



Goan Overseas Association, Vancouver -newsletter

Reaching Out

Meet the new

Executive

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2006

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Program

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Missions
Downtown

Eastside, Pilar

Sisters

Young
achievers,

Anniversaries

Obituaries

Spring is in the air.....and we are back in circulation with news, views and reviews. As goans, we believe in variety and spice and to reinforce the old saying '*Variety is the Spice of Life*' we have a new Executive, some old and some new, so folks you can look forward to lots of mirchi masala. Old guard Willie Lobo has handed over the baton to Carol D'Sa (from one Moirekar to another) and in case you are wondering about Moira, it is a village in the Bardez taluka of Goa, now famous in Vancouver for producing our recent GOA presidents - viva Moira! Thank you Willie for all your hard work and dedication to the GOA. Willie it seems has decided to savour *amchem Goem* by actually making frequent trips, 'hey Willie, are we looking at a Vancouver Overseas Association in Goa?'

Thank you also to Kevin, Ivor, Melissa and Merwyn for their contribution to the GOA's success last year, 2005 was surely an eventful year and would not have been the same without you all.

Congratulations to the new team headed by Carol D'sa!! We look forward to an exciting and event filled year ahead of us, community get-togethers, sports, talent contests and our main mission of fostering a caring community, whether in Vancouver, Goa or any where else in the world.

Read about our missions and be a part of them – Downtown Eastside, Pilar Sisters and more.

Calling all the goan youth, here is a platform to showcase your talents, nurture your culture, network, have fun and inculcate the spirit of caring and sharing, and most importantly continue our mission.

The on-going need for volunteers continues, the response last year was tremendous and we hope to see a substantial increase in the numbers this year.

Welcome to all our new members of 2006, and for those of you who would like to be part of an association..... log on to *HFU* <http://www.vancouver.com/UH>

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2006!!! MARK YOUR CALENDARS

1. June 10th at the Country Meadows in Richmond
2. June 11th – Talent Show
3. Field Hockey tournament in June (Details to come)
4. Downtown Eastside Next Lunch Drive July 9 ,2006
5. July 9th or 23rd – First Picnic
6. August 7th or 20th – Second Picnic and Jam Session – World GOA Day
7. October 14th – Night in Goa
8. November 12th – Indoor Sports Day
9. December 3rd – St. Francis Xavier's Feast
10. December 31st - New Years Dance





MEET THE NEW EXECUTIVE

After a very successful Annual general Meeting held on April 2, 2006, the Goan Overseas Association is pleased to announce its new Board of Directors.

President
Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary
Social Director
Sports Director
Youth Director
Cultural Director

Caroline D'Sa
Cleto Dos Remedios
Lorraine Rego
Debbie D'Mello
Shona Lobo
Neri Santos
Felix Saldanha
Villa Pinto

Email
president@goavancouver.com
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sports@goavancouver.com
culturals@vancouver.com
publicity@vancouver.com



Review of Highlights for 2005

The Goan Overseas Association had an extremely successful year in 2005. It not only met its objectives but surpassed them beyond all expectations, thanks in part to its very energetic Executive and mostly to the enthusiasm and participation of its members. There is a great feeling of caring and sharing within the Community and is evident in many of the Association's activities.

A. Community Service

At the start of the year it was decided to reach out to not only members of our own Community but to those outside of our Community. The participation of members and volunteers to plan, donate and implement this phase of our work has been tremendous. Among the programs undertaken this year have been:

- Donated \$ 5,500 to the Tsunami Relief Fund.
- Donated \$ 1,400 to the Pilar Society for the relief of poor and under privileged families in India. This amount includes donations collected at the first "World Goa Day" celebrations for helping a needy family in Goa.
- Provided food, clothing and volunteers to distribute the same to the poor homeless people of downtown Vancouver in association with The Union Gospel Mission. The Association thanks

Sandra Mascarenhas who initiated, planned and implemented this program.

- Awarded Joe & Vila Pinto the GOA Community Service Award for services rendered to the Community at large.

