

Konkani Express

July 2014



PHOTO:
Nikhil Baliga

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Message from the HAAS President:

Hi Everyone

Summer has started in earnest. It conjures up visions of vacations, lazy afternoons and cool drinks! The month of Shravan starts soon bringing with it a host of Indian festivals and occasions for the whole community to get together. Our newsletter has grown to reflect various topics and opinions presented by a veritable cross section of our community – ranging from school age kids to seniors! Reading their erudite articles and compositions makes me proud to be part of this vibrant, intellectual community. Do keep sending us your articles, opinions, poems etc.

I would also like to ask you all to seriously consider serving on the next committee. Together we can make great things happen. Each committee brings new ideas and new approaches which helps to bring about changes while providing continuity.

Have a nice safe summer.

Truly
Maya Prabhu

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HAAS Committee bids farewell to one of their own



The HAAS Committee met at Udupi Café, Sugarland to bid au revoir to one of their members. Mrs. Sucheta Kini will be returning to Bangalore, India along with her family to pursue prospects there. While wishing her the very best in her future endeavors, the Committee stressed that her helpful, pleasant countenance, her community spirit and her contributions to Houston Area Konkanis would indeed be missed.

The function was graced by the presence of Mrs. Sudha Pai, President of GSB Sabha, Mumbai who appreciated Mrs. Sucheta Kini's contributions. It was an opportunity to review the warm ties Houstonians share with Mumbai and working together towards common goals. Mrs. Sudha Pai conveyed thanks to the Committee for remembering deserving Konkanis in India during their celebrations and encouraged them to continue their efforts.



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HAAS hands out the GOLDEN KEY AWARD!

Commented [MRP1]:



Mrs. Radha Golikeri is awarded the very coveted Golden Key Award!!

During a glitzy ceremony sponsored by family and friends to honor Mrs. Radha Golikeri "Amulpachi" who had turned 90 years young, the HAAS Committee seized the moment to honor this matriarch of the Konkani Community and to recognize her decades of tireless service not only to the Konkani Community but also to the community at large including many "senior" citizens much younger than herself.

Maya Prabhu, President of HAAS explained that the Golden Key Award is being awarded for the first time in the history of HAAS. It does not mean the Key is Golden. It is only awarded to the person with a golden heart who has, with much love and caring, exhibited decades of tireless proactive service to the community. This nontransferable Key opens the doors of all HAAS functions to the awardee for free.

Mrs. Radha Golikeri who already hold keys to all our hearts was gracious enough to accept the award. She addressed the gathering with an inspiring speech to always do one's best for one's community and country.



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Konkani Gem shines bright!!



While precious gems at the Museum of Natural Science in Sugarland sparkled radiantly, all agreed none shone as brightly as our own Konkani Gem, Mrs. Kumud Nilekeni, who was feted by family and friends on her 80th birthday.

Mrs. Kumud Nilekeni was recognized for her multiple artistic talents ranging from her exquisite single line drawings to her ability to create and sing melodious musical pieces. While acknowledging that words could not do enough in describing this multitalented artist, all speakers emphasized that we are indeed privileged to have her in our midst!

Family members thanked her for being a pillar of strength and source of inspiration to each and every one of them.



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Keeping Up with the Konkanis
Kanchan Kabad
President, IACAN

Youth Correspondent Nishant Kelkar explores the various facets of Mrs. Kanchan Kabad in his in -depth interview!!



What brought you to the US and what did you first do when you came here and what has it led to now?

I came here as a student, and I actually came here to do my PhD in clothing and textiles. I had got admission in Charleston University in Illinois but when I came here it was a kind of a cultural shock to me. The very fact that I had to stay in a co-ed dorm, where boys and girls live together, was very new to me. Coming from a small place like Sirsi in Karnataka, it was quite a cultural shock for me. So I decided not to go to

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that school, and instead I did my MBA from Wilkes-Barre and I stayed with my sister, who lived in Hazelton Pennsylvania, which is about 35 miles from Wilkes-Barre. I took evening classes and I would drive to Wilkes-Barre every night in the snow and fog. So it was, quite an experience for me. Then, I got married and moved to Houston. Here I joined the University of Houston in their drama department. I worked there as an instructor and a costume shop firmer. I did that for almost 10 and a half years. At that time, Jayanth (my husband) who had a business in financial planning needed help as his secretary had just quit. So instead of hiring a new secretary, he suggested that I join him so that we could together run our own business. That would be rewarding both financially and be more satisfying than a job at the University. So I quit that job and I joined Jayanth in running and growing our own business. Since I had the MBA background, it helped me in this too. So that's where I am now.

