



## **An Inspiring Excursion Day of a Community**

### **The Executive Committee**

It was early morning of August 23, 2008. Birds were heralding a successful day. Soothing fresh air was blowing eastwards from the Rocky Mountains. Bright morning sunlight was gracing Edmonton City and its environs. A chartered bus was waiting at a strategic location for community-member families and individuals to arrive. Several families, with their children, and individuals arrived in time. The children's faces were radiating excitement and joy. Families that came early boarded the chartered bus and filled it quickly. Thus, others had to make the decision of driving their cars. In effect, an inspiring excursion, which was organized by the Executive Committee of the **Sociocultural and Relief Association of Tigrayan Ethiopians in Alberta** (hereafter **the Community**), was *culminating to its successful realization*. The moment for departure was announced. A fleet of several private cars and the bus hit the road to Alberta's spectacular-natural beauty, the Aspen Beach Provincial Park, which is about 140 km from Edmonton. Several other members of the Community also drove longer distances from the city of Calgary and from different towns.

A forward team had gone very early in the morning to: (a) select and mark the best picnic site by the Gull Lake Beach; (b) set up food service tables provided by the Community and benches that are always on the site provided by Alberta Recreation, Tourism, and Parks; (c) start-up (heat) BBQ machines that were obtained for the day from members of the Community; and (d) put in order a variety of food and beverages. On arrival, everyone appeared to be pleasantly surprised by: (i) the natural beauty and the span of Gull Lake; (ii) the modern picnic facilities, which included children's playground and showers; (iii) the family oriented nature of the beach; and (iv) the way the food and beverages were set up. In sum, the forward team did an excellent job in preparing a welcoming general environment.

Beef BBQ prepared by well-experienced chefs and a variety of other food and beverages were served. Adults mingled and chatted, while enjoying the food and the drinks. The children and the young adults also enjoyed the generous

treat. After that all treat, it was time for fun. The amusement schedule started in earnest. Organized teams played various games, which included volleyball and badminton. Groups of family members, young adults, and kids competed in a 100-metre dash (fast run) in their respective age-class groups. In addition, everyone had fun swimming and simply relaxing in the shallow parts of Gull Lake as well as strolling along the beautiful beach. Finally, winners in the various games were awarded with prizes.

It was a day of great success. The ultimate goal was to enhance social cohesion within the Community. With no doubt, the goal was met. It was an inspiring excursion day. It was an event of a *leap forward* of a community that is striving to raise its productive potential in order to realize the Canadian dream for prosperity. The key measure of the success is the repeated request many families and their children made for exactly similar event as soon as possible. The Executive Committee hopes to meet the request in one way or another, because the current weather condition does not seem conducive for exactly similar event this year.

### **Acknowledgements**

The event would not have been materialized without the generous financial support from the Edmonton Community Services. The Executive Committee, on behalf of the Community, gratefully appreciates this important financial incentive. Contributions of individual members of the Community, who worked tirelessly to organize the event, are also acknowledged and credited.

### **P.S.**

The Executive Committee will post on the Community's Website, *TigrailInfo*, pictures and/or slides that illustrate the event more than this brief report.