



Chiguru

Vol. 31, No. 2

September 2014

President's Note...



Contact us!

ಪ್ರೀತಿಯ ಸಂಕೇತಿ ಬಂಧುಗಳಕ್ಕೆ ನಮಸ್ಕಾರೋ,
ಉಂಗಳಕ್ಕೆಲ್ಲ ಮುಂಗಡಮ ನವರಾತ್ರಿ / ದೀಪಾವಳಿ
ಶುಭಾಶಯಂಗೇ. ಎಂಗಡೆ ಪ್ರಥಮ "ಚಿಗುರು" ವಾರ್ಧಪತ್ರೋ
ಉಂಗಡೆ ಕಣ್ ಮುಂತಿಲೇ ರಾಂದಿ. ದಯೊವಚ್ಚಿ ಅನುಕೂಲಮ
ಓದೊಕ್ಕೊಂಗೊ. ಅದಾಲು ಸಲಹೆ / ಕೋರಿಕೆ ಇಂದಾಕ
ಖಂಡಿತಮಾ ಎಂಗಳಕ್ಕೆ ಪತ್ರೋ ಅಳದಂಗೊ. ಮಿಕ್ಕ ವಿಚಾರಮೆಲ್ಲ
ಆಂಗ್ಲ ಭಾಷೆಯುಳ್ಳ ರಾಂದಿ ಅತ್ಯು ಓದೊಕ್ಕೊಂಗೊ. ಅಕ್ಟೋಬರ್
೨೫, ೨೦೧೪ NASA ತೆ ನವರಾತ್ರಿ / ದೀಪಾವಳಿ ಕೂಟತ್ಲೆ ಭೇಟಿ
ಪಣ್ ದಮ.

लोकाः समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु

ಇಂತಿ ನಮಸ್ಕಾರೋ,

ದಿವಾಕರ್ ರುದ್ರಪಟ್ಟಣ

President's Note...



Contact us!

My dear Sankethi Bandhu,

Navaratri Greetings to you all in advance from "Astalakshmi" Team. Please join us on Oct. 25th, 2014 for "Bombe Aarathi" & Deepavali celebrations. (Details are below in this "Chiguru" newsletter). We have planned a nice Pooja, Lunch / Dinner Prasada & fun games for children. Please do not miss our first Regional Meeting, kindly spread the word and join us in hundreds along with your family, relatives and friends. Help us grow stronger as a community. Support NASA by becoming Life Members, actively participating in NASA events & spreading the unique culture & heritage of Sankethis.

We welcome your suggestions for organizing various events through NASA in North America, kindly write to us. Let us know what you like the most and how we can grow as a community as well as increase our Life Members base! We need volunteers for various NASA events. Let us know if you are interested in choreographing a Dance, directing a Play / Skit. We also welcome professionals who can guide us with regards to Health Care, Financial Care, etc. We are looking forward to see you all and enjoy together at one place for fun filled, educational entertainment programs.

Please share your joy / success with NASA community, write to us for anything you would like to share! Keep visiting our website www.sankethi.org (Special thanks to Sri. Ganesha Sridhara of Bangalore-India for helping us maintain the website.)

लोकाः समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु

Regards,

Divakar Rudrapatna

Dasa to NASA (Always at the service of Sankethis)

NASA-President (2014-15-2016 Term)

(North American Sankethi Association)

1. Meet your new NASA Executive Committee Members !!

Attached are descriptions of the new Executive Committee Members. We hope that you will get to know us better as our term unfolds.

President – Divakar Rudrapatna



Divakar Rudrapatna (Pharmaceutical Sales Executive) is the youngest of seven children of Late Smt. Ratnamma & Late Sri. Rudrapatna Anantha Sreenivasaiah of Bangalore-India. Divakar's father known as Anantha in the community was the first Sankethi to complete B.A., B.Com. & B.L. (after retiring as a Govt. High School Teacher- Kannada Pundit) at the age of 68!

Divakar R.A. is the second Son-in-law of Smt. Satyavathi H.K. & Late Sri. Harave Keshavamurthy (served as BOD for Bettadapura Sankethi Sangha & was Vishwa Hindu Pracharak for Mysore District after retiring as a Pharmaceutical Rep., of Sarabhai Chemicals in Mysore-India.) Divakar is settled in Toronto, Canada since 1996 with his wife Radhika, daughter Prerana (studying MD at Trinity School of Medicine) & son Sriresh (studying 3 Yr. B.Sc., Kinesiology at McMaster University). Divakar has been serving NASA community as well as Kannada / Temple community of North America. Divakar's hobbies are social service, chanting Veda Mantras, writing drama scripts and managing a drama troupe AMMA (Ah! Mature Millennium Artists / www.kannadamma.com) as an Artistic Director. Divakar appreciates & thanks his better half Smt. Radhika (Certified General Accountant by profession) who has been supporting him in all fronts, for more than 27 years! Divakar is looking forward for a fun filled term while serving NASA community along with his "Astalakshmi" Team.

Vice President – Prema Keshav Kumar



I am very excited to be a part of the NASA BOD again. Using the experience I have in working with NASA I would like to continue encouraging the youngsters to learn about Sankethi culture, language, music, pooja, and other things. I would like to bring all fellow NASA members to our programs by continuing to arrange great programs and poojas and so on. I would also like to encourage new families that are interested in Sankethi culture to become a part of NASA!

