



North American Sankethi Association (NASA)
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Dear Fellow Sankethis of North America,

It gives me great pleasure to address you for the first time as the President of North American Sankethi Association (NASA). First of all, I want to thank Smt. Jayashree Sastry and her team for their excellent work during the previous two years and for handing over a healthy organization into our hands. I would also take this opportunity to thank you all for expressing your confidence in my fellow Directors of the Board and me. We, as a team, will do our very best to fulfill our obligation to the Sankethis in general and North American Sankethi community in particular. The Board of Directors (BOD) met on September 14, 2002 to chalk out our plans for the near term. We have received excellent feedback and suggestions for implementation during our annual meetings; thanks to Srinivas Sridhara for his meticulous compilation of ideas gathered during the roundtable discussions last July at New Windsor. We will try and implement as many ideas as possible.

One of our goals for the near term is to increase the level of participation by all the Sankethis of North America in our activities. We propose to increase the number of regional meetings and encourage you all to help us arrange many local get-togethers. We will assist you in any way possible and to the extent you want. All we ask is tell us where and when, we will pitch in. The least we will do is to pick up the tab for renting a community hall subject to a limit proportional to the size of the gathering! We are happy to report that North American Sankethis of the west coast have already started the trend by bringing the Bay area Sankethis together. As many as thirty to forty families got together recently and celebrated the inauguration of our western chapter "Paschima Vaahini." We welcome them to the NASA fold and encourage them to become life members. We are in the process of arranging at least three to four more regional meetings before we meet in July 2003. It is likely that there will be regional meetings in the National Capital area around Ugadi. We are considering a meeting in Detroit area and possibly in Richmond and Dallas area between now and May 2003. We urge you all to bring in those Sankethis who used to attend our meetings in the past and for some reason or the other have stopped coming and also enlist new families who have not shown up in the past. Our goal is to double our membership and celebrate our 20th anniversary on a grand scale in 2004. Speaking of the 20th anniversary, got any ideas? Please give us your ideas about which would be an ideal location and what sorts of activities should we include. We urge especially the younger NASA members to get involved in a big way and help us celebrate twenty great years of NASA, in 2004. Veda Shekhar is working diligently to put together a plan for a three-night NASA family cruise to the Bahamas some time during our term, stay tuned for details. Hope you will take advantage and join us for *morepuly* and *ambode* and may be some Italian *chomayi* on the sea!

Looking forward to a wonderful two years with the NASA extended family,

Sincerely,

M.S. Nataraja, President

Dear Friends:

It is my pleasure to present our first newsletter from the new committee. Since this is the first after the July annual event, we are presenting full details of that event and minutes of the General Body Meeting (GBM). In the future, we plan to cover other news items much like what we have done this time. Please send in your comments if you would like to see any other items. Of course, we also plan to put as many items as possible, including the newsletter, on the NASA web site. We look forward to seeing you in one of the regional meetings or at the next annual July event. Please actively participate in the Sankethi extended family spirit in as many ways as possible. Let us know if there is anything you want us to do to make that better.

Report on the New Windsor Get-Together:

The annual get-together was held during July 4-7, 2002, in New Windsor MD (same venue as last year), with over 160 attendees. The New Windsor Conference Center is located about 40 miles west of Baltimore. The center was very convenient for the NASA event. Food was prepared on site by Ramakrishnan and party, and was enjoyed by all. Of course, this arrangement lets NASA families fully participate in the various events. A survey was conducted towards the end of the meeting to get each participant's opinion on the annual get-together. A quick analysis indicated that we could do quite well without full meals 3 times a day with sweets each time. Your feed back will be fully analyzed and implemented for the next meeting. Our membership has increased significantly in recent times. Our **new members** are:

Life Members:

Ramesh Nagaraj and Shubha
Divakar Rudrapatna and Radhika
Ramesh Saligrama and Sujatha
Sudhirthnath and Deepika
Santosh Bharadwaj and Prabha
Sudha Iyer
Aparna Keshaviah
Nirjara Sridhara

Madhulika Nataraja
Sandya Magge

Annual Members:

Ganesh Rao and Nirupama
B.R. Ramachandra
Raghav & Mayura
K.S. Ramesh and Manjula

Congratulations & Welcome! We look forward to your continued support. We particularly thank the new youth members and urge all our youth non-members to consider becoming members in the year of 2002-2003, and look forward to our west coast sankethis to become life members!

