



INDIA COMMUNITY RELIGIOUS & CULTURAL CENTER, INC. (ICRCC)

A non-profit organization founded in 1984
 1990 Meadowbrook Drive, Syracuse, NY 13224

www.icrcc.org | www.facebook.com/ICRCC | email: shridevi@icrcc.org

Winter 2023

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Upcoming ICRCC Events Summary:

Event	Date	Place	Contact	Additional Notes
Christmas	17-Dec-2023	India Center	Shalabh Maroo, Surabhi Raina	Details here
Republic Day	27-Jan-2024	India Center	Chaitanya Halbe	
General Body Meeting (GBM)	24-Feb-2024	India Center	Shridevi Karikehalli	See here
Holi	24-Mar-2024	India Center		
International Taste Festival	06-Apr-2024	State Fairgrounds		

President's message

Dear friends:

The warm days of summer are behind us, and we welcome the crisp and frosty winter which has its own charm. This is also a season where we celebrate many holiday traditions from different cultures.

Diwali – the festival of lights – was a spectacular event, held at the Crowne Plaza hotel on November 19. It was a joyous evening with lasting memories for our community.

We now invite you to a wonderful Christmas celebration scheduled on December 17. This is another event to share the festive spirit with all our community members. Details are in the [attached flier](#).

I am also happy to share an exciting development at our India Center. The new elevator installation is near completion. This project was possible through a generous grant we received from the CNY Community Foundation (CNYCF). This improvement will ensure accessibility for all our patrons.

There are other areas needing improvement, and we are constantly looking for ways to fund these projects. Funding received through grants supports some of our projects, but community involvement is vital.

In this regard – ICRC recently received a \$15,000 grant from the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA). This grant will support some capital improvement projects and cultural programs in 2024.

ICRC is turning 40 next year, and we want you to be part of our year-long celebration! Share your program preferences with us as we plan a memorable series of events. Your input is invaluable as we look forward to another exciting year.

Our General Body Meeting (GBM), which is open to all ICRC members, will be held on February 24, 2024. Please mark your calendar for this very important meeting, where you can get an overview of the ICRC finances, projects, and vote on the new Board of Directors.

If you or anyone you know would like to join our wonderful team of selfless, hardworking Board members, please contact the nominating committee – Chilukuri Mohan or Vishnu Sishla.

There are many ways to support this vibrant organization, and one of them would be to become a member. Members are an integral part of this organization, and your participation is vital to our success. Please see details regarding ICRC membership in this newsletter.

As this year comes to an end, I would like to thank my team of Board members for all the hard work involved in keeping this organization running. A very special THANK YOU to our dedicated volunteers from the community for helping in various capacities throughout the year – we couldn't do it without YOU!

From our family to yours, wishing you the very best this Holiday Season and a Happy New Year!

Stay in touch.

Shridevi Karikehalli

shridevi@icrc.org

Membership Information

by Chaitanya Halbe

A big Thank You to all our permanent members, as well as our 2023 and 2024 members!

If you have not renewed your membership for 2024 – please do so and continue enjoying membership benefits. If you are not yet a member of ICRCC – we strongly urge you to become a member of ICRCC.

Our members are the key component of ICRCC. We seek your active involvement to further improve the organization.

Key Membership Benefits:

- Discounts to events catering to various age groups and representing the cultural diversity of India
- Opportunity to be a part of a close-knit group and forming strong friendship and network
- Attend the General Body Meeting and voice your opinion on the events or policies of the organization
- Eligibility to join the Board of Directors, thereby taking an active role in shaping the organization

So, please become a member and ask your friends and colleagues to do the same!

ICRCC Membership

- Regular Yearly Membership: Family = \$75, Single = \$50
- Permanent Membership: Family = \$1500, Single = \$1000

Payment options:

- Online: icrcc.org (preferred)
- Mail: ICRCC, 1990 Meadowbrook Drive, Syracuse, NY 13224

If you have any questions, please contact the membership committee:

Chaitanya Halbe: chaithalbe@gmail.com

Falguni Vora: falguni@icrcc.org

ICRCC is a Not-for-Profit Corporation under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Your donations and contributions to ICRCC may be tax deductible. Kindly check with your tax advisor.

Update on IC RCC Events

Gandhi Jayanti

by Chaitanya Halbe

IC RCC celebrated Gandhi Jayanti on Sunday, October 1 at our India Center. A variety of programs were organized to celebrate this day.

The program started with Sarva Dharma Prarthana, followed by recitation of Gandhiji's favorite bhajans.

