

**Regional Indian American Community Center (RIACC)
Hall of Worship and Amy Community Center**

Non Profit, Tax Exempt Organization 501 c(3) [Tax ID: 62-1497843]
PO Box 411, Kingsport, TN-37662

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

Quarterly Newsletter [April - June 2007]

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Programs July - September 2007

Date	Time	Event
Sunday 07/22/07	11:00am	Vishnu Sahastranam - No Lunch Program
Saturday 07/28/07	6:00pm	Sunderkand Path - Organized by Raji Suresh - Pot Luck Dinner
Sunday 07/29/07	11:00am	Guru Poornima - Satyanarayan Katha: Sponsored by Prema and Guruprasad Cuddapah - Lunch provided
Saturday 08/04/07	3:00pm	RIACC Summer Picnic - Warriors' Path State Park, Shelter # 1 (Don't miss this one!)
Sunday 08/05/07	11:00am	Bhagvad Gita Discussion - No Lunch Program
Sunday 08/12/07	11:00am	150 Years of First Freedom Fight & 60 years of Indian Independence - Speakers: Dr Jay Mehta and Ret. Prof John Lyle
Sunday 08/19/07	11:00am	Sunderkand Path - Organized by Seema and Puneet Goenka - Pot-luck Lunch
Friday 08/24/07	6:00pm	Tentative: VarLakshmi Pooja (Interested in organizing the program? Contact Brinda Gala @ 423-288-8501)
Sunday 08/26/07	11:00am	Vishnu Sahastranam - No Lunch Program
Tuesday 08/28/07	6:00pm	Poornima - Satyanarayan Katha/Raksha Bandhan: Sponsored by Rama & Mahendra Sharma - Pot-luck Dinner
Sunday 09/02/07	11:00am	Bhagvad Gita Discussion - No Lunch Program
Tuesday 09/04/07	6:00pm	Krishna Janmashtami: Dinner provided by Rama & Mahendra Sharma
Sunday 09/09/07	11:00am	Bhagvad Gita Discussion - No Lunch Program
Saturday 09/15/07	6:00pm	Ganesha Chaturthi: Details will be sent by email
Sunday 09/16/07	11:00am	Sunderkand Path - Organized by Manju & Narayan Kutti - Pot Luck Lunch
Sunday 09/23/07	11:30am	2nd Annual Golf Tournament (See page 2 for details) 11:00am - Vishnu Sahastranam - No Lunch Program
Wednesday 09/26/07	6:00pm	Poornima - Satyanarayan Katha. Sponsored by BK & Kalyani Gupta - Pot-luck Dinner
Sunday 09/30/07	11:00am	Bhajans - No Lunch Program

Hall of Worship Hours

**Sun-Fri: 10:30am-12:30pm (Sun open till 2:00pm)
Sun-Thurs: 6:00-8:00pm; Sat closed
Aarti on the days that HOW is open: 12:30pm and 7:30pm**

2nd Annual RIACC Golf Tournament

WHEN: September 23rd, 2007

WHERE: Crockett Ridge Golf Course, Kingsport, TN

TEE TIME: 1:00 pm

LUNCH: 11:30 am to 12:30 pm (Sitar Restaurant) at the Crockett Ridge Picnic Shelter

GREEN FEES: \$75/person, Minimum 3 players per team

(RIACC WILL NOT FORM TEAMS THIS YEAR)

Note: If someone wants to play and does not have a team we can help them put one together.

SIGN UP DUE DATE: *August 31st, 2007*. Send your team name and handicap to Ashok Gala at agala57@yahoo.com



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

(1) Hole sponsors \$150

(2) Cart sponsors \$50

2006 RIACC Golf Tournament History:

- 33 golfers participated
- Winning team shot 9 under par
- Winning team was Gopal Vimber, Neal Delwadia & Dinkar Patel
- Longest drive 320 yards and winner was Gopal Vimber
- Closest to the pin won by Dinkar Patel and Rajni Patel
- Door prizes were won by Gopal Vimber and Neal

☀ RIACC Summer Picnic ☀

3:00pm - Saturday August 4th, 2007

Warriors' Path State Park, Kingsport, TN - Shelter # 1

Celebrate the beautiful Tri-Cities Summer with:

- ☀ *Delicious 'Chaat', Tandoori Chicken & more*
- ☀ *Games for Kids & Adults*
- ☀ *Badminton, Volleyball & even Cricket!*
- ☀ *Unlimited Drinks to Cool You Down and....*
- ☀ *LOTS of Fun-loving People!!!*

Bring family & friends; especially those who have recently moved to the area for a warm welcome!

