

ST. VINCENT AND GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC.

REPORT FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS For Presentation on Sunday, September 24, 2017

The board of directors continues to meet monthly by teleconference. In addition to board meetings there have been several other meetings by members of the board and special committees. There was no membership meeting held in August.

Meetings of the Association

The kitchen area of Northwood Community Centre was booked for September 24 on a trial basis to see if members were comfortable in that room and then decide if regular meetings should be continued there or if the regular meeting room should continue to be used. On Wednesday, September 20 a call was received from the NCC representative informing me that the NCC would not be available for the scheduled meeting on September 24 as the repairs were not completed so no one would be allowed in the building. She further stated that she had found space for us at Grandravine Community Centre and that the permit which was granted for the use of the NCC would be good to use at Grandravine.

We are to make a decision on a regular meeting place once we get to see what the new room at NCC looks like and whether it could satisfy our needs.

Adopt-a-Child Program

The walk-a-thon held in June raised enough funds to cover the outstanding amounts due to this program. The Board agreed that the balance due to the students will be taken to St. Vincent and the Grenadines by the Association's president, Gideon Exeter during his visit to the country in mid-November. The schools have been informed of this and arrangements will be made for the official hand over of the money orders.

The Scholarship Program

There were no applications received at the closing date of August 31, 2017 so there will be no scholarship bursaries presented this year.

Insight

The October issue of Insight is being worked on and it is expected that it will be ready for circulation early in October. A number of companies have agreed to advertise in both the Insight and the Independence brochure.

Resignation of Board Member

Mr. Odel Lewis has decided to retire in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and accordingly has resigned as a member of the Board of Directors of the SVGAT effective September 8, 2017. The members of the board thanked Mr. Lewis for his service to the Association and wished him all the best in his retirement. His participation on the board will surely be missed.

Working with our Partners

As a result of the destruction caused by the passing of Hurricane Irma a meeting was called with representatives of the Bequia Social Organization, Toronto SVG Support Group, Union Island Cultural Association and the SVGAT to discuss how the St. Vincent and the Grenadines community in Toronto should respond to assist the people of Barbuda. The Consuls General of Antigua & Barbuda, Grenada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines all sat in on the meeting. We were all brought up to date with

details of the destruction caused to Barbuda. It was subsequently agreed that all four groups will make a joint contribution to the relief efforts of Barbuda.

Following the discussions about Barbuda, the Commonwealth of Dominica was visited by Hurricane Maria and caused more damage to the country than any other disaster had ever caused. As a community it is important that we carefully assess what we have and how we can best assist both Barbuda and Dominica.

The Council of Caribbean Associations – Canada (CCAC), the umbrella organization of which Antigua & Barbuda Association of Toronto and the Commonwealth of Dominica Ontario Association are members agreed to donate \$2,000.00 to Barbuda prior to the damage done to Dominica so the board of directors of the CCAC also has to go back to the drawing board to determine how it could assist both countries. Information about the damages done by the hurricanes are widely circulated.

The SVGAT participated in this year's Toronto Caribbean Carnival Parade with about 70 persons in the T-Shirt section under the CCAC umbrella. Cordel Telfer, Zakiya Hutchinson and Cheyenne Samuel formed the committee that coordinated the SVGAT's group. Based on the sale of extra T-Shirts and registration fees the group was able to cover the cost of participating with a left over amount of approximately \$1,200.00 which will be ultimately given to the SVGAT for its use in one of its programs. It is expected that the group will participate in the 2018 version of the festival.

A few members of the SVG community attended the annual seniors' event coordinated by the CCAC on Saturday, September 9 at the Dennis Timbrell Resource Centre, 29 St. Dennis Drive, Don Mills.

Friends of St. George's Cathedral, SVG

Bishop of the Anglican Church Diocese of the Windward Islands, the Rt. Rev. C. Leopold Friday will be visiting Toronto during November 3 to 9 to participate in a fundraiser on Saturday, November 4 to assist the Anglican Church in the Province of the West Indies. A group of concerned Anglicans has agreed to organize a fundraising Gospel Concert on Sunday, November 5 at St. Dunstan's Anglican Church, 56 Lawson Road, Scarborough and is inviting members of our community to support the event. All proceeds from the event will go towards the restoration of St. George's Cathedral, Kingstown which is a landmark historic site in St. Vincent. Tickets are on sale at \$30.00 each.

Occurred Events

2017 Walk-a-Thon

The final amount of pledges received is \$3,660.00. It was previously determined that the proceeds from this year's walk would go to help to offset the arrears for the Adopt-A-Child Program.

2017 Unity Picnic – July 15

The Association has not yet received a final report on the event.

2017 Boat Cruise

The event which was jointly coordinated by SVGAT and Toronto SVG Support Group had an increased attendance this year and realized a profit of approximately \$7,500.00 of which a small sum from advertisers is still outstanding. The two parties, SVGAT and TSVGSG have agreed to continue hosting the event in 2018 and an organizing committee will be put in place soon. One third of the proceeds from this year's event is being donated to the School for Children with Special Needs in SVG

and that amount will be taken to SVG in mid-November when persons representing both groups will be there.

Upcoming

2017 Independence Anniversary Celebrations

St. Vincent and the Grenadines celebrates the anniversary of its Independence from Great Britain which took place on October 27, 1979. As usual, the Association continues to organize a number of activities to mark the occasion here in Toronto. The events include:

Thanksgiving Church Service – Sunday, October 22 at Wesley Chapel Free Methodist Church;
Independence Gala – Saturday, October 28, Woodbine Banquet & Convention Centre;

Flag Raising Ceremony – Toronto City Hall on October 26;

Community Discussions – Sunday, October 29. To be finalized.

Tickets for the banquet are on sale with a limited number at \$70.00 for members and early bird purchasers while regular admission is \$80.00.

The organizing committee is soliciting donations of food and drinks for the Church Service. Please contact June Ellis, Sandra Bobb or Gideon Exeter if you would like to make a donation.

Eye Glasses for SVG

We continue to appeal to members of our community to donate eye glasses so that we can them to St. Vincent and the Grenadines for the Lions Club South to match up with persons in need of them. The Club will work closely with opticians on an ongoing basis to help the less fortunate who are in need of them. Persons are asked to bring whatever glasses they have along with the prescription (if possible).

Correspondence:

OUTGOING –

1. Communication with various other companies re advertisement for Insight and the Independence anniversary brochure
2. Communication with School for Children with Special Needs in SVG, Tourama Government School and Fairhall Government School
3. Invitation to several organizations to attend the Independence anniversary events

INCOMING

- a) Communication with principals of Fairhall and Tourama Government Schools
- b) From the CCAC regarding its events and programs
- c) Invitation from SVGAM for persons to attend their Independence Anniversary banquet
- d) Invitation from Union Island Cultural Association for persons to attend their Thanksgiving Brunch
- e) Invitation from Bequia Social Organization for persons to attend their Thanksgiving Brunch

Committee chairs for the respective committees will entertain questions and comments with respect to their particular portfolios.