** mensagem From the President **

**Season’s Greetings!**

I give thanks to the Spirit that moves this season, that would make our hearts kinder and thoughtful.

First, thank you to our outstanding Members and Sponsors for all that we have achieved together in 2018! We are a remarkable Association because of all of you. You challenge us on what it means to be a Guyanese in the Diaspora, on ways to improve as an institution; as well as, reminding us to never be complacent, but to always strive for even greater heights. You make this Association an exciting and dynamic institution to support.

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**GAOG re-elects, Carl Lashley as President.**

On November 18th, 2018 The Guyana Association of Georgia Inc. (GAOG) held its general elections to elect a new executive board and two new board Trustees. Carl Lashley, current President, was re-elected as the president of the Association with 65 votes. Phillip Andrews was also a contender for this position and earned 42 votes.

The Vice Presidential candidate, Merilyn Osbourne (current Secretary), was uncontested with 106 votes.

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As we set our minds toward the New Year, we anticipate that it will bring many challenges and opportunities. We must continue to look to our God for the courage and fortitude that will enable us to stand on our faith and grant us the strength to succeed in all that we do. We know that this faith will reward us with a prodigious witness, and perpetual promise of future achievements for the Guyana Association of Georgia.

We, the Guyana Association of Georgia, an Organization of Excellence, will remain faithful to the principles of integrity, service, fidelity, and unremitting progress as we draw on the Guyana Association of Georgia’s distributed strengths to confront challenges and seek solutions to society’s problems. We know that education is the cornerstone of our existence. So, we will move forward with passion and purpose to ensure that all are fully engaged in the promises and programs of the Guyana Association of Georgia.

I look forward to working with all of you! Now, let’s continue to grow as we serve TEA (Transparency, Excellence, and Accountability). May the Joy and Spirit of this Christmastide stay with us now and forever!

In Faith,
Carl Lashley
President of the Guyana Association of Georgia Inc.
GAOG re-elects President, new Executive Board, & Trustees.

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The Secretary elect, Shena Applewhaite (current Trustee), was also uncontested and received 102 votes. Marcus Gordon was re-elected as Treasurer with 71 votes. He was contested by Kenneth Chapman who earned 36 votes. Assistant Secretary Treasurer Fitzstephen Griffith was reelected unopposed with 105 votes. The parliamentarian elect, unopposed, is Shirley Vanier who garnered 102 votes.

There were four nominees for the two vacant trustee positions. Gail Cassar (68 votes) and Lawrence Prescott (61 votes) secured those positions. The other nominees, Colwin Henderson and Robert Charles scored 59 votes and 15 votes respectively.

President Lashley emphasized that his second term as President will continue to have transparency, excellence and accountability (TEA). He highlighted the main projects that the Association currently has in progress and emphasized that he “has a plan” to continue to carry the association forward.

2019 is expected to be productive as these new officers lead the organization in its mission to enhance the Guyanese community.
On September 22th 2018, the Guyana Association of Georgia Inc. held its 27th Anniversary Banquet and 2018 Scholarship Awards Ceremony. This grand occasion was as usual well attended as the Association executed one of its primary community serving events. The Master of Ceremonies Rev Carl Lashley Jr. kept the guests engaged and entertained. The invocation was conducted by Chief Apostle and International Presiding Bishop of Biblical Deliverance Ministries, Inc., Bishop Jason Owen. Special invitees this year included Mayor of Linden (Guyana) Ms. Waneka Arrindell; General Manager for Policy, Government and Public Affairs Chevron, Africa & Latin America, Mr. Mamadou Beye and Ms. Elaine Bryant of the EB Foundation.

The guest Speaker this year was Ms. Stacy Mollison, President/CEO of Libra Management Group. Ms. Mollison is currently active in the diaspora and using her skills, talents and resources to help and encourage small business owners both in the US and Guyana. She is also the Founder of the Destination Guyana Now Project. Ms. Mollison gave a riveting speech to the importance of education, and most importantly giving back to the community especially the Guyanese community.

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From Page

The highlight of the night was the awards ceremony where there were nine new recipients. There was no adult continuing education candidate this year for the CCIS prize. The recipients were as follows: Deeyona Massay, Ashley Austin, Moriah Mussenden, Nicholus Tinto, Jahari Fraser, Alynda Williams, Shawn Dublin, Allia Dorcelian and Christopher Fearon.

This year there was a new award, the GAOG 2018 Elaine Bryant Foundation Microsoft Leadership & Mentorship Scholarship Award. The Elaine Bryant Foundation focuses on STEAM mentorship and leadership for high school students. The recipients were Deyona Massey, Nicholus Tinto and Alynda Williams.

A second award which was new this year, The Sule & Nyla Marshall Student Community Volunteer Award, was presented to Alynda Williams for her outstanding community service over the years.