Dr. Ashutosh recalled his experience in the Sabarmati Ashram, and talked about how Gandhiji's approach to the freedom struggle resulted in independent India being able to maintain a cordial relationship with the UK instead of hostilities.

As has been the tradition for the last few years, Gandhiji graced us with his presence again this year.

The highlight of the event was the debut of a fictional play, "*Gandhiji meets Netaji in The Good Place*," written by Chilukuri Mohan involving a conversation between Gandhiji and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose – the audience got a ringside seat to this very interesting dialog.

There was a demonstration of Charkha spinning by Jayshri Prasad. The program was very well received.



Sarod and Tabla Concert

by Chilukuri Mohan

On October 13, 2023, ICRC hosted a wonderful concert by Swarnendu Mandal and Ritvik Yaparpalvi at the India Center.

Swarnendu, a sarod virtuoso based in Kolkata, is a scholar at the ITC Sangeet Research Academy, and has been a student of Pandit Buddhadev Dasgupta, who belongs to the [Senia Shahjahanpur Gharana](#). He has numerous acclaimed performances to his credit. Swarnendu performs regularly on All India Radio and Doordarshan (Indian TV); he has performed in Europe and more recently at the G20 Summit. He is 23 years old, and has bachelor's and master's degrees from Jadavpur University.

Playing the Tabla was another young prodigy, Ritvik Yaparpalvi, a student of Pandit Nayan Ghosh of Mumbai, from the [Farrukhabad Gharana](#). Ritvik has been playing tabla from the age of 3, and is currently a college student at the Boston Conservatory, learning other percussion instrument styles.

The concert began with a short introduction to the [Sarod](#) and [Tabla](#). The artistes then enchanted the audience by playing Raag *Bageshri*. After a brief intermission, they played the upbeat *Manjh Khamaaj* Raag, transporting the audience to a happy state of mind. They concluded by playing Rabindranath Tagore's famous "Ekla Chalo" song, a favorite of Mahatma Gandhi.

It was an amazing performance by the two young artistes, who coordinated beautifully with each other even though they had never played together before. This was also Swarnendu's first performance in the USA. Based on what we witnessed, both artistes will scale new pinnacles of accomplishments in years to come. About 70 people attended the concert and enjoyed the exceptional talents of the gifted musicians. The concert was greatly appreciated by all, and we look forward to more such events in our ICRC building in the near future.

Many thanks to the volunteers who helped organize the event, and the sponsors for their support.



Diwali

by Falguni Vora



ICRCC celebrated Diwali in grand style again this year on November 19 at the Crowne Plaza.

The Festival of Lights lived up to its name – a bright, illuminating and festive evening – an overwhelmingly successful, sold-out event.

Starting with a social hour in an aesthetically decorated front hallway area where a spread of delicious Indian appetizers was served. It was a perfect venue to mingle and socialize. This was followed in the main hall by cultural performances and dinner. The event did

not end before people danced their hearts out on dhamakedar music played by our DJ.

Overall, the community thoroughly enjoyed the great ambience, beautiful decorations, delicious food, great music and creative performances by our own local performers. The box of Mithai and a beautifully decorated diya as a return gift was the icing on the cake. The event would not have been possible without committed support by our sponsors, volunteers and board members. This was truly an event to be remembered for a long time.





Community News

Jnana Mandir

by Vidyul Krishnan

Jnana Mandir is a religious and spiritual organization based in Syracuse, NY, serving a global community.

We are very excited to announce the formation of the Jnana Mandir Board, presided by Pramod Varshney.

We provide children and adult programming both in-person and virtually. The youth programming in collaboration with HSA of SU has just started and registration for that is going on currently. If interested, please contact jnanamandir101@gmail.com

Recently, we celebrated Navaratri and Diwali. Both were very well received in the community.

Soundarya Lahari series will resume in January 2024. Our upcoming in-person events are New Year and Sankranti.

