



St. Vincent & the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc.

Quarterly Newsletter April 2008

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

First let me thank our heavenly Father for keeping us safe over the winter months. On behalf of the Executive Committee, let me say that we are greatly honoured by the confidence our members have placed in us by electing us to our various positions. Our sincere thanks to all members who have volunteered to work on the many committees.

It is with great pride that I congratulate all who have participated in building the St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto throughout the past forty years. I am honoured to be serving as president during this exciting time in the organisation's history.

The founding members of this organisation would be proud of the many accomplishments that have taken place in the past 40 years, thanks to the support of the many volunteers who have given freely of their time and expertise to the many projects that we have undertaken. To our credit, we have made tremendous contributions to our adopted country Canada as well as in our homeland, St. Vincent and the Grenadines. I take the liberty to shed light on a few:

- The building of the Arnos Vale Playing Field in St. Vincent
- Is the pillar of our community during times of disasters, most notably during the 1979 volcanic eruption;
- A founding member of Caribana
- Provide Scholarships to students towards post secondary education
- Founding member of the Annual Unity Picnic at 1000 Islands
- The catalyst to the St. Vincent Cricket Club (Toronto)
- Donate to many charitable organizations and individuals in need in both Canada and St. Vincent and the Grenadines
- Contributed to the Jamaican Canadian Centre building fund

We have set several goals as we move forward in 2008. Firstly, we are inviting and engaging the youth in our organisation to be leaders and encourage our members that have left the organisation to return. We are determined to continue to regroup, rebuild and reach out to the community in order to achieve these goals.

As we look forward to the spring and summer months, we are busy preparing for our events such as the annual Mother's Day Brunch, our coordinators are busy planning our annual Unity Vincy Picnic and it is anticipated that this year will be bigger even bigger than the record set last year.

In conjunction with the celebration of our 40th Anniversary, we are also planning our annual Independence activities beginning with our yearly Church Service and ending our celebrations on November 1 with the annual banquet.

Drop us a line in our message board or send us an email. We'd love to hear from you. We are always interested in findings ways to make our organisation current.

Respectfully submitted
Francelia George – President

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

Invites you to our

ANNUAL MOTHERS' DAY DINNER

Sunday, May 11, 2008
1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Crawford Adventist Academy
at
531 Finch Ave. W. (Bathurst & Finch)

Tickets & Contact Information:
Gracelyn: 905-417-9625
Allan: 416-510-2889
Omega: 905-444-9080
or any member of the Association

Admission: Adults: \$25.00
Children: \$15.00
A Gift for each mother attending

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Dedicated to our Mothers



Yes, mother's day comes and goes. But the memories linger and remain...

The woman who creates and sustains a home and under whose hands children grow up to be strong and pure men and women is a creator second only to God. ~Helen Hunt Jackson

Some mothers are kissing mothers and some are scolding mothers, but it is love just the same, and most mothers kiss and scold together. ~Pearl S. Buck

The heart of a mother is a deep abyss at the bottom of which you will always find forgiveness. ~Honoré de Balzac

When you are a mother, you are never really alone in your thoughts. A mother always has to think twice, once for herself and once for her child. ~Sophia Loren,

My mom is a never-ending song in my heart of comfort, happiness, and being. I may sometimes forget the words but I always remember the tune. ~Gracy Harmon

The formative period for building character for eternity is in the nursery. The mother is queen of that realm and sways a scepter more potent than that of kings or priests. ~Author Unknown

Mother love is the fuel that enables a normal human being to do the impossible. ~Marion C. Garretty

A mother is the truest friend we have, when trials heavy and sudden, fall upon us; when adversity takes the place of prosperity; when friends who rejoice with us in our sunshine desert us; when trouble thickens around us, still will she cling to us, and endeavour by her kind precepts and counsels to dissipate the clouds of darkness, and cause peace to return to our hearts. ~Washington Irving

Grown don't mean nothing to a mother. A child is a child. They get bigger, older, but grown? What's that suppose to mean? In my heart it doesn't mean a thing. ~Toni Morrison, Beloved, 1987

SVG Highlights

Bequia's Easter Sailing Regatta

At Easter time, Admiralty Bay, Friendship Bay and Lower Bay are awash with vividly coloured boats of every description, people, and plenty of action. Well known to

Yachtsman for many years, Bequia boasts the best waters in the world for sailing. All nationalities compete in a terrific array of races for yachts, fishing boats, gumboats, coconut boats and even one for 'crazy craft'. However, not surprisingly the indigenous double-ended boats remain the stars in the very special annual regatta. The racing starts on Good Friday and concludes on Easter Monday.