The Awards of Excellence this year went to Ms. Stacey Mollison, Basil Blackman, Marilyn Farley-Thompson, Seelochney & Anil Mohamed and Weygand Robert Gardner in recognition of their hard work in the Association. The Lifetime Membership were bestowed upon long serving members and Officer of the Board, Mr. Neil Wray and Ms. Verdine Benn (Current Trustee). The President’s award this year were given to two very deserving members – Mr. Marcus Gordon (Treasurer) and Ms. Merlyn Osborn (Secretary).

The GAOG President, Carl Lashley gave the closing remarks reminding all that the GAOG has given out over $250,000 in scholarships over these past 27 years. The Vice President Mr. Claude London gave the vote of thanks bringing the ceremony to a close and opening the floor for dancing and festivities.
Last May, GAOG celebrated another successful Family Fun Day. To say that we were very busy would be an understatement. This major and important fund raiser went off without a hitch. All activities, according to our staunchest critics, were not only successful, but were well received, as patrons called for more.

After months of preparation and planning, it was once again time for the association to step up and execute this major event. The Family Fun Day caters for no less than a five thousand strong crowd. It was an action-packed day. Thousands of patrons supported and participated in the day’s events. It was an incident-free event and many patrons were enthusiastic about returning next year to delight in the Guyanese culture once again. The President of the Guyana Association of Georgia Inc, Carl Lashley opened the festivities and Mayor of the City of Stone Crest, Jason Larry, Sr., gave welcoming remarks.

The Family Fun day was chockfull of activities for all ages. The children enjoyed track and field, sports and other games and were rewarded with prizes for their exuberance. There were children’s dance performances, a children’s fashion show by Amari’s Fashion and later on in the evening, entertainment by various artists.

The food vendors did not disappoint with a wide array of Guyanese and Caribbean cuisine. Cool down stands offered chilled coconut water and pit masters served up barbecue and jerk chicken.

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The highlight of the day was however the entertainment. The headliner this year was Alison Hinds. Other artistes also included Kenny Blessings, Adrian Dutchin, Anthony Mavlo and Terry Gajraj. The crowd loved their performance and thoroughly enjoyed celebrating our Caribbean musical heritage with them.

The funds from the family fund day, our flagship fund raiser, are the main source of income for the scholarships the Association has distributed to youth in the Metro Atlanta area these past 25 years. The Association deeply appreciates the patronage received from our supporters for this event.

Above: crowds at the Family Fun Day. Left Allison Hinds; right (top) Kenny Blessings and (right bottom), Anthony Mavlo.
The GAOG ushered in the Memorial Day weekend festivities with its Welcome Party at Guyana House on May 25th 2018. Guyanese arrived from all over the US and Guyana to participate in the festivities. Every Memorial Weekend thousands of Guyanese and American Guyanese venture down to Atlanta for the GAOG’s festivities which also coincide with Guyana’s Independence Anniversary week Activities. They were entertained by renowned Guyanese folk singer Jeggae who drummed out familiar tunes such as ‘Lilly Gal’ to party guests. Many danced and sang to the traditional Queh Queh and folk songs as they joyfully kept the culture alive. Guests partied way into the night to popular reggae and soca tunes and enjoyed tasty Guyanese dishes such as channa, chowmein, souse and cook up rice.

Immediately following the Family Fun Day event on May 26th, guests decked out in formal wear, flocked to the Grand Royal Events Center to support the GAOG independence Ball. This ball commemorated Guyana’s 52nd Independence Anniversary which fell on the same weekend.

The drinks flowed and the floor was packed as guests danced to oldies, soca and R&B music well into the wee hours of the morning. The Independence Ball traditionally signals the end of the memorial weekend festivities hosted by the GAOG and guests try to squeeze every last ounce of enjoyment out of it.
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The Board of the Guyana Association of Georgia Inc held the annual membership appreciation event in June. This was a gesture from the Board to thank everyone who volunteered at the Memorial Family Fun Day and other events during the year.

Members took a break from fund raising and community service and were treated to an afternoon of relaxation and enjoyment. Various Guyanese dishes were served. The president issued certificates of appreciation to several deserving members. The organization relies heavily on volunteerism to create, promote and execute its annual fundraising events -- the largest of which occur over the three-day Memorial Day/Independence Weekend.

The membership base has grown to approximately 167 paying members and has been revitalized considerably this past year by at least thirty percent. For 2019, the Association looks forward to the kinship and continued support of those living in Georgia, the US and elsewhere. Our members and supporters are instrumental in raising funds to meet our primary goals of providing scholarships to people of Guyanese heritage and supporting our communities.

