

# Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation

Issue 11

September 2004

## NIAGARA FALLS - TORONTO RELAY RUN



On August 21<sup>st</sup> at 8:30am in the mist of the Niagara Falls just over 100 children and volunteers started the two day relay run from Niagara Falls to Toronto. Under the Canadian flag the children sang "Oh Canada" and then did "Ardas" before the sea of yellow flowed down the Niagara River parkway, along this most scenic and memorable part of Ontario and Canada. On-lookers gazed in amazement and wonder many not from Canada as they saw the spirit of Canadian in particular Sikh children. The day soon cleared as the runners slowly proceeded along the asphalt roads, gravel shoulders and grass boulevards, kilometer by kilometer making their way through Town of Niagara, City of St. Catharines, Town of Lincoln, Town of Grimsby and finally into Hamilton. Along the way the children stopped over at Hamilton Ramgarhia Association and Baba Budha Ji Sikh Temple. The run ended at City Hall in Hamilton for the day while participants headed back home to rest their tired legs. Next morning all were back through to complete the second leg from Hamilton to Toronto starting again at City Hall at 9am. Along the Lift Bridge into Burlington, through Oakville, through Mississauga the children made their way to Toronto. At the western beaches the runners were joined by younger participants to run the last stretch together. This was cut short a little due to the CNE and Ontario Place crowds but the run finished on time at 6pm Nathan Phillips Square.



Guru Ravi Das Gurdawara provided a very warm welcome to the children on the second day during a lunch break. The children and youth performed kirtan, ardas, waak before having langar and heading off with the run again this time to Toronto. The Gurdwara committee and the sangat were very much touched by the children's effort and asked that in future they also involve their children.

At City Hall the GGSCF addressed the participants, parents and on lookers and a statement was read by Board member Gurjit. This reflected back on the last five years of the Foundation and on the road ahead. She also explained how the money raised by the GGSCF



was used. Sunny thanked all those present and younger children drew raffle prizes from the raffle tickets they had sold as a fund raising effort. The children also acknowledged all those who had helped with the fund raising effort, like Kuldeep Deepak and Jagdish Grewal. The total pledged on the day of the event was \$25,000. The money/pledges collected at time of printing was \$31,280.

A prize of 2 tickets to the Raptors Game for selling the most raffle tickets was won by 14 year old Deepak Singh Perhar. A prize of 2 Maple Leaf tickets for collecting the most pledges was won by Kirpa Kaur Badwal who is only 12 years old but raised \$3,206. The game ticket prizes were donated by Gursikh United Soccer Club.

## SENIORS TRIP



This years annual seniors trip was again a huge success with even more participants than previous years. Last year three buses went this year it was four buses, two from Scarborough Gurdawara, one from Rexdale Gurdawara and one from Brampton/Dixie Gurdawara.





Children, youth and volunteers served langar that they had previously prepared. As requested last year, the seniors were given time to share poems, songs, jokes with each other while having tea. The youth also brought some award/gifts given out by Amarpreet to those who came out and shared with others this particularly nice/pleasant day.

## 5<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY PICNIC



July 17<sup>th</sup> has a special significance to the GGSCF as it was 5 years ago on this day the children finished the run at the steps of Parliament Hill. To many it was the finish of the run to others as Manpreet spoke it was the beginning of the GGSCF and of the things to come. The day was remembered by having a fun picnic for children.



Bineesh arranged the day similar to last year's "fun day". Sidd/BA with all the youth soccer club coaches entertained the children with games and competitions and even getting dunked in the water tank.

## VISITS TO SPONSORED CHILDREN

This year saw four visits to the children that the GGSCF sponsors in Punjab, India. Early in February one of our monthly sponsors Gurjung Singh visited, then in March Council member Surjit Singh Hayre and during the summer Kimpreet and her mum and last but not least new helper Simi Kaur. Our special thanks to all of them who came back with reports, pictures and their own experiences.