The Bequia Easter Regatta takes first place as a true Island Regatta and a great spectator event. Started in 1967, its reputation attracts numerous boats - both traditional and modern - and hosts a wealth of local festivities; all imbued with a spirit of old-fashioned fun and relaxed merriment for everyone.

The long Easter weekend brings Bequia's biggest annual revelry, when one and all join together to celebrate and rejoice in the islands seafaring traditions and skills. The Bequia Sailing Club's aim is to encourage and promote sailing skills in every type of craft, and the CSA accredited yacht races in the regatta offer challenging courses in Racing, Cruising and Multihull classes. Yachts from all over the Caribbean and beyond converge on Bequia at Easter to take part in one of the regions most popular island regattas.



Inspired by years of tradition, the hardworking members of the Bequia Sailing Club organize many events for the entertainment of all, and Hotels, Restaurants and Bars join in making extra plans for this 'fun for everyone' community-orientated event.



Creating a true carnival atmosphere, this long weekend marine fiesta has become a major tourist attraction. It brings virtually the whole Island out to watch the races and good naturedly cheer on the competitors.

A great beach bacchanal at Lower Bay is the main event on Easter Sunday involving Bequians, visitors, families and friends, with feasting, dancing, and Lay day activities such as the Crazy Craft race and Sandcastle competitions. On Easter Monday, vendors line the Port Elizabeth shoreline, selling food, cold drinks and local specialties, all to a lively musical background. It is under the shade of the famous landmark Almond tree here that a stage sets the scene for cultural performances and more fun and games.

Bequia's Easter Regatta ends on Easter Monday afternoon with the prize giving ceremony. In true Bequia fashion, everyone turns out to applaud the losers as well as the winners, and to add their support to the Bequia Sailing Club's commitment to maintaining and encouraging the tradition of boatbuilding, sailing and racing on the island.

By Bequia information.com

Education Corner

Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship Program

Awards available to students from other Commonwealth countries for graduate study in Canada

The Government of Canada offers scholarships as part of the **Commonwealth Scholarship Plan (CSP)**. These scholarships are tenable at recognized public Canadian institutions and affiliated research institutes only.

The Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship Program (CCSP) is designed to provide opportunities for students of other Commonwealth countries to pursue research and studies in Canada.

The Scholarships are intended for men and women of high intellectual promise who may be expected to make a significant contribution to their own countries on their return from study in Canada.

The Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship Program is funded by **Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada (DFAIT)** which also determines the number of scholarships available each year. The agency responsible for financial and administrative matters is the **Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE)**.

Awards available under this program include:

Graduate Students' Exchange Program (GSEP) Awards available to citizens enrolled full-time in selected countries for research in Canada (*including the Canada-Caribbean Community Leadership Scholarships*)

Eligible countries include:

Latin America and the Caribbean region:

Anguilla, Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Falkland Islands, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint Helena, Saint Kitts, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago, Turks & Caicos.

CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES

The 'Tongue', the enemy of Hairouna

"From where did we come and what have we become?" I asked as I listened to the SVG airwaves over the past month, in which 'tongues' lashed out with no regard to human detriment and potential international impact to "The land of the blessed".

It would seem that we have become more a people of "The land of bitterness," heading for disaster as the venom pours out of the barrel.

Yes, my Brothers and Sisters, it is that bad, as the saying goes: "Fools may speak but not fools that are listening". During primary school in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, we learnt "Together we aspire, together we will achieve". According to our history we are supposedly a "blessed land" so there is no reason why we should not as a people of one nation achieve the pinnacle of success. This includes those amongst us who may not be born in the blessed land but have been adopted by us, the blessed

We need to be true patriots, protectors and mentors for the positive construction of "Hairouna SVG". We cannot reverse the reality that SVGAT is the oldest and the umbrella organization for the people of St. Vincent and the Grenadines residing in Ontario. Its progress depends on all of us and no subsidiary group should be allowed to foster a destructive agenda based on class distinction, long gone since the extinction of colonialism.

To succeed, we must strive to be a positive force to the Ontario "umbrella, a main artery to history of our Canadian blood stream. We are to be mentors to not only our children but to the international eyes on us.

As the PRO (Public Relations Officer) of the St Vincent and Grenadines Association of Toronto, it is my mandate to promote the organization. I can assure you that as a community advocate, I am committed to impartiality and will continue to advocate for administrative "transparency". You can be assured that I am not about to jeopardize the trust and reliability that I have built amongst my readers over the last 6 years. My commitment to volunteering is to the SVG international community. It is about embracing the dreams of our fore-parents, supporting the vision of our founders, the heroes of our past, maintaining and enhancing our inheritance, and creating positive examples for "Hairouna", "The land of the Blessed".