B. Youth and Seniors

Planning to get our youth involved and motivated has been our greatest achievement. We have now got a Youth Executive to plan programs for all of our youth. Our thanks to Felix Saldanha who spearheaded this program. Our thanks also to the following youth: Jaclyn Rozario, Dean Saldanha, Roger Martin, Andrea & Antoinette Fernandes, Charisse Fernandes, Keana Coats, Shinead & Daynah D'Souza. These young people sacrificed a lot of their free time to come forward and help their fellow peers. We wish them every success not only within our Community but also in their own future careers.

Congratulations to the following youth who distinguished themselves this year:

- Andrea Santos who won the GOA Scholarship
- Dean Saldanha who represented Canada at the World Scrabble Championship in the UK and just missed getting into the top 10 world ranking.
- Joe DeSilva who won the prize for the GOA Logo, a beautiful work of art capturing both worlds.



Our goal of providing programs for the well-being of our seniors got off to a great start this year with a sumptuous lunch. We hope that the programs we have planned will help our seniors to develop a healthy lifestyle and thus make valuable contributions to our community with their knowledge and experience.

The seniors committee consisting of Freda D'Souza, Clara D'Mello and Merle Lobo provided two events this year for our seniors.

C. Membership

Current membership is 340 and we look forward to strengthening our numbers.

D. Events of 2005

Every event organized by the Association was very well attended and every one was a tremendous success.

Highlights of some of the events were:

- May Ball – and the Elvis look alike
- Talent show with 52 competitors in different age groups
- Multi-Cultural Music & Dance Festival. at Minoru at the invitation of the City of Richmond
- The event of the year was the 'Nite in Goa'
- Our last event was the New Year's Eve Ball.

E. Communications

Thanks to our hardworking Carol D'Sa the Association's web site is now fully operational. We have received congratulations from sister Institutions around the world. This helps the Association keep in touch with its members instantly.

Almost all our members have email addresses, which constitutes a big saving in postage.

F. Special Programs

On receiving many requests, the Association undertook to provide its members two programs in Goan cooking and the Konkani language. The program, however, met with limited success. It will be restarted again this year and we hope members will take advantage of these programs. These are again part of the Association's mission of fostering and promoting our heritage.

The Association also encouraged its members to participate in dancing classes. As a result, Clara D'Mello and Celine Fernandes started two groups both of which performed admirably at the 'Nite in Goa'.

The Association has applied for funding which is available to Cultural Societies. If successful, the money received will go a long way to fund the programs listed above.

G. Volunteers

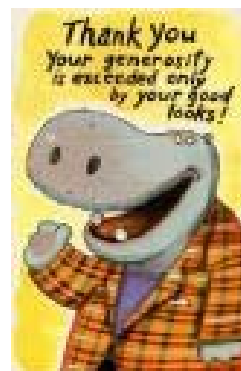
In order to meet our goals and achieve success, we depend a great deal on volunteers to give the Executive help in the different areas of our plans.

The response to our call for volunteers has been unbelievable. *There is no greater joy than giving of one's time and talent for the benefit of your fellow members.* Without the help of our volunteers none of our events would have achieved the success that they did. This year we had over 140 members who volunteered their services in sub-committees, preparation of newsletters and flyers, selling tickets for events, preparing sandwiches, collecting items for the poor and needy, donating and/or sponsoring and helping at various other events. We hope that members will continue to come forward and offer their services for the benefit of our community.

H. Thank you

The Executive sincerely thanks all members of the Association for their loyalty, cooperation and support throughout the year. Without this we could not have achieved a successful year. In particular we thank all our volunteers for the help that they provided throughout the year.

Our thanks also go to all our loyal benefactors and sponsors who have contributed so much to the Association's success.





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Goals for 2006

Our goals this year will focus on the following programs:

- Increase our membership base. We call on all our members to act as the ambassadors of the Association and spread the message of our mission statement of “promoting our heritage and fostering a caring community”. Also, on behalf of the Association, please welcome any new immigrants that you may encounter and offer them any assistance they may require or refer them to any member of the Executive.
- Develop and encourage new opportunities for our youth and towards this goal we want to present to them programs that will open up avenues of leadership and career planning. The potential of our youth is beyond all measure.
*“ Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond all measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.”
Nelson Mandela, 1994*
- Based on the tremendous response to the talent show last year, we will continue hosting this event in future. Remember that Goan musical talent is well known around the world!!
- For all sports lovers and enthusiasts, our sporting activities will continue and we encourage you to look on the website for these events. To this end we plan to hold field hockey and soccer games once a week from spring to late summer at a ground in Richmond. We also intend to obtain venues for badminton and volleyball.
- Plan more activities for our seniors.
- Pursuant to our mission statement, we plan a more aggressive, interactive program for our Konkani language and for our world famous Goan cooking. We invite members to take

advantage of this and enroll as soon as details are made known. Size of classes will be limited.

