



# HAAS Connect

HOUSTON AREA AMCHIGELE SAMAJ

Newsletter June 2011  
Volume 3, Issue 1

## What's new at HAAS?

It has been couple of quarters since last issue of newsletter was published. During this time, the HAAS has been as jubilant as always with new membership and leadership changes. We welcome our new members to Houston and hope that they actively participate in HAAS events and enjoy the great company of fellow members.

Last year also marked a change in leadership within the HAAS organization. The outgoing management committee handed over the baton to a group of enthusiast Amchis to carry on the HAAS tradition of organizing fun filled

community events. The current management committee would like to thank the outgoing committee members for their hard work, dedication and putting together a strong framework to ensure continued success of our mission (details on last page).

### The outgoing management committee

*President :* **Chetan Bhat**  
*Vice President:* **Gaurang Haldipur**  
*Secretary:* **Umesh Baliga**  
*Treasurer:* **Shanti Bhatt**  
*Asst-Treasurer:* **Nikhil Baliga**  
*Youth Coordinator:* **Ian Rao**

### The new management committee

*President :* **Gautam Shiralkar**  
*Vice President:* **Raghavendra Shenoy**  
*Secretary:* **Rajnish Kelkar**  
*Treasurer:* **Arundhati Nagarkatti**  
*Asst-Treasurer:* **Narendra Rao**  
*Youth Coordinator:* **Sunil Pai**

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## 2011 Membership

### Have you forgotten to renew your membership?

Many of you have renewed your fees during past events.

There are still some that need to renew their membership. The fees are as follows:  
Single Person - \$15  
Family of two - \$25  
Additional member - \$5/each person.

Please contact Gautam Shiralkar:  
[gautamshiralkar@hotmail.com](mailto:gautamshiralkar@hotmail.com) for more details on membership benefits.



## Satyanarayan Puja – Feb 12th

**Our HAAS Satyanarayana Puja on Feb 12th at the Eldridge Park Community Hall was a great success.**

We had about 90 attendees (33 families) of which 11 families performed the Puja. The priest was **Sri Doraiswamy Bhattar**, from Sri Meenakshi Temple. We had fantastic participation from all including the children especially .... **Neha, Pranav, Rohan, Rohit and Nishant** who read the Satyanarayana Katha with great interest and enthusiasm. Many thanks to them for their great work.

The weather was perfect...cool but bright and sunny, so lunch was served outside. It was catered from **Heritage India** and people enjoyed the delicious lunch some sitting inside and others outside in the wonderful sunshine.

### **SPONSORS:**

Thanks to Sharada & Sadananda Pai who sponsored the priest dakshina and lunch.

Special thanks to our numerous volunteers who helped serve food and clean up the hall quickly after the event.

This year we also held our very first **“Konkanis Kare; You CAN Make a Difference”** Food Drive for the Houston food bank to coincide with the Satyanarayan Puja. This idea was conceived and planned by **Anisha Kelkar** and there was good participation by families who attended. The Houston Food bank is grateful to all who donated. Our goal was to collect 150 cans and we almost made it. With your help and support we hope to have a similar drive at more HAAS functions in the future.

### **Financials:**

Collections: \$1,178

Expenses : -\$898

**Nett : \$280**



## Spring Fling – Apr 16th

The **Spring Fling** held on April 16th at the Bear Creek Park was very enjoyable, eventful and a fun event. Thanks to all who participated with so much enthusiasm and gusto.

The picnic started off with a nice **breakfast** of Danish pastries, muffins, fresh fruits like Bananas, Apples and Strawberries! There was also orange juice, hot tea and coffee. After a good breakfast everyone was enthusiastic for a game of cricket and all had a go at practicing their batting and bowling. The HAAS men, even women and kids **'in Blue'** are all really wonderful cricketers!! From the display of talent and the huge hits and strong bowling it looks like we have quite a **few talented cricketers** in this group who might even make it in the **'Men in Blue'** or IPL league some day.