Our goal of life it may seem as our choice,
Like the air we breathe it is there for our needs;
It is ours, it's free; it is for you and for me
And we take for granted the generosity of thee.

So we do as we please and are certain to succeed;
"Wow!I can see, I can hear and my phone lines are clear.
I can reach through the world and can speak loud and clear,
For sure there is air and my friends they can hear."

"As I hail to the east, west, to the north and the south
It is real and a tool and it is real cool.
No ink, no trail, no one to curtail,
Our 'tongues' are ours and its tattle-tales."

"As we move on with plans; in confidence we'll stand.
With all the support our strategies will go forth.
The power is ours and are sure for their trust,
It is great and a joy to be placed at the top."

But let's not take for granted; the generosity of thee-
And remember our success.... it all depends on "He"
As we work for love and for charity,
Our integrity in time is restrained by destiny.

© Elma Gabriel

Rape is about power, not sex

Rape is forced, unwanted sexual intercourse. Rape, sometimes also called sexual assault, can happen to both men and women of any age.



Rape is about power, not sex. A rapist uses actual force or violence — or the threat of it — to take control over another human being. Some rapists use drugs to take away a person's ability to fight back. Rape is a crime, whether the person committing it is a stranger, a date, an acquaintance, or a family member. No matter how it happened, rape is frightening and traumatizing. People who have been raped need care, comfort, and a way to heal.

What Should I Do?

What's the right thing to do if you've been raped? Take care of yourself in the best way **for you**. For some people, that means reporting the crime immediately and fighting to see the rapist brought to justice. For others it means seeking medical or emotional care without reporting the rape as a crime. Every person is different.

There are three things that everyone who has been raped should do, though:

Know that the rape wasn't your fault.

Seek medical care.

Deal with your feelings.

It's Not Your Fault

Whatever happened, it wasn't your fault. **No one** has the right to have sex with you against your will. The blame for a rape lies solely with the rapist.



Sometimes a rapist will try to exert even more power by making the person who's been raped feel like it was actually his or her fault. A rapist may say stuff like, "You asked for it" or "You wanted it." This is just another way for the rapist to take control. The truth is that what a person wears, what a person says, or how a person acts is *never* a justification for rape.

Most people who are raped know their rapists. That can sometimes lead the person who's been raped to try to protect the perpetrator. Make protecting yourself your priority; don't worry about protecting the person who raped you. If you want to report the crime, do so. If you don't feel comfortable reporting it, though, you don't have to. Do whatever helps you feel safe and heal — without blaming yourself.

Seek Medical Care

The first thing someone who has been raped needs to do is see a medical doctor. Most medical centers and hospital emergency departments have doctors and counselors who have been trained to take care of someone who has been raped. It's important to get medical care because a doctor will need to check you for [sexually transmitted diseases \(STDs\)](#) and internal injuries.

Most areas have local rape hotlines listed in the phone book that can give you advice about where to go for medical help. You may want to have a friend or family member go along for support, especially if you're feeling upset and unsafe. Some rape crisis centers also provide advocates who can go along with you. You can also call the national sexual assault hotline at (800) 656-HOPE.

If you are under 18 and don't want your parents to know about the rape, ask the rape crisis center about the laws in your area. Many jurisdictions treat rape exams confidentially, but some will require that a parent or guardian be notified.

You should get medical attention right away **without** changing your clothes, showering, douching, or washing. It can be hard not to clean up, of course — it's a natural human instinct to wash away all traces of a sexual assault. But being examined right away is the best way to ensure you get proper medical treatment.

Immediate medical attention also helps when people decide to report the crime, providing evidence needed to prosecute the rapist if a criminal case is pursued. If you've been raped and think you don't want to report it, you could change your mind later — this often happens — and having the results of a medical exam can help you do this. (There are laws, known as statutes of limitations, that give a person only a certain amount of time to pursue legal action for a crime, though, so be sure you know how long you have to report the rape. A local rape crisis center can advise you of the laws in your area.)

Even if you don't get examined right away, it doesn't mean you can't get a checkup later. It's always best to see a doctor immediately after a rape, of course. But a person can still go to a doctor or local clinic to get checked out for STDs, pregnancy, or injuries any time after being raped. In some cases, doctors can even gather evidence several days after a rape has occurred.

What Happens During the Medical Exam?