Secretary – Ranjini Srikantiah



Ranjini Srikantiah, daughter of KV Srikantiah and Shilaja, currently lives in Mahwah, NJ with her husband Dale, son, Tejan and daughter, Reyva. The first NASA event she attended was a picnic in North Carolina in 1987, when the organization was still in its infancy.

As the organization grew, so did Ranjini's involvement, from playing koko and kabbadi to performing Bharatanatyam to learning how to ski to helping during her father's NASA Presidency to finally joining the Board of Directors in 2008 - just in time to help execute NASA's exciting 25th Anniversary Celebration. Ranjini is excited to be back on the board after a short hiatus, and looks forward to helping NASA members strengthen connections both personally and professionally within the community.

Treasurer – Tara Rudrapatna



I was born and raised in central NJ (USA) and my parents are both Bettadapura Sankethis. I have a bachelor's in Cell Biology and Neuroscience, and I currently work in DEA Compliance for Ranbaxy Pharmaceuticals. My father is Ashok Rudrapatna (son of R. Narashimhaiya and Padmavati) has a PhD in Systems Engineering. He has lived in the US for over 30 years and is one of four siblings. My mother is Roopa Rudrapatna (daughter of B.S. Narayan and Vimala) and she has an M.S. in Chemistry and Computer Science. She is one of three siblings. My brother is Vivek Rudrapatna who holds a M.D.PhD. and is currently completing his residency at Baylor in Houston, Texas. While my brother and I have been born and raised in the US, we have visited India many times and are close to our family and cultural traditions in India. I spent many years learning Carnatic vocal music and Bharathanatyam dance, completing my Arangetram in 2002. I am very excited about joining the NASA BOD and look forward to working to foster the NASA community.

Newsletter Editor – Nandini Srikantiah



Nandini along with Srikanth, Kiran and Akhila live in Ottawa, Ontario Canada. Nandini began her career in high technology and now works at Canada's Department of National Defence leading large-scale military acquisition projects. Nandini is the eldest of the three Srikantiah sisters and this is the first time she has served on the NASA board. She is looking forward to engaging more with all of you in the community. Her interests include travel, dance, instrumental music and, of course, as a true Sankethi, great food!

Cultural Director – Amrutha Vishwanath



I am proud to be a sankethi. We have been involved with NASA since it started 30 yrs ago. Our intention is to expand NASA in a positive way, impart sankethi culture including music & develop & learn from each other & have good time together at Sankethi gatherings.

Events Coordinator – Sheela Nagaraj-Dikshith



I was born and raised in Bergen County, NJ (USA) and my parents are both Bettadapura Sankethis. I have an M.S. in Biomedical Engineering and work for the US Department of Defense. My father, Govindaraju Nagaraj (son of Bettadapura S. Govindaraju and Saligrama C. Vedavathi) is an Electrical Engineer. He has lived in the US for over 30 years and is one of three siblings. My mother, Shamala Nagaraj (daughter of Kanagal G. Srinivasamurthy and Bettadapura Padmavathi) is a banker and one of six siblings. My brother, Anand Nagaraj, is a Mechanical Engineering employed with GE Aviation in Dayton, Ohio. Although my brother and I have lived in the US our whole lives, our frequent visits to India and close family ties have allowed us to keep in touch with our Sankethi roots and language. I have a strong interest in Carnatic music and have performed at numerous functions in the NJ/NYC area including CMANA, Nandalala, Triveni, Telagu Fine Arts Assoc. NASA, and others. I am married to Pramod Dikshith, the son of Carnatic vocalist Ganakalabhushana Vidwan R.K. Padmanabha (son of Rudrapatna Krishna Avadhani and Rudrapatna Sharadamma) and Rudrapatna S. Vijayalakshmi (daughter of Rudrapatna Srinarsimhiah and Saligrama Sukanya). Pramod was raised in Bangalore and moved to the US to pursue his M.S. in Operations Research from Columbia University. He is currently employed with Accenture. Pramod has an elder sister, Vardhini who is married to Sharad Dikshith and they have two sons.

Hospitality Director – Pushpa Satyanarayan



I am excited to be a member of the committee this year. I am looking forward to being an extra pair of hands in organizing games, activities, food, and in anything else where I could be of value. I am looking forward to making this term another successful one for NASA.

Web Coordinator – Ashwini Srikantiah



I am happy to be involved on the NASA BoD for a second term – and this time serving with my two akkas! I am the youngest of the three Srikantiah sisters, born in Canada and raised in the USA. I live in Boston and work in an innovation group called Fidelity Labs – we use human centered design to develop new products and services for Fidelity Investments.

I like to sing, eat, travel, dance, and I love getting together with friends and family. I'm excited for the next two years of NASA!

2. NASA 2014 Annual Meeting Report – A look back

Celebrating 30 Years of Culture, Community and Charity July 4-6, Vanderkamp Retreat Center

The NASA 30th Anniversary event was held at the Vanderkamp Retreat Center in Cleveland, NY. The venue has many opportunities for outdoor fun including hiking, boating and swimming.