New & Improved RIACC Website- Poorvi Tiku & Megha Narang

We are proud to present to you the **new and improved** **RIACC website!**

Same address <http://www.riacc.us> - with a modern look and easy to use design!

Our goal is to make this a primary source of information for our community in the Tri-Cities and surrounding areas. Give us a call if you are interested in publishing your business information on this website. We are working hard to publish all relevant content, so stay tuned for more information coming soon.

This site was developed by **Nitin Narang and Devender Mallya** without charging a penny to RIACC, so please extend your gratitude when you see them next.

Contact: Poorvi Tiku @ 423-239-9530 or Megha Narang @ 423-343-5243 for more information

Fifth Anniversary of the Hall of Worship - G S Kumar

This year was the fifth anniversary of HOW and it was timed to coincide with Mother's Day and celebrated on May 12 and May 13, 2007 with the usual attention to detail that we have come to associate with this well anticipated event. Both days were beautiful with plenty of sunshine and pleasant temperatures.

Saturday May 12 began at 6PM with Sodashopachar or sixteen steps to performing deity worship. The steps were explained succinctly by our amiable priest Dr. Surendra Kumar Mishra who has won the heart and soul of all members of the Hall of Worship during his short stay here.

At 7 o'clock the children put up an impressive variety entertainment show. It started with Ganesh bhajan performed under the able direction of Deepa Raman by Alka and Suraj Sudershan, Aysha Patel, Roshan and Janaki Srinath and Soham Belgode. Daasana Maadiko song performed by Janaki and Roshan Srinath followed. Finally, a delightful Bharata Natyam show was put up by Aysha Patel, Alka Sudershan and Janaki Srinath. Nila Patel deserves credit for providing inspiration and training over a span of over two years to this group of talented children and others at HOW.

Marsha Girish from whom we have come to expect perfection in her dance routine did not once again disappoint us. She danced to Dheem Tare na from the movie "Takshak". Marsha is a girl of many talents and competes for St. Mary's Middle School swim team.

Finally Jeopardy came back by popular demand. The Smart Team (mainly women) were pitted against Mukaddar ka Sikandar (all men). Under threat from the women that they wouldn't get their food in the house if they won, the men gallantly let the women win by a score of 2800 points to 2400 points. This event was put together by our energetic and pleasant President Brinda Gala.

Poorvi Tiku, Nitin Mahalle and Megha Narang presented it on this day while Devender Mallya was the much harassed score keeper.

We also learnt that Nitin Narang and Devender Mallya are in the process of revamping our HOW website.

Mothers Day (May 13) was again a beautiful and crisp day and Nila Patel was there to greet the ladies with a bouquet. The day started at 10 AM with Navachandi puja (hawan) performed by Dr. Surendra Mishraji our priest. The highlight of the puja was the "swaha" energetically and loudly recited by the congregation as they poured ghee and other puja "samagri" on to the bonfire at the command of Mishraji.

Abhishekham and bhajans followed the havan. The deities were very tastefully decorated for the alankar and brought the congregation to appreciate the hard work performed once again by Manoj Srinath and his group. Manoj has helped with Abhishekham each and every year that we have performed this ritual.

Bal Vihar kids were again there to surprise us with their talents. Under the able direction of Raji Suresh they recited Vedic chants. These children put to shame us adults who could not match the recitation done effortlessly by them. Alka Sudershan displayed the best smile after her routine. Others who performed just as well were Janaki and Roshan Srinath, Suraj Sudarshan, Aysha Patel, Ashika Hira and Soham Belgode. Sohan at four was the youngest participant.

Shri Surendra Mishra then surprised us by his command of English as he spoke eloquently about the role and significance of mothers in India. Mishraji pointed out that in our tradition mother comes first and then the father. For example we recite "Twameva mata" before "Twameva pita"- You are my mother, You are my father. Isn't this a remarkable thought? In Christianity God is said to have created Adam first and then Eve. In the Hindu tradition, it is Eve first and then Adam.

The food was delicious on both days and was provided by Sitar on Saturday evening and Sahib Restaurant on Mothers' Day. We wish to state that both restaurants didn't charge for the yummy meals provided by them.

It is also worth mentioning that Anil Agrawal and Manoj Srinath have both contributed immensely to these annual anniversary celebrations. Between them they have taken care of most of the activities of each and every one of the five years.

While on this topic of passing kudos, I wish to mention Poorvi Tiku who in her modest and self-effacing manner does a lot of things sort of in the background. She has been the sole editor of this RIACC Quarterly now for over two years. She does not even write her name as the editor on these exceptionally produced newsletters that we have come to expect regularly so I wouldn't be surprised if many members don't even know she is the sole editor. Please compliment her when you next meet her. Bringing out a newsletter requires a lot of effort and time.