The individuals visited one or more of the charities that the GGSCF works with to help children in need - the Joti Saroop Kanaya Aasra Trust in Kharar, the Vocational Rehabilitation Training Center in Ludhiana and Navjivini School in Patiala.



Vocational Rehabilitation Training Centre that supports blind and handicap children. The GGSCF helps 26 children with the VRTC.



Navjivini School of special education that helps mentally handicap children. The children here learn artistic ability and how to manage with other everyday chores. The GGSCF supports 2 children here.



Joti Saroop Kanya Aasra Trust a center just for girls who come from poor economic background or from a single parent family who cannot support them. While they live at the JSKAT they have a chance to go to school and gain an education and the GGSCF supports 20 girls at this center.

## SUMMER CAMPS



While camps generally run by Gurdwaras the children and youth with the GGSCF help out with these events as it is an excellent way to teach and motivate younger youth to get involved and do sewa at the Gurdwara. In so doing the children also learn a lot about Gurus and our history. GGSCF youth helped this year with camps at the Sikh Heritage Centre Brampton, Dixie Road Gurdwara and Scarborough Gurdwara, where children also enjoyed a field trip to Ontario Place.





## BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT



Panveer and Taranpreet once again organized a very successful youth basketball tournament in Brampton on March 28th. This was much enjoyed as participants from all ages categories showed their 'bounce' by competing in the tournament

## GUSIKH UNITED SOCCER CLUB



The soccer club under the leadership of Sidd, BA and Gunpreet had an amazing season with about 280 children taking parts in soccer program this summer. The soccer volunteers have also supported all the events of the GGSCF, including sponsoring 5 children, organizing games at the picnic, managing the run, the raffle and giving prizes.

## TORONTO MARATHON LAUNCH

Fauja Singh gave everyone a surprise as he raced to the finish at Nathan Phillips Square at Toronto City Hall on May 7<sup>th</sup>. The event was kick-off the 2004 Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon to be held on September 26<sup>th</sup> this year. The event was a call to action for all those to start training for the event and also to start thinking about which of the official charities runners may want to run for. The GGSCF is one of the official charities and Fauja Singh will be running for us as he did last year when he broke the world record for the 90+ category by completing the run in 5 hours and 40 minutes.



The GGSCF would like everyone to come out and support Fauja Singh by either participating in the event (you can do 5km run or walk or the half marathon 21km run or walk, if you are not up to the 42km marathon). Even if you cannot run come out and cheer on Fauja Singh and the many other participants including Ed Whitlock the home grown Canadian who broke the 70+ category world record last year by completing the run in under 2 hours 59 minutes.

## FAUJA SINGH MARATHON CLUB

To assist all those who want to take part in this year's Toronto Waterfront Marathon, the GGSCF has set up a Fauja Singh Marathon Club. The coach Parminder Kaur manages the run and walk on

Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Sunday mornings at Bhagat Puran Singh Park, Scarborough Gurdawara. Come train and keep fit.

## SCOUTS VISIT

Davinder Kaur Panesar a volunteer with Scouts Canada brought a scout group to the Gurdwara on April 22nd. Rupinder, Prableen and Satnam volunteers with the GGSCF showed them around the Gurdawara and explained who Sikhs are and what they do when they come to the Gurdawara. The group very much enjoyed the langar and all the food that was made available to them.



## INTERNATIONAL SIKH CONFERENCE

On May 22nd and 23<sup>rd</sup>, York University was the venue to an International Sikh Conference to celebrate the 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib. The academic conference was organized by Dr. Jasbir Singh Mann from California and hosted locally by Gursikh Sabha Canada. In attendance were scholars from across North America and India. At the GGSCF monthly meeting the youth develop skills in public speaking and this was opportunity for the youth to be heard. Two groups of youth made presentations, one group from Scarborough branch presented the results of a survey they had undertaken about Sikhs in Canada and their understanding of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib.



