

Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation

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CHILDREN'S RUN ACROSS CANADA APPRECIATION DINNER



On March 26, 2010, the Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation held an appreciation dinner for all participants, volunteers, and sponsors of the Children's Run Across Canada. The evening at Chandni Gateway Banquet Hall attracted 150 individuals from the Greater Toronto Area and across Canada. The evening began with guests enjoying snacks and presenting the foundation's history over the last 10 years. Guest were then entertained with a 25 minute video clip of the Children's Run Across Canada. The short clip allowed sponsors and parents to see what took place over the summer of 2009. With the participants it evoked many memories. Canadian Boxer Andrew Singh Kooner congratulated the runners and also announced that a portion of the proceeds from his upcoming fight will be donated to the foundation. Soon after, participants from East, Centre, West, and Base teams were awarded medals for their contribution and efforts to make the run successful. Awards were then presented to the media, sponsors and Gurdwaras who assisted in making this run possible financially. Following the awards presentation, guests enjoyed dinner along with bhangra entertainment.



The keynote speaker was Professor Gurvinder Singh Dhaliwal from Vancouver. He congratulated the participants and expressed the feelings of the sangat when the run finished in Vancouver. He shared Sikh history when individuals achieve great things through the grace of Guruji and he acknowledged the achievement with the lesser parts of the run that we often forget such as starting out at 6am each day, running in the heat or in the cold, through rain storms and wind storms, through bruises and blisters, through hospitals and sickness experienced along the way. The evening concluded with a speech from Paneet Kaur on what it meant to take part in the run and the experience. She spoke about the accomplishments of the run, how things were built along the journey, the relationships, love, spirit, courage, commitment, dedication, support, how the challenges helped us to grow and through all these personal accomplishments we created purpose which was divine. Following this all guests were presented with a three hour DVD of the Children's Run Across Canada. We would like to thank all those who came out to the event; your support is greatly appreciated.

MARITIME SIKH SOCIETY DONATES TO IWK HEALTH CENTRE FOUNDATION



Children from Halifax Gurdwara presented, to the IWK Hospital, another cheque for \$9000 from the GGSCF after all the pledges from the Children's run across Canada had been collected. The Maritime Sikh Society (Halifax Gurdwara) also raised another \$2110 for the Hospital from a fund raising cultural evening held on November 21st, 2009. The donations were presented by Sargam Paul, a high school student, to Ms. Dionne Izzard of the IWK Hospital on December 6th, 2009. The GGSCF is grateful to the Maritime Sikh Society Committee for arranging the presentation and for the outstanding support throughout this event. Many of the participants who ran in Nova Scotia still cannot forget the hospitality after local Sikh families opened their homes to them on July 4th, 2009.

BUILDING BRIDGES-LEADERSHIP



On December 28, 2009, the Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation held a Building Bridges Leadership seminar at Scarborough Gurdwara. The all day event was attended by forty individuals ranging from youth to young adults. The focus of the event was to build leadership within the Foundation as well as to engage more individuals in leadership roles for the various events organized by the Foundation. Individuals also participated in different activities which were designed to develop leadership within groups and encompassed other skills such as teamwork and communication. At the end of the session, all participants were asked to set themselves goals based on the SMART model. These goals were to focus around various leadership roles that each person could commit to as well as other GGSCF goals for 2010. The event was success and many of the participants were actively engaged and enjoyed the learning experience.

BRAMPTON MEETINGS RESUMED



On February 18th, 2010 the Brampton meetings were restarted. The first meeting of the year was held at Ontario Khalsa Darbar Gurdwara and was well attended by many on the west side of town. Following the meeting the children and youth present were fortunate enough to meet two time Olympian

Andrew Kooner. Now being a professional boxer he dropped by to visit the members of the foundation and to announce his upcoming match. He commended the youth on the run Across Canada and voiced his desire to contribute; hence he is donating a portion of the revenue gained from ticket sales for the 15th May event to the GGSCF. He also shared stories of his youth and how he got into boxing, and the challenges he has overcome in his life.