- Actively pursue how best we can help new immigrants.

Goan Overseas Association Outreach Services

Among the many goals of the Association, one of them is to provide advisory assistance to members in areas of jobs, accommodation, new immigrants, times of illness or at time of death in a family or whenever assistance is requested. But in 2005, the Executive adopted a bold new mission statement, which was “ To promote the Goan heritage and to foster a caring community”.

The priority was to concentrate on fostering a caring Goan community. In this respect it was agreed to engage as many volunteers to use their time and talent for the benefit of all. The response was overwhelming, resulting in the formation of sub-committees of volunteers to take care of our youth, our seniors, new immigrants and an advisory committee to take care any assistance when requested. However, apart from our members, there are others who live within our community and hence it seemed appropriate for us to include everyone in our “caring community” concept. Once this was agreed to, it was then a matter of looking where we could provide assistance for those in most need.

The First United Church Mission was one organization that was brought to our attention by Sandra Mascarenhas where we could provide immediate assistance. So we offered to undertake this project of providing food and clothing to the poor and homeless people of downtown Vancouver as one of our annual projects. It was also felt that helping our brethren back in Goa would be worthwhile cause to consider. Providing assistance to the Sisters of the Pilar Society whose works among the poor workingwomen overcome all kinds of abuse was very appealing to us and so this became our second project. And in 2005, the Association, for the first time celebrated the “World Goa Day”. This is a day for Goans all over the world to unite in friendship and celebrate their proud heritage. It was at this event that a decision was made to help a poor family in Goa on an annual basis with funds raised at this event.



Thus, the Association outreach program, which started very humbly by trying to bring the Goan community to help each other, has now taken on a bold new and challenging dimension. With the support and generosity of our members we are confident we will succeed in our aspirations for a 'caring community' not only within the Goan community but also within the community at large. In 2005, the Association gave in charity to various organizations over \$ 7000.00, thanks to our very generous members and benefactors.

THEIR ANSWER TO GOD'S CALL – THE PILLAR SISTERS

The Pilar Sisters' Association began in 1998 to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. The special hallmark of the Pilar Sisters, however, is to enable women to have a dignified and honorable existence. The Pilar Sisters live joyfully among the people of Nagar Haveli, Goa, Bhopal and Punjab witnessing Christ in their pastoral, social, educational and medical services. The sisters to be able to carry out their tasks are trained in social work, teaching, nursing and other vocational courses. They utilize the monies they receive to better lives of the down trodden, whilst living extremely poor and simple lives themselves. The sisters are often exposed to dangerous living conditions and threats, but they are determined to carry out GOD's work. Willie Lobo had the privilege and opportunity of visiting the Pilar Sisters in Goa and met with Mother Superior and other sisters. Responding to Fr. Jack Dias appeal for donations, Willie Lobo handed over a cheque of \$1400.00 on behalf of the GOA. The Sisters were most grateful for this contribution and said it would help them tremendously in their work with the poor and marginalized people in India. The GOA would like to continue to support the Pilar Sisters by way of collecting funds for their worthy cause. Willie has also conveyed the prayerful wishes and blessings of the Pilar Sisters for the well being of the members and their families of the GOA, Vancouver.

DOWNTOWN EASTSIDE – SANDRA MASCARENHAS AND HER TEAM REALISE THE GOA MISSION.....

Kudos to Sandra Mascarenhas for her vision of helping the downtown eastside homeless and making



it a GOA mission. The GOA hosted it's 4th Feed the Downtown Homeless, this past March 5th 2006. The project combines the YOUTH, members, family & friends in a heartwarming, feel good effort towards providing a meal to those so much less fortunate than us. All this made possible by generous donations from volunteers, providing the food items, jackets, towels, clothing & loot bag items. **Fidelis and Celisa D'Souza** graciously hosted the preparation of the lunch. The event focuses on a team effort of a busy kitchen while the bulk of volunteers welcome & seat with table service, processing close to 200 homeless men & women to a lunch meal. The interaction with these less fortunate (which is encouraged) gives one an insight to some of the shortcomings of our society, while providing a short respite from the cruel street for a couple of hours.

