



Manjari Sankurathri Memorial Foundation

(A Registered Canadian Charity – BN 89002 4995 RR0001)

Autumn Issue

MSMF Newsletter

September 2007

Greetings!

One reporter from the South Asian Focus observed, "some times it takes a tragedy to set in motion a more noble cause – and so it has proved in this case". He was writing about Dr. Chandra Sankurathri after meeting him at the Open House, in Mississauga, Ontario. What impressed him are Dr. Chandra's accomplishments, which "bring light to troubled eyes, and provide free primary education to children from poor families". The Open House was well attended and very well organized by Ms. Meera and Mr. Vikram Sundar, Ms. Lakshmi and Mr. Raman Rudrabhatla, Mr. Siva Nadendla, and Mr. Ravi Gopisetty.

On this visit, Dr. Chandra traveled across Canada, from Quebec to British Columbia, and in the USA, from Texas to New York, raising awareness and gathering volunteer and financial support for MSMF.

In Montreal, Mrs. Rubina and Dr. Soeb Rangwala, after seeing the award winning CBC Documentary, A Ray Of Light, and also inspired by the quotation, "you make a living by what you GET, however, you make a life by what you GIVE", arranged a cultural event in Montreal to raise awareness and funds, which was a thorough success. After the event Mrs. Rangwala said, "We all had a very enjoyable time and went home feeling enriched for having had the opportunity of being a part of this virtuous cause. We hope to make this an annual event".

At the 2007 Teacher-Librarians of Durham District School Board (DDSB) Annual Dinner, to honour those who are retiring, President Ms. Nancy Dalrymple invited Dr. Chandra to be the Guest Speaker. Award winning author and friend of DDSB, Mr. Eric Walters, introduced Dr. Chandra to the Teacher-Librarians. Ms. Dalrymple remarked, "Mr. Walters is aware of the many Global Justice issues that the Teacher-Librarians have taken over the years". Dr. Chandra gave a PowerPoint presentation on "Right to Education". Ms. Dalrymple said, "This Foundation could be another added to the list that students in Durham raise funds for".

Heading to western Canada, Dr. Chandra visited his alma-mater, University of Alberta, where he gave a presentation at the Faculty Club on "The Role of MSMF in Empowering Rural People in India".

On his way, he stopped in Calgary and Golden, where he had renewed contacts with Dr. Dinesh Mistry, and friends.

In British Columbia, MSMF has a very strong support group. In Vancouver, Dr. Chandra met Mr. Noordin Madatali, who is very much interested in developing the Vocational School. A physician from Surrey, Dr. Rajeev Saincher, has offered to develop the Volunteer Program for MSMF. On June 23, Volunteers Ms. Shae Arjun, and Mr. Michael Palano arranged a visit to the Memorial in Stanley Park to the Victims of the Air India Tragedy, and a lunch for all volunteers giving them an opportunity to meet Dr. Chandra. Ms. Trish Sare of BikeHike Adventures Inc., "inspired by all that Dr. Chandra has accomplished and is proposing for those who have very little hope or support", pledged to donate \$25 to MSMF in 2007 for every person who signs up to one of their multi-sport adventure trips she conducts at 22 destinations around the world. Ms. Sare would like to develop BikeHike Adventures in India that incorporate MSMF, whether it is to raise awareness or promote volunteers among her clients.

Good friends Mrs. Ann and Dr. Hu King arranged two events in Salt Spring Island; a wonderful opportunity to address the congregation at the All Saints Church, and another session in the evening, where Dr. Chandra gave a PowerPoint presentation on the topic "Role of MSMF in Empowering Rural People in India". The Salt Spring Island residents are very generous supporters of the Blindness Prevention program of MSMF.

In Ottawa, he visited St. Gregory and St. Isidore Schools, met Principals Burke, and Kryski, addressed the students, who every year raise donations to support our school in Kakinada. He also visited the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and Help the Aged Canada, He met the Deputy Minister of Health Canada, and the High Commissioner of India. He attended a meeting at the University of Ottawa Eye Institute to discuss Institutional Cooperation with Srikriya Institute of Ophthalmology.