The NASA 30th anniversary began on Friday afternoon with cultural programs following a delicious lunch. This year's event started off with Kolaata, although initially hesitant, once the Kannada folk music started, our Sankethi friends became very involved! Karaoke brought on enthusiastic singing of Kannada, Hindi and English songs. This year teams "Kolkatte," "Ambode" and "Chomai" competed in Sankethi Jeopardy with questions on Sankethi history, food, geography, notable personalities and NASA. Congrats to - "Team Ambode" consisting of Bharat Kumar, Aditi Kumar, and Suresh Keshavsmurthy. The evening concluded with a talk by Dr. Jayaram on rare stories of the Mahabharata & Ramayana including many funny anecdotes and other tales -- An excellent end to the first day of the NASA 30th anniversary.

A nature walk led by Mr. K. Sundaresan started off Sat Jul 5th at 7am! About twenty people participated ambling through the beautiful nature trails at Vanderkamp. It was a gorgeous, sunny day and upon completion; all were greeted with a feast comprised of Idli, Vada and Sambaar.

The annual general body meeting (GBM) was held after breakfast. Details are in the minutes. Following lunch began the NASA Scavenger Hunt. Over 40 people participated across 6 teams to "FIND" things - like the oldest NASA guest, "DO" things - like climb a tree, and, "MAKE" things - like draw each member of the team. Along the way, teams were asked to photograph themselves. After scoring the champions were Sunil Rao, Srikanth Rao, Dale Poage, Sanjay, and Mayank Keshaviah. Then, all members relaxed and enjoyed the Talent show. Members of all ages entertained us with singing, folk dancing, Bharatnatyam, and instrumental pieces.

The next event was a talk by Pandit Anand Shastri. A fellow Sankethi, Pt. Shastri is a Gita pracharak and has been spreading the divine message of the Gita for four decades. Pt. Shastri's emphasis is on the practical aspect of Gita knowledge in present day life. His lecture focused on three dimensions of human personality- thoughts, actions and behavior. Thoughts are the guiding force behind all our activities and behavior. Negative or perverted thoughts stimulate destructive activity and inhuman, rude behavior, resulting in tension, estrangement of relationships, financial problems and sorrow. His talk was practical, enlightening and enjoyed by all, young and old alike.

The NASA Skit was back after a 10 year hiatus! Mayank Keshaviah and Ashwini Srikantiah wrote the idea, and Mayank directed the world premiere of "S-Men: the Battle Against the Agents of WASP". In the traditional NASA style, this improvised skit was a spoof on "X-Men" super heroes, where each "S-Man" had a mutant Sankethi power. "Buddhi, the 100 Degree Man" - played by Vikas Natesh, has more degrees than anyone can count: MS, MBA, PhD, MD, MPH, etc. "Ispit", played by Sachin Natesh, could out-play anyone in cards. Tara Rudrapatna as "Natya," used dance to chop down her opponents. Sunil Rao as "Sangeet", had a melodious voice that could lull anyone to sleep. "Oota", played by Ashwini Srikantiah, had Chomai Power ensnaring opponents in her chomai webs. The S-Men were called when "Auntie", played by Ranjini Srikantiah, was kidnapped from the kitchen of a NASA meeting! She was taken by the Agents of WASP - White American Sankethi Partners – in an attempt to steal Sankethi recipes. The Agents of WASP were Louise Keshaviah, Dale Poage and Dima Khavulya, assisted by the rogue double-agent, Shalini Rao. After a long chase and an epic fight sequence, the Agents of WASP finally fell prey to Auntie's "hottay bomb" (stomach bomb) – stemming from the extra-deadly

chilies in her bisi bele bhath! Afterwards, the Agents of WASP and the S-Men realized that they could all collaborate, with the proceeds of their restaurant going to NASA!

On Saturday evening, NASA was proud to introduce Traditional Sankethi Dining – Bale Yele Oota. This was a huge success and brought back memories of feasting in Karnataka. A traditional Sankethi mouth-watering meal was served on “Bale Yele”, with Rangoli. Menu included Uppinakayi, Kosambari, Paalya Ambode, Majjige huli, pineapple Gojju, Chitranna and 2 sweets (Hayagreeva and Jahangeer). The meal finished with Vetthale Pak (Betel leaf) – Yum!

After dinner, we were privileged to have a performance by our main artist, Mrs. Soudamini Venkatesh. Soudamini is an extremely talented and creative musician, composer, singer, songwriter, recognized for her technical skills and in depth understanding of Hindustani music. Soudamini has developed an innovative style that interweaves various Gharanas (schools of music) without losing the innate qualities of any one of them. She enchanted us with her sonorous mellifluous voice singing pure classical pieces, tumris, folk songs, abhangs and bhajans, Soudamini has performed globally and is an All India Radio artist with numerous cassettes and CDs. The concert began with raag YAMAN VILAMBIT EK TAAL – PALKAN SE MAG JHAARU. Other memorable songs during the concert included Raag KANADA – DAYA MAADO RANGA DAYA MAADO and Raag DEN BHAIRAVI – SADA YENNA HRIDAYA DALLI.

