



# HAAS Connect

HOUSTON AREA AMCHIGELE SAMAJ

Newsletter Apr 2009  
Volume 1, Issue 3

## What's been happening?

It sure has been a busy time filled with mixed news. We had some dear ones leaving us, the economy tanking badly, the job market not looking too promising, but it is also lining up with some upbeat news. In HAAS, our first community event – the Sandwich Seva, was launched very successfully. In the coming days, we have another Sandwich Seva, HAAS Picnic and the SUMMER BASH! It seems like lots of activities, but rest assured, these are fun-filled events. We hope you will support us by participating in these events. More details are contained in the newsletter.

### **Next Big Event? - The HAAS Picnic!!**

If you have not already signed up for the picnic, then please do so through the Evite invite. We will be having the picnic on **2<sup>nd</sup> May** at Cullen Park, Phase II, Pavilion C. The costs for the picnic are as follows:

\$10 – Adult/youth

\$8 – 5-12 kids years of age

Free: below 5 years of age

We plan lots of fun activities like:

- Kids sports
- Cricket
- Volleyball
- Konkani idol - Karaoke
- Bingo
- Team / group sports like passing-the-parcel, tag, et al.

**Interested to volunteer?** If you would like to volunteer, we would like to hear from you!!

### Inside this issue:

What's happening?	1
Sponsorship	1
Sandwich Seva	2
HAAS Picnic	3
Bhajans	4
Summer Bash	4
Ram and Namita Nayak	5
Surviving a Recession	6
Obituaries	7
Check this out	8

## Fund Raisers & Sponsors

We are looking for opportunities to raise funds. The funds will be utilized to purchase assets like wired microphones, wireless lapel microphones for our various events.

We are soliciting **sponsors** for our various events that are planned for the year. There are four events: **Summer Bash, Janmashtami, Diwali and Winter Bash.**

Please let us know if you are interested to co-sponsor / sponsor any of these events.



## Sandwich Seva – April 25th (Saturday) 8:30 am onwards

For the families that participated in our previous Sandwich Seva, they found it to be an enriching and fun filled morning. You can check out the video of our first event at <http://ourhaas.com/events.html> and the photos at <http://ourhaas.com/24.html>. At this event, the families and kids come together to prepare

sandwiches from scratch and then prepare lunch bags consisting of sandwiches, fruits, chips, and water.

The logistics are completely coordinated by the HAAS Management Committee and we invite you and/or your kids to come join us in this community service event. The financial contributions depend on the families

that participate in the event.

The next sandwich seva will be held at Mrs Shobha Shenoy's house. Please send an email to **Gaurang Haldipur** at [gbhaldipur@aim.com](mailto:gbhaldipur@aim.com) before 23rd April if you and/or your kids would like to participate in this event.



*Cullen Park, Phase II,  
Pavilion C*

## **HAAS Picnic – May 2nd (Saturday) 9:30 am – 6:30 pm**

HAAS Picnic is on **May 2nd (SATURDAY) at 9:30 am.**  
The location is **Cullen Park, Phase II, Pavilion C** located at **18801 Saums Rd, Houston, TX 77084.**

**Location is north of I-10 and off Barker Cypress Road.**

We hope to see lots of kids and youth participating in this event.

**Entry Fee:**  
**\$10 – Youth/Adult**  
**\$8 – 5-12 years of age**  
**Free: below 5 years of age**

*If you are lost getting to the park, please feel free to contact:*

**Chetan: 281-753-9132**

**Gaurang: 281-650-5829**

**Umesh: 832-816-6625**

**Shanti: 832-858-7802**

Would you like to sing?  
We would love to hear you! Join us in Karaoke and general singing.  
**This is open to all age groups**

If you are interested to volunteer and help us out, please contact us.  
The more the merrier...



### **From North:**

*Sam Houston Tollway South  
Exit I-10 West  
Exit Barker Cypress Rd*

### **From South:**

*Sam Houston Tollway North  
Exit I-10 West  
Exit Barker Cypress Rd*

### **From Downtown:**

*I-10 West  
Exit Barker Cypress Rd*

**Cullen Park  
Phase II, Pavilion C.  
18801 Saums Rd  
Houston, TX 77084**



## BHAJANS – May 9th – 3:00 pm onwards

*Ashwin & Kasturi  
Bhatt's residence*

Bhajans are a good opportunity for our community to get together, socialize and sing bhajans. This helps us stay connected to our roots and culture. The Bhajans on 9th May will be held at Ashwin and Kasturi Bhatt's residence. A separate email reminder will be

sent two weeks prior to the event. Please contact **Shanti Bhatt** at [shantibhatt\\_2005@yahoo.com](mailto:shantibhatt_2005@yahoo.com) if you would like to participate. We look forward to seeing you and/or your family at this event.

## SUMMER BASH! – May 23<sup>rd</sup> - 5:30 pm

We are happy to announce that we will be having our Summer Bash on **23rd May**. The event is an opportunity to showcase our members' creative juices and talents. It will include cultural programs like singing (orchestra, karaoke), dances, and dramas. We thought that providing you as much advance notification as possible would enable

you to start preparing for this event. Please contact **Umesh Baliga** at [baligau@msn.com](mailto:baligau@msn.com) if you would like to participate, please respond before 27th April to allow for planning the event.