Preventing Osteoporosis - Rekha Kumar

Osteoporosis is a disease in which the quantity of bone is reduced as a result the bones becoming weaker and consequently they are more likely to fracture. In women over the age of 50 there is more incidence of osteoporosis fractures than heart attacks, strokes and some cancers. Osteoporosis is silent till fracture occurs.

The best way to diagnose osteoporosis is by taking a specialized X-ray of the bones using DEXA (Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry) This test takes only a few minutes.

Osteoporosis is now a treatable as well as a preventable condition. The DEXA test in addition to differentiating those who have osteoporosis from those who do not, also detects those who are likely to develop osteoporosis at a later stage and can predict the risk of fracture.

It is never too late or too early to prevent and treat osteoporosis. Lots of medications are available to prevent osteoporosis and treat it when it develops. These medications are however toxic especially on the stomach and are difficult to comply on a daily basis. Prevention is the best policy and can be done naturally or with addition of dietary supplements.

What is required is:

- Adequate dietary calcium intake
- Regular physical exercise

Recommended daily requirement of elemental calcium (mg) is:

1. Adult men and pre-menopausal women	1,000mg
2. Pregnant/nursing women	1,200mg
3. Post menopausal women	
Not on hormone replacement therapy	1,500mg
On hormone replacement therapy	1,000mg

The approximate calcium content of foods rich in calcium is given below:

Milk (one glass)	300mg
Yogurt "dahi" (one cup)	400mg
Cheese one oz	200mg
Cottage cheese one cup	125mg
Broccoli (one cup)	130mg
Calcium fortified orange juice (one glass)	300mg

One can thus calculate very easily how much calcium he/she is getting from the diet. Then if necessary one can take calcium supplements like Caltrate, with Vitamin D. Also available are Oscal, Rolaids, Tums, Viactiv and Citrical. Some of these may not have Vitamin D in it. Vitamin D is necessary for the absorption of calcium.

It is very important to drink plenty of fluids when taking calcium supplements to avoid the risk of getting kidney stones. (renal calculi).

It is not a bad idea to get a bone density test (DEXA scan) so that you know where you stand in terms of your bone health and consider the above recommendations.

As always it is best to consult your physician before taking any medications as well as supplements

Source: ETSU Osteoporosis Center Pamphlet

Not IDOL Worship but Moorti Puja - Hari Puranik

IT always bothers me to read opening of new Hindu Temples in this country as Idols Installation and Idol worship etc. In other words, Hindu Gods and Goddesses are referred to as "Idols" by even educated Hindu Scholars. As a nation, India has come a long way in understanding and interpreting English language but there are quite a few words which are still not quite understood by Indians.

The history of introduction of English language in India is very painful. British not only conquered India in late 18th century but also subjected majority of Indians thru Mental Hardship by passing into law in 1835 "Macaulay's Minute on Education". Thus the policy of the British Raj called for not only study of English language by Indian Students but required that instruction in all courses of study at the college level should be given through the medium of English language. This formidable obstacle for Indian students seemed proper for vast majority of Christian Missionaries and Evangelical leaders in England.

The Christian missionaries and the British Govt. in India used the word "Idol" to denigrate and put down Hindu religion. The dream of Christian missionaries was to convert Hindu India to Christian India so that they can continue their occupation.

I have heard the story of an Indian clerk who worked in District Collectors office for many years. This was way back when very few Indians knew or understood English language. District Collector was a big white chief and had a local Indian Head Clerk to help him collect taxes, maintain law and order, act as a Judge etc. There were several regular clerks who worked in the office and did not know any English language. One day this Indian Clerk told his wife he was very happy because his White Sahib spoke to him. His wife asked him "What did he say?". He told her that White Sahib said "You are a bloody fool". He did not know what the word "fool" meant. That was many years ago.

Even at present time very few Hindus know the proper meaning of word "Idol". Webster's dictionary defines "Idol" as a "False God" or "a form or appearance visible but without substance".

In Hindu religion, deity represents a particular manifestation of Brahman. Hindu deity is as real as the Reality itself. Thus Hindu deity is neither a "false God" nor it is without "substance". There are two reasons for falsely labeling Hindu deity worship as idol worship. 1) Non Hindus look down upon Hindus as idolaters. The scriptures of some of these religions specifically instruct their followers to oppose idolaters and smash their temples, images and icons 2) Hindu scholars and religious leaders have not taken trouble to explain to other religious leaders that Hindu Gods are not idols.

