Winter 2016 Issue
(August – December 2016)

This Issue of SFV Voice is dedicated to Guru Gobind Singh Ji’s 350th Birth Anniversary on 5 January 2017

The Sangat of the SFV Gurdwara Sahib celebrated Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji’s 350th Birth Anniversary with great enthusiasm. In special Diwans on 5 and 8 January 2017, melodious Kirtan and inspiring Katha was presented by visiting Ragis/Katha Wachaks and resident Ragis; and Akhand Path seva was performed by the community. On each of these days, Langar seva was undertaken by the Sangat, including ladies and youth.

Chairman’s Message
By Permvir Singh

Respected Sadh Sangat ji,

Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji’s 350th Gurpurb celebration dee bohat-bohat vadhahee !!

On January 5, 2017, the local Sangat joined the Sikh community across the five continents to rejoice Guruji’s faith and sacrifice. With Waheguru’s grace and your participation, the celebrations at SFV Gurdwara Sahib were on a grand scale and in the Sikh tradition. Thank you, especially the initiative and enthusiasm shown by the SFV young. We all are blessed by the Almighty.

The year 2017 has rejuvenated the Sikh spirit of religious tolerance, equality and justice for mankind – and the chart-di-kala of hard work and sharing. The financial health of SFV is good – let us now share His blessings with Tan, Man & Dhan. Now, the building maintenance is a key expense – parking lot asphalt work etc. is being planned for Summer of 2017. Please contact the Treasurer to sign up for the monthly donation – as little as $11.00 per month will go a long way.

May Waheguru bless you. Please keep in touch and regularly visit www.sfova.org to read about Kirtan, school and other activities at the Gurdwara Sahib, and please keep up the Seva da Bhav.

Respectfully, Permvir Singh

Disclaimer: This issue of SFV Voice is based on contributions by SFV Sangat. The interpretations and views expressed herein are entirely those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the SFV, its Board and Management, or the SFV Voice Editing Team.
Secretary’s Report
By Amarjit Singh Riat

SFV Gurdwara Sahib is regularly providing religious services to the community, including Kirtan and Katha at the SFV premises and at the residences of the Sangat. Our Gurdwara Sahib is served by four full time Ragis/Granthis. In addition, Sangat participates in reciting Kirtan and preparation of Langar. Gurbani Kirtan is performed on Sundays, Thursdays and on special Diwans, which includes Gurpurbs and Sangrand.

The Sangat of SFV participated with excitement in celebration of the following Gurpurbs:

- Parkash Gurpurb Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji
- Parkash Gurpurb Sri Guru Ram Das Ji
- Shaheedi Gurpurb Sri Guru Teg Bahadur Ji
- Bandi Chhor Diwas
- Shaheedi Gurpurb Char Sahibzade's
- A special Diwan was held on January 6th for the 350th Parkash Gurpurb Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. SFV Gurdwara Sahib was the only Gurdwara in Northern Virginia which celebrated the Gurpurb on January 6th, according to the Nanakshahi calendar. In addition, Akhand Path Sahib seva was performed at SFV Gurdwara Sahib from January 6-8th, 2017, and another special Diwan was held on January 8th, 2017. SFV children, ladies, and Ragis, as well as outside Ragi Jathas, participated in the celebrations.
- A special Diwan was held on January 31, 2016 on the New Year Eve.

During this period, 12 Sri Akhand Path Sahibs were performed at the SFV Gurdwara Sahib. In addition, 11 special Sukmani Sahib Paths and Kirtans were performed at the premises of the Sangat by the SFV Ragis. SFV management is always encouraging SFV ladies and children for more participation in Kirtan seva and other activities at the Gurdwara Sahib.

The SFV General Body Meeting will be held on March 19, 2017 at SFV Langar Hall. Announcements to the Sangat would be made in the coming months. We look forward to participation by all General Body members.

Treasurer’s Corner
By Devinder Singh Behniwal

2016 has been a great year for the SFV. The new kitchen construction project in 2015 had affected our financial condition in 2016, causing expenses to be high most of the year. However, now we have recovered, and our finances are back on track toward the positive direction.

In past years, the Sangat’s direct deposit donations to SFV were about $1,600 per month, but now it is more than $2,100. Our goal is to raise our direct deposit to $2,385 by April 2017. This would allow us to cover our mortgage expenses from the direct deposit amount each month. Our Board members play a big role in keeping expenses low, and have given me full support for control over our current expenses.