After the meeting ended all the youth stayed back to write letters to the children sponsored by the foundation. The volunteers had the opportunity to get to "know" the children sponsored by the Foundation, ruffling through pictures, information, and letters written by the kids over the years. By the end of the meeting, 37 letters had been written by our young volunteers.

FRED VICTOR CENTRE



March 21st 2010 was the last day that volunteers came down to the Fred Victor Centre with the Guru Gobind Singh Foundation for the 2009-2010 season. The Fred Victor Centre is a shelter for the less fortunate and has been helping to provide charitable services since 1894. The centre helps people with affordable housing, community programs, career services and women services. It's aim is to provide assistance to those who are homeless and in poverty. The GGSCF visits are once a month starting from October and ending in March. The foundation provides free vegetarian meals for all those who come to the centre, where as typically they have to pay about \$2 for a meal. This meal usually consists of salad, rice, chickpea curry, buttered bread, donuts, and juice. It was the great spirit of the volunteers and many people who the volunteers served which propelled the enjoyment of the service. If it was only one time that a person helped out or several times it was much appreciated. It was great to see new faces outside of the GGSCF and some even coming far as Hamilton. The experience helped to make friends and inspire ideas of spreading a GTA wide initiative for all Gurdwara's and food shelters. It really brought back the history of Bhai Kanhaiya Ji and his service to all human beings. In addition, helping out once a month at this shelter gives opportunity for us as volunteers and for the people who are being helped to better understand "seva" and "langar" in a more modern sense. It was really exciting to see so many young and old people take part in such a humbling service.

CN TOWER STAIR CLIMB FOR WWF



April 17, 2010, the GGSCF participated, for the fifteenth consecutive year, in the CN Tower Stair Climb for the World Wildlife Fund (WWF). This year, thirty-six climbers of all ages made the journey up the tower's 1760 steps and raised \$2700 to help fight global warming. The fastest climber among the group was Amandeep Singh Chahal who climbed in an amazing 13 minutes and 20 seconds. A CTV reporter also caught sight of our group dressed in yellow t-shirts and Sunny Singh Sandher got the opportunity to tell viewers in a live interview about, not only our long participation in this event, but the Children's Run Across Canada. Member of Parliament Navdeep Singh Bains also came out to support the climbers. This year marked the 20th Anniversary of the event for the WWF and the GGSCF was recognized on their website for the long term support and contribution. Those who attended thank Nimritvir Kaur for helping organize this year's event.

SIKH CENTENNIAL FOUNDATION



April 17, 2010, youth from the Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation attended the annual Sikh Centennial Foundation Dinner at the Royal Ontario Museum. The Honourable Herb Dhaliwal, former member of parliament, congratulated the children and youth of the Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation for last year's successful 'Children's Run Across Canada'. The youth presented Mr. Dhaliwal with a DVD of the run as a token of appreciation for his kind support.



Sergeant Baltej Singh Dhillon, member of the RCMP, congratulated the youth for their huge achievement and expressed kind words of encouragement to the youth. Surjit Singh Babra, platinum sponsor of the run, also met with the youth at the dinner. Mr. Babra's support of the children and youth and of the run is greatly appreciated. The Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation was honoured to meet these three spectacular individuals and enjoyed the evening's festivities. A special thanks by the youth to Mr. Gary Singh for providing the foundation with the opportunity to attend this evening's event.

CAN-SIKH CULTURAL CENTRE SILVER JUBLIEE

March 27th, 2010 at Shingaar Banquet Hall in Brampton, Ontario, the Can-Sikh Cultural Centre celebrated their Silver Jubilee with an evening of entertainment, festivities, and great food. Can-Sikh cultural centre came into being in 1985. This year marked 25 years of Can-Sikh Cultural Centre's involvement in the community. In the few short years of its existence, this centre has played an important role in the multi-cultural fabric of Canada. It is a remarkable organization that has supported our youth and the Foundation. Every year at the Can-Sikh Cultural Centre Sports Festival, the youth and volunteers of the GGSCF provide langar to all those in attendance, and collect change for charity. At the event, Hardeep Grewal and Satinder Singh accepted an award for the youth of the GGSCF. The youth and volunteers of the GGSCF would like to congratulate the Can-Sikh Cultural Centre on their Silver Jubilee and wish them the best for the future. The evening had many dignitaries from Federal and Provincial scene but most remarkable was the speech of Mayor Hazel McCallion.

