



North American Sankethi Association (NASA)
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Volume 26, No 1
January 16, 2009

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Dear Sankethi friends,

It gives us great pleasure to wish you all Happy New Year and Happy Makara Sankranti. As we celebrate our 25th anniversary this nation is undergoing many changes such as the inauguration of its first minority president, change in our economic status etc. It should be noted that our Sankethi forebears are known to deal with change such as Nacharamma's migration. Many of us migrated to this land of opportunity seeking a change for the better. NASA was built by those who arrived in this great land and was sustained for 25 years with the help of many dedicated volunteers including the youth of the second generation. We sincerely hope and believe that this will continue forever with the involvement of every one interested in supporting NASA's aims and objectives.

We invite you all to join us on July 3 (Friday), July 4 (Saturday) and July 5 (Sunday) to celebrate our 25th anniversary at the New Windsor Conference Center in New Windsor, MD. Please bring your family and friends. Spread the word. Note that July 2 and July 6 are travel days. We have enclosed a refrigerator magnet (donated by Divakar Rudrapatna) with the dates and location to remind you of this celebration. Please post them on your refrigerator. If you need a few more refrigerator magnets to give to your friends/family, please contact one of the BOD members and we will get them to you. Please mark your calendars. Check your email and www.sankethi.org for announcements regarding registration and program content. Details of registration and program content will also be published in our next newsletter.

To mark our 25th anniversary we intend to publish a Silver Jubilee Souvenir. We invite the NASA community to participate in making this publication a reflection of NASA's diverse character. You can also reserve your spot in the Silver Jubilee publication by posting a message/family picture for a small fee. Please see the body of the newsletter for details of how to submit articles, the cover page contest and how to reserve your spot in the publication.

BOD intends to capture memories of various NASA gatherings from the past 25 years. This will be put in to some type of digital format. This will only be successful if we get submissions from the community. Please contact Ranjini Srikantiah (ranjini@alum.mit.edu) to submit any of the items you might have.

Many of us enjoyed running in the Hartford Marathon during our Connecticut regional get together. We have also planned a regional event in Raleigh NC. We also invite you all to participate in Paschmahini's gathering. A detailed report of the CT get together and information about upcoming events can be found elsewhere in this newsletter

As you all know BSS and KSS in India can benefit a great deal by your donations. We have received an appeal from KSS (please see details in the body of the newsletter) and would like to request NASA community to donate generously.

Volunteers & Sponsors of various events are the backbone of organizations like NASA. Please contact the BOD if you are interested in volunteering or sponsoring any of the upcoming events including our 25th anniversary celebration.

Thank you and have a wonderful 2009

Yours truly,

Keshava Kumar

NASA President Keshava Kumar & BOD

1. NASA Silver Jubilee Celebration Location and date

It is our great pleasure to invite you all on behalf of the NASA BOD to join fellow friends/family to celebrate the 25th anniversary of this great organization. Here are the details:

DATES: July 3, 4, 5 (Friday, Saturday, Sunday) Silver Jubilee Celebrations.
(Note that Thursday July 2 and Monday July 6 are travel days)

LOCATION: New Windsor Conference Center, 500 Main Street, New Windsor, Maryland 21776
Details of the program/Registration fees etc. will be published as soon as the BOD finalizes the same. We have enclosed a refrigerator magnet (donated by Divakar Rudrapatna) with the dates and location for your convenience.

REQUEST: Please consider sponsoring various aspects of our celebration. You can sponsor full or part of the expenses towards Silver Jubilee Publication, Cultural program, Music Concert, Various lunch or dinner menus etc. Contact any one from the BOD (nasa_BOD@yahoo.com) to initiate the same.

SPREAD THE WORD. GET YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY MEMBERS TO JOIN US
WE WANT A FULL HOUSE AT NEW WINDSOR!

2. Upcoming Ski Trip details

Let's go skiing! Join us for a Sankethi winter trip to Vermont over the Presidents' Day Weekend. Skiers and non-skiers of all levels and ages are welcome to join the fun. We will be staying at the Cavendish Inn in Cavendish, VT (www.cavendishinnvt.com), a luxurious inn with a great location. And we have the whole inn to ourselves! We'll be checking in on Friday night (Feb 13) and leaving on Monday (Feb 16). We will be skiing at nearby Okemo Mountain (www.okemo.com). For those who don't ski, there are many activities in nearby Ludlow. There is still space available so please contact Ganesh Rao (ganesh_rao@yahoo.com) as soon as possible to make arrangements.