It was a highly productive five weeks. Our appreciation and gratitude go to all of the volunteers and organizers for making it possible for him to reach so many, resulting in heightened interest in our mission and significant commitment for support.

www.msmf.ca

Events in Ottawa to raise Awareness and Funds

After going through a couple of years without the MSMF annual picnic, we had one this year in June with Dr. Chandra in Andrew Haydon Park. It was very well organized and well attended. The food was excellent and the entertainment well planned.

The second event we had was an Indian Classical Dance (*Bharatanatyam*) Program by Ramya and Anjali Kuchibhatla, sisters from San Jose, California. Their thoughts are recorded in the adjacent column. We congratulate them and thank them for their compassion.

The third was an Indian Classical (*Hindustani*) Music program by Dr. Vinay Bhide, accompanied by Mr. Opinder Sadana, Mr. Madhu Joshi, and Mrs. Chumki Bhide. Dr. Bhide is a renowned expert in vocal Indian music and an adjunct research professor in the Music Department at Carleton University. It was a wonderful concert. We are grateful to Dr. Bhide and company.

We have many dedicated volunteers in Ottawa, who contribute regularly to the well being of the Foundation. While it is pretty well impossible to mention all of them, we will single out a few to record our sincere appreciation: Mr. Bala Madaparthy, Ms. Shireesha Avadhanula, Mrs. Sudha Dukkipati, Dr. Jagjit Khosla. Mr. Mukesh Gupta kindly arranged a meeting at his house for Dr. Chandra, with H.E., R. L. Narayan, High Commissioner of India, Hon. Jim Peterson, M.P., Mr. R. Medhora, from IDRC, and Ms. C. Christmas from Queens University, Kingston. We thank Mr. Mukesh Gupta and his wife.

APPEAL for Support ...

After Summer, Sarada Vidyalayam reopened in June as a high school and admitted 128 students in grades 1 to 8. The high school construction is almost completed. Plans to start the Vocational School in 2008 are underway; we are gathering resources for construction as well as for operating.

Srikiran Institute of Ophthalmology with its four Vision Centres continues to provide quality eye care. In 2007 so far, 106 pediatric and 106 adult screening camps were conducted, 9,209 cataract and 699 other surgeries were performed; 11,313 out-patients were treated.

We urge you to support generously the education, eye care and disaster relief programs. MSMF is a registered charity in Canada and donations to MSMF qualify for tax credits in Canada. Your donation makes the difference. We thank You.

MSMF, 23 Mary Dr., Gloucester, ON, K1V 1G9, Canada
www.msmf.ca - info@msmf.ca - (613) 523 5413

Bringing the World Closer thru' Bharatanatyam

Ramya and Anjali Kuchibhatla

**Anjali (Age 12) writes**

..... "Although I have done many stage performances, this fundraiser has made me as ecstatic as the day of my Arangetram. Helping raise money for Manjari Sankurathri Memorial Foundation makes me feel extraordinary. The fact that this art form is helping a girl in India read a book just overflows my heart with glee and joy. This was the chance to feel how

awesome it is to do community service. Community service is the way to give back to the society and I feel like I can give a lot more. I hope that I have helped in any way I could. It was a great privilege to raise funds for Manjari Sankurathri Memorial Foundation."

Ramya (Age 16) writes "Service for my community has always been emphasized throughout my many years in school; here, it is not uncommon to see many teenagers searching for a place to volunteer to fulfill their school requirements. Yet, unlike the majority, I somehow managed to develop a passion for service along the way. What initially started out as a simple need to fulfill requirements eventually became a vital part of me that redefined my view on life. The never-ending thoughts of stress that pile on as I get closer towards college disappear after spending even one hour with these kids and watching their eyes light up in gratefulness and happiness.

Especially having grown up in a country where first-hand experience is limited, I truly think that this is a reason that I so deeply value what Manjari Sankurathri Memorial Foundation is working to accomplish; it is striving for a goal that will better the community, a goal I believe everybody should adopt. It is creating a caring and safe environment for everyone, providing a chance for excellence for everyone, helping bring everyone together.

For me, the term 'service' never lost its original appeal; in fact, the spark only seemed to glow brighter as time progressed. As a young adult, I hope to keep this spark alive through my own actions; perhaps our dance program lit the candle towards an auspicious start."