Summary of Activities

The 2002 annual NASA convention turned out to be a grand success. We kicked off the event on Thursday with the Sankethi tradition of oota. Following the dinner, the official Inauguration was held in the Windsor Hall Auditorium. Drs. Raji and Sri Sridhara sang the Inaugural piece, followed by President, Jayashree Sastry's welcoming speech to the attendees. Next came an icebreaker session of Sankethi Link, a general knowledge trivia game conceptualized by Sangeeta Sastry, Suchetha Sastry, Rumya Honasoge and Yashas Honasoge. It turned out to be quite competitive for the participating teams. Congratulations to the members of Team 7 for their victory. Following this was the Independence Day Fireworks presentation in the parking lot. This took place after the two National Anthems were sung in the spirit of unity. We had a lot of fireworks this year. Nataraj Honasoge sponsored this year's Fireworks, thank you Nataraj. After a brief respite, the attendees congregated in the auditorium once more for the Kannada Movie Matinee, Malaya Marutha, starring Vishnuvardhan, Sarita and Madhavi. It featured excellent Carnatic music as an integral part of the story line, and was enjoyed by many.

Friday began with Veda Ghosha at 7am led by Nataraj Honasoge and Dr. Ramakrishna. After breakfast came the Sports Activities. The following is a list of Competitive Sports Activities and the winners:

Jump Rope Kids

1st Place – Swati Sridhara Rao
2nd Place – Sneyha Nath
3rd Place – Vikram Rao

Jump Rope Adults

1st Place – Rajeev Balakrishna
2nd Place – Sandya Magge
3rd Place – Varsha Manjunath

Musical Chairs Kids

1st Place – Jayant Shekhar

2nd Place – Vivek Hanasoge

3rd Place – Vikram Rao

Musical Chairs Adults

1st Place – Hassan Manjunath

2nd Place – M. S. Nataraja

3rd Place – Prabha Manjunath

Basketball Free Throw Kids

1st Place – Shrikesh Rudrapatna

2nd Place – Jayant Shekhar

3rd Place – Snayha Nath

Basketball Free Throw Adults

1st Place – Srinivas Nataraja

2nd Place – Jayant Jayaram

3rd Place – Shankar Sridhara

Table Tennis Tournament

1st Place – Vivek Nagaraj

2nd Place – Shekhar Nagendra

3rd Place – Anjan Kowshik

After a sumptuous luncheon, it was a treat to return to the auditorium for two informative lectures on Sandhya Vandane by Dr. Ramakrishna and the Power of Shakti by Dr. Mahalakshmi Honasoge. Next on the agenda was a Financial Planning Workshop on Wealth Creation and Preservation by Santosh Govindaraju. The after dinner activities consisted of Dr. M.S. Nataraja's speech on Sankethi Sogadu, a humorous insight into the roots of the Sankethi language. The evening's cultural programs were led by a group dance choreographed by Aparna Keshaviah and Deepa Ramesh. Following this was the Young and the Talented segment consisting of the younger NASA youth showcasing their talent. This included a witty and humorous skit written by Prerana and Shrikesh Rudrapatna, and a small play on Punyakoti, the Cow. The evening's finale was the Graduation Awards handed out to the NASA 2002 graduates.

Saturday began with a nature walk and Veda Ghosha. The Annual General Body Meeting followed breakfast. GBM minutes are attached at the end. Lunch was followed by a Round Table discussion on Building a Sense of Community: Strategic Visions for the Future, skillfully coordinated by Srinivas Sridhara. Srinivas has since submitted a compilation of Round Table Member inputs to help achieve the following key goals:

- Ensure continuity of goals and ideas (among successive boards)
- Increasing community and youth involvement
- Increasing educational opportunities for important Sankethi activities
- Creating networking opportunities for professional and educational resources
- Changing the venue for the annual meeting
- Having year-round and regional activities

A complete report will be posted on the NASA website. The current Board has already started working on (and implementing!) some of the ideas generated. We will keep you posted on the progress.