3. NASA 25th Anniversary Publication: Invitation for articles

In order to celebrate NASA's Silver Jubilee, we will be publishing a souvenir book highlighting the ideas and achievements of our community. On this occasion marking twenty-five years of NASA, we thought it might be interesting to explore the theme "Seasons of NASA." Along those lines, we hope to organize submissions in the following manner:

Spring – The origins of NASA and the Sankethis, as well as the rising generation of future Life Members

Summer – The years in which NASA spread its wings and grew as an organization, growing up Sankethi, education and educational journeys, and highlighting Sankethi traditions

Fall – The maturation of the Sankethi Association, careers, and NASA "youth" who are now adults with their own families

Winter – Honoring the senior members of NASA, spirituality, traditions, and the "silver" retirement years

In addition to these suggestions, any essays, artwork, poetry, photography or other creations you submit can incorporate the theme of 'seasons' as you see fit. We definitely need contributions from all of you to make this a success and we encourage you to be creative. Submissions may be in English, Kannada or Sankethi, with articles and artwork by children especially encouraged. Also, if you have pictures of NASA gatherings or events, put together a collage and we'll print it!

Finally, we will be soliciting submissions for a cover art contest. While the front cover of the publication will be designed by Sankethi artist Mayura Simha, who has graciously donated his time and effort, we are looking for an illustration for the back cover and/or the table of content page (inner front cover). To enter, you may submit artwork in any medium that can fit into standard letter dimensions (8.5"x11"). The winner will not only have his or her artwork on the cover, but will receive a \$50 discount on his or her NASA registration. We look forward to your creative best!

4. Prices for posting advertisements in the 25th anniversary publication

- 1) Full page (8 ½ by 11 inches)\$500/-
- 2) Half Page (8 ½ by 5 ½ inches)\$250/- (Best value)
- 3) 1/3 Page (8 ½ by 3 inches)\$175/-
- 4) Quarter size (4 inch by 4 inch) \$100/- (Family picture in color with a message)
- 5) Portrait size (4 inch by 3 ½ inch)..... \$50 (Family picture in Black and white with a message)

5. Ugadi Regional event in Raleigh NC

The NASA BOD would like to invite you all for a regional get together in the Raleigh area on Saturday April 11, 2009. We would like to know how many of you are interested in attending this event. Please let Ramesh Nagaraj (ramkinagaraj@hotmail.com) know if you plan to attend by February 20. Depending on the number of people attending this regional event we will plan the meeting hall or park etc. Details will be communicated via email/NASA web site.

6. Paschimavaahini get together On Saturday, February, 14

Paschimavaahini is an organization started in 2001, to bring together the Sankethi families living in the San Francisco Bay area. This is an informal, non-membership, volunteer run organization. We have about 30-35 families who participate in the events. Every year, we informally elect a group of members to form a committee that takes care of organizing the events for that year.

We normally get together about three times every year. The first meet, which happens to be in summer, is an outdoor sports day event. The other two are indoor events, where we have some cultural activities and games for all to participate. Of course, in all the events, one of the major attractions is the authentic Sankethi cuisine that our members bring in for potluck.

Our last get together was in September 2008, where we all had a wonderful day out at Henry Shmidt Park, Santa Clara. We had activities for kids and adults and everyone had a blast!! Please visit www.paschimavaahini.org to look at some of the photographs of the event. You can also check out our earlier events at paschimavaahini.blogspot.com.

The upcoming get together is an indoor event on Feb 14, 2009 at Sanatana Dharma Kendra from 5:30 PM to 9:30 PM. Our main programs that day include Lalitha Sahasranama chanting, talk by Mr. and Mrs. Pranatarti Haran, Bharatha Natyam by Chinmayi and a play by kids. Apart from these, we also are planning for a few games for couples on the occasion of Valentine's Day.

