernimmigration.com. View her advertisement under *Suthern Immigration & Paralegal Services Inc.* in this publication for more information.

News From SVG

SVG Owes \$577m to Taiwan

Edited from a story in iWitness News

St. Vincent and the Grenadines now owes Taiwan EC\$577.9 million, up from EC\$100 million last September. Prime Minister Ralph Gonsalves said the loans "put a hook in the gill of anybody" in St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG), who wants to break the diplomatic ties with Taiwan.

Speaking at a signing ceremony for an EC\$120 million loan from Taiwan on Wednesday, Gonsalves said that the loan agreements that his government has signed with Taipei includes clauses that would make all outstanding loans payable



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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO SVGAT MEMBERS

Please note that according to the by-laws of the Corporation, persons who paid their annual dues in 2022 were deemed financial up to March 31, 2023 by way of a Grace Period. For persons who did not renew their membership prior to March 31 their membership was automatically lapsed and they now therefore need to re-apply for membership by completing the appropriate form.

CORPORATION BY-LAWS

On February 2, 2013, The St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc. enacted the Ontario Non-Profit Corporation By-Law 1 which replaced the constitution by which the Association was governed. Please visit the Corporation's website www.vincytoronto.com and click on the About Us page or click on the link [St. Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto - By-Laws \(vincytoronto.com\)](http://www.vincytoronto.com) to take you directly to read the by-law and acquaint yourself.

immediately if SVG ends diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

The prime minister said that constitutionally, his government can remain in office until March 2026, adding that his government will take more loans from Taiwan before then.

The main opposition New Democratic Party (NDP) announced in 2016 that it will sever diplomatic ties with Taiwan if elected to office. Although the party has not formally announced any review of the policy, public statements by the party since then have suggested that the party might have reconsidered that policy.

The relationship was established by the St. Vincent Labour Party administration in 1981 and the NDP maintained them from 1984 to 2001, when the Gonsalves-led ULP came to office.

“The fact is that the New Democratic Party has always been a long-standing friend of the government and people of Taiwan, and we don’t intend to change that.”

A number of persons have expressed strong feelings about the statement by the prime minister that he has put a hook in the gill of anyone who wants to break diplomatic ties with Taiwan.

Regional symposium on crime ends with a declaration of a war on guns

Edited from a story in iWitness News

CARICOM leaders ended a two-day regional symposium on violence as a public health issue, on Tuesday, declaring a war on guns to combat the illegal trade which they said “provides the weapons that contribute significantly to crime and violence in our region”.

In addition, the delegates attending the symposium including academics, crime experts, police commissioners and religious and non-governmental organizations, said that they are alarmed by the

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epidemic of crime and violence in the Caribbean.

They said it is being fueled by illegal guns and organized criminal gangs that pose a “threat to our democracy and the stability of our societies”.

In the declaration titled “War on Guns”, regional leaders said they were also calling on the United States to join the Caribbean in “our war on guns and urgently adopt and take action to stop the illegal exportation of firearms and ammunition into the Caribbean.

The regional leaders have agreed to stand with Mexico on its legal action against US gun manufacturers and retailers and establish an entity under the CARICOM Implementing Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) to assist in the containment of corruption and financial crimes, including money laundering and cybercrimes, through greater collaboration to harmonize related legislation and operational processes

They will seek to strengthen regional forensic capabilities and collaboration among national forensic agencies with a view to improving the quality of evidence and speed the conduct of trials and prepare regional model legislation to bring greater harmonization and efficiency to the development and revision of national laws.

The two-day symposium, which was held under the theme “the Crime Challenge”, also reached agreement on empowering and engaging young people as “positive content developers to offset the negative impact of social media and engage with the creative industries to re-engineer culturally acceptable norms”.

The leaders have also agreed to appoint an “eminent person” to lead and advise them and the Guyana-based CARICOM Secretariat “on further strategies and reforms and on effectively operationalizing the decisions of Heads”.

The Public Relations Committee that is responsible for producing Insight on behalf of the Corporation is inviting interested persons to submit articles and stories that they feel would be of interest to our readers. Please send by email to “pro@vincytoronto.com”

High Court Judge Rules Against SVG Government Regarding Dismissal of Civil Servants But High Court Grants Stay of Execution

Edited from a story in iWitness News

On March 13, High Court judge Justice Esco Henry ruled that the mandate, which resulted in hundreds of public sector workers being dismissed from their jobs in 2021 was unconstitutional.

