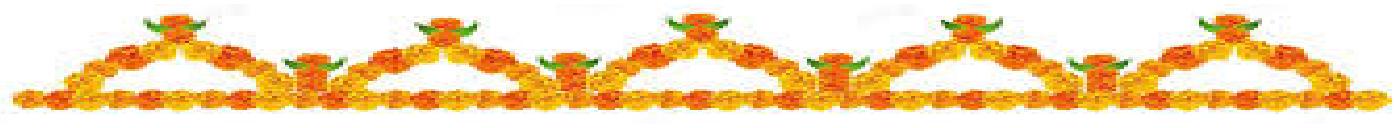




Konkani EXPRESS

AUGUST 2017





KONKANI EXPRESS

Message From the President

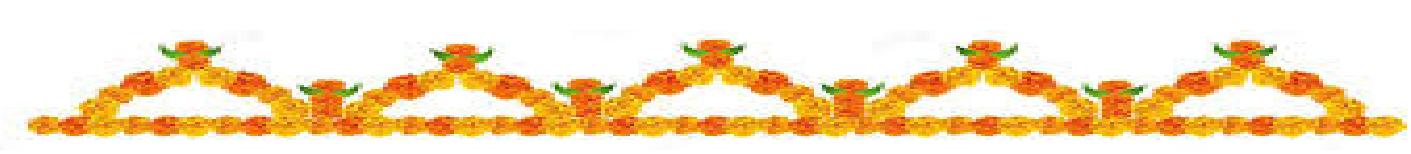
Greetings everyone,

I cannot believe 7 months has already passed since Sheila, Akhila, Aparna, Archana and I, along with our youth members Samhitha, Neha and Mallika, started our term as your HAAS committee. As you know, we kicked off 2017 with the annual Sri Satyanarayana Puja which was held at the Katy Community Hall. This was then followed by a event that was newly introduced this year "Karaoke Night- Yeh Shaam Mastaani". The evening was an overwhelming success. We also had some of our members come dressed up as Bollywood celebrities which lit up the dazzling night even further. This July, we hosted a sitar event showcasing the talent of K.Devadas Pai who is a visiting Konkani artist from Mangalore, India.

These events are not successful without all your participation and support and we look forward to seeing you all at the Janmashtami Celebration in August and the Diwali Gala in October.

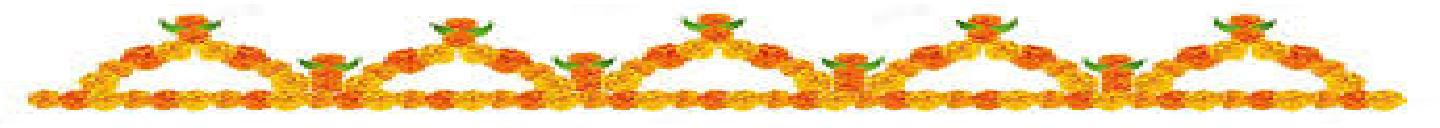
So why do we do all of this? To give the Konkani community a place to bond, promote the Konkani talent, keep our culture alive and meet and make lifelong friends. And we cannot do it without all your support and participation and we request each and everyone of you to spread the word and introduce HAAS to all your friends and families.

Sincerely,
Jayanthi Nayak





KONKANI EXPRESS

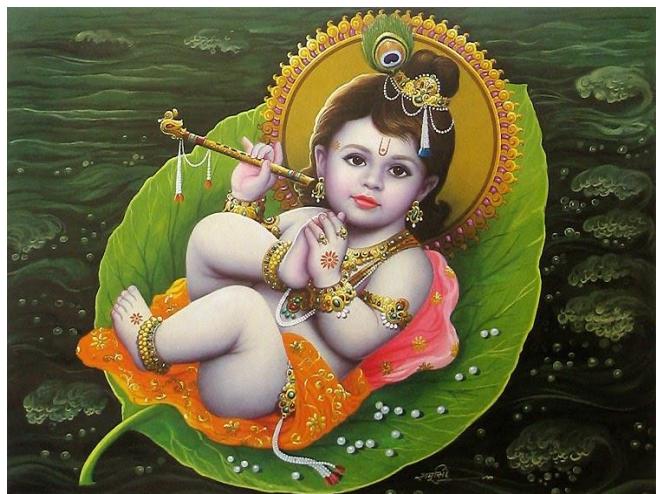
- **Upcoming Events**
 - *Janmashtami and Diwali*
 - **Introducing PayPal**
 - **Amchi Achievements “Sunil Pai”**
 - **Recipe Corner**
 - **HAAS Happenings**
 - *Karaoke evening and Mystic Sitar concert*
 - **Festivals**
 - *Choodi Puja and Chaturthi*
- 