After everyone had burned off calories and loosened up a bit, we gathered for some kids games. **Sunil Pai** orchestrated the children's events very well and did a great job. There were lemon and spoon races, 3 legged races, sack races for the kids and this was followed by the same events for the adults.

In the meantime the children were getting impatient for the **Easter egg hunt** and while no one was looking the parents and older kids went and hid the eggs in various locations. All the children had whale of a time hunting and gathering the eggs and enjoying the candy and toys inside.

There was no way to keep the **cricket** enthusiast quiet and they were again back on the pitch for another round of some cricket. We had a few **Tendulkar** and **Dhoni** kinda shots and some very serious **Malinga** kinda bowling!!

By then everyone was so ravenously hungry that by the time the food arrived at 1 pm everyone had worked up a huge appetite. The kids attacked the **Pizza** and the adults tucked into the food catered from **Heritage India** which was simply delicious. The **Pav Bhaji** was divine and so was the **Pulao** and **Raita**, **Onion salad** and **Papads**.

After a good meal, everyone was in a mood to play some gentler indoor games. So it was time for **Bingo**. **Riya** and **Allison** did a great job conducting this session and calling out the numbers. **Jayant Kabad** had a lucky winning streak and walked away with the line and full house prizes. The other winners were **Chetan Bhat** for line and **Heera Lotlikar** for the diagonal.

After the Bingo, **Ramakrishna Prabhu** satiated crowd's thirst with snow cones. He did an awesome job and everyone enjoyed it. Then was time for **Taboo**. **Raghavendra** introduced this game to all and there was a fun match between the guys and gals. We aren't sure who actually won at the end of the day but all had great fun.

By then the **Samosas** had arrived and everyone paused for a snack to relish the Samosas with sauce and tea/coffee.

The next event was musical arms and it was conducted to a wonderful **"country road take me home"** John Denver's song rendered beautifully by **Mahamaya**. Even though everyone was tired after having had so much fun by now they still wanted the all time favourite of **tug-o-war!** So it was first the kids ....Boys vs Girls followed by older Guys vs Gals. Some very interesting and strange strategies were deployed to try and ensure victories on both sides.

We then had the **prize distribution** for the winners of the races and to all the kids who participated.

The HAAS Management committee would like to thank all who chipped in to help set up, organize and clean up.



### Financials:

Collections: \$ 650

Expenses: -\$ 788

**Nett : -\$ 138**

## Amchi kid makes it big



HAAS is pleased to announce that our own Sunil Pai (son of Sujata and Nagaraja Pai) is one of the 40 selected nationwide this year for the Intel Science Talent Search, the national stage for America's best and brightest scientists and researchers. He went to Washington DC for the finals which included meeting with President Obama in the Whitehouse.

The intel STS has been going on for the past 70 years (used to be called Westinghouse Competition). Thus, Sunil has joined a very special group of talented individuals, 7 of whom have gone on to win the Nobel Prize in the past. In addition, only 75 kids from the State of Texas have achieved this honor in past 70 years.

For more details please visit <http://www.societyforscience.org/sts/> . You can see Sunil in the picture top row, 4th from the left.

Sunil has admissions to MIT, Stanford, Princeton, Rice, Yale and Caltech. Sunil will be attending Stanford University this fall.

**Congratulations on your achievements, Sunil...you make us all proud and a true inspiration for all our youth amchis. Best wishes to you from all of us at HAAS on all your future endeavors.**

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## Karate Kid Nishant enters National Championships

The Texas State Championships and National Qualifier was held on May 21st at Kennedale High School in Kennedale Texas. Nishant Kelkar took part in the 12-13 year old category for 2 events – the Kata and the Kumite (sparring) and won two silver medals, one in each event. Nishant is now scheduled to participate in the USA National Karate-do Federation (USA-NKF) championships at Arlington, TX on 14th July

([www.usankf.org](http://www.usankf.org)) where the US National team will be selected.