After a short Coffee/Tea break, the program resumed with scintillating Classical Dance performances in Kuchipudi by Varsha Manjunath and in Kathak by Sangeeta Sastry. This was followed by a "Back to our Roots" traditional Sankethi-served dinner, along with sloka singing. This year again, it was a great success. Jayashree Sastry sponsored the Obbattu. Next on the agenda was the newly added Sankethi Achievers Segment recognizing and honoring Sankethis who have achieved outstanding heights in their respective fields. Three Sankethis were recognized at this time – K.S. Sudarshanji, Dr. Shyama Shastry, and Dr. Ramachandra Rao. We plan to include a segment on each of these achievers on the NASA website.

The variety entertainment for the evening began with Dr. M.S. Nataraja's recitation of poetry. This was followed by an Egyptian dance piece elegantly choreographed by Aparna Keshaviah and Deepa Ramesh. Following this were vocal renditions by Rumya Honasoge, Vani Pavani Ram and group, and a skit by Ramesh Nagaraj. Immediately afterwards, the Sports Awards were announced and handed out. Also, the newly wed NASA members were recognized and honored with a Silver Coin – Santosh & Ami Govindaraju and Ganesh & Shalini Rao. The Member Mixer was the grand finale, which didn't end until 3am!

Sunday morning began with Vedic Prayers and brunch, after which all attendees checked out. All in all, the NASA Annual Convention was a great success. Thank you to everyone who helped put it together!

NASA Community News:

New Arrivals: Please send us information about any new arrivals in your family so we may share your joy with all families.

Weddings:

Ganesh Rao married Shalini in Bangalore on May 30, 2002. Later a grand reception was held by the family in Raleigh NC.

Shivaram Manjunathaiah and Priya married on July 14, 2002 in Bangalore. Shivaram and Priya are now living in Toledo.

Sharada and Srinivasa Murthy, living in Gaithersberg MD, celebrated the wedding of their daughter Saritha in Bangalore in June, 2002.

Best wishes to all of you from NASA!

Sankethi Sangama: The Board has recently decided to become a "Poshaka" for this Sankethi monthly.

Charitable Contributions to Hosahalli Veda Pathashaala may be channeled through NASA.

Sankethi Tamboola: NASA encourages all Sankethi families to send in a Sankethi Tamboola to mark family celebrations like wedding and new arrivals.

Other News: It is with a great sense of pride that NASA acknowledges the achievements of the following fellow members:

Dr. Ramaswamy living in Canada was recently recognized for his outstanding research contributions in the area of food technology by his University, as well as by CFTRI in Mysore, India.

Mr. Mayura Simha living in New Arc DE, is now well known for his excellent oil and water color painting, and has participated in several exhibitions. For more information, please go to his website:

www.nimishaartsandocrafts.com

NASA President, Dr. M.S. Nataraja released his collection of poems during the Second World Kannada Sammelana held in September, 2002, in Detroit.

Regional Activities:

As mentioned in the President's letter, regional activities are being planned by West Coast sankethis in December 2002 (around the Christmas holidays), in the DC capital area in Spring 2003, in Detroit in April 2003, in Richmond VA area in May 2003, and in Dallas TX area (date to be determined). More details will follow in the next newsletter or through e-mails and the NASA website.

Other Activities

Chiguru: We are happy to inform you that Chiguru magazine will start again, thanks to Lakshmi Jayaram's initiative. Please see the Proposal to Revive the Chiguru Magazine (as conceptualized by Lakshmi Jayaram) below:

As time goes on, and more and more Sankethis living in North America become absorbed into mainstream culture, NASA is in a unique position to make strategic decisions about programming to enhance cultural preservation. But what truly binds us in this time, space and age? The newly revived *Chiguru* magazine will attempt to answer this vital question, using the power of the written word and personal expression to communicate and celebrate the diversity of our thought. Each issue will be devoted to a specific issue and its relevance to the future of "Sankethism" in America. Additionally, each issue will feature a Letters/Comments to the Editor section encourage discussion and debate amongst us.

