On behalf of the members of the Board, their families, the First Lady and my family, I extend to you and your families, a warm and happy Christmas and Quanza. May the spirit of a true Guyanese Christmas bring you peace and all that you may wish yourself during this joyous season. We wish you a Happy Productive, Fruitful and Healthy 2017.

This 2016 was a very good year for the Guyana Association of Georgia Inc., because it tested our resolve. Every time the goal post moved we were not fearful, but rose to the occasion. Together, we crossed many milestones and progressed on several fronts.

“we undergirded our programs and activities with transparency, excellence, and accountability (TEA)” Dr. Thomas

On November 20th, 2016 The Guyana Association of Georgia Inc. held its general elections to elect a new executive board and two board Trustees. The candidates this year were as follows. Carl Lashley, current Trustee and Education Committee Chair, was elected as the new president of the Association and was unopposed with 59 votes. Two candidates were nominated for the vice president position – Claude London (current Parliamentarian) and Clairmont Fraser (current vice president). Claude London won with a 45 votes total. Merlyn Osborn was reelected unopposed as the secretary with 57 votes and Marcus Gordon (current Assistant Secretary Treasurer) was elected unopposed as Treasurer with 56 votes. The new unopposed Assistant Secretary Treasurer is Audey Teekah with 56 votes.

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We made mistakes, of course, because we are human, but we learned from those mistakes and moved forward.

Our Family Fun Day and related activities were successful, despite the change of venue and the 50th Anniversary Celebrations in Guyana in May of this year. I would like to note however, the high standard of our 50th Anniversary celebrations and the 25th Anniversary of the GAOG here in Georgia, which included a well-attended reception and a church service at St. Timothy’s Church. Our 2016 Scholarship Banquet is still being touted as the best throughout the years.

For the first time, we partnered with the Redan High School and donated soccer balls to that school; all in an effort to fulfill the goals of the organization, working with the community in which we operate.

Over the years, as President of the GAOG, we undergirded our programs and activities with Transparence, excellence, and accountability (TEA) and (by doing so) we were successful in changing the face of this organization; people are looking at us differently now. They see an organization that they can trust as well as a successful organization. If you look around, you will notice tangible evidence of changes in our relationships.

It was also noted with pride some sign posts that GAOG passed. One cannot help noticing among the many, extension of the garage, the replenishing of the seating accommodations at GAOG, partnering with several organizations, being in the lead at the Caribbean Council of Presidents of Georgia, and sponsoring many successful functions in Atlanta, just to mention a few. There is so much more to be done by this new Board, and I know, no I am confident that they will do better. With a smart, balanced and no-nonsense President at the helm of this organization, I am confident that we will do better. That is the objective. The new President Mr. Carl Lashley can and will do better than me. The objective is a better organization – everybody wins.

Because of time constraint, I did not set out to tabulate, the successes, challenges and possible short falls, over my past years as President of GAOG, but to unequivocally state that without you, the successes could not have been possible. I want to thank all of you, each and every one of you, for making my tenure as President of the GAOG a success. I am reminded that I am the first President of the GAOG to serve two consecutive terms. I am grateful to you. I want to give a special thanks to the First Lady Mrs. Thelma A. Thomas, without whose support, I would not have been able to function as I did.

Let us resolve to do our best, and to continue to make this organization a success as when the Board and GAOG succeed, all of us succeed.

A HAPPY GUYANESE CHRISTMAS AND A PROSPEROUS, PRODUCTIVE 2017.

Dr. William Thomas, President, Guyana Association of Georgia Inc.
Congratulations
To
President – Elect
Carl Lashley
and the newly elected Executive Board Members and Trustees.

THANK YOU!
To the outgoing Executive Board and Trustees of the
Guyana Association of Guyana Inc.

President: Dr. William Thomas
Vice President: Clairmont Fraser
Treasurer: Donna Tinto
Trustee: Dr. Kelly Thomas
There were four members nominated for two trustee positions. Judy Wilson (41 votes) and Stephen Garrett (34 votes) secured the new positions. The other nominees, Verdene Benn and Claudette Gittens scored 24 votes and 18 votes respectively. The new parliamentarian unopposed is Neville George with 56 votes.