Tell me your interest in sports and how you got into that. It has been inspiring to hear you running in marathons throughout the years so please tell me more about it.

Back in India I used to be an athlete for school and college and I used to participate at the University level. But the sports I played were shot put, javelin and discus throw, nothing running related as of yet. After that I took a back seat in sports. Three years back my father passed away with cancer and it made me think that I had to do something to support and raise money for cancer. I basically wanted to do something to have peace-of-mind and to also give back to the community. So I started running marathons. I run for a cause and my cause is to fight cancer ... to raise awareness to eliminate and prevent Cancer and help people fight the disease.

Is this what got you into IACAN as well?

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Well, I had just joined IACAN during the time of my father's illness. But, my passion grew more after his death. That's where I am now, and I am now the President of IACAN.

As the President, what is your overall mission?

Well, IACAN is mainly a resource network. The mission of this resource network is to support and educate the Indian American community affected by cancer, raising awareness of cancer and providing support. My dream for IACAN is to make it something like the American Cancer Society and to bring it to the same caliber if not greater than it.

You touched on why you like to work with cancer patients, would you like to add more to that?

Mainly I wanted to give something back to the community. With respect to Indian Americans, when it comes to cancer or any disease in particular, we people are very secretive. We tend to not tell anyone or discuss it with others, so that brings about a lot of emotional suppression and stress about the disease. What I feel is that we have to make people more aware of the prevention strategies and how to manage it if unfortunately one is ever diagnosed with cancer. Spreading awareness is the key. Ultimately what I really dream is that IACAN will become as great as the American Cancer Society. Whenever anyone thinks of cancer, they think of the American Cancer Society, but I also want them to think of IACAN.

I've truly seen your interest in costume designing as seen in many public productions as well as in UofH. . What got you into the arts in the first place?

I always loved costuming. And of course that was my background, having studied clothing and textiles and having worked in the UofH drama department. Costuming is

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my passion. After I quit my job at UofH, I always wanted to do something, like freelance, and volunteer for different costume making/designing opportunities. I have volunteered for Chinmaya Mission, and many schools and different theatre groups. I love theater so being involved in drama is also one my passions.

What other forms of art are you interested in?

I like to paint. My paintings are like backdrops, not really intricate paintings. Another form of art that I like is sewing.

Looks like you have done a lot of charity and community work in the society.

IACAN is basically is a charity and is purely volunteer work. I do spend a lot of time working for IACAN. And of course since I have this talent of costume designing, I do it as community work. And I like to help people, whenever and wherever I can!

Finally, what do you wish to tell our youth and community in HAAS and elsewhere?

I think I would tell the youth that there are a lot of opportunities in life and each moment is precious and to make good use of it in helpful ways. Give yourself to community in your time, money, effort to be an overall good citizen.

---- Nishant Kelkar, Sugarland, Texas

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The ...E... life!!!!

In this world of E-mails, E-ticket, E-paper, E-recharge, E-transfer...

Never Forget "E-shwar (God)"

who makes e-verything e-asay for e-veryone e-everyday.

"E" is the most Eminent letter of the English alphabet.

Men or Women don't exist without "E".

House or Home can't be made without "E".

Bread or Butter can't be found without "E".

"E" is the beginning of "existence" and the end of "trouble."

It's not at all in 'war'

but twice in 'peace'.

It's once in 'hell' but twice in 'heaven'.

"E" represented in 'Emotions'

Hence, all emotional relations like Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, wife & friends have 'e' in them.

"E" also represents 'Effort' & 'Energy'

Hence to be 'Better' from good both "e" 's are added.

Without "e", we would have no love, life, wife, friends or hope

& 'see', 'hear', 'smell', or 'taste' as 'eye' 'ear', 'nose' & 'tongue' are incomplete without "e".

Hence GO with "E" but without E-GO.