SAVE THE DATE

Janmashtami Celebration

Saturday, August 12th

5-11pm at First Colony Conference Center
3232 Austin Parkway Sugarland, TX 77479



We invite you to the joyous celebration of the birth of our beloved Lord Krishna.

We would like to see children and adults participate in the cultural program. Group programs are highly encouraged. We would also encourage children to be dressed in Radha-Krishna costume. They will be able to show off their cuteness and creativity in a children's costume parade.



SAVE THE DATE

Dixwali Gala

Saturday, October 14th

Join us for the grand party of the year

New Venue
Cultural program
Delicious Food
Dance Party with a DJ

*You do not want to miss this event!!
Stay tuned for more information*





WE NOW ACCEPT PAYPAL

We have made payment for events and membership fees easy now with payment through Paypal on the HAAS website.

Go to <http://www.ourhaas.com/make-payments/>

Make Payments

For your convenience we have added a Paypal payment feature to the website.

You can now make payments for membership fees and events with Paypal. If you have a Paypal account you can use that to make payments. You can make payment with your credit card even without a Paypal account, just click on the checkout button.

You also make payment with check made payable to HAAS. Please mail check to HAAS Treasurer:

Aparna Shenoy
5110 Red Oak Valley Drive
Katy, TX 77494

If you have any questions about Paypal payment contact Akhila Bhat -
haaseventcoab@yahoo.com / 713-478-4909.

HAAS Membership Fees

Single Person \$15.00 USD ▾

Member Name and Contact Info

Add to Cart

HAAS Janmashtami Celebration

Member - Adult (10 & up) \$18.00 USD ▾

Note:

Add to Cart

If you have any problems with payment contact Akhila Bhat at haaseventcoab@yahoo.com





AMCHI ACHIEVEMENTS

SUNIL PAI

In our new section “Amchi Achievements” we will be highlighting accomplished people in our HAAS community that have excelled beyond the norm and have made the Konkani community proud.

This month’s issue features an interview with Sunil Pai, s/o of Sujata and Shivram Pai, a talented scientist who by the age of 23 has already met President Obama, graduated from Stanford with Honors, has placed in the top 40 high school scientists in the country and even has a day designated as “Sunil Pai Day” in his honor.

How old are you and what do you do?

I’m 23, and I am currently working on a PhD at Stanford University, where I hope to focus on neurocomputation and artificial intelligence. For the past year, I have also been working on new artificial intelligence algorithms as a Data Scientist at an AI startup.

What is your major?

I studied physics at Stanford (class of 2015) graduating with Honors (thesis on stem cell monolayer biophysics) and then completed my masters in Computer Science in 2016. I’m currently working on my PhD, where I hope to apply my interest in sensing technologies and artificial intelligence/computer science to solve problems in biology and medicine.

How did you get into Stanford?

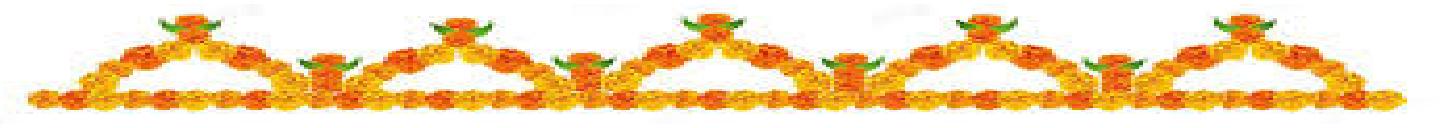
Every case is different as far as the Stanford admission goes, and it is also highly random considering the fact that admissions officers don’t really have time to analyze applications closely. One of the surefire ways to get into many top schools is to do well in national and international math and science competitions. A large part of that is being resourceful and seeking out dedicated mentors (in my case, a retired professor, my high school chemistry teacher, and my dad). Another part of that was being relentless about science research and being passionate and creative in my papers and presentations at science competitions.

What programs were/are you a part of at Stanford?