We wish him all the very best in the national championship tournament.



**Feel free to contact the HAAS Management committee to have your kid's significant achievement published in future HAAS Newsletters.**

## Usage of 'double rhyming' words in Konkani - A humorous write-up - Anonymous

Our language, konkani is enriched with many *double rhyming words* (English examples:

**murmur, pompom, tartar**) wherein the first half of a word is repeated within the same word. Moreover these words express what our senses feel. Now, let us get to the article.

One fine morning, my friend **Gulgulo** invited me for a coffee and panchadik (chitchat). **Gulgulo** is his nick name, since he is fond of **gulgule** (earthen pot) water. He pours **kiTikiTi** (boiling) water into the pot and allows it to cool overnight. As I entered Gulgule's home, a **ghamgham** aroma of freshly prepared coffee welcomed me. Then a bowl full of **hunihuni** chakkuli straight from the frying pan, arrived. **Ekek** (each one) tasted differently. If first one was **nurnuri** (crispy), the second one was **kurkuri** (crunchy), and the third one was **kaTkaTi** (hard nut) that I felt my teeth would break off. I had **churchur** (worry) about tooth damage for a while. The last chakkuli was **chivchivi** (soft) specially pulled out of the frying pan when it is half fried.

Slowly my friend opened the topic of interest: "Come on, listen to me" he did **gusgus** (whisper) into my ears – "marriage date fixed, it is on 4th Sunday, and you are my **doDDo**" (one who sits besides bridegroom in the mantap until bride joins - a sort of a best man).

**Haahaa** he laughed and served me a sweet: sheera. It was **pichipichi** (soft), and I felt the **guLiguLi** (globules) in my mouth, but it was very tasty.

Just as I emptied the plate, the bride walked in. The **KuTkuTi** (hefty Orwell built) bridegroom, my friend **Gulgule** had selected **asaTsaTi** (brisk) walking bride. Ms. **SaTsaTi** hoom **galgalthaa** (was sweating profusely). Her mother proudly said "She drinks 8 cups of water, and walks **aaTaaT** (8) kilometers daily. She is dieting, eats **thode thode** (little quantity at a time). This is all to get into a great shape, before the marriage." I thought "All this will be short lived. She will be back to her normal **gulguli** (plumpy) shape within a month after marriage." But then, it is called a sign of progress, happiness, and prosperity.



On the day of marriage, we got up **phalphalleri** (before sunrise). The sky was cloudy, typical weather in west coast of India during monsoon. We experienced **piripiri** pavsu (drizzle) at the beginning. In minutes the sky was over cast, exhibiting nature's wonderful light and sound

show **jhagjhagu** (lightening), and **guDuguDu** (thunders) followed by **dharandhar** (continuous downpour). We prayed, **deva deva** (O God), please spare this day for the marriage.

One year passed. Gulgulo was busy with **baabbaak nunnun, kokko, m ammam** etc.(feeding milk, rice, eatables to **AmmaNNU** the baby), cleaning up the **jijji** (mess). This was followed by a **jojo** (song) to induce **thaathi** (sleep) to the baby. Soon the baby learnt to speak words such as **amma, ajjo, mamama** etc. Probably Konkani is the only language with a voluminous vocabulary specially constructed for toddler's use only. Child loves to wear **bamba** (jewels), place a colored **thitho** (dot) on the forehead, apply **theththi** (oil) onto hair, comb and decorate with **puppaa** (flowers), put on colorful **chocho** (dress), and go to the temple to do **pampa** (namaskaar). Now **AmmaNNU's** taste buds are active, she says **mimi** (chilli) is hot, **bobbo** (dosa) is tasty, **kekke**(banana) is sweet etc. She likes to go **peppe** (outing), loves to watch **memme** (fish) in the pond, gaayi (cow) feeding **nunnun**(milk) to **buchchi** (calf), **kaakkamam** (crow) picking the food spilled on the deck and then go **burraa** (flying away), **kokoko**(chicken) following its mom,