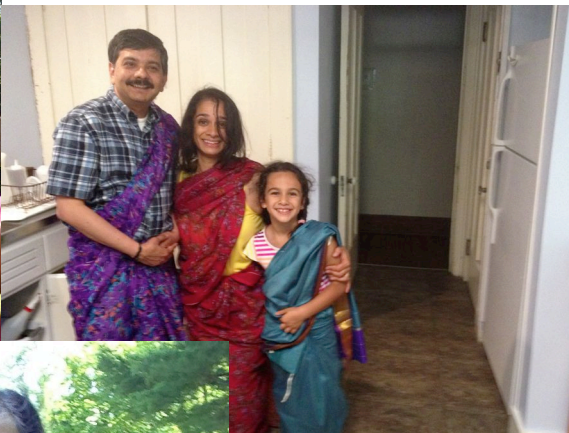
The Bonfire was back this year as another highlight of the weekend. It was a great chance to enjoy the natural setting of Vanderkamp by sitting around a fire, and enjoying one another's company. Ashok Rudrapatna also provided beautiful paper lanterns that were cast off into the sky - A great way to end Saturday's programming.

Sunday morning began with the Veda parayana at 7 AM. Many dressed in traditional attire (panche, anga vestra, and vibhuti) joined by Pandit Anand Shastri chanted Shanti mantras, Rudram and Chamakam, and Durga Suktam. This session concluded with the full recitation of Vishnusahasranama stotra.

Following breakfast, the first "Sankethi Iron Chef" competition was held in which non-traditional ingredients like Olives, Artichokes and Mole Sauce were used to create the most traditional Sankethi dish possible. Judges Divakar Rudrapatna, Dr. Jayaram and Shalini Rudrapatna scored based on taste and how well they represented Sankethi cuisine. The winners of the competition were Ranjini Srikantiah, Shilaja Srikantiah and Prema Kumar who created delicious Mole Puliogare, Artichoke Palya and Olive Mosar-bhajji. YUMM!

Another event held during the get-together was, the 28 card game! As many of you know, 28 card game is a famous tradition among Sankethis. This year there were 8 players in the Tournament. The game was played for 90 minutes and the persons who had the maximum number of points were declared Champion and Runner up. This year Sri. Nagaraja Rao from Pittsburgh, PA was the champion and Dr Y.N. Jayaram was in the second place. We encourage all Sankethi bandhus who know the game to participate next year and those who do not know the game, they should learn and challenge this year's winners :)

2014 Annual Event in Pictures



3. 2014 NASA Annual General Body Meeting (GBM) Minutes

NASA – 2014 Annual General Body Meeting July 5, 2014

GBM Start: 9:13am
Quorum confirmed.

Sundaresan makes motion to excuse announcement of General Body Meeting by President (not Secretary, as should have been). Motion seconded.

Invocation – Geetha Prabhakara

Review of 2013 Minutes:

- Modifications from Sundaresan:
 - o Minutes should have said “any changes to bylaws should be communicated” and not “any changes to amendments”, as “amendments” are, by definition, changes.
 - o There is no such thing as “unpaid members” – this should be removed.
 - o Changing the Poojari payment from sundry items – has this been completed? Lalitha will check.
 - o Attorney consulted on charity? Expect to hear about this today, later in GBM (part of Treasurer’s report).

President Report, Ashok Rudrapatna

Accomplishment Highlights:

- **Bylaw amendments:** made some modifications to bylaws, based on feedback from the GBM, to rectify outdated bylaws and make the organization more streamlined
- **Permanent Documents:** needed by future board of directors (original constitution, IRS paperwork, etc.)
 - o We still need to retain original paperwork in their paper form, which NASA will continue to do
 - o But in addition, Sujaya sorted and digitized all paperwork and Ashwini will upload them to the cloud
 - Question by Sundaresan: asking for catastrophe fund and the scholarship fund bylaws be uploaded to the website, in addition to the original constitution
 - Sundaresan recommends these uploaded to Sankethi.org, as these records can be public and should be easily accessible.
 - Board agrees to get this done.
- **Charity Policy:** in the past, NASA has been a conduit to foreign organizations, which is not tax-deductible according to the IRS. (Ashok, Lalitha, Sundaresan worked together on this)
 - o In the last General Body Meeting, we asked permission from the General Body to hire a tax attorney to provide us guidance
 - o Lalitha found a very thorough website from a tax attorney, with all necessary details and thus the services of a paid attorney was determined to be not needed.
 - o Based on this, Lalitha, Ashok and Sundaresan drafted a new charity policy which was approved by BOD last summer, and distributed to GBM through Chiguru
 - o This Policy prompted a bi-lateral agreement between NASA, and BSS / KSS respectively
 - BSS / KSS reviewed over a couple of months
 - BSS & KSS did not accept, due to the terms, reporting details, etc. required of each of these organizations
 - BSS provided a specific list of items they objected to, KSS did not
 - NASA now has to review these objections and decide on next action
 - o Sundaresan: has dissenting views on the need for a formal agreement in the first place. The IRS does not require it, all that would be required is a report including:
 - Name of donor
 - Amount,

