



## What's been happening?

It has been quite some time since our newsletter has been published. But we have been extremely busy as an organization and had several events that were well attended and supported by you.

The Summer Bash was held on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, Janmashtami was held on August 15<sup>th</sup>, the Annual Meeting was held on Sep 19<sup>th</sup> and the Diwali function was held on Oct 10<sup>th</sup>.

### Next Big Event? – **Winter Socializing Event- at a Restaurant!!**

Based upon the responses you have provided, the Restaurant was voted as the event to have

in December. This event will be held at **Ashiana** Restaurant. The estimated dinner costs are as follows:

#### MEMBERS

\$25 – Adult/youth

\$18 – 5-12 kids years of age

Free: below 5 years of age

After Dec 6, add \$5.00 late fee for each category.

#### NON-MEMBERS:

\$32 – Adult/Youth

\$18 – 5-12 years of age

Free: below 5 years of age

After Dec 6, add \$5.00 late fee for each category.

We plan to have Karaoke, Anthakshari, interactive activities and plenty of networking /socializing opportunities.

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## 2010 Membership

### Have you forgotten to renew your membership?

Many of you have renewed your fees during the Diwali drive. 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 note that memberships are for named individuals.

Your membership helps us to achieve our mission (details on last page).

## Diwali Wrap-Up - Oct 10th, 2009

The HAAS Diwali program out to be a fantastic event with 146 persons in attendance! We were very happy to see you all and look forward to your continued participation at our future upcoming HAAS events – potentially for the upcoming Winter Bash that is being planned.

In addition to the commencement prayer and invocations, the Diwali event was filled with a variety of entertaining programs such as shlokas, songs, violin, keyboard and dance performances by children of all age groups, interactive sessions with the audience, a Konkani skit, comedy and jokes, Hindi songs with orchestra, and karaoke.

### THANKS

Namrata Sirur and Nikhil Baliga for their entertaining emcee'ing.

Pushpa Desai and few others for coordinating the prayer and aarthi.

Meera Lotlikar and Kumud Nilekini for

singing the invocations.

Kids and Young Adults: Saisha, Uma and Rohit Kamath, Neha and Rohan Bhat, Ketaki Joshi, Pooja Nayak, Nikhil Baliga (Jr), Ria Rao, Shivani and Amrith Lotlikar, Samhita Bhat, and Sheela Prabhu. **Special thanks goes to all their parents.**

The skit 'Konkani School of Acting' was enacted very well by Gauri Sirur, Chetan Bhat, Deepa Karkal, Sharda Pai, and Pratik Karkal.

Hema Kamath and Chaya Ubhayakar for their lively interactive sessions.

Venkataramana & Prabha Pai for their amusing real life Korean experiences.

Deepa Karkal for her entertaining standup comedy.

Hindi music singers and orchestra: Suresh, Kusum Pai, Ramkrishna & Maya Prabhu, Sharda Pai, Shanti Bhat, Pushpa Desai, Ravindra Pai, Raghavendra Pai, and Umesh Baliga for their time and efforts in several rehearsals which resulted in a great program.

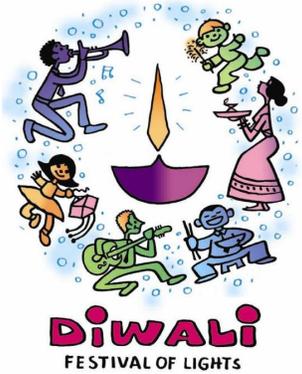
Neela Kamath, Archana

Rao, Madhav Ubhayakar, and Ramesh Kamath for their karaoke singing.

Mohan Bhatt for his superb, extempore English songs.

Special mention goes to Prashant Lotlikar, Sadananda & Sharda Pai, Kumar & Gauri Sirur, Raju & Hema Kamath, Pushpa Desai, Suresh & Kusum Pai, Prabha & Anu Malya, Ramkrishna & Maya Prabhu, Madhav & Chaya Ubhayakar, Shanti & Mohan Bhatt, Ratnakar & Lata Bhat, Ravindra & Shanthi Pai, Venkataramana & Prabha Pai, Sunil & Sandhya Shenoy, Pramod & Archana Rao, Prakash, Deepa, & Pratik Karkal, Didi & Nikhil Baliga, Ian Rao, Gurudath Kamath & Nikhil Nayak for selflessly volunteering their help, and to the families of the HAAS Management Committee who tirelessly supported the MC on all phone conferences and get-togethers to help make this program a grand success.