I worked on an ambitious mind-controlled robotics project as part of the Stanford Robotics club. The idea was to control a robotic arm with our mind, and we were able to take several major steps to integrate commercial mind control equipment with some state-of-the-art robotic arm technology. I was a part of several outreach groups, including one where we would visit local elementary schools to teach science at after-school programs. Last year, I joined the Stanford band where I played the violin, and played at the Rose Parade and Rose Bowl.

What are your hobbies?

I’ve been a huge Yankees fan since I was young (owing to the fact I was originally brought up in New York), and began exploring sports analytics last year when I worked on a college football ranking system based on statistical analysis of football game trends. In my free time, I play squash, tennis, and basketball with my friends.





What do you consider your biggest accomplishment?

About 6 years ago, I was selected as an Intel Science Talent Search finalist, which placed me in the top 40 high school scientists in the country. I had the opportunity to meet the other students and share my work with top scientists. The biggest highlight of the competition week was shaking hands and taking a picture with President Obama and meeting Senator John Cornyn.

At what age did you achieve the before-mentioned accomplishment?

I was 17

How do you think your age affected your success?

I don't think age affected my success; success is mostly a result of raw ambition (which is ageless in my opinion).

What were your motivators and inspirations? What obstacles if any did you overcome?

My biggest obstacle before I got into science research was finding my passion in high school. Until sophomore year, I had attempted high school debate, chess and sports, but I was unable to distinguish myself in these areas. Recognizing my constant interest in science and research, I approached the school counselor about adding science research to my schedule.

I have to say that the techniques I learnt in the debate club came in handy during my science research presentations. I have to also thank my middle school science and math teachers for their tremendous encouragement.

What is your background in this field?

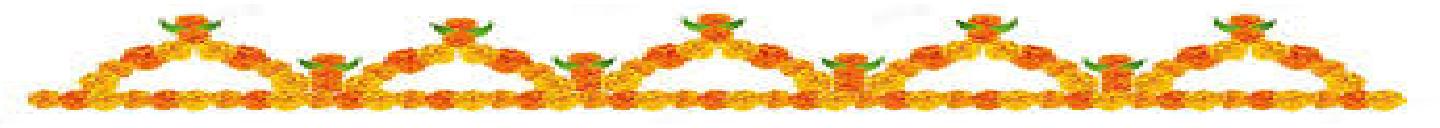
While my high school research focused on quantum chemistry, my research in Stanford has been more computationally focused, dealing with computational imaging applications for stem cell therapy.

What club/ organization outside of Stanford you are apart of?

I have been working as a Data Scientist at Stella.ai, a startup in artificial intelligence. I have been designing state-of-the-art AI algorithms (using an approach called deep learning).

What is Sunil Pai Day?

Sunil Pai Day was on September 9, 2011. I was awarded this honor by the Harris County district judge for my accomplishments in scientific research including multiple awards at the Houston Science Fair, Intel Science Talent Search Finalist, Siemen's Scholar (Regional Finalist and Semifinalist), International Finalist in Intel Science and Engineering Fair, and the Davidson Fellowship.





RECIPE CORNER

submitted by JYOTHI NAYAK

Masala for Upma & Masala bhath

INGREDIENTS:

1 TBS urad dhal
1 TBS chana dhal
2 TBS coriander seeds
1" piece cinnamon
1-2 cloves
6-7 red chilies
3 TBS desiccated coconut

Dry roast the spices except the coconut. Cool & powder them in a spice grinder & remove from the grinder.

Now roast the coconut in the same pan on low/medium heat till light brown. Cool & powder in the spice grinder. The reason to do this separately is because the coconut oozes out some oil & the spices don't get ground properly.

Mix the 2 powders & bottle. If you double or triple the recipe, refrigerate.