## Usage of 'double rhyming' words - continued

**bowbow** (dog) wagging its baala (tail), **meowmeow** (cat) drinking milk and then sounding **purrrurr**.

Children catch **jigjigi** (twinkling) fireflies in the night, and scared to see the eyes of **gugumu** (owl). Generally babies are afraid of **gongo** (strangers) with **gugum** (long gowns). Children are fascinated to see large animals like elephants, whale, or a **jugjug** train. They love to play **kuku-achchi** (a hide and seek game) that starts with a **kukkuli** (whistle).

As **AmmaNnu** turns one, she eats fast **gabgabi** khaathaa, then tries to **ibbi ibbi** raab (stand up),

and doing **chant chant**(taking baby steps). She tries to **dhavnu dhavnu vaggi vaggi** (run fast) but falls down **bumma** and gets **bubu** (hurt). Watching her we, **poNu poNu**. haasta i.e ROFLOL, Rolling On Floor Laughing Out Loud.

What is the origin of word Konkani? I guess, it is **koNikoNi**, easy to speak language by **koNi** (any one) to **koNi** (any one) with great flexibility and high level of blend-ability of any number of local or foreign words. I have a bunch of friends who speak Konkani, start with a few words in Konkani: haava sangthaa, then fill entire

sentence with **gaDbad** (hurry burry) English. We are proud to have Konkani jibbe ruchi taste, culture and traditions.

Probably names such as **Kaikai** in Ramayana, **Dumdum** airport in Kolkatta, **Murmura** Sea in Turkey, **Tsetse** insect of Africa, **Alfalfa** grass, must have Konkani influence. Let me stop this **karkari** write up or **baDbadi** talk at this stage lest readers might get maththek **kaNkaN**.

Please feel free to **DabDab** knock at the author's door any missing words

## Sanjay Bhat wins the National Award in Journalism

Sanjay Bhatt, son of Ashwin & Kasturi Bhatt, is recipient of the Gannett Foundation Award for Innovation in Watchdog Journalism. In partnership with the Gannett Foundation, the Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA) recognizes groundbreaking work that creatively uses digital tools in watchdog journalism. The winning entry was a Sept. 5 story, "Rescue from foreclosure? Frustration, anger grow," which documented problems in the federal loan modification program and was accompanied by a data

visualization using data from the Treasury.

**Congratulations, Sanjay!**



## Ira Domnitz's new venture

HAAS member Ira Domnitz has left his previous firm Winstead PC to partner with Mr. Kelly Stephens in the formation of the new law firm Stephens & Domnitz, PLLC. The firm's practice areas include general commercial, business, intellectual property law, and litigation, as well as wills and trusts. Stephens & Domnitz PLLC does not do family or criminal law. They have offices in the Galleria area as well as 59 at the Beltway. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Ira Domnitz at 832-567-2765.

## Mark your Calendars! Upcoming Future Events in 2011

Janmastami on **September 10th**, venue TBD

Diwali on **November 5th**, venue TBD

Have you checked out  
our website?  
[www.ourhaas.com](http://www.ourhaas.com)

## IDEAS?

HAAS has been created to preserve and promote our culture so that we can pass it on to our future generation.

We would like to hear from you on how we can make our organization work for your benefit.

If you have any ideas for good events to drive youth involvement, member involvement at all age levels – we would love to hear from you.

Also if you have feedback on how we can improve, we would like to hear from you.

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## Houston Area Amchigele Samaj

[www.ourhaas.com](http://www.ourhaas.com)

HAAS has been formed to provide a common meeting ground for the Amchigele's residing in and around the Houston area.

Our mission is to

- Preserve and promote our culture, tradition and deep rooted heritage.
- Pass on the values and spirit of our culture to generations after us, and
- Provide an opportunity to network socially and professionally with other Amchigeles.

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