



The Shield

The Quarterly Newsletter of the St. Joseph High School Old Students' Association

April - June 2008

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REUNION 2009

The Return Home

As if continuing the homecoming trend, first with Guyana hosting CARIFESTA, the local alumni will in 2009 host the Triennial St Joseph High Reunion. The event is being hailed as a time to reconnect by allowing the opportunity for old friends to meet and for new friendships to be forged.

The organizers are insisting that it will be a time to remember the good old SJH days and to this end are promising a well organize week of fun filled activities.

The 2009 Reunion, which will be held from July 12-18, 2009, is also expected to be much grander than previous years with participation expected from both the Canadian and United States Chapters.

The preliminary itinerary of events released by the Organizing Committee is as follows:

Sunday July 12 - Church service at the Cathedral of Immaculate Conception followed by registration and brunch at the school.

Monday July 13 - Registration continues with an Open Day at the school followed

by lunch. In the afternoon there will be a Road Trip from Vreed-en-Hoop to Turkeyen followed by a Lime on the Kitty Seawalls.

Tuesday July 14 - A Variety Show will be held in the evening at the National Cultural Centre.

Wednesday July 15 - Executive Meeting with the various chapters, the school and the PTA. In the evening there will be a 70's and 80's Party.

Thursday July 16 - The day will be available for pre-arranged trips while in the evening there will be a Nostalgia Night in D'Aguiar's Park.

Friday July 17 - A Day Trip to an out of town resort.

Saturday July 18 - Closing ceremony and dinner and dance.

According to the Organizing Committee a confirmed itinerary complete with venues will be unveiled in January 2009 at the official launching ceremony.



Alumni at the Sunday Brunch during Reunion 2000 in Georgetown.

New Executive Committee Elected Wasim Khan Returned as President

At its Biennial General Meeting of held on January 5, 2008 the Association elected a new Executive Committee. This committee, which will hold office from 2008-2009, is comprised of the following persons:

- Wasim Khan - President
- Khemraj Persaud - Vice-President
- Charmaine Oxley - Treasurer
- Keane Glasgow - Assistant Treasurer
- Junette Bagot - Corresponding Secretary

Juel Gibson - Recording Secretary

The executive will be tasked with, among other things, the successful hosting of the Triennial Reunion 2009 to be hosted in Guyana in July 2009. The outgoing Vice-President, Quacy Williams, challenged the new Executive to focus on means of increasing the number of members and their support for the Association. His thoughts were echoed by other members in attendance.

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TD and Science Labs Refurbished Agriculture Science Plot to be Fenced and Tilled

In its continued efforts to make better the learning facilities of the school, the Association in collaboration with the Canadian chapter completed renovation of the Technical Drawing laboratory in September 2006. The refurbishment of the laboratory costed in excess of \$600,000 and the lab now sports new seating accommodation, cupboards and working tables.

One year later in September 2007, the Association commissioned the refurbished Science Laboratory. The work on this laboratory saw all three active chapters pitching in for its completion.

The infrastructural works for this project, which cost in excess of two million dollars, was funded by the Canadian Chapter. The Guyana Chapter coordinated the project and acquired much needed chemicals and provided a brand new televisionset and DVD player for the laboratory. The United States Chapter assisted with the provision of a quantity of microscopes and other equipment.

The chemicals which were acquired at a cost of approximately \$100,000, were greatly welcomed by both students and teachers as the unavailability of certain chemicals was a major impediment to the conduct of experiments. In keeping their promise to assist with equipment, the US Chapter donated a quantity of microscopes and other paraphernalia.

The Home Economics Department



Students occupying the newly refurbished Technical Drawing Laboratory

also benefited from a donation of kitchen utensils by the Canadian Chapter.

The renovations and new furniture and equipment in the laboratories caused the school and the local chapter to make an effort to secure the investments by improving the security of the laboratories. The school installed a new security alarm system in the laboratories and the Guyana Chapter replaced all the doors with secure panel doors to support the new alarm system installed.

For 2008 the Association has identified the Agricultural Science

Department for improvement works. The work which entails fencing and tilling the plot, is expected to commence during the August holiday for completion by the new school year. The acquisition of new farming implements is also being considered.