This amount is enough for 1.5 cups of rava or 1 cup rice & 1.5 cups vegetables

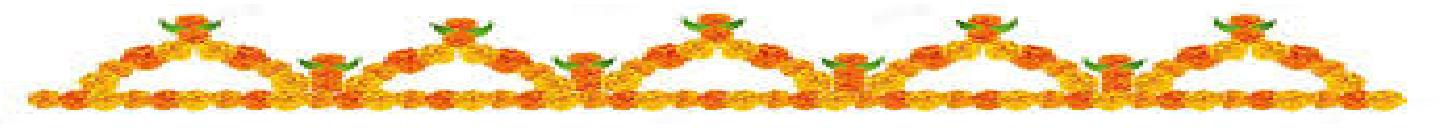
Masala Upma

In oil or ghee, add mustard seeds, curry leaves & roast rava , then add the masala & mix well. Remove from heat. In another pan, season in oil, chopped onion & saute'. When light brown, add vegetables of your choice & cook to a dry consistency till tender. When vegetables are almost cooked, boil water in a pot little more than 2 cups to 1 cup of rava ratio. To the cooked vegetables, add the roasted rava, reduce heat & add the boiling water slowly. Be careful since it will bubble. Add salt to taste, cover & cook. Garnish with chopped coriander leaves. Optional: sprinkle a little lemon juice.

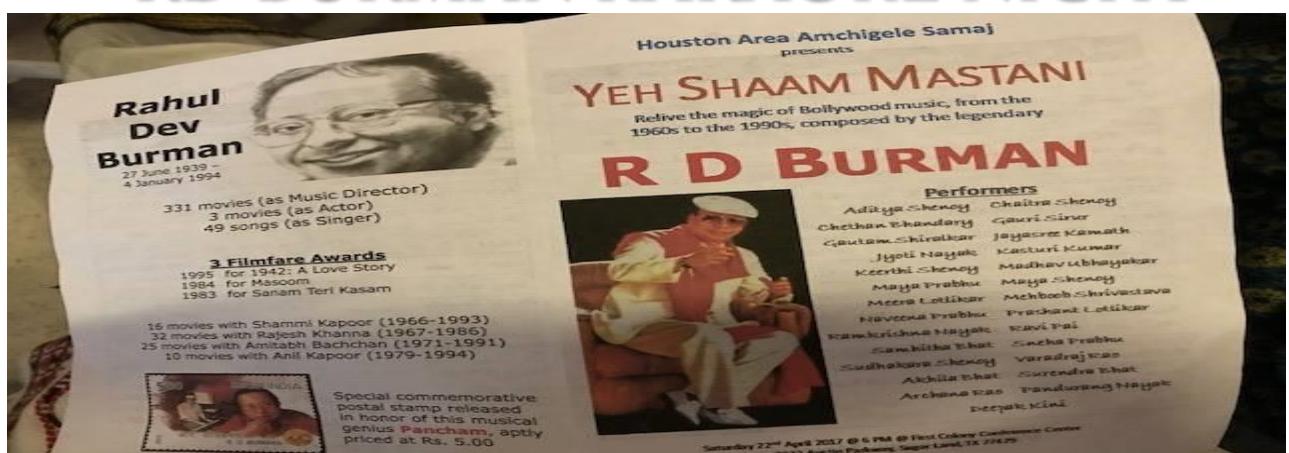
Masala Bhath

Same method can be used to make masala rice with eggplant or bell peppers or other vegetable combinations. In this case, cook rice completely & set aside. Cook the vegetables with the masala & when done, mix the rice.

This masala makes a great care package for your child away from home. When my daughter was in college, I used to give her packets of rava that was roasted with the masala. She used to boil the frozen mixed vegetables in the same 2:1 water to rava ratio & add the rava & salt! A quick and nutritious meal!



WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING? RD BURMAN KARAOKE NIGHT



The culmination of the vision of one man, Anand Nayak, "ये शाम मस्तानी." An exciting evening of music dedicated to the legendary music director, R. D. Burman. Creativity of Pramod Rao. Persuasive powers and hard work of HAAS office bearers, the lovely ladies, (Archana, Akhila, Aparna, Sheila and Jayanthi) who called and presented the vision convincingly to all the singers. Pandu and Surendra's ample support. Deepak's enthusiasm in bringing RD to life. And, most importantly, the wholehearted commitment, detailed preparation and zeal of the entire team! Bravo.

As you entered the venue, you were greeted and ushered in by none other than the stylish Burmunda beaming from a big poster. The backdrop and the posters dotted around the hall were superb. As you took your seat, you found a detailed program on the seat with some interesting, and enlightening facts about RD on the back. The video presentation of RD's most famous songs was excellent.