The current President Dr. William Thomas congratulated president elect Carl Lashley on winning the confidence of the general membership. Mr. Lashley promised that his tenure as President will have transparency, excellence and accountability (TEA). He brings years of experience as an educator to the organization. He also has past board experience as a trustee and experience as the Education Committee Chair. He has shown his passion for working with the youth through offering free tutoring at the association for the metro Atlanta youth in the community and coordinating the annual scholarship banquet.

The remaining Board members gave tribute to the outgoing executive board members—Dr. Kelly Thomas (Trustee), Donna Tinto (Treasurer), Clairmont Fraser (Vice President) and Dr. William Thomas (President).
Membership Appreciation

The Board of the Guyana Association of Georgia Inc held a membership appreciation cook out earlier this year. Members took a break from fund raising and community service and were treated to an afternoon of relaxation and fun. Various Guyanese dishes were served. This last October, the President and Board of the Guyana Association of Georgia Inc. held a function for all members and volunteers for this past year’s activities and events. Members were treated to dinner and festivities at the GAOG Secretariat.

The organization relies heavily on volunteerism to create, promote and pull off its fundraising events annually, the largest of which is the three day Memorial Day Actives. The membership base has grown and has been revitalized considerably this past year by at least thirty percent. The Association looks forward to the kinship and continued support of those living in Georgia, the US and elsewhere for the year 2016.

GAOG Thanksgiving Party

The Guyana Association of Georgia Inc held it annual Thanksgiving dinner this past November. The board treated members and guests to a delicious Guyanese dinner of spinach Rice, Chowmein, greens, Turkey, curried cabbage and peas and rice.

Guests took the time to reminisce on the year’s events and reflected on how grateful they were for this year.

From Left to right: Past Secretary Jackie Brown, Past Membership Chair Patricia Jeffrey (center) and wife of Vice President, Andrea Frazer.

Right: President William Thomas addresses members at Membership Appreciation.

GAOG Board and Members prepare the Thanksgiving Buffet. Below: Members partaking in dinner.
The GAOG Board hosted Christmas Dinner for its members on December 18th, 2016 at the GAOG Secretariat. Many members turned out to join in the festivities. The evening began with an abbreviated version of the general members meeting which ended in the singing of traditional Christmas carols and dinner.

The President, Dr. William Thomas took this opportunity to show his appreciation to the members and Board for his two term tenure as president of the Association. He acknowledged the diligence of members in 2016 to keep the organization going and encouraged collaboration with the new president Elect, Carl Lashley, for the New Year.

The remaining Board members gave tribute to the outgoing executive board members—Dr. Kelly Thomas (Trustee), Donna Tinto (Treasurer), Clairmont Fraser (Vice President) and Dr. William Thomas (President)

Following this, members were then treated to a traditional Guyanese dinner. Some of the items on the menu were spinach rice, baked turkey and chowmein. Desserts included black cake and a variety of pastries.

Many guests present ended the night in dancing and wishing each other God’s blessings and good cheer for the Holidays and New Year.

Thiyear the GAOG ended the year with a traditional Guyanese Boxing day 2 to 2 party. The day after Christmas is a holiday traditionally known as Boxing’s Day. On this Day Guyanese typically visit with friends and family and enjoy more food and festivities. The festivities started at 2 pm on Boxing day (December 26th) and went until 2 am December 27th. Many braved the weather the wet, foggy area to come out and have a good time.
Building Committee

**Goals 2016:** To ensure the general maintenance and upkeep of the building through refurbishing and holding clean-up activities.

**Team:** Dennis Belgrave (Chairperson), Neville George, Marrie George, Claude London, Aubrey Augustine, Neil Wray

**Projects completed in 2016:**
1. Completed attachments to the Awning.
2. Obtained Flooring for the second floor.
3. Continued proceedings to obtain the neighboring lot.

**How can you contribute?**
Small monthly monetary donations to help with maintenance. Sign up to volunteer in the building committee. Assist us in the clean-up and maintenance activities.

