

Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation

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KHALSA DAY CELEBRATIONS



This year's Nagar Kirtan celebrations held on April 27th in downtown Toronto attracted the biggest participation since 1999 when the 300th Anniversary of the creation of the Khalsa was celebrated. The GGSCF was involved in two events on that day. Firstly, 3000 lbs of food was collected for the Daily Bread Food Bank. However, most of the volunteer effort was spent on the buses or transportation arrangements for the event. In total, the GGSCF managed 85 buses that brought over 8000 people from 17 different pick up points ranging from Burlington to Oshawa. In addition, the out of town buses from Barrie and Hamilton were also coordinated. This year we were successful in significantly reducing the "pushing and crushing" experienced in previous years and also in having a timely service out of City Hall. For the first time in several years the "bus" situation was not picked up by the Punjabi media as being a disaster in terms of service, in particular to those with children and the elderly. The GGSCF would like to congratulate all the volunteers who gave up their day to help with this sewa and it was appreciated by many of the elderly. It was not easy as many people were impatient and those helping were thirsty and hungry, but we are our Guru's Sikhs and their teachings are to help others and, in particular, those in need.



GAMESHOW A HUGE SUCCESS



There was lots of fun and entertainment to be had at Markham Theatre on Sunday September 30, 2007 when hundreds gathered to see the first ever Punjabi Gameshow put on as a fund raiser for the GGSCF. The show got off to a start with bhangra, followed by lots of games such as Bingo, The Price is Right, Lets Make a Deal, Deal or No Deal and more. A generational comedy skit was also performed by some of the youth. There was a lot of suspense as contestants drawn from the crowd got chances to win prizes such as DVDs, iPods, Bicycles, a Wii, M&Ms, vacuum cleaners and of course cash. While having so much fun it also helped raise approximately \$5200 for the GGSCF because of sponsors picking up the cost of the theatre and the prizes. A big thank you to all the participants and many of the back stage volunteers who made this possible and a most enjoyable evening.



CN TOWER STAIR CLIMB



On Saturday April 19, 2008 volunteers from the Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation took part in the annual CN Tower Stair Climb for the World Wildlife Fund of Canada. In total, 68 participants took part, the youngest being only 8 years old. The fastest climber this year from the group was 15 year old Amandeep Singh Chahal who climbed the 1768 steps in 14 minutes and 20 seconds. This was the 14th year that the group participated with representations from youth across the GTA. In total, the GGSCF presented a cheque for \$3400 to the WWF of Canada that will be used to protect endangered species as habitat is destroyed by human population growth and global warming.

HUNGRY MOOSE PARADE



On Thanksgiving Monday October 8, 2007, the Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation volunteers were busy again this year collecting food donations while taking part in the annual Hungry Moose Parade. The parade started off from the Fire Station at Yonge/Lawrence to the North York Harvest Food Bank centre at Varna Drive. Along the way children knocked on the doors and collected food donations which were thrown onto the flat bed carrying the hungry moose. The GGSCF also donated \$300 to the food bank. It was good to see young Sikh youth actively involved in the larger Canadian Community and mixing up with the Toronto Police and Fire Department who were also out supporting this event.

OFFICE

The GGSCF office is now open every Wednesday evening at Scarborough Gurdwara from 7pm to 8pm. This allows children and youth to drop in to help out with administrative duties. The focus has recently been helping out with the G.S.United soccer club registration for the 2008 season. Amrit

Kaur Randhawa has been assisted by other youth in writing letters to children and getting them mailed out. Lakhbir Kaur Saggi has been helping with the profiles of the children we sponsor and Renu Duggal with new sponsorship applications. Children at the Brampton/Dixie branch also made New Year cards for the children sponsored in Punjab.



CHARITIES IN PUNJAB



Surjit Singh Hayre visited all three charities in Punjab through which the GGSCF provides financial support. He visited the Joti Saroop Kanya Aasra Trust in Kharar for girls in need, the Vocational Rehabilitation Training Centre in Ludhiana for blind children and Navjivini School of Special Education in Patiala for mentally handicapped children. We are indebted to Surjit who has been visiting these organizations each year bring back reports and pictures of the children that are supported from the GGSCF. These pictures are then shared with the monthly sponsors.



GURU NANAK WALK



This year's Guru Nanak Walk started from the Rouge River at the east end of Scarborough and wound its way along the waterfront trail to Pickering. In total, just over 10km was covered by the 42 participants on October 20, 2007. The winding trails, the autumn colours of the trees, the nuclear power station, the marina and of course the lake were a few of the interesting views along this unusually warm day. Local Sikh businessman Avtar Singh who lives on Liverpool Road came out to see the group and offered ice cream to some of the younger participants.

