

Message from the President



A Happy, Prosperous, Goal-driven, and Healthy 2015, to you, your families and friends.

Over the last two years the GAOG made *noticeable* and *tangible* progress. Without the fear of being contradicted, I can attest to the fact that they did move the ball down the field. The outgoing Board faced many challenges and I can corroborate that they not only prevailed, but raised the bar to a higher water mark. I want to publicly *thank* them for their exemplary work, and we must applaud them.

In January of this year, the Board came out of a full day of its yearly retreat and I am *convinced* and *confident* that we will move forward together. I know that there will be lots of discussions as the Board is made up of a group of very strong people. One uniting factor is that all the members are passionate about the same goal – improvement of the GAOG so that it can achieve its organizational goals.

We will continue to have some of the activities we executed in the past – observance of the Republic anniversary celebration, a jazz session, family fun day, the youth symposium, annual brunch, scholarship banquet, games and cinema night at which we hope to view Guyanese films. I must say too, that this list is not exhausted. Also new this year is the casino night, and Oktoberfest, which will be staged in October. All I can tell you now is that it has to do with beer and other activities. I am sure you will hear more of it later.

In addition to doing the same things better this year, we are working to take the GAOG truly into the 21st century. We hope to communicate with you regularly, by email blasts and get information to you, in a timely manner.

With the new communications chair, the GAOG face book page will be fully active keeping you connected. We encourage you to like us on face book, whenever you visit. We will improve or build a new website. As we build our data base, please give the chairperson of the membership committee your email addresses and phone numbers.

This year and in the future, we will partner with more community organizations, whose goals coincide with those of the GAOG. For example, we are partnering with an organization called “Celebrate Our Children Foundation” who has as one of its goals “to provide educational opportunities, to empower our children, to rise in excellence academically, socially, professionally, and personally”.

In the area of education we are partnering with Caribbean International Shipping Services, for the first time, to offer a scholarship to “provide support to Adult Career Advancement”. Among the criteria is that person must be 25 years and older and going back to school to improve himself or herself. Other individuals and agencies have expressed their willingness to subscribe, in a more tangible and concrete way, to our scholarship drive. The education committee also plans to partner with experts to sponsor seminars on Healthcare and Financial Investment.

These plans I have laid out did not include the activities of all the committees and as we move forward you will hear of their plans. In an effort to strive for more involvement and participation, we established these committees, with specific functions. The committee chairs have expressed that they need members to help out. Let us stop talking and let us start doing. We know from our experiences what can happen when people work together- they succeed. Hence I am appealing to you to not only join the organization and committees but to put your shoulder to the wheel as well.

Continued on pg. 4

Inside This Issue

- 2 Launching the GAOG into the 21st Century
- 3 New Board Members 2015
- 3 Ruimveldt Children’s home
- 4 GAOG offers free tutorial lessons
- 4 Announcements
- 5 The Year in Review
- 6 Committee Updates
- 7 Folklore Galore
- 8 Editor’s corner

Launching the GAOG into the 21st century

In the February General Members Meeting, those present were given a preview into what the board had planned to launch the association into the 21st century. In an attempt to promote the organization socially, activity will be focused in three areas: the GAOG Web site, the GAOG Facebook page and Groupsaces.

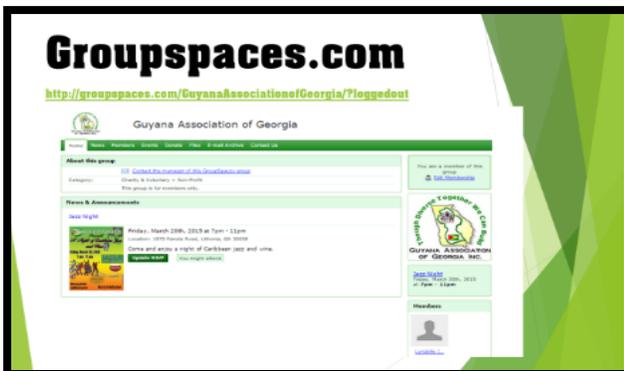
This is your way to stay connected, receive notifications, pay for events early and update your membership timely.

