

## Regional Indian American Community Center (RIACC)

Non Profit, Tax Exempt Organization (501(c3))

PO Box 411, Kingsport, TN-37662

Tel No: (423) 349-6515 • Email: how@riacc.us • Internet: http://www.riacc.us

### Quarterly Newsletter [April-June 2005]

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423-288-5869

Dr. Girish Hoskere  
(Vice President)

Mrs. Bharati Solanki  
(Treasurer)

Mrs. Poorvi Tiku &  
Mrs. Rushmie Bakshi  
(Secretary)

#### **Hall of Worship Committee**

Mr. Ashok Gala (Chairman)

Dr. Manoj Srinath

Dr. Puneet Goenka

Dr. Rekha Kumar

Mrs. Rama Sharma

**Regular HOW Hours:**  
**Sun 11am-1pm**  
**(Aarti 12:30pm)**  
**Wed 6:30pm-8pm.**  
**(Aarti 7:30pm)**

Hari Om,

It has been an eventful quarter. The splashing of colors and the rituals around the bonfire during the Holi festival was a great reminder of the rich traditions we enjoyed in India.

Priest Ronur Murali from Nashville Ganesha Temple conducted the Havan and Pooja for the Anniversary celebrations in May. There was good community participation. The performance of the children in the Fashion Show was excellent. I would like to thank all the volunteers who donated their time, money and effort to make this Program a success. The RIACC picnic was also well attended. I was thrilled to see the growth of friendship and fellowship in our Indian community.

Summer has begun and everyone is busy with vacations, etc. We, at RIACC Hall of Worship also have several projects planned. The fund raising for recruitment of Priest is almost complete. We request the people who have pledged their support for this project to come forward and send the money to the Hall of Worship. We are also planning to enhance the front entrances to the Parking Lot. This will be planned and completed in the next few months. With the onset of Shravan, there are several festivals that will be celebrated at the Hall of Worship. The schedule of events can be found on our website. As always, we are looking for volunteers for pooja and other activities. Please contact one of the committee members if you are interested in participating.

Sincerely, Manoj Srinath

#### **Programs [Jul-Sep 2005]**

Date	Time	Event
Wednesday 7/20/05	6:30pm	Guru Poornima
<b>Sunday 7/31/05</b>	<b>11:00am</b>	<b>RIACC Fund Raiser - Theme: North Indian Cuisine. Please spread the word!</b>
Sunday 08/14/05	11:00am	India Independence Day Celebration - 'Gandhi' documentary followed by Flag Hoisting
Sunday 8/21/05	11:00am	Raksha Bandhan / Poornima / Satyanarayan Katha
Saturday 8/27/05	7:00pm	Krishna Jayanti by Mrs. Rama Sharma
Wednesday 09/07/05	6:30pm	Ganesh Chaturthi
Sunday 09/18/05	11:00am	Poornima / Satyanarayan Katha
Sunday 09/25/05	11:00am	RIACC General Body Meeting

## News You Can Eat ( Rekha Kumar, HOW Food Committee)

Ever since the Hall of Worship was started, our community has come together and various activities are being held throughout the year. The general consensus is that we should continue these activities. However, we are serving food, i.e. lunch/dinner/snacks very frequently including all kinds of sweets we call Prasad. Since we are all health conscious we need to look into this matter closely as a team. We know that fresh fruits, dried fruits, nuts are good for the health.

Does our religion require that "Prasad" should be in the form of sweets? I don't think so. I suggest we serve heart healthy nuts, fresh and dry fruits and restrict sweets to very special occasions like Murthy Sthapana, Divali, Satyanarayana Katha and Fund Raising events. We can also add seasonal berries like strawberries, blue berries, black berries, cranberries and various other fruits to our fruit bowl which at present consists mainly of apples, oranges and bananas.

In our cooking we can add cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage to our standard potato dish.