Anyone wishing to make a contribution to this project can contact the association via email sjhosaguyana@yahoo.com or by mailing us at P.O. Box 101558, Georgetown, Guyana

SJH Gets New Board of Governors

The Minister of Education acting under Section 3(6) of the President's College Act 1990, has approved the Appointment of the following persons as members of the St Joseph High School Board of Governors for a period of two years beginning June 2, 2008:

Calvin Benn - Chairman
Wasim Khan
Curtis Bernard
Gloria Croft
Joan Kendall
Ingrid Fung
Martin Goolsarran
Gregory Sills
Samantha Alleyne

Ramwratie Jagdeo
Mohan Samlall
Karen Burch-Smith

The Board is constituted of representatives from the Old Students Association, the Staff Association, the Parents Teachers Association, the Guyana Teachers Union as well as retired educators and prominent members of society.

This is the second Board of Governor appointed for the institution and many of the members of the previous board, including the chairman, were reappointed. The new members of the board are Samantha Alleyne, the Guyana Teachers' Union representative, and Ramwratie Jagdeo and Mohan Samlall, members of

the Parent Teacher's Association. The Headmistress, Ms. Gail Primo, Deputy Headmaster, Mr. Clifton David and the Assistant Chief Education Officer are Ex-Officio Members of the board.

Under the School Board system, the Board of Governors has taken over a great majority of the Ministry's responsibility, with the Headmistress reporting to the School Board and the Board reporting to the Ministry. While the Board undertakes most decision making and strategic planning functions, day to day administration of the school rests with the Headmistress.

SJH Hosts First Cultural Day



Principal, Ms. Gail Primo, addressing the gathering on the school's patio.

On May 23, 2008 the students of St Joseph High hosted the inaugural Culture Day of the school. Dubbed 'The Arrival', the culture day was a joint initiative of the Parent Teachers Association and the school. The day's activities included, among other things, stage performances in the form of dance, poems, skits and other dramatic pieces. These were performed by both students and teachers. Also, as part of the celebrations, several booths showcasing the cultural heritage of the various ethnic groups were on display. And to compliment it all were the students attired

in the traditional garbs of the various ethnic groups.

The event which was hailed a success by both the media and public at large is expected to become an annual feature on the school's calendar of events. In the same breath, other schools were encouraged to follow suit and organize activities of a similar nature since it was emphasized that in orienting our younger generation to the different cultures might help them to develop a greater appreciation for each others differences.

In giving it's thought on the event, the Old Students Association said that the event could not have come at a more opportune time given the ongoing debate in our country on race and racism. The Association expressed its hope that the activity would serve to enlighten our young people and thus encourage them to be more

tolerant and accepting.


On a final note it would be unfair of me to conclude and not thank all those persons who worked tirelessly to make this activity a success. Special thanks to the members of the Parent Teachers Association, the students and all members of staff especially Ms. Karen Burch-Smith and Ms. Gail Primo.



Students display East Indian wear during the festivities.



Students and a teacher adorned in African outfits during the St. Joseph High Cultural Day festivities.



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She is Beauty and She is Grace

SHE IS MISS SJH

Beauty, intelligence and glamour were all on show at the 2008 Ms. St Joseph High Pageant held on March 15 at the National Cultural Centre.

The Pageant, one of the signature activities on the social calendar of the Old Students Association, is held biennially as a collaborative effort between the Association and the school. Its aim is to showcase the talents and public speaking skills of the delegates while at the same time helping them to improve their confidence and self esteem. The funds raised from the event is used for the continued maintenance and upgrading of the school's facilities.

This year's pageant saw the participation of ten delightful and vivacious young ladies five in the junior category and five in the senior category.

After almost three hours of stiff competition, the evening climaxed with Crystal Barclay, a thirteen year old aspiring

medical doctor, being crowned the Junior Queen and Minka Ndifon, a Nigerian born aspiring oncologist, copping the Senior crown.

The event, which was describe as well organized, opened with a dance done by the students of St Joseph High and on the heels of the dancers came the delegates displaying their casual wear and delivering their formal introduction. This was followed by the question and answer segment where the young ladies answered questions on their platform which they had chosen and researched.

In the segment that followed the delegates showcased their artistic abilities in the form of dance, drama and songs.