The GAOG Facebook was officially re launched in February 2015 and has been a huge success. Members were excited and supportive of the page and immediately started liking and sharing it. Currently there are more than 240 persons liking the page. We are aiming to have at least 500 page likes by June so please share, share and share!



The Guyana Association of Georgia's web site will be updated and made more user friendly so that members can navigate it with ease. The web site will let everyone know who we are and what we do. Additional tabs for membership and committees will be uploaded and the site will be more interactive. The GAOG blog will be activated as well allowing any one to contribute articles and stimulate discussions. Members will be able to pay dues on line or buy tickets for events on line as well.

The page is intended to reconnect the generations and ensure the growth of the organizations. It will be a major tool used to show the community our activities and events as we embrace all. In addition to keeping members informed about what is going on in the association, there are other posts which reinforce our strong proud culture that have become popular such as the 'OI' People Dem Seh', 'Throw back Thursday' and 'A day in our history.'



The GAOG Group spaces page has been instrumental in moving the association forward. Through this membership database we have been able to update all members' information, send out mass emails informing all about upcoming events, allowing members to pay dues on line, purchase event tickets. It also allows the board to manage the organization from behind the scenes and to document activities. Members will receive an email from the association inviting them to sign up. Please do!



New members voted onto the 2015 Board of the Guyana Association of Georgia



New GAOG board members: top from left to right- Re-elected president Dr. William Thomas, Vice president Mr. Clairmont Fraser, Secretary Ms. Merlyn Osborne, Treasurer Ms. Donna Tinto and Asst. Sect. Treasurer Mr. Marcus Gordon. Bottom - Trustee Mr. Dennis Fraser, Trustee Ms. Lyndelle Isaacs- Heyliger and Parliamentarian Claude London.

On November 16th, 2014, members of the Guyana Association of Georgia (GAOG) turned out in numbers to vote for their new board members. The Elections Chairperson Ms. Donna DeGroot presided over the voting process and informed all present that even though there were only 60 members eligible to participate in this process there were a lot more at the meeting. She urged all present to ensure that they joined or renewed their membership in a timely manner in order to exercise their voting rights in the future. Candidates who were nominated by the membership were announced by Ms. DeGroot and invited to discuss their qualifications and explain why they should be entrusted with the new positions.

The presidential candidates were incumbent president, Dr. William Thomas and contender Mr. Orin Marshall. All other positions had nominees who were unopposed and the candidates were voted into their respective positions.

The new board members are as follows: vice president, Mr. Clairmont Fraser; Secretary, Ms. Meryl Osborne; Treasurer, Ms. Dona Tinto; Assistant Treasurer, Mr. Marcus Gordon;

Parliamentarian, Mr. Claude London and trustees Ms. Lyndelle Isaacs- Heyliger and Mr. Dennis Fraser.

Dr. Thomas addressed the membership and expressed gratitude for being trusted to run the GAOG for another term. He expressed confidence in achieving the goals of the association and stressed that it would no longer be looked at in "that old way, but as a respectful organization of which people are not afraid to be a part of..." He shared what some of his future projects are for the organization. These included reactivating the youth arm of the GAOG, something which is desperately needed to ensure the survival of the association. Further, he pledged continued financial transparency and accountability, attracting new members and mining current organization skills, publicizing the GAOG's achievements, rebooting corporate sponsorship, creating a more interactive eye catching website, arranging a GAOG trip to Guyana and twinning the cities of Georgetown and Atlanta.

Ruimveldt Children's Home



Recently, to help fulfill our charitable mission, the Guyana Association of Georgia joined with Caribbean International Shipping Services and sent much needed items to the Ruimveldt Children's Care Center in Guyana. Members, friends and supporters showed their generosity by donating food, clothing, shoes, toys, toiletries, and books for the children. GAOG members collected the items and packed two large barrels which were shipped and delivered to the Center by Caribbean International Shipping Services. We extend our thanks to each of you for supporting this worthy cause.