- Application / use of funds
 - If the items above are received on a transaction by transaction basis, there is no need to report on a quarterly basis
 - Furthermore: the agreement requires BSS / KSS to adhere to US regulations even through they are not US organizations
- Lalitha: is not in agreement with Sundaresan, would like formal agreement between NASA and these organizations
 - Her point of view is based on the reading of a lot of rulings, was not developed in isolation.
- Prabhakara: does not have a clear understanding, in writing, of the need for an agreement
 - Secondly: the only real purpose of NASA's involvement is for donors to get a tax writeoff
 - But it might be simpler for people to go directly to BSS / KSS if getting a tax benefit through NASA is not easy
 - This would also be easier for NASA
- Ashok: the struggle is making it easy for our members to support organizations in India, while being fully compliant rules and regulations in the US.
 - Although agreement has not been reached, we have not stopped providing donations to BSS / KSS based on NASA member recommendations and forwarded along to KSS while this is being worked out
- **Cultural programs**: Navaratri / Deepavali function (Sheela will report in detail)
- **Webpage**: updates throughout the year on the webpage
- **Finding the Vanderkamp Location**: a lot of time and energy was spent searching for a location to accommodate us, that met almost all of our needs. We consider this a major achievement of the BOD during its term.
 - This year, we also looked at other options but concluded that this is still the best
 - This was a time consuming task
- **Fundraising**: Last year, hosted a sponsored program from Prudential Financial which we tried for the first time, which raised us \$600
- **Electronic communication**: moved most of our mailing to electronic mailing
 - Spent significant time / effort to update the database and get valid email addresses for all members for electronic communication
 - Passed a Bylaw to send email addresses to all members for whom we have valid email addresses, unless they request in writing to receive paper.

Secretary Report, Ashwini Srikantiah

- **Membership Roster**: Ashwini to work with Sundaresan to confirm final tally
 - Sundaresan: Question: what efforts have been undertaken by this committee to increase membership?
 - Ashok: whenever we are having functions, Ashok has always attempted to increase membership, and has continued to cross-check registrants of events against our membership
 - In addition, positioning membership as a benefit to save on cost of registration and charitable contributions.
- **New website**: look and feel is better
 - Ganesha Sridhara, our web developer in India, continues to volunteer his time for NASA. Members who have web needs can consider using him, giving him some business
- **Website ownership**: owned by Niranjana Hanasoge, he keeps the payment up to date
 - Divakar: should buy sankethi.org from Niranjana, or come up with a new domain
 - Ashok: he doesn't want to sell it, He is happy to continually provide this to NASA

Cultural Secretary, Sheela Nagaraj Dikshith:

- Navaratri Function:

- Bombes (dolls), Lalitha Sahasranama, great food
- Last July: Vasu Bhadyar Rudrabisheka
- November:
 - Canada Sankethis met at Divakar's residence
 - Asked a few members to become life members.
- In previous years:
 - Halloween party, ski trip, not able to conduct those this year

Treasurer, Lalitha Hanasoge:

- **IRS filings complete**
 - In these 6 years, opportunity to complete 7 IRS filings
 - Established a good precedent
 - For new Treasurer: continue this precedent
 - For new Treasurer, will need to update the balance sheet
 - Box of archival documents
 - Remains in its entirety, including transaction journals from 1984!
- **Lessons learned:**
 - A lot about accounting! With precision and diligence from Sundaresan
 - Lalitha wants to take this opportunity to really appreciate Sundaresan's time and diligence and patience
 - Lalitha's OWN finances have improved!
 - Sundaresan Uncle has guided Lalitha and really protected the interests of NASA
 - "He is really the treasurer and auditor"
- **Balance Sheet:**
 - This year we had a surplus
 - 5% of surplus goes to scholarship fund and catastrophe, the balance of these line items reflects these additions
 - two checks (outgoing from NASA) that had not been cashed
 - the recipients said they don't need the money, it's a donation to NASA
 - amount of \$101.44 – written it off on expense side as a sundry expense
 - Fidelity account with \$10 – written this off too
 - Future treasurer will not need to include these items on future balance sheets
 - Ranjini: correction: 2013 GBM was in May, not July
 - Jayaram: thanks for whatever you have been doing
 - Navaratri function: October 2013 – community hall in Bennington? Was there a charge for that? Lalitha: wrote a check for this in 2014, not 2013. So this expense was recorded in the 2014 year. Pickle income of 2013??
 - Ashok: for every function that we held in our term, we came out in the black (net revenue for NASA)
 - Lalitha: some expenses incurred in 2013 were not handled until 2014
 - MISSING: Pickle Income!!
 - Sundaresan: line item: event donation – includes all donations (from sale proceeds of pickles to donated catering), so those two lines against which those blanks appear can be deleted.

Annual Financial Auditor's Report (Sundaresan)

- Lalitha: unable to recover status of the check:
 - But decision was made to not put a cancellation on that check, Decision was to take no further action
 - Priest fee: needs to be corrected from sundry expenses
- Subject to these changes, we may treat the provisional report as the final report
- 2012: our receipts were in excess of \$30,764 – payments; \$29,406

- 2013: drastic reduction to income! From \$30,000 to \$10,000. Expenses also have dropped.
- Charitable donations in 2012: \$16,000, 2013: donations of \$600.
 - o Significant that one particular family of donors is missing. Which leads me to suspect that we have alienated that family from donations, and those donations may be going directly to KSS / BSS. Comments?
 - Lalitha had originally written a note to one of the members of the above cited family, she became irate and disturbed about lack of proper process with respect to our transferring funds to KSS / BSS. Lalitha was very concerned about her personal liability as treasurer, that was the heart of that incident, and this was largely the impetus for the charity policy
 - The above site member said he doesn't want to create problems for NASA and he'd take it directly to KSS
 - Shivashankar uncle also used to donate to BSS: \$4000, also held back while NASA figures out its policy
- 2013: \$245 ski trip expense – this is not really an “expense”, it's not the total amount spent on the trip. It's a subsidy, or a “grant”