Above, members of the Association enjoy dinner and dancing at the annual Membership Appreciation. Right, President Carl Lashley distributes certificates of appreciation to members, thanking them for their support and hard work.
On October 27th the Guyana Association of Georgia held its 7th Annual brunch at the Christ Our Hope Catholic Church Ball Room in Lithonia, GA. This event was well attended as guests came out to support this fund raiser. Emcee Hazel Harry, effortlessly chaired the event and kept guests engaged. Those present were treated to Guyanese cuisine and drinks and entertainment from Guyanese and a fashion show from Phoebe’s collection. The committee had the men in the Association serve brunch and beverages for guests. Many guests took the opportunity to mingle and catchup. After brunch was served everyone was treated to an array of entertainment from local talent.
This year the Guyana Association of Georgia Inc held its first annual Health fair in the community. The fair was intended to educate members of the community on healthy eating habits and monitoring their vitals. Members of the public were treated to fresh fruit smoothies, blood pressure tests, guest speakers in the medical field and education seminars.
The Guyana Association of Georgia was given a grant of $20,000.00 to participate in a project to, register eligible voters, canvass our community, hold voter education sessions and instruct eligible permanent USA residents on applying for citizenship. GAOG also held a workshop to alert citizens of the 2020 census.

We are pleased to report that we completed the task and were among the most productive of twenty one organizations, involved in the 2018 voter registration effort.

The most challenging aspect of our task was the registering of voters but we met our goal of 200 registered and then some. We are very appreciative of the opportunity that we were given to serve our community and to fulfill one of our stated pledges to reach out and educate our neighbors. This was our second year of involvement in this type of project.

Lessons learned from the previous year 2017, served us well in our success in 2018. Our thanks go out to the 2017 team of Lyndell Heliger, Robert Charles, Douglas Prince, Shirley Vanier, Kimberly Heliger, Verdine Ben, and Judy Wilson. The year 2018 saw the following addition to the team, Aubrey Wilburg, Carmen Bernard, Dionne Bernard, Donna DeGroot, Barbara Lashley, Jackie Brown, Marlyn Farley-Thompson, Joycelyn Merchant, Sheryl Hodge Marrie George and Dennis Belgraves. We wish to congratulate them all and to express our appreciation for a job well done. It must also be mentioned that assistance rendered by Merlyn Osbourne was pivotal in holding together a key segment of our team.

Neville George, GAOG CPACS Coordinator.
This December, the Guyana Association of Georgia Inc. held its first Annual Christmas Party for Children in the Community and in the Metro Atlanta Area. The GAOG received more than 500 Toys from the following partner organizations—Toys for Tots, Our Mother’s Outreach Inc., Moby Inc., and My Own Back Yard.

Over 200 Children from the surrounding community and schools registered and several more arrived to be registered on the spot for the toys. They were treated to lunch then a dance by the Afro Centric Dance Collaboration. This was a very fulfilling event for the Board and volunteers at the GAOG as children happily picked out the toys they desired and participated in the activities.
Black cake is the term used to refer to a dense cake made from lots of aged rum-soaked dried fruit.

Ingredients
1. 1/4 lb cherries
2. 1 lb local dried fruits (or raisins)
3. 1 cup rum
4. 1 1/2 lbs. brown sugar
5. 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
6. 1 teaspoon cinnamon
7. 1/2 lb flour
8. 6 eggs
9. 4 oz orange or lemon peel
1/2 lb butter

Instructions
1. Grind dried fruits and soak it in 3 cups of rum. Store in an air tight container for three weeks.
2. Prepare the caramel by heating 1 lb of the sugar until it turns dark brown.
3. Cream the butter and sugar. Add the eggs, soaked fruits, and rum. When it is well blended, pour the caramel.
4. Add the flour with the baking powder and mixed spice.
5. Fold in the cherries.

Pour mixture in a baking pan and bake in a slow oven (about 300 degrees F.) for two hours. Remove cake from pan after cooking and Soak

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“describe somebody that don’t make smart choices as a Packoo"
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Claude London – Vice-President
Merlyn Osborne – Secretary
Marcus Gordon – Treasurer
Fitzstephen Griffith – Asst. Secty/Treasurer
Neville George – Parliamentarian

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Membership – Thelma Williams
Sponsorship – Stephen Garrett
Sports – Gordon Barnwell
Youth and Culture – Patricia Jeffrey

Another year has flown by. As usual it was another busy one. The GAOG recently held its annual general Elections and have elected a new executive board and trustees.

Congratulations to Carl Lashley, who was re-elected as President, Merlyn Osborne, our new Vice President, Marcus Gordon, and Fitzstephen Griffith who were re-elected in their respective positions. New Trustee positions went to Gail Casar and Lawrence Prescott.

Under Mr. Carl Lashley’s leadership we successfully pulled off the iconic Memorial Day festivities, The Scholarship Banquet, and staples such as the Annual Brunch. and are actively pursuing acquisition of new land.

This year we held a children’s Christmas Party as part of our community outreach. We have also continued with the Feed the Homeless Program in Metro Atlanta as well.

Thanks to the diligence of our board and members we were able to accomplish all this and much more. The Association will continue on this strong note with this new board and we look forward to working with President—Elect Lashley.

Condolences
Our hearts go out to the members and friends of the Association who lost loved ones during this past quarter.

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