

# Konkani Express

April 2017



## KONKANI EXPRESS

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### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Greetings everyone,

I am honored to be representing you all as your HAAS president for the next two years. Sheila, Akhila, Aparna, Archana and I, along with our youth members Samhita, Neha and Mallika, are excited about the prospect of serving our community. The HAAS group was chartered more than a decade ago so Houston Area Amchigeles could meet, promote and preserve our Konkani culture and pass on our values to the next generation. We currently have more than 100 families that are active members of this elite group.

We are a philanthropic organization and have supported multiple charity events in the past and will continue to do so in the future. In addition to the philanthropy, our monthly bhajan sessions and unique and fun cultural and religious events bring our community together where we can showcase our community's talents and enjoy Konkani cuisine. Above all, it is the camaraderie of our members that makes this community so special. You create bonds with members who become more like family than friends.

Our commitment, as your current committee, is to continue to promote and preserve our Konkani culture and values outlined above and encourage participation of existing and new members by supporting our community needs, organizing enjoyable events where we can meet and socialize and develop lifelong friendships and extended family ties.

We look forward to exciting and fun times ahead.

Sincerely,  
Jayanthi Nayak

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## THE COMMITTEE 2017-2018:



Pictured (from left to right): Akhila Bhat, Jayanthi Nayak, Aparna Shenoy, Sheila Kini, and Archana Rao

### President: Jayanthi Nayak

Jayanthi lives in Katy TX with her husband Pandurang. They have two children, Atul and Tara (Pooja), who are both currently studying at UT Austin. Jayanthi grew up in Mangaluru, India and moved to the US 23 years back and has since called Houston home. She currently works for Charming Charlie, a large women's fashion retailer. During her free time she enjoys playing Tennis, hiking, traveling and spending time with family and friends. She has been an active member of the Konkani community in Houston for the past 20 years.

### Vice President: Sheila Kini

Sheila resides in The Woodlands area with her husband, Deepak. They relocated here 4 years ago from Westford, MA where they lived for 23 years. They have a son, Sameer, who is currently a student at Baylor College of Medicine after graduating from Rice University in 2016. Sheila was born in Minnesota and grew up in Colorado where she also attended college at the University of

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Denver. She currently works at Cisco Systems in their Finance organization and is a co-lead in their Connected Women's organization, which is responsible for coordinating their yearly Women of Impact conference and fundraiser. In her free time, she enjoys traveling, trying new restaurants, and spending time with family and friends.

### Secretary: Archana Rao

Archana is the HAAS secretary for the calendar year 2017-18. She, along with her husband Pramod Rao and two daughters - Ria & Reim, reside in Katy, Texas. She is originally from Mumbai, India, and came to Houston, Texas in mid-1990. She works in the financial sector in the lending & credit department. She is very excited to be a part of an all-women committee and looks forward to meeting new members of our community.

### Treasurer: Aparna Shenoy

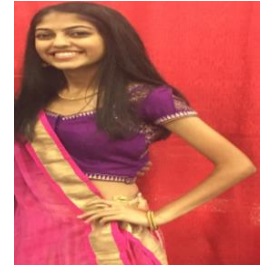
Aparna is an HR Professional and currently works for an oilfield services company in the Energy Corridor. She and her husband, Anand, moved to Houston in 2003 and have been a part of HAAS ever since. They live in Katy with their 12-year-old son, Ansh, and 11-month-old Labrador puppy, Zoey. Aparna was born and raised in Bombay, but her family is originally from Kundapur and Kanhangad. In her spare time she likes to read, travel, and socialize with friends. Aparna has always enjoyed working on cultural/community events. As a teenager, she served as Secretary of her society's cultural committee and organized activities during Holi, Ganesh Chaturthi, Diwali, etc. She was the Event Coordinator for 2013-2014 HAAS committees and really enjoyed the experience, which made her want to do it again.

### Event Coordinator: Akhila Bhat

Akhila lives in the Cypress area with her husband, Surendra Bhat, children Samhitha & Shlok and in-laws Vasumathi & Shantharam Bhat. Akhila grew up in Mumbai, India and has lived in Houston for twenty years. Akhila and her family have been involved with HAAS since its formation. They consider Houston Konkani's as their extended family. Akhila works as the Assistant Branch Manager of Children's Services at the Barbara Bush Library in Spring. She enjoys reading to children, planning and organizing children's programs. She plans on utilizing her organizational skills as the HAAS event coordinator and plan some fun programs. Akhila also loves reading, traveling, and listening to music in her free time.