When you go to the hospital after a rape, a trained counselor or social worker will listen while you talk about what happened. Talking to a trained listener can help you begin to release some of the emotions you are probably feeling so that you can start to feel calm and safe again.

The counselor may also talk with you about the medical exam and what it involves. Each state or jurisdiction has different requirements, of course, but here are some of the things that may happen during the medical exam:

A medical professional will test you for STDs, including HIV/AIDS. These tests may involve taking blood or saliva samples. Although the thought of getting an STD after a rape is extremely scary, the quicker a person finds out about any infection, the more effectively he or she can be treated. Doctors can start you on immediate treatment courses for STDs, including HIV/AIDS, that will greatly increase your protection against developing these diseases.



If you're female, a medical professional may treat you to prevent an unwanted pregnancy, if you wish.

A medical professional will examine you internally to check for any injury that might have been caused by the rape. A medical professional or trained technician may look for and take samples of the rapist's hair, skin, nails, or bodily fluids from your clothes or body.

If you think you've been given a rape drug, a doctor or technician can test for this, too. Be aware that this **toxicology test** covers any and all illegal drugs.

At any time during the medical exam, you can say if you don't want a certain test performed or evidence collected. All procedures are being done to help *you*, so you have control over which procedures you'd like done, as well as a say in any you *don't* want.

Dealing With Feelings

Rape isn't just physically damaging, it can be emotionally traumatic as well. The right emotional attention, care, and support can help a person begin the healing process and prevent lingering problems later on.

Someone who has been raped might feel a lot of things: angry, degraded, frightened, numb, or confused. It's also normal for someone who has been raped to feel ashamed or embarrassed. Some people withdraw from friends and family. Others don't want to be alone. Some feel **depressed**, **anxious**, or nervous.

Sometimes the feelings surrounding rape may show up in physical ways, such as trouble sleeping or eating. It may be hard to concentrate in school or to participate in everyday activities. Sometimes it may feel like you'll never get over the trauma of the rape. Experts often refer to these emotions — and their physical side effects — as **rape trauma syndrome**. The best way to work through them is with professional help.


It can be hard to think or talk about a frightening experience, especially something as personal as rape. People who have been raped sometimes avoid seeking help because they're

afraid that talking about it will bring back memories or feelings that are too painful. But this can actually do more harm than good.

Talking about rape in a safe environment with the help and support of a trained professional is the best way to ensure long-term healing. Working through the pain sooner rather than later can help reduce symptoms like nightmares and flashbacks. It can also help people avoid potentially harmful behaviors and emotions, like major depression or **self-injury**.

Every rape survivor works through his or her feelings differently. Some people feel most comfortable talking one-on-one with a therapist. Others find that joining a support group where they can be with other survivors helps them to feel better, get their power back, and move on with their lives. In a support group, you can get help and support as well as give it. Your experiences and ideas may help others heal.

Reviewed by: **Richard S. Kingsley, MD**, and **Allison L. Cassidy, LCSW**



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DONATE YOUR CANADIAN TIRE MONEY TO
THE ASSOCIATION'S RELIEF COMMITTEE

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONT INC.

GENERAL MEETING

Please join us for the General Meeting of the Association on Sunday, April 27, 2008 from 4:00 p.m. at Northwood Community Centre, 15 Clubhouse Court, North York (Keele & Sheppard).

Please bring along a friend with you.

HELP AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS

The Association each year provides the opportunity for two persons to benefit from its Scholarship Program in the amount of \$1,000.00 each. Please visit our website, www.vincytoronto.com to get more details.

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES CONSULATE TORONTO

The Consulate General wishes to advise the
general public of its hours of operation:

Monday to Friday

Open to the General Public
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

By Special Appointment only:

2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Tel: 416-398-4277

**The office is closed on all statutory holidays
in St. Vincent and the Grenadines**

ASSOCIATION BRIEFS

THE EXECUTIVE

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

President – Francelia George; Tel: 647-244-6642

president@vincytoronto.com;

Vice President – Kwuassi Hutchinson; Tel: 416-652-5207

vicepres@vincytoronto.com

Executive Secretary – Franklyn Ash; Tel: 905-970-1063

execsec@vincytoronto.com

General Secretary - Androula Samuel; Tel: 416-898-4135

gensecretary@vincytoronto.com

Treasurer – Kenneth Farrell; Tel: 416-822-3601

Treasurer@vincytoronto.com

Assistant Treasurer – Yolande Lewis – 416-809-6820

assisttreas@vincytoronto.com

Public Relations Officer – Elma Gabriel, Tel: 416-282-4557

pro@vincytoronto.com

Immediate Past President – Gideon Exeter; Tel: 905-831-1814

gexeter@yahoo.com

Ass'n General Email address: svga@vincytoronto.com

Nominated Member – Monty Providence – Tel: 905-417-9625

Nominated Member – Emergene Sam – Tel: 416-537-3269

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.