Dennis Belgrave - Dennis9321@att.net

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Communications/Publicity Committee

**Goal 2016:** To work mainly through the media of the GAOG Website, Facebook page, Twitter and the Newsletter to continue promoting the association’s community outreach programs, activities, events and efforts.

**Team:** Shena Applewhaite (Chairperson), Lyndelle Isaacs- Heyliger, Judy Wilson, Lawrence Prescott.

**Projects completed in 2015:**
1. Used the various social media to promote the association’s events and activities such as Memorial Weekend, Scholarship Banquet and Tea Party.
2. Continuously updated the Association’s website to accurately reflect the organization’s mission, vision and current activities. A new membership tab has been added and all newsletters have been uploaded.
3. Increased the GAOG Facebook page viewership from 64 person likes in February 2015 to over 630 person likes at year end.
4. Consistently published the quarterly newsletter (News and Views).
5. Reactivated the GAOG Twitter Account.

**How can you contribute?**
Sign up to Work on the Committee. Send us old Guyanese photos and proverbs or let us know what is happening in our community. We will get it out there!

Shena Applewhaite – shena_a@yahoo.com, info@gaog.org

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Education Committee

**Goal 2016:** To plan for all phases of the Educational programs for GAOG and promote and provide programs and practices that will enhance the social and emotional wellbeing of students and young adults.

**Team:** Carl C. Lashley (Chairperson), Slater Jeffrey, Neville George, Dr. Hector Butts, Marilyn Browne, Dr. Kelly Thomas, Patricia Jeffrey and Marcus Gordon.

**Projects completed in 2016:**
1. The Annual Scholarship Banquet was successfully held this year.
2. A total of nine local scholarships, one international scholarship (Guyana) and one Adult Career advancement scholarship were successfully given out to students and young adults this year through the Annual Scholarship Program. Please visit www.gaog.org for more information on our scholarship program.

**How can you contribute?**
Tutors are needed for our youth programs.

Contact: Carl Lashley; cdlashley@gmail.com
Finance/Economics Committee

Goal 2016: Develop an annual operation budget with staff, approve the budget within the finance committee. Monitor Adherence to the budget as well as setting long range financial goals.

Team: Dennis Fraser (Chairperson), Andrea Fraser, Marcus Gordon.

Projects completed in 2015:
- Started the auditing process and cleaning up the facility. Taking inventory of the Association’s Assets.
- Ensured feasibility reports were submitted for events.
- Ensured the association’s money is accounted for.
- Each member of the board contributed $10/ month to the building fund. Members have also pledged $10 per month

How can you contribute?
Sign up to volunteer in the committee

Contact: Dennis Fraser Email: dennisfraser@msn.com

Humanitarian/Hospitality Committee

Goal 2016: The goal and objective of this committee is to support and provide humanitarian and hospitality services within our community, to our Motherland Guyana, as well as to other countries within the diaspora, who may be experiencing disasters such as - hurricanes, earthquakes, volcanoes, flooding etc.

Team: Marilyn Farley-Thompson (Chairperson), Adolf Farley-Thompson, Ms. Joan Rueben, Mrs. Lezlie Sinclair, Marilyn Browne

Projects completed in 2016:
1. Annual Feed the Homeless.
2. Prepared care packages for the homeless.
3. Prepared Christmas Baskets for the sick and shut in members of our community.

How can you contribute?
Over the past 23 years the GAOG has annually supported a Feed the Homeless Project at the Trinity Community Ministries in Metro Atlanta, where we prepare and serve a hot lunch to the homeless community, comprising of 250 to 400 men, women and children.
Also, we have been tasked to send favors - such as get well cards, sympathy cards and flowers to membership and supporters in their time of need. Volunteering for humanitarian programs and initiatives has been and remains my passion. Overtime, I have learned that it is indeed a fantastic way to express one’s caring for others who may be less fortunate or experiencing a down period in their lives. I would submit that there is no better way, than by participation in humanitarian projects domestically and abroad to show that “We truly care”

Contact: Marilyn Farley-Thompson E-mail: farleythompsonm@yahoo.com

Membership/Events Committee

Goal 2016: Membership - To increase overall membership by 10% over the next three years and to reach out to current inactive members and encourage them to become active members once again.
Events - to assist with the coordination of the events held throughout the year.