Gauri did a great job of the emcee. Deepak as RD was as flamboyant as the real man himself. Gauri and Deepak's rapport was easygoing. Aparna Shenoy as Asha Bhosle was "खूपच छान" All the singers participated with gusto. Each singer had chosen a lovely song and rendered it melodiously. As each singer sang a song, Anand projected the scene from that particular movie on the screen. The ambience created with strobe lighting and background music added to the magical effect. Time management was spot on.

"Anything worth doing, is worth doing right." a quote by Hunter S. Thompson is apt for "ये शाम मस्तानी". This event was "done right" with keen teamwork, meticulous planning and panache.

*Writeup courtesy of:
Chaya Ubhayakar*

WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING? MUSIC FROM THE MYSTIC STRINGS



"Mystic Strings of India" – a melodious and vibrant musical evening of Sitar by Shree Ratna Kochikar Devadas Pai.

Though he is a businessman by profession, his accomplishment as a renowned Sitar player is proof of the proverb- "Where there is a will there is a way". With over 220 concerts to his credit and with an incredible range comprising Hindustani and Carnatic music, bhajans and kirthans, Devadas Pai has become a much in demand music artiste preferred and patronized by music enthusiasts. Besides being a full time businessman as the Managing Partner of New Chitra talkies, he sets aside time from his busy schedule for music and as you can see, he has made tremendous achievements in the music field to become a much in-demand performer as a music artiste. Since 2014 he has also been the Executive Board member of the Karnataka Konkani Sahitya Academy.

He has won many titles and been bestowed with many honors. He now holds the "Vidhwan" title conferred in 1995 by Dr D Veerendra Heggade. In 1996 he was conferred "Sangeet Saurabh" award given by K Amarnath Shetty. He has also received Sangeetha Visharada title conferred by Sri Vishwesha Theertha Swamiji of Udupi Pejavar Mutt, Young Talent Award given by Bank Associations, Maan Patra Samman by Government of Goa state and "Sitar Sri" by Vatsalayadham Vradhashram, Kodialbail. He is also the proud recipient of 'Sitar Ratna' conferred on him in 2015 by Srimad Sudhindra Theertha Swamiji of Shree Kashi Math Samsthan at Haridwar.

A special thank you to Shree Govind Shetty who graciously volunteered to play the tabla as accompaniment to Shree Devadas Pai and Dr's Maya and Ramakrishna Prabhu for hosting the event at their home.

OUR TRADITIONS

CHOODI POOJA

Choodi Puja is a puja performed by married women on every Friday and Sunday of the Shravan Month. This year

Shravan began on July 24th. Choodi Puja is rooted in Karnataka where it is most commonly performed. The Choodi itself is dirbankur, anvali, and ratnagandi flowers all tied together. Women wake up and take their bath early in the morning as the puja must be performed before noon.

For this puja, put a minimum of 11 choodis, kumkum, akshath, chandan, beetleleaf with beetlenut, and a pot of water onto a tray. Place a little bit of each item into the water and put it on and around the tulsi plant after putting kumkum on the tulsi leaves. Place one choodi on the tulsi and perform aarti. Pray and take 5 rounds around the tulsi, throwing akshath at the sun and on the tulsi with each round. The second part of the puja begins by putting choodis outside your front door. Perform the steps of the first part again, pray, and then enter the house. Panchakajjaya or fruits should be placed as an offering. Wives touch the feet of their husbands and choodis are given to the elder women.



OUR TRADITIONS

GANESH CHATURTHI

Ganesh Chaturthi falls on the Chaturthi of the Bhadrapada month, which this year is on August 25th. For this occasion, people do an aarti to Lord Ganesha, sing bhajans, and celebrate with Ganapathi's favorite things. As an offering to the God, people typically make 5 different curries as well as modak, appo, patholi, kotto, and pathrado. In India, people also do Rang puja with 100 coconuts and offer them to Ganesh. Following the puja, those coconuts are distributed. Ganesh Chaturthi is most commonly celebrated in Maharashtra, specifically Mumbai. Public Ganesh idols are meant to be grand, sometimes exceeding 10 feet tall. At home, families make their own Ganapathi idol from clay to perform the puja. On the 5th or 10th day after the puja, there is a procession with music and chanting that ends in the immersion of the Ganesh idol into a nearby body of water, called visarjan.





HAAS Information

Have you checked out our website and Facebook page?

www.ourhaas.com

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.

Facebook group: [Houston Area Amchigele Samaj](#)

Houston Area Amchigele Samaj

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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