Charity Policy:

- Lalitha: It makes sense to have a formal agreement in place with KSS / BSS –
 - o Sign of the organization's maturity and professionalism
 - o No reason not to have a formal agreement
 - o In the future, if IRS were ever to audit, this kind of document is very helpful as documentation to say what we support and don't support
 - o We don't want to be perceived as a conduit
 - o Based on recent rulings, conduits are not viewed well by IRS
 - o Especially because of sensitivity to national security considerations, etc.
 - o NASA reserves right of discretion to how these funds are used
 - o Usually board will say yes, but worthwhile to have guidelines
 - o Donations to KSS / BSS are typically made from the older generation
 - o Younger generation is not donating to these organizations
 - o Can we increase our impact / community service here in the US?
 - NASA has to maintain oversight, so in the event of an audit, we can show that NASA has done our best to maintain oversight
 - Lalitha does not think it's sufficient to track per transaction (per Sundaresan's recommendation)
 - A formal agreement would provide more discipline to NASA's reporting, which is required
- Does NASA incur any financial benefit or impact from these donations?
 - o No. We do not take any percentage.
 - o Donating funds to be directed to KSS / BSS in a pass through manner is not tax deductible
- Why does NASA have to be the bookkeeper for KSS / BSS?
 - o i.e. we have activities here in the US - like the ski trip – why don't we fund that?
- Lalitha's personal opinion: I don't think we need to be the middle-man.

Divakar:

- is there any benefit to NASA from charitable donations?
 - o Ashok: In a past GBM, GBM said that members should not be charged any fees. Donations can be sent to India for free
 - o For Non-members, there is a fee (2 years ago, a family in California became NASA members to avail of no fees)

Jayaram:

- there used to be a fee,
- during a previous term, NASA decided that we should do away with this fee. NASA would absorb everything (including mailing charges, etc.)

Does the individual receive a tax deduction if they contribute to KSS / BSS through NASA?

- technically, they are just donating to NASA
- the Board decides how the money should be used, taking the individuals wishes in account
- NASA then issues a note that says no goods / services were exchanged for the donation
- It is up to the individual to decide whether or not this is tax deductible

NASA does incur a cost for transaction to KSS / BSS

- Ashok tries to lump together multiple checks to minimize expenses
- Sometimes, when there are outside orgs that match contributions, we also need to wait for these

Prabhakara:

- the board needs a maturity to encourage members to be part of the community
 - o the more involved we are, the better
 - o we need to bring people together, not divide
- we need to have the maturity to balance fiscal / IRS responsibility, with community building that encourages people to come together

Ashok (By-Law amendments):

- people need to explicitly request NASA communications to be sent to them by paper mail, in writing. Otherwise email will be the only way such communications will be sent.
- we took that into account and amended bylaws
- 6 parts to bylaw amendments including
 - o gender neutral terms
 - o Bring all by law amendments to the attention of members and GBM
 - o definition of "Sankethi"
- Ganesh: do bylaw amendments need to be filed in State of New York?
 - o We should check this, and do this if necessary
- Sundaresan: motion to accept the bylaw amendments:
 - o Seconded

Sundaresan: Auditor report

- maintenance of recording expenses
- NASA uses cash-basis accounting
 - o No effort has been done to formally observe cash-basis accounting
- Don't see evidence of follow-up on transaction by transaction basis
- But the real question is: what are we doing with our balance?
 - o We should be putting it to use lest it go away
 - o Why shouldn't NASA make an element of the registration as subsidy from NASA?
 - o In the expectation that we will attract more members?
- The financial statements presented are accurate other than the notes provided
- Motion proposed to approve financial report
 - o Seconded

Announcements of Good & Welfare

Announcement of Give and Receive Aid of two temples in India

Recognition of Past Presidents & their spouses

Given that this was the 30th anniversary celebrations of NASA, the board thanks all the past presidents, the BOD members and their spouses. The three past presidents and their spouses who were in attendance at the GBM (Dr. and Mrs. Jayaram, Mr. and Mrs. Srikantiah and Mr. and Mrs. Keshavakumar) were invited to the podium by our president, Dr. Ashok Rudrapatna and thanked and applauded by all the members.

- photo

Recognition of Mr. Sundaresan

Mr. Sundaresan was thanked by our president for the extraordinary and sustained service he has rendered to NASA over the years. Mr. and Mrs. Sundaresan were invited to the podium and thanked and applauded by all the members.

Sheela: recognizing Sujaya and Nagaraj for their contributions.

Suresh: Suggestion of buying a difibrilator and having it available at the annual meeting since we have quite a few older members.