As much as we thank all the volunteers for their time, effort & donations – the volunteers seem to all gain a great sense of pride & satisfaction for their part in contributing to "TEAMWORK with a Heart" – a feather in the cap of the GOA for caring. Thank you to **Fidelis and Celisa D'Souza** who hosted the preparation of the lunch and to very many volunteers who donated jackets, towels, clothing and food items. Next Lunch Drive **July 9, 2006** Sandwich Preparation **July 8, 2006, Ladner, Host: Lucia Maria Costa**



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TEAMWORK WITH A HEART! Thank you volunteers, it is in giving that we receive.....Socks are again needed to "save their soles" To volunteer your time or contribute towards the lunch please contact *Celisa De Souza* 604 274 1964



Outstanding Achievements

Kevin Figueiredo, son of Fatima Figueiredo just completed his PhD at Harvard University.

Xavier Fernandes, an RCMP Officer, and son of George Fernandes, recently took an examination for RCMP Officers of Canada and stood first in Canada.



WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES GOLDEN

Caetano and Lydia Martins recently completed their 50th wedding anniversary.

Mark and Olga Vaz will complete their 50th wedding anniversary in June.

SILVER

Rita and Albert D'Souza in February

Ben and Lorraine Rego in April

Shona and Vijay Lobo

Deborah and Louis D'Mello.



VOLUNTEERS

WEBSITE: We would like to develop the website further. If you or your kids would like to share their talent in this respect with us that would be very helpful. Please give Carol a call at 604-279-0876 or email president@goavancouver.com

VCD/DVD: We have digital tapes of couple of our occasions as well as some digital images. We would like to get that all organized into VCD/DVDs. If you have talent in editing/ etc. and would like to share the same with the community, we would be happy to have that kind of help. Please give Carol a call at 604-279-0876 or email president@goavancouver.com.

EVENT COORDINATING: If any of you are into event coordinating and would like to share your talent with us, we will look forward to that. Please give Shona a call at 604-5430035 or email at socials@goavancouver.com.

YOUTH: We would like to tailor our events/functions to encourage our youth to participate and make it a COOL PLACE for them to be in. It is important to give our youth the Platform and provide them the opportunities to stay connected. If you would have ideas/suggestions and would like to share that with us we

will definitely appreciate it. Please call Felix at 604-433-5152 or email at youth@goavancouver.com.

PUBLICITY: If you have contacts on how we can network and improve how we publicize ourselves, please contact Vila Pinto. She will be happy to hear from you. Please give her a call at 604-2721159 or email publicity@goavancouver.com

MEMBERSHIP: If you can help encourage new members to sign in, feel free to print out an application form from the web and send in the membership to the GOA postal address.

SENIORS THANK YOU DINNER: The GOA would like to initiate a thank you dinner for our seniors. If you would like to help in any way please contact Shona Lobo or Ann De Silva.



"Okay your father managed to get a mouse. Now how do we use it?"

OBITUARIES

ANTHONY LEWIS, HUSBAND OF CHRISTY LEWIS, FATHER OF CELISA (ELLA), LATE JOE, CLYDE, VERNON & MELITA ON March 27th, 2006

EDWIGES SANTOS, BELOVED MOTHER OF NERY SANTOS, IN MUMBAI, INDIA on March 21st, 2006

ANTHONY, BROTHER OF JOAQUIM (& CARMEN) IN PAKISTAN on January 12th, 2006

YVETTE DIAS, BELOVED SISTER OF LYNETTE D'SOUZA (DAMIEN) IN MUMBAI,INDIA on December 20th, 2005

DELPHINE D'COSTA HUSBAND OF AUDREY D'COSTA AND THEIR CHILDREN KEITH AND ALISON (PRESGRAVE) on December 13th, 2005.

And finally, HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY TO ALL OUR GOAN MOTHERS.....



Newsletter compiled on behalf of the GOA by Freda Moraes