The second presentation was made by the Brampton branch on the role of women in history and society from a Sikh perspective. Both presentations were well received, the survey one with lots of questions/feedback and the one about women with the usual silence.



## UNITED WAY & IBM EMPLOYEES

In July we received a cheque from the United Way. It was not the amount that was important but the fact that one Indresh Kohli had pursued the money she donated at work be directed to the GGSCF and the work that children do. Likewise IBM employee Harjeet Singh Sandhu took on the initiative at his work with IBM to donate money to the GGSCF. This September we received a donation from the



IBM Employees Charitable Fund Donation Committee from those employees who directed their money to the GGSCF. It is good to see that children and youth activities through the GGSCF be acknowledged by those who are older and appreciate the work being done, so much so that they went out of their way to ensure that this charity received their generous contributions, thank you.

## CAN-SIKH TOURNAMENT



The GGSCF would like to thank the Can-Sikh Tournament Committee who every year invite the children to come and collect change from all those who attend the function. This year was no exception. Hardeep Singh served food and also collected the change. Thanks to everyone, all those cents, nickels, dimes, quarters, loonies, toonies and notes added up to \$3150.

## CANADA DAY



For the second year the GGSCF took part in the Canada Day Parade in Scarborough. About sixty participants of all ages all in yellow cheered and waved along the route from City Centre in Scarborough to Thompson Park. GGSCF children handed out balloons to the smaller children along the route. Three special GGSCF volunteers (Gurjit the puppy, Karan the beaver and Amrit the rabbit) made the younger children even more happy by giving them hugs along the route. It was a hot day and we do not know how they managed, we think the beaver had too much sun as volunteers helped him to get on the GGSCF truck. Even Councillor Balkissoon joined the group.



## NEW MEMBER GGSCF



On May 22nd one more volunteer joined the GGSCF, his name Kanwal Singh Khosa. Unlike many of us who have a choice if we want to come to events and meetings Kanwal had no choice, but then we think he knew what he was letting himself in for when he married GGSCF special founding member Inderpal Kaur Wig. From everyone at the GGSCF our congratulations, happiness and best wishes to

both. We can now look forward to twice as much contribution from Inderpal as before. Kanwal did not let us down as he jumped right into centralized registration via web for the Niagara Falls relay run. Good work Inderpal on the new recruit but don't work him too hard like the relay run we want him to turn up to events and not be sick.

## NEW MEMBER PARLIAMENT



On June 28<sup>th</sup>, GGSCF volunteer won the riding Mississauga Brampton South as the liberal candidate. Navdeep has been inspiring children and youth at all GGSCF events. He was particularly impressed by the Niagara Falls to Toronto relay run, where he ran with the children and realized how much energy and spirit they have. It is good to see the next generation of youth,

the generation that will hopefully help clean up politics and maybe in time gain the people's confidence and trust. Maybe some of the older generation will learn that when you are in office, you are there to serve the people and not your own self interest. The GGSCF would also like to acknowledge Brahamjot (Navdeep's better half) efforts this year to help with the annual tax returns for the foundation. She managed to do this during the course of the campaign when most would not have made the time. This shows the commitment both have to community service, it gives us insight on the values their parents hold and have instilled in them, who are now role models for other youth as to what they can aspire to be in Canada or the world.

## EDITOR

This was a great year being the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the GGSCF founded in 1999 on the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Khalasa, who would have thought we would still be around 5 years on. It is often easy to say or do good work but building an organization to carry on the work is hard work in itself. This year the GGSCF started off with an Akhand Path by children to thank God for his blessing along the way and with a request for more assistance into the future, so that we the children of Guru Ji can build a foundation that bears his name. Everyone was kept very busy this year with all the events that have been reported in this newsletter. It is amazing the GGSCF has come so far in the last five years but we know that we still have a long way to go. Anyway step by step just like a young child we need to take this journey and our hope is that many more children and youth will join along the way so that we can add value to the lives of children just like our Gurus added some value and meaning to our lives.

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