Team: Lyndelle Isaacs-Heyliger (Chairperson), Shena Applewhaite, Verdine Benn, Claude London and Claire Wilson-Daly

2016 Projects:
1. Increased financial membership by approximately 40% in 2016.
2. Continued to use GroupSpaces- our contact management data base, which has been successful in communicating information to our members.
3. Completed the process of transferring all of the financial members and friends of the organization into GroupSpaces.
   Increased the signing up of interested persons from 104 people to 184 persons.
   Overall 99% of the events were successful in 2015.

How can you contribute?
Members can help by providing current contact information and signing up via the email request to join our group sent to them.

Contact: Lyndelle Isaacs Heyliger
E-mail: Lyndelleheyliger@yahoo.com
Sponsorship Committee

Goal 2016: To build a network of Sponsors and Partners with other community organizations, groups, businesses and individuals to assist in accomplishing the mission of the GAOG to promote and expand its humanitarian, cultural and education impact within the community.

Team: Claire Wilson-Daly (Chairperson), Brenda & Charles D'Andrade, Arlene Wilson-Ryan, Joylyn DePeana.

Projects completed in 2016:
1. GAOG enrolled in E-Verify to position it to receive corporate donations.
2. Designed program to engage and commit Past Presidents in an ongoing Scholarship Awards program beginning September 2016.
4. Designed program to encourage periodic vendors and supporters to become partners and sustaining members of programs of their choice.

How can you contribute?
By partnering with the GAOG at any level that is comfortable for them, or for any event they are passionate about seeing succeed. Members can also commit to donating cleaning items for the building, (bathroom cleaners, trash can liners, hand sanitizers, hand soap, paper towels, toilet paper, etc.) Please document and place a value to your donation so that you may receive the appropriate acknowledgement from the GAOG.

Contact: grannyfit_2000@yahoo.com

Goal 2016: To build a network of Sponsors and Partners with other community organizations, groups, businesses and individuals to assist in accomplishing the mission of the GAOG to promote and expand its humanitarian, cultural and education impact within the community.

Christmas Baskets for our members who are shut in.

The Sick and Shut in Program was revived this year as members of the association remembered those who could no longer actively participate in the events of the Association. Ms. Joan Reuben spearheaded this project.

Christmas baskets with various food and household items to help those members get through the holiday season were prepared.

It is important that at this time of the year we remember the elderly and those who are unable to be out and about. The recipients of the baskets were Dr. Mitchell and Ms. Caroline Pigott. The Board and members would like to thank the hospitality committee for this kind gesture.
As part of its community outreach program, The Guyana Association of Georgia Inc donated several Soccer balls to the Redan High School on November 4th 2016.

President William Thomas handed over the balls on behalf of the Association to Redan High Coach Henderson. The school expressed gratitude for the balls which will enable the students to continue with their sports curriculum.

The Care group of the Guyana Association of Georgia Inc. gave out holiday care baskets to deserving members. Ms. Joan Reuben presented baskets to two members at this last General Members Meeting. Ms. Marrie George (Right) is presented with her basket by Ms Joan Reuben and President Dr. William Thomas. Ms. Estel Haley is presented her basket by President Elect Carl Lashley and Joan Reuben. The baskets were tokens of appreciation for their hard work and contributions.
Past GAOG scholarship recipient (2013) Crystal Mussenden graduated a semester early with a bachelor in Journalism with cum laude honors. She has already secured a job with the Southern Company. Her parents Miles and Vanessa Mussenden (Seen in photo with Crystal) would like to express gratitude to the GAOG for helping making this possible.

Financial Series

1. Write a list before you go shopping – and stick to it.

One of the easiest ways to save money is to only shop when you have a list. Because when you’re without one, you typically end up making impulse buys and unplanned purchases – all things that cost money.

Creating a list before you go to the grocery store is especially important. Not only can it help you buy items that fit with your meal plan, but it can also help you avoid buying food you might waste. Always create a list and, more importantly, stick to it.