Ashok: recognized and thanked each of the board members for their service

Sundaresan:

- Current By-laws limits the term of a director to 3 terms, except the president
- this doesn't make sense
- Amendment proposal: delete the concluding sentence para 2, article 4: reading: "A director shall not qualify for re-election except as president if he has held office for 3 immediate terms."
- (do away with term limits across all offices)
 - o Seconded
 - o Move to vote on Amendment from Ranjini
- Prabhakara:
 - o The purpose of term limits is to prevent this from becoming a clique organization
 - o So we are defeating this completely by doing away with the term limits entirely
 - o Specific proposal: same, unless, the GB during that election can overrule
- Sundaresan:
 - o The GBM always has a right to vote against the person who is running
 - o So this addresses that challenge
- Motion to Vote:
 - o Many in favor
 - o None opposed
 - o Bylaw passed!

K.V. Srikantiah:

- This venue is very good for our needs. Recommend that we book this venue and lock it in for the next 2-3 years to start a precedent again

Meeting Adjourned

4. NASA Biennial Elections Report – Jul 5 2014

Following the expiry of the term of the President and the remaining eight members of the Board of Directors, election of office bearers for the period 2014-2016 was taken up at the General Body Meeting held at the Vanderkamp, Cleveland, N.Y. on July 5, 2014.

Two candidates were duly nominated and seconded for the office of the president. Both accepted the nomination. They are Mr. Divakar Rudrapatna and Smt. Geetha Prabhakar.

Each candidate was given the opportunity to address the general body to explain why he/she is running for the office of the next president.

Secret ballot elections were conducted and the counting was done in the presence of a representative of each of the contestants.

It turned out to be a very close election as can be seen from the following result:

President:

Mr. Divakar Rudrapatna- 27 votes

Smt. Geetha Prabhakar-24 Votes

Divakar Rudrapatna was declared the president for the 2014-2016 term.

Board of Directors:

The following eight candidates were declared unanimously elected to serve on the Board of Directors for the 2014-2016 term:

Board of Directors:

1. Pushpa Satyanarayana
2. Nandini Srikantiah
3. Ashwini Srikantiah
4. Ranjini Srikantiah Poage
5. Tara Rudrapatna
6. Sheela Nagaraj
7. Prema Keshava Kumar
8. Amritha Viswanath

My personal thanks to the following who helped me to conduct the elections:

Keshav Sundaresan, Sujaya Rao, Nandini Srikantiah, Ashwini Srikantiah and Ranjini Srikantiah Poage

Respectfully submitted

Yelleshpur Jayaram MD FAAP MPH FS
Election officer
NASA 2014 elections

5. Upcoming Events

Please mark your calendar for the upcoming NASA event...

NAVARATRI / DEEPAVALI celebrations
Oct. 25, 2014, 10:30am – 7:00pm at
Sri. Satyanarayana Temple

#11 Training Hill Road
Middletown. Connecticut 06457
Temple Phone #: [1-860-346-8675](tel:1-860-346-8675)

Lunch and Dinner will be served
Admission is Free
Any donations are welcome.

For details please contact
Prema: [1-860-648-9798](tel:1-860-648-9798)
Ranjini: [1-201-835-5081](tel:1-201-835-5081)



6. NASA on the World Wide Web!!!

Have you visited www.sankethi.org recently? If so, thanks and please keep surfing to our website! If not, please visit NASA online where you can find news and information about our events and activities, the latest information and updates on our upcoming Navarathri and Deepavali celebrations, as well as interesting reading about the Sankethi heritage and traditions. You can also read this and previous editions of Chiguru online.

We are in the process of revitalizing our website and online presence, with an emphasis on centralizing all member communication and community news. We welcome your suggestions in moving this revitalization effort forward. Specifically, we welcome your contributions to the section on the webpage titled “Sankethis in the News” in which “Famous Sankethis” are described. We know there are many notable Sankethis (many of whom are in your families) and their cultural and societal contributions to recognize on our website. So please send a brief write-up about these individuals along with relevant photos to be included on this page of our website to the NASA Secretary. In the meanwhile, stay tuned for a more dynamic www.sankethi.org!

7. Helping NASA Better Communicate with You

NASA is committed to keeping in touch with members and sharing community news in a timely and efficient manner. Please help us stay in good touch with you by keeping us apprised of any changes to your contact information (i.e., email addresses, postal mailing addresses, phone numbers, etc.). Our renovated website will provide you with a mechanism to update your contact information independently, but until those renovations take effect, please send this information to the NASA Secretary.

We have moved to an entirely electronic mode of communication, particularly with respect to sending you the *Chiguru* / NASA Newsletter. If you are not yet receiving electronic editions of the *Chiguru* / NASA

Newsletter, please help us to include you on our electronic mailing list by providing an email address at which you wish to receive such correspondence.

8. Community News

NASA members appreciate being able to keep up with news about fellow Sankethis all over the world, so please send any news you wish to share to Nandini Srikantiah, the Newsletter Editor to be included in upcoming editions of the *Chiguru* / NASA Newsletter.

9. Congratulations!

Weddings

Vivek Rudrapatna, son of Ashok and Roopa Rudrapatna married Monica Raj, daughter of Rajan and Kamala Raj. The wedding took place on Aug 31, 2014 in New Jersey. NASA would like to congratulate the newlyweds and wish them all the best for a long and happy future together.



Graduations

Unfortunately, due to time constraints, graduation awards were not provided during the NASA annual event this year. The graduating students will be recognized for their achievements during in the 2015 Annual Retreat. Apologies for any inconvenience this has caused.

