

Volunteers made it all possible

It's already been noted that the Aga Khan's recent visit to Vancouver went off without a hitch.

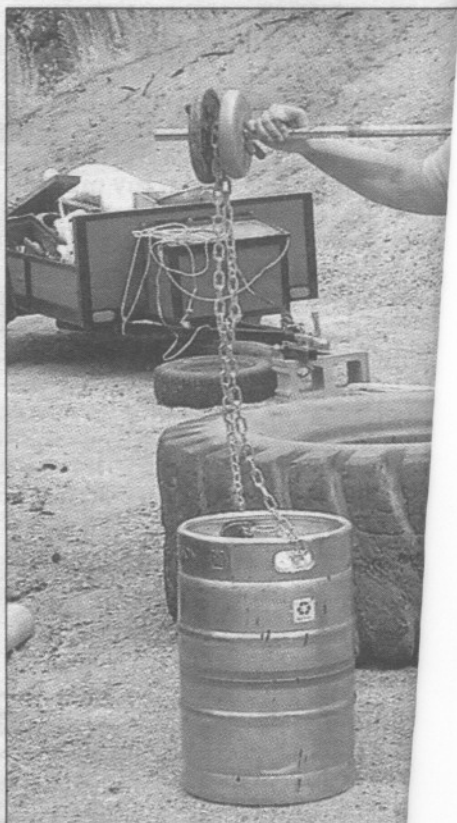
But if you wondered how it's possible to host a crowd of more than 30,000 without a single report of bad behaviour, you're probably not aware that members of B.C.'s Ismaili community are passionate about volunteer work.

Karim Kassam, one of 2,500 volunteers who kept things rolling during the visit, tells me that an event of this scale would normally take a year to organize.

"We did it in three weeks — and it was all volunteer-driven," he says.

More than 600 volunteers offered maps and tourism advice at welcome centres set up at airports and free-way stops; others secured 2,000 downtown parking spaces and operated 100 shuttle buses. There were 100 medical personnel on hand for each event, along with ambulances. Others looked after traffic control — relieving a burden that's normally left to city police.

But perhaps the hardest-working volunteers of all were the cooks, who prepared 300,000 meals at various events — using 3,000 kilos of prawns, 25,000 apples, 45,000 chicken strips and 20,000 ice cream cones.



Teenager Jamie McEwan trains hard and somewhere. WYLIE EDEN — LAKE COUNTRY CA

He's B.C.!

It's only now that Jamie McEwan, one of B.C.'s most promising Strongman competitors, sees the significance of the story his parents used to tell — about the horrifying day when he was rushed to hospital with an asthma attack.

"I was two years old and I broke the straps they used to hold me down," says Jamie.

On July Okanagan will be the competitor heavyweights North American Champion Charles Louis, Missouri.

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