For the inaugural issue, to be published in January 2003, the topic will be a metaphor of the word "chiguru" itself. Chiguru means *to blossom*. I would like to collect articles from our community about experiences that caused a blossoming, or perhaps a bitter awakening, of cultural appreciation and/or understanding, whatever

that may mean to each individual. Entries from all Sankethis are welcome – men and women, children and adults alike, immigrant and first generation together.

The submission deadline will be December 1, 2002 for the first issue. I will work with each contributor to edit the submission for grammar and syntax, and do my editorial best to encourage fully developed thoughts, but all of the author's original ideas will be preserved and presented in entirety. Additionally, all types of entries will be accepted – essays, short stories, poetry, photographic essays, artwork, and any other form of individual expression related to the topic. The only guideline to observe is communication in the English language. As a magazine for North American Sankethis, of all generations, I believe it is important to use a common language to ensure everyone's ability to contribute to and read *Chiguru*. Lastly, I will also write a context essay for each issue to introduce the topic and provide some synthesis of the ideas presented.

I hope to publish *Chiguru* twice each year – once in mid-January, and then again in July, at the time of the Annual Meeting. The last page of each issue will contain the topic and submission deadline for the following issue. In general, I expect the submission deadlines to be December 1 for the January issue, and May 15 for the July issue.

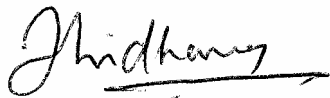
In conclusion, I thank the NASA Board of Directors and the General Body for their support of this project, as voiced at the 2002 NASA General Body Meeting in New Windsor, Maryland. And I would like to particularly thank Santosh Govindaraju for pledging funding to support this endeavor. My hope and dream is that through the written word, we are able to capture and sustain the rich Sankethi tradition and heritage, and find a binding voice for the Sankethis of North America.

For more information and to submit to Chiguru, please contact: Lakshmi Jayaram, e-mail: lj@jhu.edu, phone: 410-243-8990, address: 3011 Saint Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21218. All feedback is welcome!

Sankethi Cruise: NASA is planning a 3-night cruise (with Indian food) to the Bahamas some time next year, leaving from Miami FL. Please write to Veda Shekhar (address on the front page) if you are interested, how many may go, and your preferred month.

NASA Website: The NASA website has experienced quite a facelift in the last year, thanks to the efforts of Ms. Lalitha Saroja Hanasoge. We hope to continue this trend and expand the content and offerings of the NASA website. Please visit www.sankethi.org to read our new Sankethi Anthem, along with many other new and interesting items! We look forward to your feedback!

Thank you and with best wishes,



Sri Sridhara, Gen. Secretary, NASA



Minutes of the 2002 NASA General Body Meeting

The 2002 General Body Meeting (GBM) started at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 6th at the New Windsor Conference Center, New Windsor, MD.

Welcome: The meeting began with an invocation by S. Sridhara. The meeting was then called to order by the President, Mrs. Jayashree Sastry. Jayashree Sastry welcomed the General Body, introduced her Board of Directors (BOD) and briefly went over the agenda for the meeting (distributed with the May & June 2002 Newsletter).

Roll call: Rajeshwari Sridhara officially noted the roll call by calling out all the registered members. After this all new attendees were introduced to the membership at large.

Reading & Approving of preceding GBM minutes: Rajeshwari Sridhara asked everyone to read the 2001 GBM minutes that was earlier handed out and published in the January 2002 Newsletter. In the interest of time, members waived reading of the minutes. It was approved by the GBM by a voice vote.

Reports of committees:

Mr. Sundaresan presented a summary report on the constitution bylaws and amendments. The bylaw baseline document as it stood at May 2000 was completed by the previous BOD and presented to the General Body at the annual meeting held in July that year. Due to subsequent amendments sponsored by the BOD for adoption by the General Body, the updating of the baseline document has been deferred to the future BOD. Mr. Sundaresan also reported that he had helped process through the BOD the unofficial proposal to redefine voting criteria as suggested at last year's GBM. He also referred to the second proposal by this BOD regarding investment being presented to the assembled General Body for discussion under 'New Business'. Mr. Sundaresan clarified that his involvement in the bylaw amendment proposals in question was limited to reviewing drafts proposed by the BOD for consistency and conformity with procedure.