Following the talent segment the young ladies displayed their elegance and finesse as they graced the National Cultural Centre staged in their cocktail and evening wear.

However, like any other competition there could only be one winner and to make the work of the judges easier the cut had to be made. At this point the scores from the preliminary segments were taken together and the final three in each category was announced. Making the cut in the senior category were Candace Benn , Tanisha Jerrick and Minka Ndifon. In the junior category were Tremayne Francis , Esther Osborne and Crystal Barclay.

With a cleared score sheet the finalist now had one last opportunity to impress the judges in their quest to become the next Ms. SJH and that was the final question.

The junior delegates were each asked "What is the one thing you like most about your school?" while the senior delegates were asked "If you were to win the Ms. SJH pageant what would be the first thing you would do for your school?"

If it were possible six Queens



Junior Queen - Crystal Barclay



Senior Queen - Minka Ndifon

would have been crowned. However, in the final scoring the Judges gave the nodge for Junior Queen to Crystal Barclay and the senior crown went to Minka Ndifon. Tanisha was adjudged first runner-up and Candace second runner-up in the senior category. The runners-up in the junior category were Esther Osborne (first runner-up) and Tremayne Francis (second runner-up).

The special prizes for Best Talent went to Tanisha Jerrick in the senior category and Esther Osborne in the junior category while the prize for best cocktail wear went to Esther Osborne. The best evening gown prize was copped by Minka Ndifon. Prizes were also given for the best smile in each category with Crystal taking the junior prize and Tanish the senior. Candace was chosen by the delegates as Miss Congeniality.

Meet Ms. Gail Primo

New Headmistress for SJH

Gail Primo is the newly appointed Headmistress for the St Joseph High School. Ms. Primo joined St Joseph High in 2004 as the Deputy Headmistress, a post she held until 2006. In 2006 she was promoted to Acting Headmistress pending the Ministry of Education's formal appointment. This appointment finally came in September, 2007.

Gail Primo grew up in Rosignol with her grandmother. Growing up, she said she always wanted to be a teacher. As a young girl she always had a class of the neighbour's children or the cut out girls from her mother's fashion books. At the age of nine she moved to Linden, where she completed her primary education, which she had started at Rosignol Primary, at Regma Primary. On completion of her primary education, Ms. Primo joined the Wismar/Christianburg Multilateral Secondary School.

After her graduation in 1977, Ms. Primo enrolled in the Lillian Dewar Teachers Training College, the then training college for secondary school teachers. There she majored in Mathematics and English. On completion of her training, she began teaching at the Linden Foundation Secondary. She taught there from 1982 to 1988.

In 1988, Gail Primo commenced studies at the University of Guyana where she read for a Bachelors Degree in Economics. From this time up until 2001 she was attached to the North Ruimveldt Multilateral. She left North Ruimveldt in 2001 to serve as the Deputy Headmistress at Ascension Community High. She served there until joining the St Joseph High Family in 2004.

Today, in addition to serving as Headmistress, Ms. Primo also teaches Forms 3 and 4 mathematics. She is also a Marker for the CXC Mathematics Basic Proficiency paper.

In describing her experiences as a teacher this is what she had to say "It is very interesting and always a challenge ... each batch of students bring something



Ms. Gail Primo - New SJH Principal

new, something you have never encountered." She indicated that her experience at St Joseph High has been no different. She did say however, that the students at St Joseph High are some of the smartest she has come across.

Commenting on her role as Headmistress, she said that it can be demanding at times but acknowledges that her staff is very supportive and cooperative.

When asked about her vision for the school, she indicated that one of the things she wants to see happen is the reestablishment of

clubs with students managing them. This she believes will help students to develop a sense of responsibility and improve their managerial skills. She also hopes to see our students being better prepared for the technological age. Removing the taboo associated with the Technical Stream, she said is pivotal in achieving this.

On her thoughts about the relationship between the school and the Old Students Association, she indicated that it was very healthy and that the school remains grateful to the Association for all it has done and continues to do. She further noted that she and the school stands ready to support the Association in whatever way they can.