GURU NANAK FOOD DRIVE



On the occasion of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's Gurburab, the Sikh Sangat in the GTA came together to collect food for the Toronto Daily Bread Food Bank in the 7th Annual Guru Nanak Food Drive. The food drive was held over two weeks from November 18th to 30th and 15 Gurdwaras participated from Burlington to Scarborough. In total 8,559 lbs of food was collected, the most ever from this annual event. The 15 Gurdwaras who participated were:

BRAMPTON - Gurdwara Damesh Darbar (Ebenezer), Gurdwara Jot Parkash Sahib (SunPac), Sri Guru Nanak Centre (Glidden), Sikh Heritage Centre (Mayfield)

MISSISSAUGA - Ontario Khalsa Darbar (Dixie), Sri Guru Singh Sabha (Malton), Shromani Sikh Sangat (Dunwin)

TORONTO - Gursikh Sabha Canada (Scarborough), North York Sikh Temple, Ramgarhia Sikh Society (Rivalda), Rexdale Singh Sabha (Baywood), Shromani Sikh Sangat (Pape), Sri Guru Singh Sabha (Weston)

HALTON - Guru Ravidas Sahib (Burlington), Halton Sikh Cultural Association (Oakville).

Despite the winter storm over the weekend the food was collected from all the Gurdwaras and delivered to the food bank on the morning of December 3, 2007. The GGSCF would like to thank all the sangat and all the Gurdwaras for working together to make this possible. The only time the Sikh community has collected more food has been when the Punjabi Media did an appeal in 1999 when over 10,000 lbs was collected.

RUN ACROSS CANADA

On December 28, 2007, over 70 participants took part in this year's Building Bridges workshop. The theme this year was the "Run Across Canada" planned for the summer of 2009. The day started with an exercise on "Colours" as a way of identifying dominant personalities and character traits. Then there was a session on "Planning" and finally some group work to establish "task teams" to run with the organization of this large project. The task teams established were Logistics, Charity, Promotion, Gurdwaras, Sponsors, Fundraising, Religious and Media. Participants volunteered to form these teams and set goals.



However with a project of this size we immediately ran into problems in terms of security and resources. To discuss this, a second meeting was held on February 18, 2008 (first Family Day in Ontario) to discuss these issues. From this, the drive was to see how many adult volunteers/runners would sign up as there is significant commitment required in particular for people to take time off work. As enough volunteers did not sign up it was agreed to scale the event to one that was manageable both in terms of manpower and financial resources. The run has now been restructured with the Board of the GGSCF taking the leadership role and splitting the route into three parts managed by three teams. As there is still a long way to go, there will be more information presented in the upcoming months.

FOOD FOR HOMELESS



Like previous years this winter the GGSCF served free hot meals to those in need and on the streets in Toronto. Once a month, food was prepared at Scarborough Gurdwara and then taken to the Fred Victor Centre by volunteers. It is a real life changing event for the many youth that take part as it opens their eyes to what they have and take for granted when they see others around them struggle with basic needs.

AWARDS



On April 13, 2008 at Woodbine Banquet Hall, Parvasi Weekly held its annual awards. The GGSCF was presented with the Youth Award for charity work done in the community for the effort of the children to help other children in need around the world. The award was accepted by Amardeep, Hardeep and Taranpreet from special guest Kiran Bedi first woman Police Chief in New Delhi. Taranpreet thanked Parvasi and shared the vision of the GGSCF for all those who were present

On Saturday April 19, 2008, the Centennial Foundation presented the Honoree Sewa award to the GGSCF. The event was held at the Royal Ontario Museum and a table was donated for the youth by Gary Singh. Gagandeep Kaur Babra accepted the award and thanked the Centennial Foundation for their on going support and recognition of the charity work by the volunteers of the GGSCF.



On May 3, 2008, Gurleen and Jasmin Kaur Dhaliwal accepted a award from Provincial Minister Michael Chan on the 3rd South Asian Heritage Day Awards in Vaughan. The nomination was made by Baldev Singh Mutta from the Punjabi Community Health Centre.



Although many rewards were received the GGSCF does also thank those who have supported it throughout the years. In July 21, 2007 children from the GGSCF presented an award to Jagdish Singh Grewal and his wife, Parminder Kaur Grewal, of Punjabi Post for their unconditional support over the years at the 5th Anniversary Celebration of the paper.

VOLUNTEER NEWS

The Council appointed Gagandeep Kaur Babra to the Board of the GGSCF at the end of January 2008. Gagandeep replaces Tajinder Kaur Shengra who has served two terms on the Board. Tajinder was pleased to serve on the Board and cannot wait for the Run Across Canada. She has recently graduated but is now busy helping her family with a new business. We wish to thank Tajinder and we know she will continue contributing with the GGSCF.



On Friday October 12, 2007 Pritam Singh left this world. He will be missed by all the volunteers as he has been helping to prepare food that the GGSCF takes to the homeless shelter in Toronto. He has also assisted over many years in preparing food for the

seniors trips, the Scotiabank Marathon, Race Against Racism in Brampton, children's camps and any other event the GGSCF has organized. As he was outspoken, some liked him and some did not but no one would doubt his commitment to sewa, in particular, helping to prepare food at the Gurdwara.

On Saturday May 10, 2008 two well know volunteers, Sidd Singh Nijhawan, one of the founding members of the G.S.United Soccer Club at Scarborough Gurdwara married Sartia Kaur Birring who manages the web site of the Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation. Both have been volunteering for many years in many charitable activities and are role models for the younger generation.



EDITOR - Paramjit Singh

This issue is very late and some items are from last year. Things have been busy as you can see. It is good to see the children and youth active in the GGSCF and hopefully their involvement will shape their lives and values.

Guru Gobind Singh Children's Foundation

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