Justice Henry further held that the workers never ceased to hold their respective jobs and are entitled to all salaries and benefits they would have received, as well as punitive damages.

Immediately following the ruling, the government appealed the ruling and applied for a stay of execution of the order of the court, pending the outcome of the appeal.

The lawyers for both parties feel that their clients will win the appeal and both have threatened that the matter might have to be decided by the Privy Council.

On April 20, A Court of Appeal judge granted a stay of execution of High Court judge Justice Esco Henry's March 13 decision in the vaccine mandate case.

In a decision the justice of appeal said that on reading the papers submitted in support and against the stay of execution, the court was satisfied that the government has reasonable prospects of success on appeal, that there is cogent evidence that the appeal will be rendered nugatory unless a stay is granted, and that the appeal concerns matters of public importance.

“And upon the court considering all of the circumstances of the case and determining that the applicants have met the threshold for the grant of a stay of execution, the application for a stay of the judgment and order of Esco Henry delivered on 13th March 2023 pending the hearing and determination of the appeal is granted,” the justice of appeal said.

The judge noted that in coming to its decision, the court must consider all the circumstances of the case including the strength of the appeal, the balance of harm by the grant or refusal of a stay, and whether the appeal will be stifled or rendered nugatory unless a stay is granted.

Jomo Thomas, a lawyer for the workers in the case, said that his team would push for a speedy hearing if the stay of execution was granted.

“And hopefully we can get it heard by July because that's the next time that the court returns to St. Vincent,” Thomas said.

“What we don't want is for the government to get a stay and then for them to engage in some kind of stalling tactics to pressure the workers into, to browbeat the workers, to stonewall the workers into applying, reapplying for a job by the mere economic pressure that would come down on them,” the lawyer further states.

Africa Is Physically Splitting In Two



The African continent is splitting in two and a new continent will eventually be formed. The reason is a geologic rift which runs down the eastern side of the continent and will eventually be replaced with an ocean.

This phenomenon is caused by the geography you may remember from school days; the tectonic plates.

The Earth's crust is divided into different sections called tectonic plates; the huge rocky slabs made up from the Earth's crust and upper mantle. These massive sheets are continually being pushed around by movements in the mantle (one of the three main

layers of Earth, consisting of hot, dense, semisolid rock) which is shifting millimetre by millimetre, reshaping the Earth's surface over millions of years.

As the rift continues, it will eventually cause the eastern part of Africa to split away from the rest creating a new "Somali plate" and sea in the process.

Since 2005, this process is underway and in north-eastern Africa's Afar Triangle, hundreds of crevices are reported as splitting the desert floor and the ground has slumped by as much as 100m:

This process will take millions of years, but here's how Africa will look in around 50 million years:

In a few million years' time this process will cause Africa to split in two, creating an entirely new continent. If we use the current geography of Africa, this huge new continent would include all of Somalia and half of Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania.

Canouan, A Place To Visit

(Edited from various sources)

Canouan, a petite, three-square mile island, one of the 32 isles forming part of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, has a population of approximately 2,000. Canouan is the Carib word for "island of turtles".



Canouan is a peculiar place that, in some ways, shows the perils of tourism development. Once a normal Grenadine paradise, more than half of the island was sold off by the SVG government to private investors for a mega resort project leaving local residents bunched up in the village on the

southern reaches of the isle without access to some of Canouan's loveliest spots. Of course, if you're staying in the resort, you will enjoy access to absolutely stunning beaches with first class snorkeling and zero crowds.

While many of the nicest beaches are within the resort boundaries, there is also fine snorkeling and some lovely sands to the south and east of the village of Charlestown, although infrastructure on the island is limited for independent visitors.

Not long ago, though, the island was without running water or paved roads, and it tallied more turtles than human residents. Now, there's a runway for private jets, a flurry of new [luxury hotels](#) and villas, and a multimillion-dollar marina for mega yachts. Yet, arriving here still feels like unearthing something new.