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A Talent Extravaganza In Every Sense of the Word

The St Joseph High School Old Students Association in collaboration with the St Joseph High School held its first ever Talent Extravaganza on March 10, 2007 at the National Cultural Centre. Initially aimed at showcasing the talents of the students of St Joseph High, both past and present, the show managed to attract the participation of a number of friends of St Joseph High. As a result the evening saw performances from a wide spectrum of local artistes including the then reigning Soca Monarch Malo, GT Rudeboi Gialiani, the 'Shake it off Babe' Typhoon and gospel sensation Eddie Neblette among others. Also, and like most persons have come to expect of any SJH Old Students Association planned event, the evening was complimented with the sexy, sophisticated and glamorous designs of Michelle Cole, Andrea McAdam, Luann Jackson, Sharon Fraites and Andrea Braithwaite - all past students.

The show got underway at around

8:00pm and from then on it was non-stop entertainment with patrons being entertained for the first half hour by excellent renditions of songs and well choreographed dances by some of St Joseph finest. Worthy of mention, and not that the others aren't, was a group calling themselves 'Steps', who transformed stamping of the feet into a form of dance that truly had the crowd wowed. By the time patrons were beginning to get a bit bored with all the



A part of a group of Sjh students who gave a raving "Stomp" performance at the Talent Extravaganza, much to the delight of the audience.

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song and dance the crazy clan of Artistes in Direct Support invaded the stage. Instantaneously the crowd was alive and the humour of the performance had patrons slipping off their chairs with laughter, some even in tears.

The second segment of the show was just as entertaining as the first with performances by

Gialiani, Classique Dancers and the then reigning Miss St Joseph Shanelly Fortune. Performing also was Eddie Neblette and Ossie O. In this segment patrons were also treated to a spectacular display of fashion by Michelle Cole and Andrea Braithwaite. Doing his thing too was the hilarious Henry Rodney.

As the saying goes you always save the best for last and so to bring the curtains down Malo was introduced. With his catchy lyrics and superb dance moves Malo had the crowd going wild.

The Talent Extravaganza will be a biennial event and will alternate through the years with the Ms. St Joseph High Pageant. The funds raised from the inaugural event were used to assist with refurbishing works done on the Science Laboratory.

CARIFESTA Returns to its Genesis

CARIFESTA the Caribbean Festival of Arts will this year return to its birthplace after 36 long years. The tenth edition of this extravaganza of Caribbean history, arts and culture will be staged for ten days in Guyana between August 22-31, 2008.

This event, the region's roving, multicultural, mega arts festival will attract a wide range of creative artists from various Caribbean and Latin American countries, with participation expected from guest artists from Africa and Asia also.

Being held under the theme "One Caribbean, One Purpose - Our Culture Our Life", this year's festival promises to be the largest to date with a programme of activities ranging from the Performing Arts to mega exhibitions and concerts. In

addition there will also be the Fine Arts, literary, craft and culinary exhibitions, the Grand Market, Community Festivals, Fashion Focus, Indigenous Villages and

Calypso and Chutney Competition among others.

Visitors can avail themselves to sample Guyana's cultural tourism when they visit certain sites and communities to experience folk rituals, celebrations and traditional lifestyles.

Since its inaugural launch in 1972, previous CARIFESTA have been held in Guyana, Jamaica, Cuba, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, St Kitts and Nevis and Suriname.

CARIFESTA in Guyana will be truly a vacation to savour discovering or re-living the Region's arts and culture while at the same time experiencing the endless possibilities that Guyana eco-tourism product offers. So come join the Caribbean in Guyana as we celebrate CARIFESTA Guyanese style.



Courageous Students Represent School at GBTI Impromptu Speech Competition

Three (3) fourth formers braved the challenge and confidently participated in the GBTI Annual Impromptu Speech Competition held during May 2008. Ms. Sherrie Hewit, Ms. Kiana Wilburg and Ms. Minka Ndifon noted that the Competition has sharpened their ability to organize concepts and develop spontaneous thinking while improving confidence. The ladies were of the view that most people are not comfortable giving speeches or having to undergo public scrutiny when speaking and as such the Competition was helpful to all the students who participated.

The GBTI Regent Street branch hosts the Competition annually for fourth form students of selected secondary schools as a means for helping them to develop their communicative and creative potential, improve their self-confidence and the ability to think on their feet and hold the attention of their audience.