Santosh Govindaraju constituted the one man Audit Committee appointed for examining the Financial Statements for the years 2000 (revised in the light of guidelines from the GBM held in July 2001) and 2001. A suggestion was made from the floor to consider an auditor outside of the BOD to avoid possible conflict of interest. This was deferred to the future board for consideration.

Santosh Govindaraju, who chaired the investment committee, supported by the treasurer Mayank Keshaviah and advised by Mr. Rudrapatna Govindaraju, reported a loss of 4% to date. The money market funds earned 1.6%. In March 2002, a decision to shift funds to bonds was made. Having regard to the goals and risk tolerance of NASA, Santosh Govindaraju recommended to the BOD to amend the investment by-law in this regard. The BOD accepted his proposal, which would be discussed under 'New Business'.

Reports of officers:

Jayashree Sastry reported that this board focused on Sankethi Heritage. In this regard to become a part of the parent organizations in India, a benefactor membership with the Bettadapura Sankethi Sangha has been taken at a cost of \$200. Similar membership does not exist with Kowshika Sankethi Sangha (KSS) at this time. But KSS is exploring other possibilities will get back to NASA.

Rajeshwari Sridhara gave the general secretaries report. She reported that this board started with 9 BOD in 2000 and since then 3 members have resigned because of their other commitments. During the year 2001-2002, 3 Newsletters were published and 3 BOD meetings were conducted. This board started in 2000 by reviewing the input received from the members at large and set the motto for their term as education and promotion of culture. In this regard this board has introduced several educational and cultural activities in the annual meetings. A web page www.sankethi.org has been developed and completely functional. All the Newsletters are also posted on the web. A regional meeting was held in April 2002 in Detroit and was a great success with more than 100 members attending the get-together. Fifteen new life members and 7 new annual members have joined NASA. Mr. Sunderesan proposed to move the secretaries report and was seconded by Mr. Ashwathanarayana. The report was unanimously approved by the General Body.

Nataraj Honasoge reported that the response for compiling a family directory was poor (only 30/145 members responded) At this time it was felt that it was not prudent to publish a family directory. The responses received have been entered into a database and will be handed over to the next board. The member address directory has been cleaned and updated. Sankethi Sampada and Sankethi Vani published about the July NASA event. Nataraj Honasoge and Ashwathanarayana Hanasoge have established funds to support needy students studying in US.

Sangeeta Sastry gave a report of the accomplishments of this board through the cultural activities. Many new activities were introduced by this board including picnic at Centennial Park, Kannada workshop delivered by a professional, Dr. Krishna Murthy, religious discourse by Swami Chidananda of Sri Ramakrishna Order, fireworks display, Kannada movie, member mixer with anthakshari and Sankethi link, and formal served dinner. The meetings continued to hold productive panel discussions, music, dance and drama skits.

Mayank Keshaviah and Santosh Govindaraju presented the treasurer's report, covering the 2000 and 2001 Financial Statements (statements in file). Motion to adopt the statements was proposed by Sridhara and seconded by Ramakrishna and both the 2000 and 2001 Statements were adopted by the General Body.

Old and Unfinished Business: This was covered under the constitution and by-law committee report by Mr. Sunderasan.

New Business:

Four items were covered as part of new business - two officially proposed amendments to the bylaws (distributed to all members as part of the May 2002 Newsletter) and two private amendments proposed by a life member.

Proposal No. 1 was to amend the criteria for voting rights and was discussed by the General Body. It was not adopted by the General Body, as a result of a 21 to 21 tie vote..

Proposal No. 2: Prior to the annual membership meeting held on July 2, 2000 the manner in which the Association's funds could be invested was limited to deposits in a bank or trust company. By virtue of an amendment adopted at the abovementioned meeting, the BOD was given the freedom to establish its Investment Policy from time to time and to invest the NASA organization's funds in accordance with that policy. In NASA's best interest to limit its investments to less volatile and risky products, the following bylaw amendments were submitted to the General Body and were adopted by a vote of 46 to 7 by the General Body after open discussions.