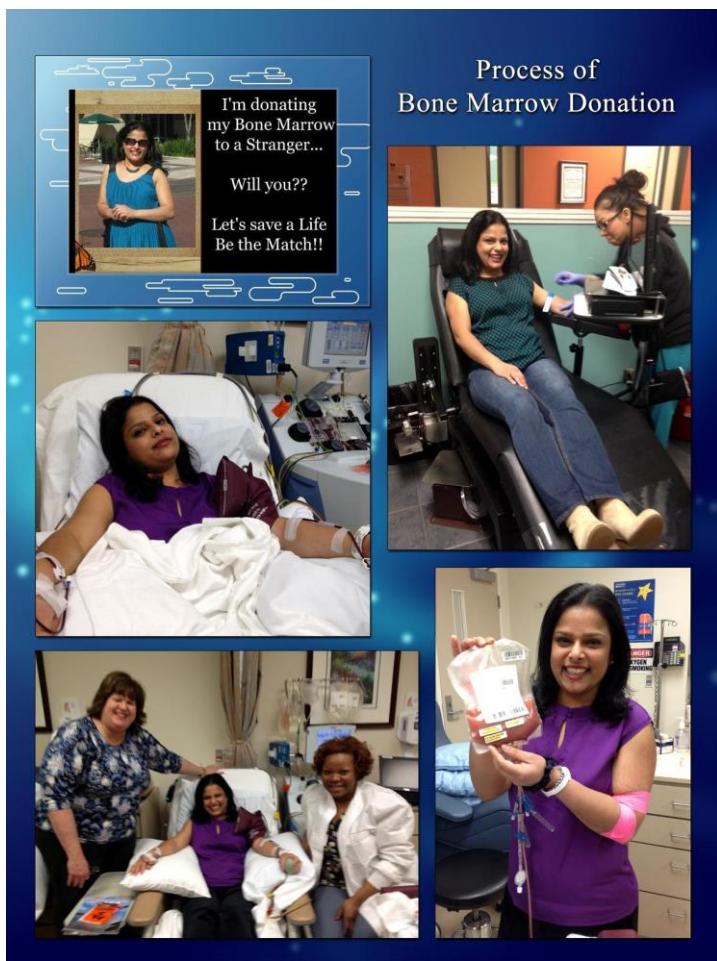
-- Thanks to Jyoti Nayalkar, Sugarland Texas for the submission



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Bone Marrow Donors

For patients with life threatening cancers like Leukemia, Lymphoma, Sickle Cell and several other diseases, the only possible cure is a Marrow Transplant. Some patients are able to get the Transplant from a sibling, but most have to rely on an Unrelated Donor. Nowadays Bone marrow/stem cell donation became very easier with many doctors opting for PBSC (Peripheral stem cell) method of extraction. This process is similar to what is used when donating blood platelets. Recently Gayathri Rao donated her stem cell/Bone marrow to an 11 year old boy suffering from Leukemia. Here is her testimonial.



Gayathri Rao

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When I got a call from the “Be the match” coordinator that I’m a potential match, I was happy and very confused. Happy that I can actually save someone’s life, confused as I have heard that there are dangers associated with the bone marrow donation and need weeks to recuperate from the procedure.

But knowing that I can’t say No to such a noble thing, I gave consent for further testing for compatibility. I was so shocked and pleased when the Bone marrow coordinator called me back after couple of months with the news that I’m the perfect donor for this particular patient. She explained that I will be donating my bone marrow for an 11 year old boy in India. When I heard that, the mother in me woke up. Being a mother to 2 kids ages 15 and 9, I know I’ll go to any extent to save my kids life and this was no different. I can save a child’s life.

The reaction from home was disbelief and the big question of how we are going to go through this with a busy work schedule and responsibilities. But once you make up your mind, everything is possible. With a very supporting family behind me at home and an understanding boss who appreciate what I’m doing, I knew we will get through it without any complications.

The patient’s doctor chose PBSC (Peripheral Blood Stem Cell) process for the cell extraction. PBSC donation is a non-surgical procedure. For 5 days leading up to donation, you will be given injections of filgrastim. Filgrastim is a medication that increases the number of blood-forming cells in your bloodstream. On the day of donation, blood is removed through a needle on one arm and passed through a machine that separates out the blood-forming cells. The remaining blood is returned to you through the other arm.

Apart from having the fear of needles, everything went smooth with the injections. I had some body aches and head ache, but it went away when I took pain medication like Advil. The PBSC process was not painful, just uncomfortable. You have to stay hooked on to the machine for 5 hours continuously while the blood keep circulating through the machine and the cells get separated. My very supporting husband stayed with me the entire time without even stepping out once.

The whole process of donating bone marrow made me realize that how such a small inconvenience on your part can be a lifesaver for someone and how misinformed most of us are about the process. My very well meaning friends messaged me asking me to reconsider bone marrow donation as they thought I’m putting myself in danger. But at the end I’m glad that I listened to my heart and went along with the procedure.

I think all healthy people should register in “Be the match” directory and be ready to get that magic call that you are matched up with a donor and can be a potential life saver. It’s such an easy and humble thing to do.

If I ever have to do it again, I won’t think twice!!! Well, If It’s so easy to save a life, why don’t we all do it?? I encourage all my friends and family to get registered at <http://bethematch.org> and be ready to save a life!!! And when that magic happens and you are matched up with a patient, please don’t think twice before committing to be a life saver and bone marrow donor[©] after all everything else in life can wait!!! But you may be the only hope for a cancer patient and their families, who cannot wait longer!!!