From April-December 2016, our checking and other accounts were in good shape. For this period, the total Income was $215,187.01, total Expenses were $168,977.02, and net Savings were $46,209.99. Details are in the Table below.
Public Relations Officer’s Report
By Manjit Singh Taneja

Members of the SFV Board and Sangat have participated in a variety of activities organized by local Gurdwara Sahibs, Interfaith organizations, and Fairfax County staff.

The Annual SFV picnic was held at the Burke Lake Park on August 13, 2016. It was well attended by the Sangat, who enjoyed the relaxed conversations, games for kids, and tasty food for all. Because so many cultural programs are happening in the community (such as the Panjabi Mela), a separate cultural program organized by SFV was not considered appropriate. In addition, in view of the mixed experience of the Sikh Samagam organized in Fall 2016 by an external group, the Board decided not to host such events at SFV in the future. As recommended by Fairfax County, security on Gurdwara Sahib premises is being enhanced.

An Interfaith Outreach event was organized at SFV Gurdwara Sahib premises on Thursday, 26 August 2016 evening. About 40 members of the Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, and Baha’i faiths visited the Gurdwara Sahib for several hours of informal interaction with members of the SFV Sangat. The visitors included Ms. Marie Monsen, Chair of the Interfaith Communities for Dialogue (ICD), and Ms. Sandra Chisholm, the Community Interfaith Liaison for the Fairfax County Department of Neighborhood and Community Services. ICD is a local organization that helps build communities where everyone feels included, valued and safe in Northern Virginia.

An informative presentation on the “Basics of Sikhism” by Dr Ajaib Singh was followed by a thought-provoking Q&A session in which queries about the beliefs and practices of Sikhism, how similar they are to American values, and how Sikhs in America and elsewhere have adapted to the circumstances and mores of different countries and cultures were addressed by SFV Board and Sangat members serving as resource persons.

The visitors were then escorted to the main Darbar Hall by SFV Youth volunteers, were introduced to the Sangat by the SFV Secretary, and listened attentively to melodious Kirtan performed by our Granthis. At the end of the worship
service, the traditional Sikh Ardas was offered. The visitors then joined the Sangat in partaking of Guru-ka-Langar prepared and served by Sangat volunteers.

Following the visit, we were gratified to receive the following message from Ms. Marie Monsen:

“On behalf of the members and friends of ICD who visited the Sikh Foundation of Virginia (SFV) Gurdwara last Thursday, I'd like to thank [the organizers] for arranging such a wonderful evening of learning and fellowship. The overview of the Sikh faith and traditions coupled with the opportunity to observe prayers and Gurbani hymns provided a very good introduction to Sikhism. Sharing a meal with members of the Gurdwara made the evening even more special. Please convey our thanks to the members of your Gurdwara for their hospitality and warm welcome. We felt very much at home. As we were leaving, several of our participants asked that ICD schedule more visits "like that" to other houses of worship. We look forward to working with you in the months ahead to build a stronger community here in Northern Virginia. Peace and blessings.”

A Fundraising dinner along with some cultural activities is planned for Saturday, 4 March 2017 at Preet Palace in Centreville. We look forward to enthusiastic support and participation by Sangat members.

Youth and Education Committee’s Report
By Surinder Pal Singh Sachdeva

SFV’s youth had an overwhelming participation in the grand celebrations of 350th Prakash Purab of Guru Gobind Singh Ji. While Sikh Sangat throughout the world celebrated this special event for a week or two around January 5th, 2017, SFV youth had a series of events from July 2016 leading on to the celebrations between January 5th and 8th.

July 2016 Summer Camp – As previously reported, kids participated in the Annual Youth Gurmat Camp from July 7 to July 10. A total of 62 kids between the ages of 4 and 17 attended the camp.

Aug 2016 ICD Members Meet at SFV – The youth of SFV played an excellent role in welcoming Interfaith Communities for Dialogue (ICD) members while they visited Gurdwara Sahib on Thursday, August 25 evening. ICD Members were visiting the Gurdwara to learn more about the Sikhism. Our youth attended them right from the entrance, helped them with covering their heads with scarves, removing and placing their shoes, guide them through the snacks, and finding them a seat in the designated area for their presentation. Some of the youngsters interviewed them and answered questions about how they are so well integrated with the faith while holding on to their American values.
Sep 2016 New Semester of Gurmat School – Considering the current needs of our youngsters, a new curriculum and classroom structure was introduced this year. A new learning program is being introduced for youth between ages 13 and 17 years. The new program focuses on Expedited Learning, Public Speaking, Gurbani Understanding, and Activism. This new program will put them on a right path to become proud Sikh Americans before they leave for college.