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

*Sugarland Community  
Center Hall*



We will  
miss you

## ***LEAVING FOR GREENER PASTURES IN THE CAROLINAS: April 12th***

Ram and Namita Nayak are well known to all HAAS family members. They moved to Sugar Land from **New Jersey** in 1996 and have been the driving force for so many of our community activities. As many of you know, Namita served as a dynamic Secretary for HAAS for the 2006-2008 time period and was instrumental in arranging several of the memorable social functions hosted by HAAS.

Ram continues to work for the **Shaw Group** and has

been transferred to their **Charlotte, North Carolina** operating center. Ram will frequently visit Houston on business and he has promised us that they will try and attend as many of our HAAS events as their schedule permits. Their son, Nikhil, will graduate from UT Austin in May and has accepted a position at the **Bank of America** in Houston.

The HAAS family extends our warmest best wishes to the Nayaks as they make their transition for Sugar Land to Charlotte, North Carolina.

## Surviving a Recession – Article contributed by HAAS member



Surviving during a recession is no easy task. Money is tight, and for most Americans, this means that before you were making it from paycheck to paycheck, but now you aren't. That squeeze can have many effects, many of them not just financial. Stress leads to depression, which leads to decreased productivity, and the cycle continues. The first key to surviving a recession is to realize that it will be over soon. Most recessions typically last for 6 to 18 months. This can seem like a long time during the recession, but it's really not that long in the larger sense of things.

Here are five things to do to manage during a recession:

**Refinance your mortgage.** Almost every

time we are heading into a recession, or already there, the Federal Reserve will lower interest rates to stimulate the economy. If you're in a high-rate mortgage, refinance now. Not only will it lower your payment, you'll save thousands of dollars in interest over the long term.

**If your finances are tight, resist the urge to splurge.** If you don't need it now, wait until the recession is over. You'll thank yourself later.

**Keep your job, or get a job!** Employers feel the squeeze during these times too, so make sure you are not a dispensable employee. Shape up if you have to, and make sure now more than ever you are doing what's best for the company. If you are searching for a job, don't lose faith.

Remember it is quite tough during these times to get a job and it is not a reflection of your abilities.

**If you happen to have a little extra spending cash, now is a time for good deals.** Companies need to stimulate sales, so they will be offering their best deals. Just like mortgages, if you've had your eye on something special (and you have the funds) now's the time to buy.

**Don't stress out.** If you're struggling financially, so is almost everyone else. Just track your money closely, don't spend more than you earn, and take extra time appreciating the things that matter most in your life.

## Obituaries

### **Mrs. Kusumlatha N. Rao**

There simply are no words to express the sorrow we felt when HAAS learnt about the sad demise of our beloved Kusumlatha, also known as Srimathi, wife of Narayan Rao, mother of Rupa Rao Domnitz and eldest sister of Umesh Baliga, in Chennai, India, on Monday March 9<sup>th</sup>. We know how devastating this must be for the Domnitzs, the Baligas, and the rest of the family. Srimathi passed away peacefully in her sleep due to cardiac infraction. She was only two months short of her 73<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

Srimathi was actively engaged in social work in Chennai and was a former secretary of the Saraswat Mahila Samaj in Chennai. She will be greatly missed by her family that includes her grandchildren, Rivan and Natanya Domnitz. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Domnitzs and Baligas at this sad and difficult time.

### **Dr. Nileshtar Sethuraj Rao**

With great sorrow, we regret to inform you that Rajmam (Dr. Nileshtar Sethuraj Rao) passed away on Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> in Tyler, Texas after a prolonged illness patiently borne. He had just celebrated his 80th birthday on Valentines Day. He leaves behind his wife Vasanthipachi and children, Ram Nileshtar of Lake Charles, Louisiana and Anjani Upponi of Tyler, Texas and their families along with and a very large group of friends and relatives.

Rajmam was a very successful dentist in India and he came to his country with Vasanthipachi in 1984. He was a great role model for young and old alike. Our thoughts and prayers are with the Nileshtars and their immediate family. He will be greatly missed by everyone whose lives were touched by him.

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

**Chetan Bhat:** [chetan.bhat@yahoo.com](mailto:chetan.bhat@yahoo.com)  
**Gaurang Haldipur:** [gbhaldipur@aim.com](mailto:gbhaldipur@aim.com)  
**Umesh Baliga:** [baligau@msn.com](mailto:baligau@msn.com)  
**Shanti Bhatt:** [shantibhatt\\_2005@yahoo.com](mailto:shantibhatt_2005@yahoo.com)  
**Nikhil Baliga:** Asst Treasurer  
**Ian Rao:** Youth Coordinator

## Houston Area Amchigele Samaj

[www.ourhass.com](http://www.ourhass.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.

5080 Cedar Creek Dr  
Houston TX 77056  
[Bhatta@HDTVest.net](mailto:Bhatta@HDTVest.net)

Ph.: (713) 443-6835  
Fax: (713) 622-6830  
[AshwinBhatt.com](http://AshwinBhatt.com)

**Ashwin K Bhatt<sup>\*</sup>, CFP<sup>®</sup>, CFA<sup>®</sup>, CAIA<sup>SM</sup>**  
**Bhatt Asset Management**

<sup>\*</sup>Securities offered through H. D. Vest Investment Services<sup>SM</sup>, Member: SIPC  
Advisory Services offered through H. D. Vest Advisory Services<sup>SM</sup>,  
Non-bank subsidiaries of Wells Fargo & Co., 6333 N.State Highway  
161, Fourth Floor, Irving, Texas 75038, Ph: (978)870-6000