Marilyn Browne

Guyana Association of Georgia offers free tutorial classes to the community



On March 7th the Education Committee launched its annual tutorial program for youth in the Atlanta Metro area. An invitation was extended for all to participate in classes in Math, Science and Language Arts. Dr. Hector Butts addressed those present about the goals and achievements of the program, which were to make students independent and positive thinkers. Head of the Education Committee, Carl Lashley stated that the reason this service is offered is in part to help the youth get to a higher school of learning.

Several youth showed up to register for classes which would be held every Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Mr. Lashley and Dr. Butts both hope to see many more youth take advantage of this opportunity. Students will also be prepared for CRCT, PSAT AND SAT. The sessions are open to all and peer volunteers are needed to help tutor.

If you are interested in volunteering contact Carl Lashley – cclashley@gmail.com

Message from the President cont'd from page 1

You may ask what about me? What is in it for me as a member? Well, we did not forget you in our plans. We have approached several businesses who have either agreed or are processing our request to offer members of our association as much as 10% discount, on purchases or services. The completed list will be posted on the web site. Membership cards will once again be issued to facilitate benefit.

We will not, in all our actions, take our eyes off the ball of being transparent and being accountable. Our Finance committees is headed by an *astute* businessman and that committee will look closely at our finances and how we spend money. The theme this year is EXCELLENCE: THROUGH TRANSPARENCY AND PARTICIPATION. We must continue our march in *EXCELLENCE* as we move forward. Every event that is undertaken must be one of *EXCELLENCE*.

Please feel free to contact me with any ideas or criticisms as I am quite certain that your ideas may influence a direction or decision in the future.

God bless you.
William Thomas. Ph.D.
PRESIDENT

Announcements

Upcoming events



April 18th 2015 - Annual Brunch

May 8th 2015 - Games & Movie Night

May 24th 2015 - Family Fun Day

May 24th 2015 - Independence Dance

June 7th 2015 - Caribbean Heritage Month Celebration.

June 12th 2015 - Games Night

June 27th 2015 - BBQ - Membership Appreciation

July 11th 2015 - Casino Night

The Year in Review

Family Fun Day 2014

Last year the association hosted its annual Memorial Weekend Family Fun Day. The 2014 Family Fun Day was held at the Hallford Stadium in Decatur where the community turned out in record numbers to support this venture. Even though numbers declined slightly compared with last year's event it was still a huge success. Event goers enjoyed a fun-filled day, packed with great entertainment, cultural activities, and nostalgic memories of favourite Guyanese dishes and songs. Many family and friends travelled long distances for this iconic event.



The Annual Scholarship Awards Banquet



The GAOG held its annual Scholarship and Awards ceremony on September 27th 2014. The Key note speaker was Ms. Dawnique Larisa Shury, Global Youth Ambassador. The service awards went to Myrna Sylvia Barratt-Pryor (Food Preparation industry), Austin E Thompson Jr. (Adjunct Professor of Business and Project management at Shorter University), Dr. Clemlyn-Ann Pollydore (Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry at Emory University), Dr. Ronald Culley, Urologist and Dr. Carla Crawford (Obstetrician/Gynecologist).

The outstanding Service Awards went to Caribbean International Shipping Services and Dr. Joan Liverpool (Family Medicine and international and Tropical Medicine).

The scholarship recipients this year were as follows:

Cheyenne Tremera McBean
Nichoas M. Boston
Seyoum D. McPherson
Hadiya Catherine George
Kisten Bosah

Annual Thanksgiving Dinner



Members of the Guyana Association of Georgia (GAOG) were treated to Thanksgiving dinner at the association's headquarters on Panola road on November 16th. The board and members were provided delectable traditional Guyanese and American dishes which were enjoyed by all. These included spinach rice, fried rice, macaroni and cheese, baked ham, baked turkey, jerk turkey and refreshments such as mauby and punch. An array of desserts accompanied the main course. This is a time when all members reflected on their blessings for the past year and were mind full of others who did not have as much. As part of their community outreach, the Association recently shipped two barrels with supplies for the Ruimveldt Children Care Center in Guyana. Items catered for 40 children and included clothing, food, personal hygiene items and school supplies. Items were donated by members and the barrel and shipping costs were donated by Sharon Barnwell, CEO of Caribbean International Shipping.