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. A little as Cdn\$1.50 a day, will amount to almost EC\$120.00 per month. This small sum 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 select such a child and how to ensure that your sponsorship 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.

NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTED

The Association held its annual general meeting on Sunday, January 27, 2008 at which the retiring executive committee presented the annual report – a review of the past year's activities. The report showed that in 2007 the Association continued its outreach to causes in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and the local community. The Association ended the year in good financial standing with in excess of \$19,000.00 in cash and assets despite a couple of unsuccessful events in the latter part of the year.

The election of officers for the new year was only partially done and was completed at the following meeting on February 24.

The executive committee shall be comprised of the elected members and up to four other financial members as Nominated Members to assist with the administration of the Association's affairs.

Familiarize yourself with the Association's
Constitution by going to the following link:
<http://www.vincytoronto.com/constitution.htm>

COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND COORDINATORS NAMED

The new executive has begun putting in place a number of committees to ensure that the Association's work is done.

The following committee chairs and coordinators have been named:

Education Committee - Fred Williams

Building Committee - Kuwassi Hutchinson

Finance Committee - Kenneth Farrell

Public Relations Committee – Elma Gabriel

Relief Committee - Emergene Sam

Scholarship Committee - Franklyn Ash & Gideon Exeter

SVG Unity Picnic Representatives - Cordel Telfer and Kenneth Farrell

Mothers Day Dinner Committee - Gracelyn Providence

Independence Dinner Committee - Francelia George, Yolande Lewis and Shelley John

Children's Christmas Party Coordinators - Yvette Cadogan and Lucine Butler

Recognition Committee - Androula Samuel

CCAC Representatives - Cordel Telfer & Gideon Exeter

Fundraising & Entertainment Committee: Monty Providence

SVGAT PROVIDES MORE ASSISTANCE TO HOMELAND

The Association continued its outreach to causes in St. Vincent and the Grenadines by sponsoring a second child and donating to Marion House. In December 2007 the Association began a program to financially assist a young student in primary school to try to ensure that he had the basic foundation to prepare him for life beyond primary school. Donlee Sutherland of the Spring Village Methodist School was the first selected student. Through a contribution from a member who was impressed by the initiative, a second student, Kadisha Nichols of Cane End Government School benefits to the amount of Cdn\$4,200.00 over a five year period.

Anyone who wishes to assist in sponsoring a student is asked to contact Ms Emergene Sam, Chairperson of the Relief Committee by email at relief@vincytoronto.com or telephone 416-537-3269.

“Vincy “ – UNITY PICNIC

Brown's Bay Provincial Park, 1000 Islands
Saturday, July 19, 2008

COUNCIL OF CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATIONS – CANADA

The Council of Caribbean Associations – Canada is a group of organizations representing persons of Caribbean descent in Canada. Currently, it consists of the following founding organizations – Antigua & Barbuda Association of Toronto, Association of Bahamians in Canada & Friends of Bahamians, Barbados Overseas Organizations in Canada, Commonwealth of Dominica Ontario Association, Grenada Association – Toronto, Haiti Association of Toronto, Montserrat Association – Toronto, NevCan Cultural Association, St. Kitts Canadian Association, St. Lucia Association – Toronto, St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto and Trinidad & Tobago Association of Ontario.

The mission of the council is to foster understanding, harmony and cooperation among organizations committed to the economic, social, cultural and political advancement of Caribbean people living in Canada.

The organization has identified three areas to focus on during 2008 and 2009 while laying the foundation for the future. The areas are Youth, Seniors and Disaster Preparedness. It recently organized a successful Career Options Day on March 1st which was geared to find employment opportunities for our young people. An event to help to inform of the services, opportunities and benefits available to our seniors is being planned for later this year in late Summer to early Fall. Since our Caribbean countries are prone to hurricanes, earthquakes and other natural disasters, the Council is attempting to educate nationals here to be prepared to act and respond when disasters occur in those parts.

Cordel Telfer and Gideon Exeter will represent St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto during 2008.

CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES CONT.....

Building Better Understanding

The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto must build a not-for-profit productive and equality competitive body of people in their community to advance their social, economic and cultural agenda.

With this in mind, our community and information services can be the vehicle through which the Association can apply its positive growth and good governance.