From the plane, Canouan mimics many other [Caribbean islands](#): turquoise waters, interrupted only by emerald-green hills and slick, masted sailboats — every [tropical destination](#) cliché is on full display from above. Up close, as the island quietly unfurls, roads reveal locals gathering on the streets of a small, lively village and unfettered ocean views at every bend. There are no packs of cruise passengers, no tawdry tchotchke shops, no overdeveloped swathes crammed with hotels and restaurants. Instead, here, traffic means breaking to

let turtles pass (Canouan is the Carib word for "island of turtles"), and the nature is so unspoiled you feel as if you're one of the first to visit.

Canouan sits just below the hurricane belt, steering clear of storms that historically hammer the region, so there's no bad time to visit.

Getting there: Canouan is accessible by ferry services running between Kingstown on St Vincent and Union Island. There are flights to Kingstown and Union Island – a five-minute hop over the channel – with [SVG Air](#).

DO YOU HAVE A STORY THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH OUR READERS? IF SO, PLEASE SEND TO: PRO@VINCYTORONTO.COM.

Happenings in St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Courtesy of St. Vincent and the Grenadines Tourism

May: Youlou Arts Foundation

The Power of The Volcano Show - A show of paintings by local artists of the eruption of the volcano, La Soufriere. Date for the opening reception to be announced.

For more info call: (784) 457-4493 or email: youlouartcentre@gmail.com

Maroon Festival, Union Island

Annual festival held the week of the full moon, marking the start of the planting season. Activities include the Big Drum, Nation Dance and traditional folksongs.

Contact: Union Island Tourism Bureau.

Tel: (784) 458-8350

Email: unionislandtourism@gmail.com

Canouan Regatta – Canouan -25th to 29th

Takes place during Whitsun weekend.

Boat races, sports and games, calypso competitions, street jump-up and beauty pageants. Contact: Canouan Sailing Club at

Tel: (784) 458-8197.

June: Bequia Carnival – Bequia - 23rd to 26th

A delightfully informal and spontaneous event.

Contact: Bequia Tourism Association.

Tel: (784) 458-3286.

Vincy Mas Celebrations – St. Vincent - 30th June to 11th July

Vincy Mas festivities include King and Queen of the Bands, Junior Carnival, Miss SVG, Miss Carnival, Steel Band and Calypso competitions, Old Mas and Jouvert street parades.

Contact the Carnival Development Corporation
Tel: (784) 457-2580, Website: carnivalsvg.com

National Fisherman's Day Competition (TBA)

July: Bequia Annual Fisherman's Day Competition - 8th July

Contact: Bequia Tourism Association:

Tel: 784- 458-3286 or

email:bequiatourism@vincysurf.com

Vincy Mas Celebrations

Carnival Monday/J'ouvert - 10th July -

An early morning street jump-up.

T-shirt bands participate in a great street jump-up in the afternoon and into the evening.

Carnival Tuesday - 11th July

Mardi Gras Mas Bands parade on stage at Carnival City (Victoria Park) competing for the

Band of the Year Award and then on to the streets of Kingstown.

Canouan Carnival-22nd July to 1st August.

Visit discoversvg.com

Youlou Arts Foundation - Annual visual arts programme for children titled "Growing Young SVG Artists" in Kingstown, Georgetown, Tourama, Buccament and Spring Village - dates to be announced.

Contact: (784) 457-4493 or email youlouartcentre@gmail.com

August: Emancipation Day Festivities –

Events to commemorate the abolition of slavery.

Seafood Fest- Bequia - 5th & 6th

Keegan's Beachside, Lower Bay, Bequia.

Tel: (784) 458-3530 or (784) 434-5339

Youlou Arts Foundation - Annual visual arts programme for children titled "Growing Young SVG Artists" in Kingstown, Georgetown, Tourama, Buccament and Spring Village - dates to be announced. Opening of the art show titled the "Blue Show" – listen out for dates

For more info call (784) 457-4493 or email: youlouartcentre@gmail.com

Breadfruit Festival - Includes various food fair presentations in different parts of the country, showcasing a variety of breadfruit dishes. There are also mini exhibitions which explain the potential uses of the plant, from lumber and function as toys, to medicinal use.

Contact the Ministry of Culture at Tel: (784) 451-2180 or email: culturesvg@gmail.com

September: Lobster Season Opens - 1st

KCCU National Dance Festival - This festival takes place every 2 years, therefore there will be a showcase on the 23rd September, 2023. Performance events of a competitive format.