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## Youth Coordinator: Samhitha Bhat

Samhitha is the daughter of Surendra and Akhila Bhat. She was born and raised in Houston and now lives in Cypress. She is a part of the Cy Ranch Marching Band and Varsity Indoor Percussion group, an officer for the Health Science (HOSA) club at school, and has been training in Hindustani Classical singing for the past 9 years. After high school, Samhitha hopes to pursue a career in medicine.



## Youth Coordinator: Neha Bhat

Neha is the daughter of Ayshwarya and Chetan Bhat, who are from Kerala and Bombay respectively, but currently reside in Katy. She is involved in Colorguard, is the founder of the Psychology Club, and is a member of various other school clubs. After high school she would like to pursue a career in psychology as a psychologist.



## Youth Coordinator: Mallika Nagarkatti

Mallika is the daughter of Mahesh Nagarkatti and Arundhati Bijoor, from Mumbai and Karnataka respectively. They currently live in Sugar Land and lived two years in Southern California. She is part of the Speech & Debate Team, a volunteering club, and Science Olympiad. She loves biology and science and would like to pursue a career in the medicine field.



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# The Konkani Badminton Club

### 1. When do you meet?

There is not any fixed schedule. Since different folks have different commitments, it is not easy to have a consistent schedule. Typically, we play Saturday mornings between 8:00 am and 11:00 am. However, there have been occasions when there is enough interest, we have played Friday afternoons.

### 2. How often do you meet?

We do not play on a fixed schedule. It depends upon availability of folks in the group. Some are regularly irregular while others are irregularly regular. When someone is interested in playing on a particular weekend, the individual posts it on the group to solicit interest and depending upon the availability of the folks, we proceed with our plans to play that weekend. Generally, we go ahead with our plans if we have at least four people.

### 3. Where do you meet?

We play at Houston Badminton Center facility in Stafford, Texas. It has 12 courts built per international standards.

### 4. Who is currently a part of it?

We have a WhatsApp group called Amchi Baddy and currently have about 18 folks enrolled.

### 5. Who can play?

Our group now is limited to men (generally 35+ plus). Sometimes high schoolers and young adults do join us. All members in the group are from HAAS community. There is no restriction but folks who have some experience playing and more importantly willing to burn some calories are generally welcome. We have heard that our group has generated interest among HAAS ladies and they are planning to start their own group which is great news. Our motto is "fun at the cost of fitness".

### 6. Is there a cost?

There is an entry fee for the facility. An all-day pass costs approximately \$10 plus tax for weekends and is valid for unlimited game time (provided courts are available) for the entire day. In addition, we expect folks to contribute shuttles on the days they play. A box (12#) of good quality shuttles costs approximately \$22.

### 7. Can people still join?

Of course! People are encouraged to join if they have a genuine interest in the game and willing to put in effort, while having fun.

### 8. Is this competitive or just for fun?

We play regulation games and compete with each other. But it is all for fun and it comes at the cost of fitness. A win-win situation!

*Courtesy of Pramod Rao*

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## **RECIPE CORNER**

### **Carrot Halwa**

#### **Ingredients:**

3 lb finely shredded carrots  
 2 sticks unsalted butter  
 10 oz whole milk ricotta cheese  
 2 cups sugar  
 1/2 tea sp cardamom Powder  
 1/4 tea sp saffron powder



Use wide, heavy bottom sauté pan. On medium heat melt butter. Add shredded carrots. Sauté for about 45 minutes. When carrots turn into rust color, add ricotta cheese. Sauté for 5 minutes. Add sugar. Sauté for another 5 to 10 min. Add cardamom and saffron powder and mix well. If you use a heavy bottomed pan, you don't need to stir continuously. This freezes well.

### **Patholi**

#### **Ingredients**

2 cups wheat flour  
 1/2 cup thick poha  
 3 tablespoons full brown sugar  
 Pinch of salt  
 10 oz. coconut milk  
 3 cups frozen shredded coconut  
 3 cups brown sugar  
 1 teaspoon powdered cardamom  
 30 haldi paan



#### **Making the Batter:**

Soak poha in one cup of water for five minutes. Blend it in a blender until smooth. In a bowl mix the blended poha, flour, coconut milk, and brown sugar, salt. Add enough water to make the batter. The consistency should be like thick pancake batter.

#### **Coconut filling mixture:**

In a pan sauté coconut and brown sugar for three to five minutes and then add the cardamom. Let it cool down completely.

#### **Preparation:**

Spread batter on haldi paan. Right in the middle of the batter put two tablespoons of coconut mixture horizontally. Fold haldi paan in half. Steam patholis for twenty minutes or so, similar to idlis.

This will make around thirty Patholis and they do freeze well.