Condolences

Modern Spiritual Mama – Sri R.K. Srikanta Kumaraswamy (May 20, 1928 – Jul 5, 2014)



Ved. Brh. **Sri R.K. Srikanta Kumaraswamy** is an outstanding personality in the galaxy of modern Spiritual Advisers. Indeed a multifaceted personality, my brother- in-law late Sri. B.V. Srikant was his ardent disciple for more than four decades. Through him I came to know this great soul, a true “Gyaani”. Affectionately I called him Mama. In the past I had exchanged few mails with the Modern Spiritual Mama (discussing religion). My GOD he was bigger than any encyclopedia for me. Thus I wanted to inform the NASA community that we have lost one of the greatest Sankethi Souls...

Veda Brahma Sri. R. K. Srikanta Kumaraswamy Mama was born on May 20, 1928 in Nanjanagudu-Karnataka, India. He studied in Bangalore-Karnataka, India and in Banaras-India.

Intermediate University Course (1945): First Class B. Sc., Bangalore University (1947): 2nd Rank (Gold Medal in Chemistry) B. Sc., Engineering from Banaras Hindu University: Metallurgy Degree Joined Steel Factory in Bhadravathi-Karnataka (VISL): Blast & Open Hearth Furnace Expert Left VISL in 1965 & joined IIT Madras as Lecturer in Metallurgy & retired in 1988 as Asst. Prof.

Kumaraswamy Mama grew up in an orthodox family and always had questions about blind traditions followed by many in the community. He was yearning for answers and decided to pursue Vedic studies in his spare time. He wanted to educate the common man about logical religious practices rather than blindly following traditions and bringing a bad name to Dharma & Religion. While in Banaras he studied “Yajurveda” under the tutelage of his Guru Sri Yagnyanarayana Diskshitar. He started teaching “VEDAS” in Bhadravathi and continued in Madras as well.

He also stressed that all the Kriyas and the consequent development of the values are for the benefit of kartha or the doer alone and nobody else. Each person has to lift himself and nobody can do that for him. This is true even in the physical world and more so in the spiritual plane.

Kumara Swmay Mama helped us perform “Seemantha” ceremony, before the birth of my daughter. I noticed that he was a perfectionist and did not tolerate, indifference and disrespect while performing any ritual; be it a pooja, homa or any samskaras. He felt that one should make all attempts to know everything about any karma and should be aware of the purpose of undertaking it. It was his strong conviction that any pursuit can be sustained only when one develops an interest and a taste for it. This can happen only when one has all the relevant knowledge about the subject being pursued. He was branded as a non-

traditionalist. His answer was simple; one need not take his word or his interpretation for granted, but should seek the answers for themselves by going to the fundamentals or to the originals. In support of his logic he quoted the following sayings of Gautama Buddha, whom he considered the greatest humanitarian and a rationalist mankind has ever known.

Believe not, because some old Manuscripts are produced, Believe not because, it is your national belief, Believe not because, you have been made to believe from your childhood,

He had given many lectures on Veda, Religion & Dharma. He taught Veda Paata for hundreds of students without discriminating caste, religion & sex. He was an expert in Valmiki Ramayana & Bhagavatam.

Veda Brahma Sri. R. K. Srikanta Kumaraswamy Mama has written six books in Kannada and they

are:

Hridaya Sampannate (this is a compilation of his experiences with noble souls whom he had come across in his life. This has seen three editions.)

Straddha (Straddha is the annual ritual performed in memory of one's own parents. This booklet gives the basic concepts behind every ritual as envisaged by our Maharashis.)

Sarala Vivaha (This is also a Vedic Samskara (sacrement). This booklet gives the real way in which the marriage should be conducted according to our Maharshis.)

Samskaragalu mattu Maanaviya Maulyagalu (*Samskaras and human value*: All our samskaras are meant to result in Chittashuddhi, a cleaning of the mind, which is nothing but the practice of human values. The book gives the details of all the usual samskaras and its relationship with human values.)

Upakarma (A small booklet about the annual upakarma (beginning of studying the Vedas) which is being observed on the full moon day in the Sravana month) **Antyesti** (**Popular** misconceptions & fears associated with the final rites are cleared in this work.)

Our beloved Kumaraswamy Mama had clearly understood our maharishis intentions and has worked ceaselessly all his life to explain the purpose of our rituals. He advised the right way to perform Shradha and defined the goal of human life, through his discourses, speeches and books. The Book on Anyesti is the last of the 16 samskaras (the first one is birth) in one's lifespan. If properly done it really fills the human soul with a sense of fulfillment. It satisfies an emotional yearning of serving our parents with love and gratitude even when they are no more. Veda Brahma Sri. R. K. Srikanta Kumaraswamy Mama was personable and clarified thousands of doubts without any inhibitions. He held women in high esteem and taught them Vedic mantras and performances of rituals. He was a man with a liberal and rational outlook.

Dear Kumara Swamy Mama we truly miss you. May GOD continue to bless your soul. We pray for your soul to rest in peace.

Divakar Rudrapatna

Toronto. CANADA (Sept. 20, 2014)

लोकाः समस्ताः सुखिनो भवन्तु



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3305 Colonial Drive
Mississauga ON L5L