Contact the Ministry of Culture at Tel: (784) 451-2180 or email culturesvg@gmail.com

Youlou Arts Foundation - The "Blue Show" continues.

For more info call (784) 457-4493 or email voulouartcentre@gmail.com

SVG Bible Festival (TBA)

The SVG Bible Festival was started in 2009, and is comprised of Impromptu Speech, where participants speak on a topical social or religious issue; Bible Drama, where a character or event from the Bible is dramatized; and in Bible Boxing, in which the churches face off against each other quoting scripture verses. There are six rounds of Bible quizzes. Visit discoversvg.com

October:

44th Anniversary of Independence Celebrations

Various shows, rallies and other celebrations occur across the country.

Youlou Arts Foundation - Sun. 8th Sip & Paint 3-6pm

The "Blue Show" continues. For more info call: (784) 457-4493 or email: voulouartcentre@gmail.com

Independence Cycling competition (SVG) - Visit discoversva.com

Miss St. Vincent & The Grenadines Pageant

Invest SVG - Everything Vincy Expo

Union Island Model Boat Regatta

November:

National Tourism Month

Youlou Arts Foundation

The "Blue Show" continues - dates to be announced.

For more info call (784) 457-1493 or email youlouartcentre@gmail.com

Theatre Arts Festival - 3rd to 26th - This is an opportunity for community groups and schools to present dramatic work within a festival programme.

Contact the Ministry of Culture at Tel: (784) 451-2180 or email culturesvg@gmail.com

December:

National Christmas Festival Launch - 1st
Youlou Arts Foundation

The "Blue Show" continues - dates to be announced. For more info call (784) 457-4493 or email youlouartcentre@gmail.com

Steel Expressions - Steel Expressions features some of St. Vincent and the Grenadine's top entertainers along with some young upcoming performers.

Nine nights of lights at the Botanical Gardens - 15th to 23rd

National Nine Mornings Festival - 16th to 24th - A unique Vincentian tradition celebrated annually during the nine mornings before Christmas. Vincentians awake in the early hours and take part in various activities including concerts, dances, bicycle riding and sea baths. In the rural areas, the final morning usually ends with a steel band jump-up'.

Contact the Ministry of Culture at Tel: (784) 451-2180 or email culturesvg@gmail.com

New Year's Eve Celebrations - Sun. 31st - Midnight fireworks display over the Harbour in Port Elizabeth, Bequia and Britannia Bay, Mustique.

When is the 2023 Vincy Mas?

Vincy Mas is a summer Caribbean carnival and always starts the last Friday in June and generally runs for about 12 days. The 2023 Vincy Mass will begin on Friday June 30 until Friday July 14, 2023. Two days of carnival are public holidays. **In 2023, Vincy Mas will fall on Monday July 3 and Tuesday, July 4, 2023.**



Parking Information:

Early Bird Tickets By May 13 - \$40.00;

Regular Priced Tickets from Toronto

ONLY By July 14 - \$45.00 -

Same Day Purchase - \$60.00

Contact Cordel @ 647-717-9731

TRAVELLING BY BUS FROM TORONTO!

The SVGAT is operating a bus service from Toronto leaving at 7:00 a.m. Tickets are **\$60.00 for Adults;** **\$40.00 for children 12 years and younger.**

Bus leaves Jane & Finch Mall and Scarborough Town Centre.

Tickets available from: Cordel – 416-771-7931;

Erline – 416-788-5163; Jim – 416-459-2462

BUS TICKETS MUST BE BOUGHT BY JUNE 30



Barristers, Solicitors,
Notaries Public

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We're Back! Vincy Boat Cruise!

FRIDAY, AUGUST 11, 2023, 8:00PM

176 CHERRY ST.- PIER 35, TORONTO

Early Bird \$65 until June 30, \$75 thereafter



Save the Date

ENTERPRISE 2000



Gideon 416-992-4253
Stuart 416-707-0125
Dennis 416-402-1978
Youlanda 416-919-3433
Prudence 416-254-3774
Cynthia 647-213-5638



Part proceeds go towards a charitable cause in SVG

THE ST. VINCENT AND GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC.
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