This practice might help foster healthy eating habits in our youngsters who might remain healthy into the 50s and beyond. They will then not have to import medications for cholesterol and other ailments from India since these drugs are very expensive here. However, some host families might want to offer Prasad to God as sweets on their special day of puja. Certainly, they should be allowed to do that but the key is in their hands. They can control the amount of incoming sweets, at the same time make sure every one gets the same small amount of Prasad. In our visits to temples in India including the famous one at Tirupathi, we noticed that sweets are not always offered as Prasad. Sometimes "yellow rice" is offered – which is not even a sweet. When sweet is offered, the portions are miniscule in comparison to what is served in our Hall of Worship functions. We spoke to Sri Ronur Murali avaru the head priest at the Nashville Ganesh temple who echoed these very sentiments. They offer a small quantity of rice as Prasad and whenever sweets are offered they are offered in measurably small quantities.

I have gleaned the following information from the publication **Hem/Onc today** of September and October 2004 which I wanted to share with readers of this esteemed quarterly:

1. **Walnuts:** Walnuts are rich in protein and have no cholesterol. They are also good for the heart.
2. **Milk:** Leads to lower incidence of colorectal cancer. It is a good source of calcium for the bones. If you are a vegan – one who doesn't consume dairy products- some of the non-dairy sources of calcium are Tofu, spinach, okra and white beans.
3. **Blueberries:** Number one cancer fighting antioxidant.
4. **Peanuts:** Reduces the risk of gallstones and is a good source of fiber.
5. **Eggs:** A source of lutein which is important for the eye (protects against macular degeneration and cataracts). Of course, you cannot bring eggs to the Hall of Worship.
6. **Citrus fruit:** Prevents colon cancer. Grape fruit promotes weight loss and decreases the risk of cancer in smokers.
7. **Broccoli:** Blocks breast cancer cell growth. Cranberries also help in fighting not only breast cancer but also other forms of cancer, including cancers of the prostate, colon, lung and brain.
8. **Tomatoes:** These are rich in Lycopene. There is evidence that incidence of prostate cancer is decreased with high consumption of tomatoes and tomato based products.

Putting all this information together, I hope we will come up with new ideas and thoughts for our own benefit.

### Email Updates

If you would like to receive email updates on HOW activities, please submit your email address to [how@riacc.us](mailto:how@riacc.us). In addition please add [how@riacc.us](mailto:how@riacc.us) to your address book to ensure receipt of the emails.

## **A Hearty RIACC Welcome to Rushmie and Mandeep (G S Kumar)**

What makes RIACC run like a well oiled machine? Answer: It is our hardworking volunteers. High on this list are Members of the Executive Committee and Hall of Worship.

These volunteers keep track of our finances, are responsible for arranging the many excellent programs and activities that we have come to expect, keep us informed about them through e-mails and finally they are responsible for bringing out this excellent newsletter. I could go on and on, but I am digressing.

In this issue we wish to highlight one of our hardworking and elegant co-Secretaries: Mrs. Rushmie Bakshi and her family. Rushmie is married to Mandeep Bakshi who graduated from Government Medical College, Amritsar and came to Canada in 1992. There he met and married Rushmie in Halifax, Nova Scotia. They both moved to the States in 1994. Mandeep did his residency in Internal Medicine and Fellowship in the Pulmonary field. He is currently finishing a second Fellowship in Sleep disorders. When not at work, Mandeep is into gardening, traveling and he is an excellent tennis player.

Rushmie, who needs no introduction, was a marketing major at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia in Canada. Apart from her role in the Executive Committee, she is also in the Food Committee – and can she cook yum, yum stuff? You bet! She is also a substitute teacher for the tiny tots in our Bal Vihar venture for younger children. As you are aware Raji Suresh takes care of the older children. You would have got a glimpse of Rushmie's talents if you attended the Fashion Show for children held during our anniversary celebration on May 7<sup>th</sup> at the Hall of Worship. From her narrative of the participants it appeared we were attending a Fashion Show in that capital of such shows – Paris, France. Rushmie's hobbies are reading, handicrafts, dancing, cooking, entertaining and traveling. In addition to being a full time "soccer mom" she is also active in PTA and the AMA Alliance.