If you are interested in getting DVD copies, please contact Shanti Bhatt and/or Chetan Bhat.



## Sandwich Seva – October 24th, 2009

The October Sandwich Seva was quite a hit. We had a fair turn out from our HAAS families who woke up early on Saturday morning to attend this event.

The hosts for this event were Bala and Archana Gadiyar. They had made some very good breakfast for the participants.

The adults had a good time socializing and

helping to prepare the sandwiches. The kids were very active and prepared all the lunch bags.

We prepared around 180 lunches and drove downtown to hand them out to the homeless people. The folks who received the lunch bags were very appreciative and thanked and blessed the kids.

To top it all, Bala then treated all of us to some

good cup-cakes at Craves.

It was an enjoyable event. We thank Bala and Archana for hosting this event.

We would also like to acknowledge our past hosts as they play a very key role in keeping this event lively. They include: Vasudev & Shobha Shenoy, Ramachandra & Prabha Malya, and Satish & Jyothi Baliga.



## HAAS Bhajans

Bhajans are one of our important events of our organization as they align themselves to some of our main objectives.

HAAS members and friends meet every

month at one of the member's house and participate in chanting and singing Bhajans. The October Bhajans were held on October 11<sup>th</sup>. The host for this event was Mrs Pushpa Desai.

Our next HAAS Bhajan is being hosted by Narendra and Gayathri Rao and it is scheduled for Nov 14<sup>th</sup>.

## Annual Meeting 2009 - September 19th, 2009



The Management Committee (MC) expressed their gratitude to all members for participating in all events and making it a great year for HAAS.

In the meeting, MC covered the highlights of all the activities performed during the year. We launched the website as a communication medium. We have heard from folks across the globe due to the website. The newsletter has been very well received and we have received a few inquiries

for advertisements. The cost for a quarter panel (on side) is \$25 and a half page ad is \$50.

MC reviewed the Financials in detail. The members present appreciated the level of detail maintained and how the financials were balanced.

There were several decisions that were approved:

Procure 4 wireless mics, 3 regular mics, and necessary cables.

Change the membership model to ensure it is fair and matches up with new increase in costs.

Charge for events in advance for better planning of food and other logistics. Have tiered event fees for members, non-members, and for those who want to pay at the gate.

Do nothing more for increasing participation at the Bhajans.

There was a discussion on building a temple using land donated by a HAAS member. It was proposed that the current land being proposed be swapped for better location and this proposal be put forward to a wider audience within HAAS. A separate board of trustees was recommended.

## Janmashtami 2009 – August 15th, 2009



The Janmashtami event was graciously sponsored by **Kasturi and Ashwin Bhatt**. Due to this sponsorship, we were able to subsidize the event even for our non-members. The evening was filled with a variety of entertaining programs like bhajans, fancy dress, interactive Lord Krishna story-telling and quiz, dance performances, Dahi Handi and then the

finale with Dhandiya. We would like to thank all of you without whom this program would not have been such a success, especially:

Parents and their kids who participated and made the program a success  
Bhajan singers for their time and efforts in rehearsals which resulted in a great show  
Vinay Pai for playing the table.

Pushpa Desai and Ramkrishna/ Maya Prabhu

for bringing the idols, decorations, backdrops, etc

Pushpa Desai for coordinating the Dhandiya  
Sharda Pai for making the prasad (godha phova)  
Jayant Kabad for providing the dahi handi equipment  
Anushri, Anshul Haldipur and Anasuya Kabad for their wonderful story telling and quiz on Lord Krishna. AND

All our eager volunteers for helping set up the stage, hall, serving the dinner, cleaning up, etc.

## Summer Bash Wrap Up - May 23rd, 2009

Our young MCs Anushri Haldipuri, Nikhil Baliga, and Ashwin Prabhu did a great job compering the entire evening.

The evening was kicked off with a Bhajan by Meera Lotlikar. After which we had our youngest star

Uma dancing with her brother Rohit Kamath. Varun Nayak did a good job of singing a Marathi song - and he doesn't know Marathi! This was followed by a splendid dance performance by Neha Bhat and Ketaki Joshi.