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I have always appreciated my life and never took it for granted. But being through this experience definitely made me a more content and happy person.

As some wise person has said

“A meaningful life is not being rich, being popular, being highly educated or being perfect.it’s about being real, being humble, being able to share ourselves and touch life of others. It is only then that we could have a full, happy and contented life”.

Please visit <http://bethematch.org/> for more information and to sign up.

If you are in India, Please register with **Datri** at <http://datriworld.org/>.

For other countries, you may find a registry near you from

http://marrowdrives.org/bone_marrow_donor_programs.html#international_marrow

Your Attention please!

The Committee announces:

1. Janmashtami Celebrations will be held on August 17th at 3232 Austin Parkway Community Hall
2. Townhall meeting will be scheduled. Date and location TBA
3. Thanks to Madhav Ubhayakar for his help in web maintenance and updates.
4. Thanks to Umesh Baliga and Ashwin Bhat for their help in updating HAAS Sound system. The old speakers and mixer was traded in for new, lighter state of the art ones.
5. Thanks to Chaaya Ubhayakar, Gayathri Rao, Maya Prabhu and Shanti Bhatt for hosting HAAS Bhajans this quarter.
6. Thanks to all contributors of articles to the Konkani Express and Junior Correspondents for their insightful interviews,
7. Thanks to all volunteers who help make our functions enjoyable and successful.

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Peanuts and Snoopy

Snow drifted from the white sky into the blizzard on the busy cold street,

The layers of snow were so deep that it even covered little Lucy's feet,

"Help!" she called trying to get her warm boot out of the ground tugging with all her might,

Snoopy came and tried but it was wedged in the snow deep, snug, and tight,

Woodstock called all of his friends and they gathered 'round they pulled, they pushed, and upward they flew,

Finally! At last out the fuzzy boot came like a root from the ground, what a stubborn shoe!

They shivered all the way to Charlie Brown's house hidden in their coats frozen cold,

When they reached, they celebrated with hot cocoa, and put the star on the tree shimmery, bright, and gold,

Then, defrosted their hands in mittens by the warm relaxing fire,

Finally, Linus pointed out the misty air and the faint dim of Christmas lights and the sunset, a real something to admire

--- Mallika Nagarkatti, Sugarland, Texas

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Masala Kale Chips

*Konkani Creativity & Cooking
Corner*



Kale is a nutritional Powerhouse. One cup of chopped Kale has 33 Calories, 206% of the daily value of Vitamin A, 134 % of Vitamin C, 684% of vitamin K and 9% of Calcium. It is also a good source of Copper, Potassium, iron , Manganese , Phosphorus, and eye health promoting Lutein and zeaxanthin compounds, Anyone taking warfarin should avoid taking kale since the high levels of vitamin K can interfere with the drug.

This nutritional powerhouse should be part of the Konkani diet. Maya Prabhu suggests Masala Kale chips as one good way to include it.

Ingredients:

1. Two fresh kale leaves
2. One tablespoon olive oil
3. One Teaspoon seasoned salt
4. Two tablespoons rice powder

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5. One Teaspoon Madras Curry Powder
1. Make a paste with rice powder, Madras curry powder and very little water. Add salt to taste and keep aside.
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit (175 degrees centigrade).
3. With kitchen shears, carefully remove kale leaves from the thick stems and shred into bite sized pieces. Wash and thoroughly dry kale with a salad spinner or by using paper towels. Drizzle kale lightly with olive oil and roll leaves in curry paste so it is evenly coated
4. Place paste coated kale leaves on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper.
5. Place loaded cookie sheet in preheated oven and bake for 20 minutes until edges are brown but not burnt.
6. Serve crisp kale chips as a healthy snack or side dish.
7. Enjoy!!

----- Maya Prabhu, Houston, Texas



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We welcome Advertisements!
Rates are:
Quarter page \$20.00
Half page \$40.00
Full page \$75.00
HAAS members-10% off above rates

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HAAS has been formed to provide a common meeting ground for the Amchigeles residing in and around the Greater Houston area.

Our mission is to

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

Have you checked
out our website?
www.ourhaas.co

m

Houston Area Amchigale Samaj

www.ourhaas.com

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

We would like to hear from you on how we can help our organization have greater impact.

If you have any new ideas to encourage youth involvement or any service opportunities for our organization— we would love to hear from you.

Also, if you have any specific concerns or goals you would like addresses, we hope to hear from you as well!

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