KHALSA DAY CELEBRATIONS

On April 14th the Sikh Sangat celebrated the 311th anniversary of the Khalsa. However on Sunday April 25th, the Sikh Sangat of the Greater Toronto Area celebrated Khalsa Day with the annual Nagar Kirtan Parade in the city of Toronto. Thousands of individuals participated in this year's Nagar Kirtan Parade and many of the volunteers of the GGSCF turned out to volunteer at the parade. Although the day could have been better in terms of temperature and less rain, this did not dampen the spirit of all those took part. The GGSCF helped with a number of activities outlined below.



1. Launch the Guru Nanak Education Assistance Program – by having a booth and announcing to the sangat.
2. Having a booth to collect donation for the Daily Bread Food Bank – total collection was 1316lbs
3. Making preparations for langar and helping to serve.
4. Managing the buses for a fourth consecutive year.

This year's parade took a different route which started from the CNE and finished at Queen's Park. This meant a new location for the bus pickups on the way back for all of our passengers. The Police tried to help by closing Queen's Park Crescent but this caused more difficulties as we could not use the bus stop locations printed on flyers. It became challenge for the bus drivers, the passengers and the volunteers. However, our last bus with our last passengers managed to depart by 6:45pm, which was a little later than last year. But, it was a good finishing time considering the size of the event and the first time at this location at Queen's Park. The many positives from the event was that everyone got home safe, volunteers did not quit even after listening to many things that should not have been said, and left many of us with lots of ideas to make next year's run even smoother.



The GGSCF would also like to thank the staff of Attridge Transportation (some pictured above) who helped to make the event run smoothly and kept their patience through the peak rush hour at Queen's Park.

GURU NANAK EAP



April 25th, the GGSCF introduced the Guru Nanak EAP to the Sikh community at the Khalsa Day Celebrations. The GGSCF Guru Nanak Education Assistance Program (EAP) is a pilot projects of the GGSCF. Over a period of time, several community members have asked for a fund to be set up to help Canadian Sikh students in need of financial assistance to help them complete their university/college education. On Guru Nanak Dev Ji's GURPURAB in 2008, a Sikh philanthropist pledged a generous donation to the GGSCF if the organization could establish and administer a Sikh student loan program. The initial pilot program is to help Sikh students in Ontario and assess the need in the community. If established the long term aim is to grow the program across Canada. While financial need is the most important criteria for eligibility, consideration is also given to academic ability, involvement in community activities or sewa and assessment of the credibility of the individual to pay back the loan. All applicants must be attending or should have been admitted to an accredited course of study (University/College in Canada). Applicants selected for the awards will usually be high school seniors or college/university students. Awards are in the form of interest-free loan(s) for which repayment is required after graduation. The repaid funds will be re-invested by the GGSCF to aid more students in the future through the Guru Nanak EAP. More information and applications are available from the GGSCF website.

GGSCF BOARD

For 2010 some of the Board members were changed by the GGSCF Council. The members are:

Avneet Kaur Jaswal
 Harjot Singh Bains
 Jasmin Kaur Dhaliwal
 Sandeep Singh Sandher
 Sarpreet Kaur Khera

The new Board's goals can be seen on the web site. The primary goal is to make the GGSCF sustainable. Presently the GGSCF functions due to the high level of commitment by some members, however this itself not good for the long run especially if one of these leaves. The best way is for each person to look for potential candidates and then mentor them to take the reins for the GGSCF in the future.

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