Oct 2016 Sikh History Jeopardy – This is just one activity our youth looks forward to throughout the year. The Sikh History Jeopardy game has evolved so much over the period that it is even difficult for parents and other adults to resist. A total of 29 kids participated in the contest this year. The winners from each group of all three groups were rewarded with $25.00, $50.00, and $100.00 Dollars for 3rd, 2nd, and 1st position respectively.

Nov 2016 Jap Ji Sahib Recital – The most beautiful gift received from Guru Gobind Singh Ji is the Nitnem. Nitnem connects us with Waheguru on daily basis. The very first bani of Nitnem is Jap Ji Sahib. This year, youngsters focused on memorizing this bani. They were tested on their memorization during the recital. All participants received small tokens of appreciation.

Dec 2016 Sikh Youth Day Camp – This year, as an experiment, kids attended a one day camp on December 24th. This camp was focused on catching up on History and Punjabi class sessions, which had been lost in the month of November and December due to many holidays and other activities. This experiment turned out to be a real success. The participants were really serious about learning and not just have fun. The older kids 13 and above enjoyed the history workshop the most and attended two other very concrete workshops on activism, and the outcome of these two workshops will be reflected in other activities in the months to come.

Jan 2017 Turban & Keski Showdown – As a part of the grand celebrations of 350th Prakash Purab of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, we hosted our Annual Turban & Keski Showdown on Saturday, January 7th. Many families with their children dressed up in their beautiful turbans and keskis for the occasion. A professional photo shoot was also arranged.

Besides these activities, throughout the year many youngsters participated in Kirtan Seva, Langar Seva and Interfaith activities. We are looking forward to work more closely with our youth and keep them progressing every Sunday.
Sangat’s Corner

(1) भगवान की नाम मैं देखै परिक्रमये ॥ - मारिया मूं सृज्ञ गोरिंध सिंह नी

By Bhai Kirpal Singh

मारिया मूं सृज्ञ गोरिंध सिंह नी देखै मारिया मूं के पछताण दे देखै मारिया मूं गोरिंध सिंह नी। भगवान की नाम मैं देखै परिक्रमये देखै मारिया मूं के पछताण दे देखै मारिया मूं गोरिंध सिंह नी।

(सृज्ञ गोरिंध सिंह नी, म: 1, अंक 1168) “सेवी बृज राम रत्न धन कृपाली पुराण ॥ सेवी मैं हृदय मौजूद सेवी मारिया मूं ॥” (H: 4, अंक 885)

दिन की समस्ति दे लेने मैं एक दिन हैं दें उठा। उस पछताण दे पहले नाम बन जी देशी मारिया मूं गोरिंध सिंह नी। भगवान की नाम मैं देखै परिक्रमये देखै मारिया मूं के पछताण दे देखै मारिया मूं गोरिंध सिंह नी।

(मारिया मूं सृज्ञ गोरिंध सिंह नी, म: 9, अंक 1127-1128)

(1) भगवान की नाम मैं देखै परिक्रमये ॥ - मारिया मूं सृज्ञ गोरिंध सिंह नी
Sikhs believe that in October 1708 Guru Gobind Singh Ji told his followers Sab Sikhon ko Hukam Hai, Guru Manyo Granth. By so doing, he clearly directed the entire Sikh Panth to consider the Sikh Scripture (Granth) as their Guru. This was his unambiguous final instruction to the Sikhs.

Some years earlier, he himself had finalized this Granth by including his father's (Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji's) hymns in the Adi Granth that had been prepared and installed by Guru Arjan Dev Ji in the Harmandar Sahib gurdwara in 1604. By not including any of his own writings in this final Granth, and by not asking Sikhs to follow any teachings other than those contained in the Guru Granth, he instructed that the Guru Granth Sahib Ji be the sole Scripture of the Sikhs.