While the St. Joseph team did not reach the finals, they certainly put up a good show in winning their first and second round matches. The St Joseph High team first came up against Marian Academy and won that match 696 points to 606 points. The St Joseph team pulled the topics: How would you solve the garbage problems in the city; Why are people illiterate in today's world; The minibus

problem.

In their second round match The St Joseph High team first came up against St Roses High School and won that match 684 points to 549 points. The St Joseph team pulled the topics: Are the number of school hours reasonable?; Television commercials; What I wish to know about the future.

St Joseph then lost to Annandale Secondary School in the quarter finals 636 points to 656 points. The St Joseph team pulled the topics: How can we feed the world?; The benefits of gardening as a hobby; All that glitters is not gold.

In the impromptu speech contest, participants have one minute after selecting a topic to prepare their speech a three minutes to deliver the speech. The topics that are given in an impromptu speech basically expect the contestants to express their own points of view. There aren't any

correct answers.

Ms. Minka Ndifon is of the view that such speech contests should be part of the Language curriculum at School. Her advice to future St Joseph speakers was "All in all, I really suggest you have confidence in yourself. Just speak in a normal tempo and be aware of your body language and victory will be yours!"

Our congratulations and best wishes are extended to Ms. Sherrie Hewit, Ms. Kiana Wilburg and Ms. Minka Ndifon for representing St Joseph High so well.



The SJH Impromptu Speech Team from Left: Sherrie Hewit, Kiana Wilburg and Minka Ndifon.

Constitution Watch



General Meetings

26. There shall be an annual general meeting of the association in the month of January in each year for general business. Notice by circular shall be given by the Honorary Secretary.

27. Notices of motions and questions must be sent in writing to the Honorary Secretary not less than ten (10) days before the date fixed for the meeting. Particulars of the business to be discussed shall be sent by circular to each member of the association not less than seven (7) days before the date of the meeting.

28. The committee may convene a Special General Meeting whenever they deem it necessary.

29. The committee shall have the power to convene a special general meeting upon the requisition to that effect signed by not fewer than twenty (20) members of the association stating the purpose for which the meeting is being convened and such Special General Meetings shall be called within one calendar month after the requisition has been sent in.

30. Not less than five (5) days notice by advertisement as above shall be given of such special general meetings, and the particulars of the business to be discussed shall be sent to each member. No other business shall be discussed.

31. At any general meeting fifteen (15) members shall form a quorum. If, within thirty (30) minutes from the time appointed for the meeting a quorum of members is not present, the meeting, if convened on the requisition of the members, shall be dissolved; in any other case it shall stand adjourned to the same day in the following week at the same time and place, and if, at the adjourned meeting thirty members are not present within thirty minutes of the time appointed, the member present shall form a quorum.

32. Every member who is not in arrears with his/her subscription, as provided in rule 38, shall be entitled to be present at all general meetings of the association and shall be entitled to one vote upon every issue put before the meeting.

33. Voting shall, in the first instant, be by the show of hands but any number of members, not being less than one-third of those present, may demand a poll which shall be taken. A declaration by the chairman of the result of voting, either by show of hands or on a poll, shall be final.

Coming Events

B-B-Q
& Lime

August 16, 2008
SJH Patio, Woolford Avenue
Tickets: \$700
B-B-Q Served from 12:00 hrs

3rd
Quarterly
Meeting

September 20, 2008
16:30 hrs
SJH, Woolford Avenue

Final
Quarterly
Meeting

December 6, 2008
16:30 hrs
SJH, Woolford Avenue

Reunion
2009
Launching

January, 2009
SJH Patio, Woolford Avenue

Talent
Extrava-
ganza

March 14, 2009
National Cultural Centre

The Shield is published in the months of March, June, September and December.

Please send all contributions to either the mailing or email address below by the end of the first week in the months of publication.

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Condolences

The Association expresses its deepest sympathy and sincere condolences to Rameen Alli nee Hydaralli (Class of 1994) on the passing of her husband Akbar Ali.

May His Soul Rest in Eternal Peace.

The Association expresses its deepest sympathy and sincere condolences to Alana Gravesande nee Beresford (Class of 1996) and Arlene Beresford (Class of 2001) on the passing of their mother Patricia Beresford.

May Her Soul Rest in Eternal Peace.

Condolences