*Courtesy of Seema Bhat*

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### *Our Traditions: Ugadi*

Ugadi, which fell on March 28th this year, is an important festival and is celebrated by Amchigele and Maharashtrian people all throughout India. Konkani's also call it Samsar Padwa and for Maharashtrians it is celebrated as Gudi Padwa. There are several rituals and customs associated with this festival.



Ugadi is the first day of the Hindu calendar, and typically falls in either March or April. It marks the beginning of the New Year. Amchigele people follow the Panchang, which is a calendar specific to Konkani events and dates throughout the year.

On the day of Ugadi, people make a mixture of powdered bitter leaf and sugar and offer it to the Gods along with the new fruits that coincide with the New Year. The premise of this ritual of eating the bitter leaf first and then the sweets after, is to symbolize getting rid of the bitterness of the previous year and starting the new year with something sweet. On this day people wear new clothes and go to the temple as well as touch the feet of their elders to get blessings for the New Year. It is also an auspicious time to do things such as buy a new house or car, start a new job, etc.



As with any special occasion, during Ugadi Konkani's make a variety of delicious dishes, such as phodi, madgane and khotto, tendle and bibbo upkari and ambat. In addition to these dishes, we also incorporate things like mango, grapefruit, and jackfruit into our meals for the day.





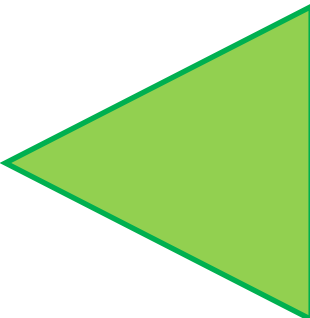
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HAAS SATYANARAYAN PUJA – FEBRUARY 2017

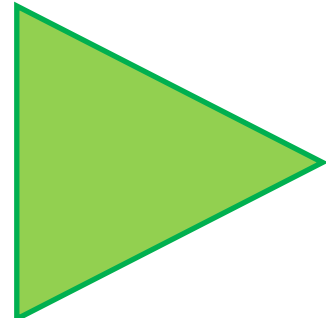


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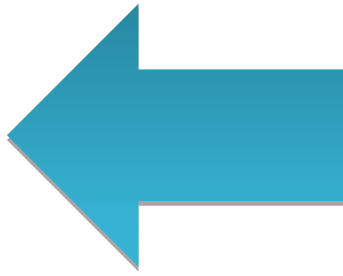
## Jokes



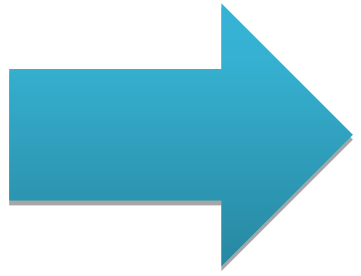
While reviewing math symbols with the students the teacher drew a greater-than ( $>$ ) and a less-than ( $<$ ) sign on the white board. "Does anyone know these mean?" the teacher asked. A boy raised his hand: "One means fast-forward, and the other means rewind"



When the teacher asked a 6 year-old student why his handwriting was not as neat as usual he responded, "I am trying a new font".



The professor's last patient for the day asks, "Tell me doctor, what is the best exercise to lose weight?  
I advise you to move your head first to the right and then to the left".  
"And how many times?"  
Every time someone offers you something to eat".





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### UPCOMING EVENT - KARAOKE NIGHT

*Saturday, April 22*

*6:00 PM to 11:00 PM*

*First Colony Community Center*

*3232 Austin Parkway Sugar Land, TX 77479*

**You are invited to "Yeh Shaam Mastani", a musical evening celebrating the melodies of the Bollywood music legend R. D. Burman.**

**We would love to see our HAAS music lovers and talented singers participate in this Karaoke program.**



To take the journey back in time we encourage attendees to dress Bollywood style from 60's-80's era. There will be awards for best dressed male and female.

**Please check your Evite for more details on this event**

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# GSB CALENDAR

Want to stay up to date with events in the GSB community. You can download the following app and stay connected using this link

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.Chipsy.gsbcalendar.calendar>



### GSB Calendar 2017

Chipsy Productivity

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**E** Everyone

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HAAS members,

We would like to hear from you on how we can help our organization have a greater impact in serving our community and others. Also, if you have any new ideas to encourage youth involvement, increased participation and/or volunteer at events, service opportunities for our organization, or just have other concerns that we can address we would love to hear from you.

**Have you checked out our website?**

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

**Fans of Facebook**

**<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=houston%20area%20amchigile%20samaj>**

**Have a question?**

**Contact us at [ourhaas@gmail.com](mailto:ourhaas@gmail.com)**

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# ***SAVE THE DATE***

*Krishna Janmashtami*  
August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017



*Diwali Gala*  
October 14, 2017