Pandurang Shastri Athavle of Swadhaya Pariwar has written a good book about Moorti Puja. He explains it as a "Perfect Science". Moorti Puja helps develop our mind. When our mind takes the shape of Moorti that state is called "Ekagrta" (Concentration). The quality of Moorti purifies our mind. When mind is purified our life expands our horizon.

I have come across several Sanskrit words where English translation does not do justice. In other words the meaning is lost in translation. Of course as I have described before the word "Idol" has been deliberately chosen by Christian missionaries and we must drop this word and refer to it as Moorti in our Hindu Temple literature. We also need to contact press particularly Indian Press, and ask them to change the vocabulary from "Idol" to "Moorti" as the word Idol is offensive and insensitive to Hindus.

There has been lot of interest in Hindu Philosophy and Religion in Western countries for the past 25-30 years. There is also lot of scholarship on subject of Monotheism and Polytheism. Alain Danielou, a Frenchman, calls "Monotheism dangerous because of its consequences. It is a projection of the human "Self" into the divine sphere, replacing love and respect for the divine work as whole with fictitious character, a kind of heavenly king who governs human affairs..... Monotheistic religions have served as an excuse for persecutions, massacres, and genocides; they fight each other to impose the dominion of their heavenly tyrant on others.

We confuse what Hindus call *ishta devata*., "the chosen god" that aspect each of us chooses to worship as a representative of the divine with the cosmogonic reality of the Universal Being.....Who knows through what aspect of the world the experience of the divine will one day be manifest to us? "

My Free Ad - Andy Delwadia

When I read the recent RIACC newsletter that mentioned about advertising your businesses in the newsletter at a nominal charge, I was excited. I badly need to increase my business. I am losing my patients left and right, some of my patients have permanently moved to India. Some patients are themselves becoming Doctors and chipping away more businesses. And many other Indian patients have found out that they have more choices now. There are more younger, smarter and good looking Indian Doctors available in town. I lost them too. With three children, two in college and one on the way to college, I can't afford to lose any more patients. So I decided to put an ad in this newsletter. Only one problem - "nominal charge". You know I am a Gujarati (seen that movie 'Guru'?). Charge is not acceptable, no matter how nominal - since any kind of charge cuts into profit. So I figured out to write an article (which is free) with commercial that I won't have to pay for. So here is my free ad.

"Come one, come all - we have a new and improved Doctor Delwadia. He recently colored his hair to dark black, attended Deepak Chopra's motivational course and also read a book about Eight Habits of the most successful people. He also practices yoga regularly.

We are very flexible about new patients. We accept patients regardless of age, sex or your background as long as you are covered by good medical insurance. We even accept Republicans.

Lately we have Summer Giveaway going on, that will end shortly. During summer if you come for a complete physical at regular price, we will throw in a complementary prostate exam or pap smear for your spouse absolutely free. And yes, do not forget our special 20% Christmas discount on your weight. If you visit us in December, we will document your weight in your chart at 20% less than your actual weight - so more weight you have, more you lose instantly.

Still skeptical? Need references? Call my mom in India - she swears that I am the best Doctor she has seen in her entire life.

God Bless You (I am appealing to the Hall of Worship people) and see you soon in my office."

Welcome Narangs - G S Kumar

We give a hearty RIACC welcome to Nitin and Megha Narang. They have been in Kingsport since May 2006 but came into the limelight only after Megha began to show her talents. Nitin works as an IT Professional for INFOSYS at Eastman.

During their short stay here both Nitin and Megha have made a mark in our community. Nitin along with Devender Mallya is revamping our website. They have already made some changes and others like putting up photos of the 5th Anniversary Celebrations of HOW will appear soon. Keep tuned or shall we say keep clicking on the website.

Megha Narang has joined the Executive Committee as an Assistant Secretary and you must have noticed the informative e-mails that she has been sending lately. Nitin and Megha hail from Punjab but have lived mostly in Gujarat.

Megha went to Kendriya Vidyalaya in Rajkot and followed it up with a BSc in Zoology from University of Baroda, followed by a Masters in Social Work, Human Resource Management and Labor Laws. She worked for Alembic Chemicals in their Pharmaceutical Division in Baroda and also for Kirloskar Cummins in their Automobile Sector as a Human Resource Manager for two years.

As if that were not enough, she taught Human Resources and Organization Behavior for ICFAI National College in Mangalore, Karnataka.

Megha and Nitin were married in 2004.

Megha is wondering how best she can improve upon her stellar education and experience. Maybe she should get into a PhD program in Business Administration. Granted we are being a little selfish. That way Nitin and Megha will be in the Tri-City area a little longer - no a lot longer. They will become rich and give big bucks to the Hall of Worship. Now is that too much to ask?