2. Invite friends over instead of going out.

Going out to eat or “out on the town” has a way of completely destroying both your food budget and your entertainment budget in one fell swoop. And no matter what, it is always cheaper to stay in with friends and come up with your own entertainment.

Instead of hitting the town, host a fun pitch-in dinner with your friends. Play cards, sit around a fire pit, or watch movies with your guests. You’ll all save money – and have a blast.

Care packages for the homeless

Humanitarian and Hospitality Chair, Marilyn Farley-Thompson and President Thomas collect personal hygiene care packages from members for homeless men in Metro Atlanta community.

Repair clothing instead of tossing it.

Don’t toss out a shirt because of a broken button – sew on a new one with some closely-matched thread. Don’t toss out pants because of a hole in them – put in a patch of some sort and save them for times when you’re working around the house.

Most basic sewing jobs can be completed by anyone, and a little bit of practice goes a long way. Learning basic sewing skills is a great way to save some money – and extend the life of your clothing.

The Simple Dollar
Guyanese born owner of Qua–La–Tee Affairs Gail Lyte (left), has been a long time member of the Guyana Association of Georgia Inc., and past board member. She served as a Former Secretary and Membership Chair for the Association in the past.

Ms. Lyte was born in Guyana, on the West Coast of Berbice, Village # 28 but grew up in New Amsterdam. She migrated to the United States to New York in 1982.

In 1999 Ms. Lyte sought a change and she and her daughter relocated to Georgia, in the metro Atlanta area. Here she continued with the business, Qua–La–Tee Affairs and its subsidiary Lyte’s D’lites. The umbrella company Qua-La–Tee Affairs handles mostly the event planning including providing a venue and menu for events. Lyte’s D’Lites deals mostly with catering events.

Ms. Lyte got into this business because she likes catering for people and wanted to present quality and professional services to her clients.

She has catered several events for Guyana Association of Georgia, Family Reunion, Birthdays, and Anniversaries and hosted of her own self events such as the Banquets, Cinderella Balls, Tea Parties, Breakfast morning, brunches etc. She leans more towards Guyanese cuisine which is much sought after by Guyanese and West Indians in the Metro Atlanta area.

Ms. Lyte plans on growing her business in the future. She currently works out of her home. Qua–La–Tee Affairs looks forward to continuing servicing the Georgians and in particular the Guyanese Community.
Snap Shot

GUYSUCO CONTINUES TO COST THE STATE BILLIONS

The Guyana Sugar Corporation has been costing Guyanese tax payers Billions of dollars to stay afloat and in the next two years the Sugar Company is projected to require a further $30 billion dollars.

RECORD BREAKING GOLD DECLARATION IN 2016

The Gold Mining Sector is receiving the best of reviews from the Government as it hits a record-breaking 690,000 ounces declaration for the year 2016. But the Gold Board is to be revamped.

PRESIDENT VISITS MATERNITY WARD ON CHRISTMAS DAY

It was a merry Christmas for Regent street vendors shoppers as well as mothers who delivered babies on Christmas day as President David Granger made his appearance among the man-in the street and at the GPHC.

Baked Custard

Ingredients:
1 can condensed milk
2 cans evaporated milk
4 large eggs
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1/2 tsp. grated nutmeg

Directions
1. In a saucepan whisk together condensed milk and evaporated milk and warm until almost boiling.
2. Whisk eggs together in a large mixing bowl and add essence and about 1/4 tsp. nutmeg.
3. Slowly add small amounts of warmed milk (about 1/2 cup at a time) to the egg mixture, while whisking vigorously. (This is called tempering the eggs).
4. Pour mixture into a greased baking dish. Here I am using a 2 1/2 quart earthen baking dish.
5. Grate some fresh nutmeg over the mixture and bake for 30 mins at 350 degrees.

Cinnamon Berries:
Ingredients:
1/2 cup granulated sugar
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 cup of mixed berries

Directions
Mixed Berries
1. In a bowl mix together 1/2 cup sugar and 1 tsp. ground cinnamon.
2. Add 1 cup mixed berries to sugar mixture.