Ria Rao did a marvellous Carnatic song. Rohit Kamath did a unique of presentation of chanting shlokas and playing them

on his violin. This was followed by the drama Vailoo Kaloo (Time & Place) performed by Hema Kamath, Deepa Karkal, Chetan Bhat, and a budding star – Rohan Bhat. We had a splendid dance performance by Monica and Megan Rao. We had a professional stand-up comedy act by Sundry Srinivasan.

To keep the audience continuously engaged, there were songs performed by Ramkrishna & Maya Prabhu, Madhav & Chaya Ubhayakar, Prashant Lotlikar, Suresh & Kusum Pai, Gautam & Usha Shiralkar, and Vasant Bhat peppered with mini-skits by Hema

Kamath, Deepa Karkal, and Chetan Bhat. All-in-all it was very good and enjoyable evening. The dinner was catered by Udipi Cafe. We also tried out an idea proposed by some members and made the left-over food available to all of our members for a nominal cost. This was well received by everyone.

We would like to thank everyone who made this evening a huge success. Thanks to all participants and volunteers who helped setup the stage, musical instruments, audio equipment, stage-backdrop, tables, assist in serving food and cleaning up.



Location will be announced soon

## Winter Event 2009 – Planned on Dec 12th, 2009 at Ashiana Restaurant

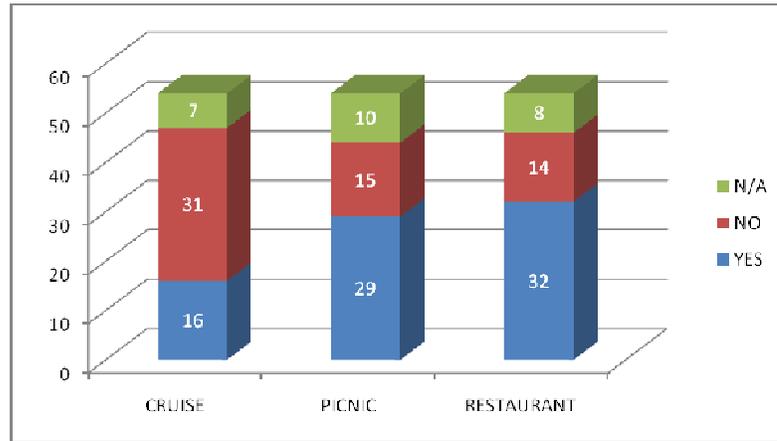
We thank the folks who responded to our survey request to provide feedback on what event we should have for winter. There were 3 options that we were considering: Cruise, Picnic and Restaurant. We received a total of 54 responses and based upon your responses, we found that Restaurant won over the Picnic by a small

margin of 3 votes. We are in the process of arranging the logistics for the Event.

The event will be held at the Ashiana Restaurant. More details on this will be sent via email. So please keep your eyes open for this. We would love to see you all and have a good time to interact and have fun.

We would love to hear from you if you have any thoughts, ideas or feedback to make this a fun event.

The results of the survey are provided for everyone's benefit.



## Congrats!! – Sanjay Bhatt



New York, Oct 1: Two Indian American journalists bagged the prestigious 2009 Knowledge@Wharton Awards for Business Journalism on Wednesday, Sep 30.

The Indian origin winners are **Sanjay Bhatt**, an enterprise reporter for The Seattle

Times & son of Ashwin and Kasturi Bhatt, and Sonia Narang, a journalist with NBC News in New York.

The awards provide journalists with a scholarship to attend the prestigious Wharton Seminars for Business Journalists at the Wharton School of

the University of Pennsylvania in Oct 2009.

## What's happening in Texas? – contributed by our members



### **NEW LAWS:**

**HB537** requires all occupants of the vehicle, no matter their age, to be secured by safety belt, no matter where they are seated in the vehicle.

**SB61** requires child younger than 8 years of age to be restrained in approved child safety seat unless the child is at least 4'9" tall. Tickets will be issued starting June 2010.

**HB55** makes it illegal to

use wireless communication device in school zone unless vehicle is stopped or hands-free device is used.

**HB 2730** requires that all applicants under the age of 18 take the driving skills exam to receive a driver license. The law also requires that a provisional driver license (under 18) or instruction permit expire on an individual's 18th birthday

**HB 339** increases the total hours of behind-the-wheel driving instruction a teen receives from 14 to 34 and creates an adult driver education requirement for applicants older than 18 and younger than 21.

**HB 558** allows minors to be charged with public intoxication.

**Read about DPS @:**  
[www.txdps.state.tx.us](http://www.txdps.state.tx.us)

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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