Christmas Party

Members of the GAOG were treated to the annual Christmas Party by the Board. Traditional Guyanese dishes and drinks were in abundance as members mingled with each other, exchanged gifts and danced the night away.



Our Committees

Building Committee

Goals 2015: To ensure the general maintenance and upkeep of the building through refurbishing and holding cleanup activities. Work on obtaining a special use permit from DeKalb County for the property.



Team: Dennis Belgrave (Chairperson), Neal Wray.

Projects 2015:

1. Schedule two fund raisers for the year: One in the spring and another in the summer.
2. Schedule a spring property cleanup to include all members and the board
3. Coordinate with the Treasurer the budget for possible long term expansion or further modification of the building structure. Maintain a list of quotes for use of the GAOG building.

How can you contribute?

Sign up for the building committee or assist us in the cleanup and maintenance activities.

Dennis Belgrave - Dennis9321@att.net

Dennis Belgrave- Chair

Communications/Publicity Committee

Goal 2015: to work mainly through the media of the GAOG Website, Facebook page and the Newsletter to continue promoting the association's community outreach programs, activities, events and efforts.



Team: Shena Applewhaite (Chairperson), Colvin Henderson, Lyndelle Isaacs- Heyliger.

Projects 2015:

- 1 Collaborate with other committees to further connect members, promote the association's special projects & events, and generate good will for the association.
2. Update the Association's website to accurately reflect the organization's mission, vision and current activities.
- 3 Promote the association's accomplishments and provide a medium to express Guyanese and Guyanese American culture, history and achievements through Facebook.
4. Publish the quarterly newsletter (News and Views).

How can you contribute?

Sign up. 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

Shena Applewhaite – Chair

Education Committee

Goal 2015: 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.

2015 projects:

1. Hosting several Educational "Topic of Interest" Presentations for the Youth and Adults e.g. Personal development, Finance and Investing.
 2. Continue with our tutoring/mentoring program for CRCT, PSAT and SAT.
 3. Provide student development and support through the Annual scholarship Program.
 4. New this year we will provide support to Adult Career Advancement.
 5. We will plan and organize the Annual Scholarship Awards Banquet and Anniversary Dance
- Please visit www.gaog.org for more information on our scholarship program criteria.

How can you contribute?

Tutors are needed for our youth programs.

Contact: Carl Lashley; cclashley@gmail.com

Carl Lashley - Chair

Finance/Economics Committee

Goal 2015: 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), Looking for volunteers.

2015 Projects:

1. Create, approve, and update as necessary, polices that help ensure the assets of the Guyana Association of Georgia are protected
2. Ensure the policies and procedures for financial transactions are documented in a manual, and the manual is reviewed annually, and updated as necessary.
3. Ensure approved financial policies and procedures are being followed.

How can you contribute?

Volunteer today to be a part of this committee.

Contact: Dennis Fraser

Email: dennisfraser@msn.com

Dennis Fraser - Chair

Page 6

Membership/Events Committee

Goal 2015: 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

2015 Projects:

1. Create and manage a contact management database to easily communicate with members.
2. Contact inactive members and ask them to consider becoming active again.
3. Re-create membership cards that allow members to receive discounts at participating merchants and vendors.

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: Lyndelleheylinger@yahoo.com

Lyndelle Isaacs- Heyliger (Chair)



Folklore Galore Churail



Churail (or Churile) is supposed to be the evil spirit of a woman who had died in childbirth. She haunts pregnant women and attacks women and newborn children. It is also a vampire-like creature of East Indian origin. (Source: Wayne's Outpost)