7. Report on Navarathri Celebrations, October 11, 2008

Hartford Marathon Races, October 11, 2008

Held at: Bushnell Park, Hartford, CT



On a brisk but sunny October morning, five NASA members embarked on a challenge together –we laced up our running shoes and arrived at the start of the ING Hartford Marathon 5K by 7:45am. Despite the early hour and chilly temperatures, Keshava Kumar, Lalitha Hanasoge, Shalini Rao, Nandan Satyanarayanan and I not only made it to the starting line of the ING Hartford Marathon with time to spare, (yes, IST tendencies were overcome!), but we also managed to meet each other among the crowd of 200+ runners (thank goodness for cell phones!). About two seconds after the horn blasted, Nandan took off at a pace none of us could match, happily listening to whatever tunes he had stored in his iPod. The rest of us stayed close for a while, but soon Lalitha also

pulled ahead of the group, and we settled into an individual pace that we each found comfortable. We all successfully completed the run, and after some complimentary refreshments (courtesy of the race organization) and a little rest, we moved to the Kids K race in which Jathin Rao and Tejan Poage competed. The kids had their choice of race distances – 50m, ¼ mile, ½ mile and 1 mile. Both boys decided to try their endurance in the ¼ mile. The crowd went wild when Tejan and Jathin took off along the course. We waved handmade signs for the boys as both demonstrated great strength and speed. With a great spurt of speed at the end, Tejan and Jathin crossed the finish



line and proudly received their medals. They were beaming from ear to ear, knowing they had accomplished a pretty big task for 4 and 5 year olds, beating out some older kids in their race.



All in all, the event was a success and we have already started talking about next year. If you're interested in joining the Hartford run next October, please let us know! For those of you planning NASA regional events, we found that this was definitely a good formula – exercise in the morning, then enjoy good Sankethi food and culture in the afternoon. What could be better for the NASA soul? For those of you who are unable to run, many running events allow walkers to sign up as well so put on your shoes and participate! If you send us a summary and some photos afterwards, we can include the information in our newsletters and online postings. Good Luck and Happy Running!

- Ranjini Srikantiah

Navarathri Celebrations, October 11, 2008

Held at: CVTS, 11 Training Hill Road, Middletown CT 06457

The NASA Navarathri program was held at the Middletown Temple's function room. Attendance was excellent with many people driving great distances to attend the function.

The program began with a sumptuous lunch that was prepared by several volunteers with a couple of catered items as well. It was followed by the children's program. Aniruddha, Mukunda and Sudhanva started off the event with Sanskrit shlokas. This was followed by Tejan Poage, who talked about his experience running in the kids' races at the Hartford Marathon that morning. Mahathi Kumar and Niharika both performed violin solos. Then the audience was entertained with a song.



Mr. M.S. Nataraj, who had traveled all the way from Washington, D.C., then read some of his Kannada poems. The audience thoroughly enjoyed the reading, which included poems touching on a wide range of topics including politics, 9/11 and saris. Mr. Nataraj was also kind enough to donate all proceeds from the sale of his books at the event to NASA.



After a short break with snacks, the program continued with a classical vocal concert by our own Sandhya Nagaraj accompanied by GV Srinivas on mridangam and Deepak Varma on violin. This was followed by another concert by Seethalakshmi Madhavan. At the end of her concert, she invited several people to join her on the stage to sing "Bhagyada Lakshmi Baramma".

After the concerts, Dr. Jayaram spoke briefly about the Bhagavad Gita and then a group led the audience in the Lalitha Sahasranama.



Dinner (that was prepared by several volunteers, with couple of items catered as well) capped off the evening. The get-together offered everyone a chance to meet old friends, make new ones and enjoy both cultural and culinary delights.

The NASA BOD would like to thank the following families for helping to make this regional event a grand success (our

apologies if we have missed any names):



1. B.K. Lakshminarayana & B.N. Savithamma (Keshava Kumar's parents visiting from India)
2. Shanthi and Keshava Rao
3. Bhagya and Srinivas Komarla
4. Lakshmi
5. Sandhya Nagaraj
6. Nalini Nagendra
7. Sudha Nagaraj
8. Uma Shankar Magge
9. Anubha and Shashank (sent us several food items even though they couldn't make it due to children not being well)
10. Shilaja Srikantiah
11. Nalini Sundareshan
12. Y.N. Jayaram (nice pickles as usual)
13. Geetha Dathatri (nice pickles as usual)
14. Pushpa Satyanarayana
15. Prema Keshava Kumar

8. Community News

New Life Members: NASA would like to welcome the following new Life Members:

- 1) Keshava & Vranda Aithal of Durham, CT
- 2) Ramchandra & Uma Rangaswamy of Woburn, MA
- 3) Arun & Uma Dharwar of Glastonbury, CT

Nandini Srikantiah:

Nandini Srikantiah has been selected by the Canadian Department of National Defense to be Canada's first and only representative in a 1-year executive MBA at the Queensland University of Technology in Canberra Australia. The program specializes in complex project management, and was formed through the collaboration of multiple international defense organizations and industry partners. Upon graduating from this course in December 2009, Nandini will work at the Australian Ministry of Defense leading one of their Military Acquisition projects for 1 year, as part of an international exchange. Srikanth, Kiran and Akhila are along with Nandini for this incredible journey, and the entire family is looking forward to the new experiences they will all face -- driving on the other side of the road and seeing the wildlife -- birds, koala bears and kangaroos to name a few! They are expecting it to be a learning experience for them all. These temporary Sankethis Down Under ("Sankaroos"?!) invite any NASA member who has an interest in seeing Australia to visit between now and December 2010. They can be contacted by e-mail .- . n_srikantiah@hotmail.com at any time. NASA BOD wishes them the very best and is proud of this recognition.

9. Obituary

NASA is sorry to note the passing of Nagaraja Rudrapatna's father, Subbaraya Nagappa Rudrapatna, on Jan. 2, 2009 in Bangalore at the age of 71. On behalf of the Sankethi community, we would like to express our sympathy to his family. Please accept our prayers and our sincere condolences.

10. Other News

Opportunity to get great looking painting done while helping out NASA Silver Jubilee Celebrations:

Mayura Simha has volunteered to donate all proceeds from the sale of paintings (excluding material costs) to NASA. The purchaser would be able to get a wonderful piece of art and help NASA at the same time. Details of the paintings are:

1. Paintings of people's choice can be ordered (landscapes/architecture - temple, home, village scenes etc). Sponsor shall provide pictures of the subject.
2. Each painting will be of 12" x 16" (Framed 16" x 20") watercolor painting made on the best quality paper and using artists' quality materials. The paintings will be matted and framed.
3. Each painting will be priced at \$250.
4. Actual material costs will be paid to the artist (the artist will provide receipts for paper and framing), which is estimated at \$50 per painting.
5. The remaining money will be donated to NASA (estimated at \$200 per painting).
6. All the paintings will be exhibited at the 2009 NASA gathering in July.
7. In order to complete the paintings in time please send in the pictures/contact the artist before January 2009.

Please contact Mayura Simha at mayurasimha@comcast.net or (302) 239-4534 to get your paintings done.

Availability of Sundarakaanda CD and ordering Information

NASA is happy to announce the availability of a musical CD called "**Raagamaalika Sundarakaanda**" produced by Nadatarangini. The lyrics for the CD are written by NASA's past president **Dr. M.S. Nataraja** and the music is composed by **Vidwan Ananthakrishna Sharma (Shivu)** of Bangalore. The lead singers are **M.S. Sheela, M.D. Pallavi and Mangalaa Ravi** with chorus support from the students of vidushi Usha Char. The CD is dedicated to the memory of Late Sri H.C. Subba Rao, a life-long devotee of Sri Rama (and father-in-law of two past NASA presidents, Dr. Ramakrishna and Dr. Sridhara). The CD was formally released at the Sri Siva Vishnu Temple on July 25, 2008. A number of people had the opportunity to listen to the CD during the recent NASA program.

The CD is available for purchase. Those interested in ordering CDs may write a check in favor of "**Nadatarangini**" and mail it to Dr. M.S.Nataraja, 10510, Beechknoll Lane, Potomac, MD, 20854. The minimum suggested donation is **\$10 per CD + \$3 mailing cost for each CD or \$13 total**. Please write "**Sundarakaanda CD**" in the memo section.

An appeal from KSS (Kowshika Sankethi Sangha)

The growth of KSS Activities in the last 5-10 years has been very steep due to new Projects, new Beneficial Schemes, and Enhancements in the existing Schemes etc.

For example, in this period – (a) The Old Age Home at Bangalore, Girls Hostels at Mysore and Shimoga, Boys Hostel at Shimoga, Computer labs at all the Hostels, Purchase of Site for Girls hostel at Shimoga were started. (b) New Schemes- Medical Support for Old Age Home inmates (MSF scheme), Financial help for very poor and needy (Sahaya Hastha Scheme), Financing English and Computer Education to Hostel Inmates were started. (c) Old Age Pension was increased by 70 %, Student Scholarships by about 100 %.

All these Developments have substantially increased the Cost of Running the Institution – Today we need about Rs 30 Lacs a year (\$75,000). We have to find this money at any cost every year.

We look up to NASA as a partner in our Progress. We need your benevolent, continuous support every year to help us to improve the cause of the Community.

NASA BOD requests members to donate generously to KSS and BSS.



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