However, this strong sense of community relationship and quality management will drive The St. Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto to communicate more effectively with other organizations, governments and institutions about their ideals, policies and goals, thus benefiting all members of the society.

The failure to integrate the people's aspirations, their economic contribution, their skills and ability can be catastrophic for their future generations. It is our duty to ensure harmony amongst our people in order to accomplish financial stability in our families and communities.

Kuwassi Hutchinson
Vice President, SVGAT

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(Courtesy of the Vincentian and Searchlight Newspapers)

SVG - Open-ended Turkey Scholarship Offer

An open-ended scholarship offer has been made to St Vincent and the Grenadines by the government of the Republic of Turkey.

This is one of the “practical results” announced by Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves following his six-day official visit to Turkey.

Dr Gonsalves said that Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan has left the number of scholarships to be awarded up to him (Dr Gonsalves) to decide.

At a press conference last Tuesday, Dr Gonsalves also said that a group of Turkish investors is expected in this country in the next two months to examine investment opportunities.

He said that the group of investors will particularly be looking at this country’s tourism sector.

Dr Gonsalves, who is the first CARICOM Prime Minister to make an official visit to the Eurasian country, which has a population of 80 million, also secured a commitment from Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan for the Argyle International Airport.

Prime Minister Erdogan agreed to assist either through the provision of construction material, heavy-duty equipment, or financial and technical support.

There was also an agreement to pursue a long term strategy for increased cooperation with St Vincent and the Grenadines and the broader CARICOM region in the areas of Climate Change, Disaster preparedness, Tourism and Small Business development among other things.

Prime Minister Dr Gonsalves also announced that two candidates are in the forefront of consideration to be named as Honorary Consul of St Vincent and the Grenadines to Turkey.

Dr Gonsalves told reporters that he reiterated this country’s pledge of support for candidacy of Turkey for a non-permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council for the period 2009- 2010.

The bid by the city of Izmir to host the World Exposition in 2015 under the theme “New Routes to a better world: Health for all” will also be strongly supported by this country, Dr. Gonsalves said.

Dr Gonsalves, who was accompanied on the trip by his wife Eloise, Ambassador to the United Nations Camillo Gonsalves, and High Commissioner to London Cenio Lewis, also visited

several historic and cultural sites, and had meetings with several important officials in Turkey. (KJ)

OECS Music and Film to take spotlight

People in the OECS involved in the film and music industries are getting an opportunity to put the development of these sectors on a structured and comprehensive development path.

The OECS Secretariat is bringing together the region’s film and music practitioners and a number of invited international operators in these sectors, to face off over two days - April 4th and 5th - in St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

This is the second annual OECS International Development Conference, and this year the theme is “Promoting and Sustaining the OECS Service Industry: The Creative Industries - Music and Film”.

The focus on the Music Industry will touch on areas such as Music Development and Studio production, Artist Development and Management, Touring and Concert development, Online and Virtual IP development, Broadcasting and Distribution, the Performing Arts, Linking Art and Culture, and a comprehensive approach to building the Creative Industries in the OECS.

Trinidad and Tobago signs health pact with SVG

A GIANT STEP to the benefit of Vincentian health care was taken recently, as Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves and Trinidadian Prime Minister Patrick Manning signed a three-year health agreement. The agreement paves the way for Vincentians to access emergency health care in the twin island state.

Dr Gonsalves explained that since his administration took the reins of power in 2001, the Government has arranged for about 30 Vincentians to go to Trinidad and Tobago for medical attention. He, however, explained that he expressed to Prime Minister Manning, during his two-day visit, that the arrangement that is already practiced should be packaged within an official memorandum, so that it could remain in place, even if either of them is to suddenly drop off the scene. (KJ)

Let your voice be heard.

Join us at the next Monthly General Meeting on Sunday, April 27 from 4:00 p.m. at Northwood Community Centre to share your views on the future of the Association.

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ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES' FLAG - A DESCRIPTION

The flag of St. Vincent and the Grenadines was officially adopted on October 12, 1985.



The green diamonds are shaped in a V for St. Vincent, and reflect the plural nature of the many islands of St. Vincent and the Grenadines. These gems define St. Vincent and the Grenadines as the gems of the Antilles. The Blue represents the sky and sea. The gold is for warmth, the bright spirit of the people and the golden sands of the Grenadines. The Green represents the lush vegetation of St. Vincent's agriculture and the enduring vitality of the people. The Flag may be called "The gems".

FACTS ABOUT ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

POPULATION AND LABOUR FORCE

* The population is estimated to be 109,022

* The labour force is estimated at 41,000.

* Recent data indicates an unemployment rate of 22%.

ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES ASSOCIATION OF TORONTO INC. TENTATIVE CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2008

Sunday, March 30	Monthly General Meeting	Northwood Community Centre
Sunday, April 27	Monthly General Meeting	Northwood Community Centre
Saturday, May 10	Caribbean Youth Debate Prelim.	Scarborough Civic Centre
Sunday, May 11	Annual Mothers' Day Dinner	Crawford Adventist Academy
Saturday, May 31	Caribbean Youth Debate Finals	North York Civic Centre
Sunday, May 25	Monthly General Meeting	Northwood Community Centre
Saturday, July 19	Vincy Unity Picnic	Brown's Bay Provincial Park, 1000 Islands
Sunday, October 26	Thanksgiving Church Service	Venue to be announced
Saturday, November 1	Independence Banquet	Riviera Parque Banquet Hall, 2800 Hwy 7 West
Sunday, November 2	Town Hall Discussions	Venue to be announced
Saturday, December 13	Children's Christmas Party	Northwood Community Centre
Christmas Week	Christmas Hamper Project	Across the Community

WINFIELD "MIGHTY REY" WILLIAMS PASSES ON

ONE of our country's most distinguished educators is dead. Winfield Lancelot Darington "Mighty Rey" Williams died on Saturday, March 8, at 2:05 a.m, at the Williams family Home at Glen. Williams, who was the former Headmaster of the St. Vincent Grammar School, was at the time of his death the Director of the Centre for the Human Sciences, a consulting agency offering services in training, research and publication.

During the recently concluded Constitution Review Commission, Williams, who was 61 at the time of his death, was Research Officer. Williams' contribution to Education was not limited to St. Vincent and the Grenadines. From 1967 to 1979, he was a secondary school teacher of French and Spanish up to the sixth form level in Barbados, St. Lucia And Jamaica. He also served as Curriculum Officer in the Jamaica Ministry of Education from 1979 to 1982, and lectured in Teacher Education at the University of Technology from 1982 to 1989.

He was also a part-time lecturer in the Faculty of Education at the University of the West Indies. For three years from 1989, Williams was Programme Officer with the Caribbean People's Development Agency. Williams, who was born in Calliaqua on December 5, 1946, was also a musician and a dedicated proponent and practitioner of the calypso art form. He represented St. Vincent and the Grenadines twice at the Caribbean Festival of Creative Arts (CARIFESTA) and appeared regularly as a musician on the hotel circuit in St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados and St. Lucia.

Williams is survived by five children: Dawn (Montreal), Olu (USA), Kamilah and Shari (Jamaica), Shawn (Barbados); his siblings, including T. Wade Kojo Williams Sr., Beverly Williams Jacobs, other relatives and friends. He was buried on Saturday, March 15, following a funeral service at the Calliaqua Methodist Church.

Travel Documents for Entering the United States

Attention Canadian citizens traveling to the United States by land or water. As of January 31, 2008, if you travel to the U.S. by land or water, a U.S. law will require you to present:

A government-issued photo ID, such as a driver's licence; AND a birth certificate or a citizenship card; OR A valid passport; OR A NEXUS or a Free and Secure Trade (FAST) card; OR For those 18 and under, a birth certificate.

Canadian citizens flying to or through the U.S. must present a valid Canadian passport.

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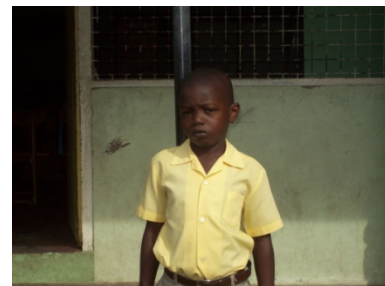
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ADOPT A CHILD PROGRAM

The Association's Adopt-A-Child program got off the ground with the selection of Donlee Sutherland of Spring Village Methodist School, St. Vincent, being the first sponsor child. His school was chosen from among the Government Primary Schools and Special Needs Schools throughout the country, then he was selected.



This program is coordinated by the Relief Committee. Please support this cause by making a special donation.

Please call Emergene Sam, Relief Committee Chair at 416-537-3269 or email svgatoronto@vincytoronto.com

CANADA ANNOUNCES OPEN SKIES AGREEMENT WITH BARBADOS

For release - March 4, 2008

OTTAWA — The governments of Canada and Barbados have negotiated an Open Skies-type air transport agreement to increase trade and tourism between the two countries. The agreement was announced today by the Honourable Lawrence Cannon, Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, and the Honourable David Emerson, Minister of International Trade, and Minister for the Pacific Gateway and the Vancouver-Whistler Olympics.