SUNDAY, MAY 24, 2015
Guyana Association of Georgia, Inc.
FREE PARKING
Family Fun Day
James R. Hallford Stadium
3789 Memorial College Avenue • Clarkston, GA 30021
12:00 noon - 10:00 pm
KIDS ZONE
GAMES2U ENTERTAINMENT
Natural Black – Guyanese recording artiste backed by Chronic band out of Jamaica
Lisa Punch – Former Contestant on ABC Rising Star Talent Show
Terry Gajraj – Chutney/Soca artist
Food & Drinks on sale!
LOCAL ARTISTS
Kathak Dancers, Tassa Drummers, Queh, Queh Dancers
I-285 North to Exit #41, (Memorial Drive) and make a right. I-285 South to Exit #41 (Memorial Drive) and make a left. From either direction, go about 3 miles to Memorial College Avenue (Office Depot on left). Make a left at the light and go half mile, Stadium is on the left.
For Information Clairmont Fraser - 404-694-4977 • Merlyn Osborne - 678-913-4948
Raul Boston - 404-468-6989 • Dr. William Thomas - 770-891-2170
Marva Jacobs - 240-460-7119
Sponsored by **CARIBBEAN INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING SERVICES, INC.** • 770-323-1111
Tickets can be purchased at www.gaog.org
Donation
\$10.00 BEFORE 4.00 PM • \$15.00 AFTER 4.00 PM
\$10.00 FOR SENIOR (65 YEARS AND OVER)
\$8.00 FOR GROUP OF 15 AND MORE UP TO 4.00 PM
KIDS 12 YEARS AND UNDER FREE

Sponsorship Committee

Goal 2015: To provide a sponsorship/partnership opportunity to corporate entities and individuals to enjoin us in our goal to expand our reach in the realization of the Guyana Association of Georgia's mission, and provide financial support for the highest cost community service objectives of our organization.



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

2015 Projects:

1. Revising the prospectus to better quantify and evaluate the impact of past activities on the community.
2. Compile a register of alumni in order to reach out and engage past beneficiaries of the GAOG's Scholarship program.
3. Compile a register of past presidents and executive board members.

How can you contribute?

Members can help by providing current contact information for alumni - many of whom are their relatives.

Claire Wilson-Daly
Email: grannyfit_2000@yahoo.com.

Claire Wilson- Daly (Chair)

Executive Board

Dr. William Thomas – President

Clairmont Fraser – Vice-President

Merlyn Osborne – Secretary

Donna Tinto – Treasurer

Marcus Gordon– Asst. Secty/Treasurer

Parliamentarian – Claude London

Trustees

Dennis Belgrave

Lyndelle Isaacs– Heyliger

Raul Boston

Dennis Fraser

Carl Lashley

Dr. Kelly Thomas

Committee Chairpersons

Building – Dennis Belgrave

Communications – Shena Applewhaite

Education – Carl Lashley

Finance – Dennis Fraser

Humanitarian/Hospitality– Marilyn Farley–Thompson

Membership– Lyndelle Isaacs–Heyliger

Sponsorship– Claire Daily– Wilson

Editor's Corner



It was fun producing this issue of News and Views. Now that you have seen some of what the association has to offer, we invite you to embrace the volunteer in you, participate in your organization's activities and help us achieve our vision. Each committee chair has outlined his or her respective goals and projects. We will hear from other committees in the next issue. We have a full year of events planned and each of them will be a success! So go ahead and find the perfect fit for you and dive right in. We expect you to hold us accountable while supporting us.

Further we want to hear from you. Update your membership so that you can not only fully participate and vote, but enjoy the benefits as well. We cherish your ideas and opinions. Help us maintain our culture and share it with the community at large. Teach games, tell "Nancy" stories, caution others with Guyanese proverbs, share your expertise on our blog, volunteer to tutor, or get involved in improving our building.

In an effort to keep GAOG on the move, we invite you to become a critical partner with us and help give back to the community. Assist by collaborating, advertising or donating to our organization. No gift is too small or large! We at the GAOG look forward to an eventful, fun filled and successful 2015!

Shena Applewhaite

Congratulations!



To Ms. Marva Jacobs who was appointed as Guyana's Honorary Consul in the State of Georgia earlier this year. Ms. Jacobs will be operating from the following address:

5365 Dividend Dr. Ste. E
Decatur, GA 30035

Condolences

Our heart goes out to the members and friends of the Association who lost loved ones during this past quarter.



Thank you!

To all our members, volunteers and sponsors for your assistance to the Guyana Association of Georgia this past year.



Your association needs you! Volunteer today in one of our committees!

Please contact the head of the committee you are interested in.

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