



# Manjari Sankurathri Memorial Foundation

( A Registered Canadian Charity)

Autumn Issue

MSMF Newsletter

October 2001

## Mission Statement:

*Manjari Sankurathri Memorial Foundation (MSMF), a not for profit, non-governmental organization, is aiming to promote rural community development in India, through education and vocational training, health care and emergency relief.*

## Greetings from MSMF

Every year as the snow starts melting, we begin to plan and prepare for Chandra Sekhar Sankurathri's visit. This year, he arrived in Ottawa on June 20 and returned on August 2. As he usually does every year, he traveled across the USA and Canada meeting friends and well wishers during those six weeks.

Chandra attended the public engagement programs in Ottawa, Toronto and Nanaimo. In Collingwood, he met the organizers of 'Ride For Sight' and was interviewed by correspondents from the local Newspapers. In Vancouver, he met a producer from the BCTV, who was about to go to India to produce a number of documentaries, including one on Chandra and the humanitarian work he is doing.

He attended the Telugu Association of North America (TANA) meetings in Philadelphia, where he received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Chairman, Dr. Ravindranath Guttikonda.

In Plattsburgh, he visited Dr. Kjell Dahlen, Ophthalmologist from Eye Care for the Adirondacks. Dr. Dahlen is a regular visitor to

Srikiran Institute of Ophthalmology (SIO) in Kakinada. In Morgantown, he spent a few days with Dr. V. K. Raju, Ophthalmologist, President, Eye Foundation of America. Dr. Raju is the cofounder of SIO. In Houston, he met a number of friends and well-wishers.

He cherishes his friends and extends his thanks to every one he had met during this visit.

## 2001 - INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE VOLUNTEERS

We are proud of our volunteers and we thank all of them very, very much, in particular at this time:

*Mrs. Vilma Dube, Nanaimo, BC, Ms. Deepti Gupta, Delhi, India, Ms. Anuradha Naimpally, Austin, TX, Ms. Bageshree Vaze, Toronto, ON, and Mr. Jaideep Mukerji, Ottawa, ON.*

Below is a letter, we received recently –

*"We are a group of 6 children who raise money for charity. We read an article in Nanaimo newspaper, that says every dollar we donate to your Foundation will be matched by two dollars from the Canadian International Development Agency. We are sending \$70 that we raised to pay for eye surgery.*

*Yours sincerely"*

## TANA FOUNDATION

### CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

*In recognition of outstanding service to the poor and needy for eye care, TANA Foundation is honored to present this certificate of appreciation to Dr. Chandra Sekhar.*

*Dr. Ravindranath Guttikonda  
Chairman*

### **Prevention of Childhood Blindness**

The project's scope is to screen in three years about 60,000 school children of ages from 5 to 16 and treat them for Vitamin A Deficiency, Refractive Errors (a defect that prevents light from being brought to a point focus on the retina), Strabismus (deviation of the eye which the patient cannot control), Amblyopia (loss or decrease in vision in an eye that is apparently normal structurally), and Conduct workshops for teachers and parents.

The project, supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), began in January 2001, with two workshops to Ophthalmologists, Family Physicians and Pediatricians regarding children's eye problems. During the first eight months, 7,453 children (3,801 girls and 3,652 boys) from 34 schools were screened and 871 children (409 girls and 462 boys), about 12%, needed a visit to an ophthalmologist. This project is providing valuable data for epidemiological studies.

*"Children are the crucible of sustainable human development, there is no question about that,"* said Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF. *"When we do what's good for children, we do what's good and right for all of us."*

### **U of Ottawa Co-Op Student Volunteer Program**

Jaideep Mukerji, a University of Ottawa student, who volunteered at the Foundation in India, is coordinating the recruiting process for the next Co-Op term.

Jaideep says, *"the University of Ottawa Co-Op Program has enthusiastically supported the idea and has helped us by organizing information sessions as well as actively promoting the work term within their Program. Various faculties at the University have also been*

*very supportive of this initiative and Dean Staines of the Faculty of Arts and Dean Andrew from the Faculty of Social Sciences have both agreed to support any of their students selected to volunteer at MSMF."*

Jaideep also says, *"My time at MSMF left a profound impact on me and I feel it important to make sure that other students in the region have a chance to experience some of the things I was lucky enough to."*

### **Progressive Elimination of Avoidable Blindness**

The project objective is to eliminate avoidable and curable blindness due to cataract and glaucoma for a population of over two million people from 550 villages around Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh, India.

Under this three year project, began in April 2000, supported by Help the Aged Canada and CIDA, 18,367 people were screened in 74 camps, and 4,982 were treated for cataract and 1092 for glaucoma at SIO. The project is progressing well.

### **Sarada Vidyalayam**

After summer vacation the school was reopened at the end of June 2001. With 17 new entrants in grade one, this year's total enrollment has come up to 88 in the seven grades.

Those students who completed grade 7 in our school did very well in the State-conducted test to enter into grade eight in the neighbourhood public schools.

*Appeal for your continuing support ...*

*We would appreciate financial support for the education, eye care and emergency relief programs. Donations to MSMF qualify for tax credits in Canada. Donations to our partner organization, Eye Foundation of America (1420 Anderson Road, Morgantown, WV, 26505), qualify for tax exemption in the USA.*

*Thank you.*

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