Folklore Galore

Massacooraman

The massacooraman (or massacooraman) is a huge, hairy, man-like creature that lives in rivers in the interior of Guyana. The massacooraman is a powerful river spirit that pulls boats down into the water in the rapids, often these boats were carrying the pork knockers. It is much taller and bigger than a man, and has sharp teeth. It is unknown whether or not the massacooraman lives in the river or dwells on land, but it is certain that it can swim very well and attacks boats in the river at whatever chance it gets.

Source: Jumbees of Guyana

IS SUH DEY SEH
Only Guyanese does:
“describe somebody that can’t dance as "Pagaley"
Dr. Edward Ricardo Braithwaite (born June 27th 1920 in Georgetown, Guyana) is a Guyanese novelist, writer, teacher and diplomat, best known for his stories of social conditions and racial discrimination against black people. Braithwaite had a privileged beginning in life. Both parents went to Oxford University and he describes growing up with education, achievement, and parental pride surrounding him.

He attended Queen’s College, Guyana and then the City College of New York (1940). During World War II, he joined the Royal Air Force as a pilot. He would later describe this experience as one where he felt no discrimination based on his skin color or ethnicity. He went on to attend the University of Cambridge (1949), from which he earned a bachelor’s degree and a doctorate in Physics. After the war, like many other ethnic minorities, despite his extensive training, Braithwaite could not find work in his field and, disillusioned, reluctantly took up a job as a schoolteacher in the East End of London. The book To Sir With Love (1959) was based on his experiences there. While writing his book about the school, Braithwaite turned to social work and it became his job to find foster homes for non-white children for the London County Council. His harrowing experiences resulted in his second novel Paid Servant (1962). Braithwaite’s numerous writings have primarily dealt with the difficulties of being an educated, black social worker, a black teacher, and simply a human being in inhumane circumstances.

In 1973, the South African ban on Braithwaite’s books was lifted and he reluctantly applied to visit the country. He was granted a visa and the status ‘Honorary White’ which gave him significantly more freedom and privileges than the indigenous black population, but less than the whites. He recorded the experiences and horror he witnessed during the six weeks he spent in South Africa in his novel Honorary White. Braithwaite continued to write novels and short stories throughout his long international career as an educational consultant and lecturer for UNESCO; permanent representative to the United Nations for Guyana; Guyana’s Ambassador to Venezuela, and an academic. He thought English Studies at New York University; in 2002, was a writer in residence at Howard University, Washington DC; associated himself with Manchester Community College, Connecticut, during the 2005-2006 academic year as visiting professor, also serving as commencement speaker and receiving an honorary degree.

Dr. Braithwaite also received the highest award in the Cooperative republic of Guyana, The Cacique Crown of Honor, by Past President, His Excellency Donald Ramotar. He was the keynote speaker at the GAOG Scholarship Award Banquet in 2005, and received Honorary Lifetime Membership from GAOG in 2005. Dr. Braithwaite received an Award of Excellence from GAOG in 2013.

Our hearts go out to the members and friends of the Association who lost loved ones during this past quarter. Particularly to the family of Dr. E.R. Braitwaite who passed earlier this month.

We are at the end of yet another year which has been fast paced, fun packed. With the Association’s anniversary and Guyana’s 50th Jubilee, we were busy. We have also had general elections with a new executive board taking over the helm for the next two years.

Congratulations to Carl Lashley, Claude London, Merlyn Osborn, Marcus Gordon, Audrey Teekah, Judy Wilson and Stephen Garrett on being elected for the new Executive Board and Trustee positions.

I would also like to thank everyone who worked during the years we endured in the best interest of the Association. Under Dr. Thomas’s leadership we successfully pulled off the iconic Memorial Day festivities, The Scholarship Banquet, staples such as the Annual Brunch and Tea Party and added a few new events like the Casino Night, Fourth of July Cookout and Labor Day Bar-B-Q.

This year we also adopted Redan High School as part of our community outreach and donated soccer balls to their athletic program. We have 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.

Are you up for the challenge? GAOG needs your talents to help the community. Become a member today!