Since Guru Gobind Singh Ji was Guru Nanak Sahib Ji's descendent in an unbroken line of spiritual succession (Guruship), all the shabads contained in the Guru Granth Sahib Ji are in effect Guru Gobind Singh Ji's spiritual teachings, as the Tenth Nanak. These teachings include the shabad Bani Guru, Guru Hai Bani, Vich Bani Amrit Sare.

(2) Following Guru Gobind Singh Ji’s Spiritual Teachings

By Paramjit Singh Sachdeva
(Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, p. 982, M4), which is similar to Guru Gobind Singh Ji’s later instruction *Guru Manyo Granth*. This too indicates that the Tenth Guru instructed Sikhs to consider the Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the only source of *Gurbani*.

By ensuring that the *Gurbani* personally included in the Guru Granth Sahib Ji by our Sikh Gurus be the only basis for addressing all doctrinal concerns of the Sikh Panth, we would truly follow the spiritual teachings of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, who in 1708 ordained the Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the sole Scripture and eternal Guru of the Sikhs.

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**Poems**

(1) **टिक टिकः उरविअः तर में**

*By Surinder Pal Singh Sachdeva*

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Poems

(1) टिक टिकः उरविअः तर में

*By Surinder Pal Singh Sachdeva*
(2) गोदिंच ख़ितान

By Harjit Singh

मंदिरां में हुए गोदिंच सिख ने इस देखनी के लिए उनकी गुलाम रहने वाली
के सिखियां निर्माण की गई थी जो अक्षर का वाणी

उन्होंने उनकी जीवन को देखा जी उस जी का देखा जी रहा गुरु गोरींच सिख
उन्होंने उनकी जीवन को देखा जी उस जी का देखा जी रहा गुरु गोरींच सिख

बहुत हाथ जी जा उस जी का देखा जी रहा गुरु गोरींच सिख
उन्होंने उनकी जीवन को देखा जी उस जी का देखा जी रहा गुरु गोरींच सिख

"बहुत हाथ जी जा उस जी रहा गुरु गोरींच सिख
उन्होंने उनकी जीवन को देखा जी उस जी का देखा जी रहा गुरु गोरींच सिख"

अवधि, जीवन ने जा जाय ने जा जाय ने जा जाय जीवन को नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता
झींगा गुरु गोरींच सिख
उन्होंने उनकी जीवन को नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता

"बहुत हाथ जी जा उस जी रहा गुरु गोरींच सिख
उन्होंने उनकी जीवन को नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता"

23वीं वर्षी के संस्कृति खेल के लिए राष्ट्रीय आधिकार
उन्होंने उनकी जीवन को नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता

बीमार मरन, तंग न फिरना
उन्होंने उनकी जीवन को नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता

विश्व जीवने देखे उन
उनके पास जीवन ने बाली
उनके पास पुजारियों से मानते
उनके अन्य जीवन को नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता

बीमार मरन, तंग न फिरना
उन्होंने उनकी जीवन को नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता

"बीमार मरन, तंग न फिरना"
उन्होंने उनकी जीवन को नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता

बीमार मरन, तंग न फिरना
उन्होंने उनकी जीवन को नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता नवीनता
वर्तमान स्थिति की दर्शाव

“से उठे” पुनः, बेहतर दर्श
मिश सत से साधी
उन मनोहर दर बीताए
गज विषयों से लिखाए
संबंध नजरें दर मसलाओं

दिव्य निश्चय सदरगढ़
दिव्यवाचा भोजी हूँ यहाँ
आशियाबाबा साहिब से जी देती देती है यहाँ
मेरो दिव्य निश्चय यहाँ
यह भाषा सुरक्षित में मान्य है
अपना धर्म रहो दें डिसी

दिव्य हस धन्य है
दूर ध्वनि ना संघी
कविता विवरण देख धुलवती सूर
पुनः तरंग निख ना संघी
मेरे राम ने अती
जैसे राम इलाज
वेद्य संगीत धन्य ना संघी
हार-में नाटक रीड़ी
अभिषेक भूँ नाटक
मन न्यु को दी धर
देवी अभिषेक दी मुरली
पिंड़ कहली दी बढ़ाई
संगी किसीने दे दुःखरिया
संघी सनियम नि संघरिया
उनी किसी निकी दर विश्वरिया
पुनः तरंग धन्य ना संघी
अपनी धर्म रहो दें डिसी