"This is Canada's first Open Skies-type agreement in the Caribbean region and signals another step forward in providing greater flexibility for air services for passengers, businesses, air carriers and airports," said Minister Cannon. "I am pleased with the outcome of these negotiations, marking another bilateral air services agreement achieved under Canada's Blue Sky policy."

The new agreement allows airlines to provide scheduled air services as frequently as desired between cities in Canada and Barbados. This agreement also allows airlines to react quickly to market conditions by more effectively adjusting prices. In addition, airlines from both countries have greater flexibility in offering flights (passenger and cargo) to and from third countries, with the gradual phase-out of all limitations.

"Canada greatly values its close, long-standing relationship with Barbados," said Minister Emerson. "Canada is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service's presence in Barbados this year. The new agreement will provide a stronger basis for competitive air services. We anticipate this will generate even more growth in trade, tourism and investment."

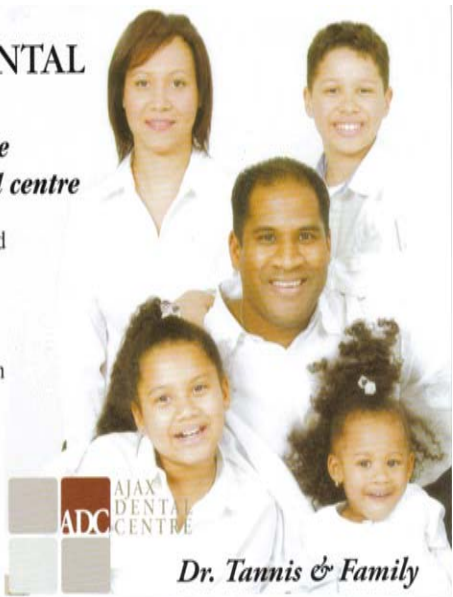
**** The new agreement also provides all-cargo air carriers with greater options to facilitate and expedite the flow of cargo between both countries, and third countries, including those of the Caricom region. Caricom countries include Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.**

This new agreement builds on Prime Minister Stephen Harper's visit to the Caribbean region in July 2007, when he outlined Canada's re-engagement in the Americas as a critical, long-term international priority for the government.

In 2007, trade between Canada and the Caricom members including Barbados, was \$2.2 billion, a 20-per-cent increase from 2006. Canadian merchandise exports to Caricom totalled \$725 million and merchandise imports from Caricom totalled \$1.47 billion. In 2006, 25,600 Canadians travelled to Barbados. The Caricom region received more than 251,100 Canadian tourists in 2006.

The new provisions are applied immediately. Once ratified, the

new agreement will replace the 1985 agreement currently in force.



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2008 INDEPENDENCE ANNIVERSARY DINNER & DANCE

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2008

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IMPORTANT IMMIGRATION NOTICE TO SVG NATIONALS

We have been asked to advise St. Vincent and the Grenadines nationals that as of August 1, 2007, only the new Machine-Readable Passports issued by the Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines will be accepted as official travel documents for our country.

The last day for using the old type of passports that are not machine-readable was July 31, 2007. Please take the necessary actions to obtain your new St. Vincent and the Grenadines Passport. The following rates apply for obtaining your new passport:

When applying in Canada - Cdn\$102.00
 When applying in the United States of America - US\$105.00
 When applying in the United Kingdom - 40 Pounds (Sterling)
 When applying in St. Vincent and the Grenadines - EC\$85.00

Please be guided accordingly and share the information with others. Please check with any SVG Overseas Office for further information. The SVG Toronto Consulate Office can be reached at 416-398-4277.

The Consulate is located at 333 Wilson Avenue West at Bathurst.
 Email address is:
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TORONTO CONSULATE OFFICE

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

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

Steve O. Phillips - Consul General

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.

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BEREAVEMENT NOTICE

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.

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



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FACTS ABOUT ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

POPULATION AND LABOUR FORCE

- * The population is estimated to be 109,022
- * The labour force is estimated at 41,000.
- * Recent data indicates an unemployment rate of 22%.

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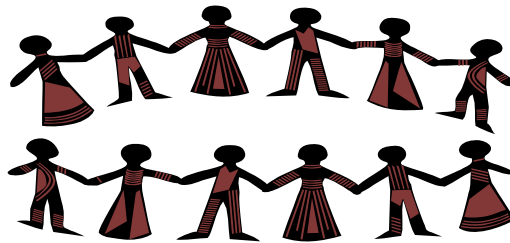
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Association of Toronto Inc.

Membership Registration Form

Be a Member!
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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 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!

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