Mandeep and Rushmie are blessed with a charming daughter Moneesha, who is eight, and will be in the eighth grade and a dashing son Nishant who is five and will start schooling in the first grade come Fall. While Moneesha learns piano and is into ballet, Bharatanatyam and Scottish Highland dancing, Nishant dabbles in gymnastics and some Tae Kwon Do.

Rushmie says "When we moved to Johnson City, we had no plans to stay. But when we looked at the benefits we get with the Temple and the local Indian community, and compared them with the problems of big city life, we realized that the Tri-cities offers the best of both worlds, and decided to stay!"

We are indeed fortunate to have such a talented family in our midst. We wish them a long, happy and memorable stay in the Tri-Cities area, and hope they decide to stay here till Mandeep's retirement.

## **The Great Epic - Ramayana (J B Mehta)**

Ramayana has remained popular among Hindus for centuries. Why this ancient story has remained in the heart of the millions for so long?

For some it is a story of Lord Vishnu's incarnation. It has appealed many because it is a story of our life. Common people want kingdom where weak and poor are taken care of. Ram's ability to kill Ravana is our hope. Good will win over the evil. In today's politics we see corruption. Evil power controls the government and financial structure. We hope some RAMA will come from heaven to solve our problems! In reality it is the divine within us that needs to stand up. Here is the spiritual metaphor of Ramayana:

King Ram is the son of Dashratha - Ten essentials of body. Five elements and five senses. Sita represents material world of Satvic nature. Soul or Atman and Pure nature need to stay together.

Demon Ravana kidnaps this prosperity of the material world. Sita becomes Maya and falls in love with a golden deer. Thus separation of Ram and Sita creates chaos. In Lanka of Gold there are three Gunas: Ravans is Tamas. Kumbhakarna is Rajas. Vibhishana is Satvic. Satvic comes to the inner spirituality: Shri Ram.

Mind is like a monkey. When the mind has devotion it becomes Hanuman. He finds Sita. Rama kills evil power within us. Now the satvic nature and materialism of moderation are one. Shri Rama the inner awareness is in command of the life.

Where Ram and Sita rule the kingdom our life, everybody is happy. This is Ramrajya. Our divine consciousness and material needs should remain in harmony. We need the strength to kill Ravana – our ego and lust.

RIACC Hall of Worship  
P.O. Box 411  
Kingsport, TN 37662

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## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

### Marriages

- Nina Kutta (d/o Dr. & Mrs I Narayan Kutty) with Michael David Gregory on 18th June, 2005 in Kingsport, TN
- Mridula Bagrodia (d/o Rajni and Sriram Bagrodia) with Jesse Livingston Watt on 9th July, 2005 in Kingsport, TN

### Special Recognitions

- Sandeep and Lini Bhatia's daughter Divya received the Best Student Award in 6th Grade. She got all 100's in TCAP. She received a medal in Violin, with a score of 1 at a local competition in Kingsport. Their youngest daughter Shreya received Academic Excellence and Honesty for the 4th Grade.

*Please submit any significant events in your family to [how@riacc.us](mailto:how@riacc.us) for publication in the next newsletter.*

**Please visit our website for updated Program information - <http://www.riacc.us>**

### Directions to the Hall of Worship:

From Johnson City - Take I-181 (I-26) towards Kingsport. Take Exit 49 (Rock Springs Exit). Take a left on the RAMP and see below

From Kingsport: Take I-181 towards Johnson City. Take exit 49 (Rock Springs Exit). Take a Right on the RAMP and see below

Drive about quarter of a mile and make a left turn on to Westfield Road, immediately after the Power building. Drive about half a mile and keep right on the fork onto Westfield place, the third building on the left is Hall of Worship.