Why Hindu-Gurus do not teach “Ancient wisdom” of India to any non-Hindus?

Dr Jay Mehta

Christian missionaries go all over the world to spread the “word of God”. Islam is one of the fastest growing religions. Recently 50,000 Dalits in India converted to Buddhism. In summer many Gurus and Swamis visit USA, but their teaching is mainly to the Hindu- NRI’s. Why not spread the wisdom of the East to the rest of the world?

Here is my answer, what is yours?

* In seventh century when Buddhism was growing in India, Adi Shankara taught “adwaita” of Upanishad. He thus reconverted many Buddhist back in Hinduism.

Swami Vivekananda was not reluctant to teach Hindu philosophy to the Westerners. Swami Prabhupada started “Here Krishna” movement, which raised Krishna consciousness in the West. In 18th chapter of Geeta, Lord Krishna says: “One who spreads this teaching to others is my favorite devotee.” So there is nothing in our ancient tradition that stops us from teaching Vedic philosophy to the non-Hindus. We should share our knowledge with both Hindus and non Hindus.

* Hindus do not have one definite set of essential teaching. So there is no uniform “curriculum” that we can present to the world. Every Guru teaches his own cult.

* Most Hindu Gurus are not fluent in English. Many Sanskrit schools do not teach English as a language to the Hindu priests and Pundits.

* There is no National Institution that supports Hindu missionaries to go abroad to teach ancient “wisdom” of India. I am not talking about spreading religion.

* Hindu teachers do not give formal education to ALL the Hindus in India. Where is the question of giving such education to the non Hindus in the world? There is no Maderesa or Sunday Bible class.

* In the past crossing the ocean was considered sinful.

* Hindu Gurus take the attitude of “master” rather than “servant” of the Dharma. When Christian missionaries go to remote places they go as “servant of the Christ”. Most Hindu scholars do not study the theology of other religions either. Unless we study Bible and Christianity, how can we understand the western mind set?

*There is a fine difference between preslytization and teaching. Hindus need to know the difference and let their feelings known.

*A united effort to teach Hindu Dharma is not developed yet. There is no international body that promotes Hindu teaching as a non profit institution. If such organizations exist people are not aware of their efforts. Ram Krishna mission is perhaps an exception.

*Developing a long range project to publish “Encyclopedia of Hinduism” is NOT an answer to this problem.

* We NRI must teach Hindu Dharma to our children. I am not talking about rituals or Moorty Pooja. I am referring to the teaching of Geeta, Upanishad and moral values. Do not depend on cult Gurus and religious heads to solve our problems.

Submit articles for Q3 Newsletter to how@riacc.us or contact Poorvi Tiku at 423-239-9530

“Thank you!” - As of June 2007 67 families in the community have paid \$100 (or more) towards the RIACC Membership/Maintenance Fees

Significant Events & Other News

- *Pramod and Ila Shah celebrated the first birthday of their grand daughter Ashna on April 28th at Sahib Restaurant and all family members and friends were in attendance. Ashna is daughter of DRS. VISHANT AND ARUNA SHAH and proud sister of her brother SUREN*
- *Wedding on April 7, 2007 in Kingsport, TN - Shivani Gupta (d/o Kalyani & BK Gupta) & Krishna Mukkamala. Shivani graduated from Medical School of Virginia on May 15 and is currently doing he residency in Anesthesia at Columbia University, NY*
- *In the month of April, during Satyanarayan Katha, Pramod Shah had a presentation on Mahavir Jayanti and Jainism. It was well received and good participation of audience in question/answer session after the presentation*

HOW 5th Anniversary Donors - Special Recognition

The Executive Committee and the RIACC Board would like to express their gratitude to all donors. This was a record year for Fund Raising.

We had pledges in excess of \$16,000. A sincere THANKS to all for the support!

Platinum Sponsors (\$1000 or above)

Mandeep and Rashmi Bakshi * Summit and Noni Bakshi * Vinay and Rakshita Belgode * Ashok and Brinda Gala * Puneet and Seema Goenka * Anil and Deepika Tumkur

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Maha Prasad

Sitar Restaurant * Sahib Restaurant

If we have missed anyone, please accept our sincere apologies and let us know so we can include your name in the next newsletter.

Directions to the Hall of Worship:

From Johnson City - Take I-26 towards Kingsport. Take Exit 6 (Rock Springs Exit). Take a left on the RAMP and see below

From Kingsport: Take I-26 towards Johnson City. Take exit 6 (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.