AMENDMENT # 2A

In the first sentence of Paragraph 5 of Article V of the Association's bylaws, the part currently reading:

"The treasurer shall have the care and custody of all the funds and securities of the corporation and shall deposit and invest said funds in the name of the corporation in accordance with the corporation's Investment Policy, as the same may be amended from time to time;" shall be deleted and replaced with the following:

"The treasurer shall have the care and custody of all the funds and securities of the corporation, and shall deposit said funds in the name of the corporation in a FDIC insured account in such bank or trust company as the directors may elect; he shall, when duly authorized by the board of directors, invest said funds in one or more of the following: 1)FDIC Insured Savings Accounts, 2) FDIC Insured Certificate of Deposit Accounts, 3)Money Market Accounts, 4) U.S. Government Treasury Securities and 5) Mutual Funds that invest only in GNMA Securities or Municipal Bonds".

AMENDMENT # 2B:

The sentence reading "Funds shall be invested in accordance with the corporation's investment policy as the same may be amended from time to time." under the heading 'Instrument of Authority' in the current bylaws governing the corporation's Catastrophe Fund shall be deleted and replaced with the following:

"Funds shall be held in one or more of the following: 1) FDIC Insured Checking Accounts, 2) FDIC Insured Savings Accounts, 3)FDIC Insured Certificate of Deposit Accounts, 4)Money Market Accounts, 5) U.S. Government Treasury Securities and 6) Mutual Funds that invest only in GNMA Securities or Municipal Bonds."

AMENDMENT # 2C:

The sentence reading "Funds shall be invested in accordance with the corporation's investment policy as the same may be amended from time to time." Under Article 4.3(b) of the bylaws governing the corporation's scholarship fund shall be deleted and replaced with the following:

"Funds shall be held in one or more of the following: 1) FDIC Insured Checking Accounts, 2) FDIC Insured Savings Accounts, 3) FDIC Insured Certificate of Deposit Accounts, 4) Money Market Accounts, 5) U.S. Government Treasury Securities and 6) Mutual Funds that invest only in GNMA Securities or Municipal Bonds.".

Two private proposals for amendment of bylaws were submitted to the BOD prior to the GBM. The BOD had chosen not to make any recommendation to the General Body on the proposals in order to avoid any appearance of a conflict of interest. These two proposals were distributed to the General Body at the meeting. The member who proposed the amendments was not present at the meeting. The first proposal was to amend the bylaws so that no two persons from the same nuclear family could serve concurrently on the BOD. Since this involved constitutional rights, the General Body decided that this should be examined by a constitutional committee and was deferred to the future BOD to consider such action. The second proposal was regarding the conduct and order in the BOD. The members in General Body voiced the view that the existing bylaws should be adequate for this purpose and recommended for the proposal to be dropped

Good and Welfare:

Dr. Nataraj made a few sad announcements: Sri Ramashastry of Hosahalli, famous for reciting gamaka vachana, father of Geetha Dattatri passed away in India; Smt Kamalamma, mother of Shantharam Kashyap, also passed away in Mysore.

Lakshmi Jayaram solicited interest from the General Body to revive 'Chigaru'. The General Body overwhelmingly supported her idea and she has volunteered to solicit articles and serve as the editor and bring the project to fruition.

Aswathanarayana Hanasoge suggested that the organization should consider joining United Way with contributions designated for NASA. This will require proper documentation of charity, etc.

A motion of thanks to the President and the BOD for their selfless service during the last two years was unanimously adopted by the General Body.

Elections for the new board:

Election of the President along with eight other directors for the term 2002-2004 was held after the lunch break.

Dr. Jayaram was the returning officer. Here is the list of the elected directors:

President – Dr. M.S. Nataraja

Other directors:

Santosh Govindaraju

Dr. Ramesh Nagaraj

Vedavathi Nagendra

Pavani Ram

Latha Shanthi Ramakrishna

Dr. Jaikumar Rangappa

Sangeeta Sastry

Dr. S. Sridhara

Adjournment: After wishing all members, and congratulating the new BOD Jayashree Sastry adjourned the meeting.

Rajeshwari Sridhara

Rajeshwari Sridhara

General Secretary, NASA (2000-2002), July 15, 2002



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