All our event details are available at www.jnanamandir.com

Lav Varshney

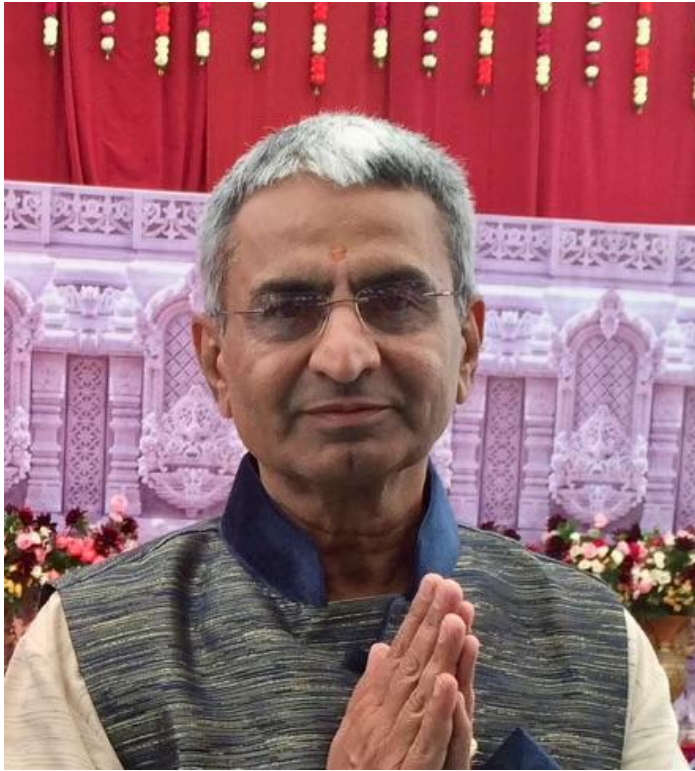
Lav Varshney, a son of Pramod and the late Anju Varshney from Fayetteville, recently completed his term as a White House Fellow for 2022-23, where he served on the National Security Council staff.

The White House Fellowship is often called the nation's most prestigious service and leadership program – with significant influence on the nation's policy-making in science and technology.



He graduated from Fayetteville-Manlius High School, holds a B.S. degree in electrical and computer engineering from Cornell University, and a Ph.D. degree from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Lav is a professor of engineering, computer science, neuroscience, and digital agriculture at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He is also CEO of Kocree, Inc. (a music co-creativity startup), chief scientist of Ensaras, Inc. (a wastewater + AI startup), and works with Brookhaven National Laboratory on computing for national security. He has published widely in core areas of information theory and artificial intelligence (AI), as well as applications in critical infrastructure, music, food, sustainability, public health, and medicine.

Remembering Kishor Kanabar



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Mr Kishor Kanabar on 12 Oct 2023; he was born on 26 Oct 1950.

Kishor had a heart of gold that was evident in the community work he did throughout his life. Apart from dedicating a major portion of his life for BAPS temple and community, he was also an ICRCC board member for a number of years, including a few years on the Executive Committee.

Kishor was very diligent and sincere, and was instrumental in the collaboration between ICRCC and the Gujarati community to hold highly successful Navratri events. He always volunteered for different events and donated time and food whenever possible.

Family and education were very important to Kishor. This was his primary motivation to leave India and then Africa and come to the US. He wanted to ensure his children, Anand and Mishal, had the best possible education and upbringing. Kishor and his wife, Harsha,

sacrificed a lot to ensure their children had the best chance at a great life.

The summer of 2006 was a turning point for Kishor's entire family. Due to a severe allergic reaction his liver failed within a week. All signs pointed to him dying that week due to his condition. But with a combination of divine intervention and modern medicine, he received a liver transplant in less than 2 days after being on the list. Doctors said he only had hours left by the time he received the transplant.

While today, tomorrow, and the foreseeable future will be sad, his family felt truly blessed that they had 17 years with him that they weren't supposed to have.

Kishor loved his grand-daughters, and it was one of the last things he wanted to see before he passed. They were his pride and joy, and he will forever be with them. One of his 2-year old granddaughters said, "Papa went above to see God. But I will always have him in my heart and mind."

Kishor had many passions, including football and golf. With football, the big event he loved hosting every year was the Super Bowl. It was his event. And he loved being the antagonist in the group. He went as far as rooting for the Patriots just to spice up the viewing party.

Kishor will be remembered as a wonderful human being who gave selflessly to the community.

ICRCC Christmas Event



ICRCC Christmas Celebration

Santa on site
Cultural program
Christmas carols
Snacks and beverages

Sunday, December 17
4-6 pm

India Center
1990 Meadowbrook Drive
Syracuse, NY 13224

ICRCC will be collecting new unwrapped toys and nonperishable food for donation

If you would like to bring a dish to share, or for additional information contact:
surabhiraina1@gmail.com
scmaroo@syr.edu



ICRCC General Body Meeting (GBM)

All members in good standing are strongly encouraged to attend

India Center on 24-Feb-2024

Hear the Annual Reports and participate in electing new board members

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Connect with us:

email: shridevi@icrcc.org

facebook: www.facebook.com/ICRCC/

Written material can be mailed to:

ICRCC
1990 Meadowbrook Drive
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