दही गली हूँ गरीब
गुलम ने छपटी
सम चुमका कराई
संघी तरंग दे दर
मान निकी दे दर
देवी अभिषेक दी मुरली
हार-में नाटक रीड़ी
अभिषेक भूँ नाटक
मन न्यु को दी धर
देवी अभिषेक दी मुरली
पिंड़ कहली दी बढ़ाई
संगी किसीने दे दुःखरिया
संघी सनियम नि संघरिया
उनी किसी निकी दर विश्वरिया
पुनः तरंग धन्य ना संघी
अपनी धर्म रहो दें डिसी

फिर देते दे वंधु" दे चुमके
निसर्ग कही जगदी

महर्षि जय सोम बालापारी
में भूल के मानी
उन मनोहर दर बीताए
गज विषयों से लिखाए
संबंध नजरें दर मसलाओं

बें मर रहा पुष्पकर
टेङ़ पहुँच दिया भन्ना भर
बें मर से लिखे

Editor’s Corner

By Paramjit Singh Sachdeva

As we celebrate the 350th birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh Ji this year, we seek to ensure that all Sikhs follow our Gurus’ teachings, centered on the Gurbani contained in the Guru Granth Sahib Ji. From the time of Guru Nanak Sahib Ji, our Gurdwara Sahibs have enabled us to become better Sikhs by providing opportunities for learning about and practicing our faith.

At the Sikh Foundation of Virginia there is an appropriate focus on youth education. The Punjabi & Gurmat School conducts classes for youth 5-17 years of age on the Punjabi language, Sikh History, and Gurmat Study. These are complemented by activities such as annual youth camps, debate and Jeopardy competitions, service projects of various kinds, and participation in Gurpurbs and other celebrations. These activities are relevant and useful, and should be strengthened.

However, this education caters only to those below age 17. Older adults, some of whom may still need or be interested in ‘continuing’ Gurmat education, are expected to fend for themselves. This group includes alumni of the SFV School, those who for any reason were unable to participate in this or similar programs, parents of current or former students who may wish to ‘brush up’ their knowledge of Sikh to keep pace with their children’s education, and adults wishing to learn more about Sikh beliefs, philosophy, history, and ‘Way of life’ so that they could contribute more effectively to the Sikh community as volunteers, activists, and leaders.

An effort to improve SFV adults’ understanding and practice of Sikhi would be consistent with the important educational role of a gurdwara. It would also help consolidate and extend the benefits of the youth education program, and could help better utilize SFV gurdwara facilities and sangat resources. The potential benefits to the adults themselves, and to improving the functioning of the gurdwara management committee and board of trustees could be substantial.

However, at SFV we have hesitated to address the ‘continuing education’ needs of adults, nor have we taken stock of the sangat- and other local resources that could be tapped to address these needs. If and when we do consider such activities in the future, we could take advantage of readily accessible websites and YouTube videos on Sikhi-related topics, well known publications, and on-line presentations by reputed parcharaks and scholars.

Other areas of interest could be helping SFV adults improve their knowledge of English (or even Punjabi), computer and internet skills, interfaith engagement, and activities that enhance the quality of life of SFV seniors and women. These and other activities could be covered in a phased manner, depending upon expressed interest and available resources.

These are just preliminary thoughts. Please let me or other members of the SFV Board know your views regarding the need for continuing education of SFV adults, and whether you would be interested in contributing to this effort as a potential resource person or participant. Thanks!

Request to Sangat for Contributions to SFV Voice

Respected Sadh Sangat Ji:

Please make your voice heard through SFV Voice! Through six-monthly updates from SFV officers and coordinators, and voluntary contributions from the Sangat, the Newsletter will cover:
- The Punjabi/Gurmat school, annual youth camp, and various service projects
- Katha, kirtan and gurbani vichar programs
- Activities that amplify women's voices
- Programs for seniors and elders
- Cultural events, annual picnic, and interfaith activities
- Broader concerns of the global Sikh community, and
- Suggestions from the Sangat, and SFV management’s response.

Please share your views on any relevant topic that interests you! We particularly invite contributions from women, youth, and seniors. Your write-ups can be short (just a few paras), or longer (a couple of pages). In English, or in Punjabi. Just send us a final draft, and we’ll work with you to get it published!

Contact the editorial team for more information or clarification. We look forward to hearing from you. Thanks!

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