



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

January 2025

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Upcoming ICRCC Events Summary:

Event	Date	Place	Contact	Additional Notes
Rafi Centenary	18-Jan-2025	India Center	Chilukuri Mohan	See details here
Indian Republic Day	26-Jan-2025	India Center	Shridevi Karikehalli	
General Body Meeting	01-Feb-2025	India Center	Shridevi Karikehalli	See details here
Holi	29-Mar-2025	India Center	Jayshri Prasad	
International Taste Festival	12-Apr-2025	NY State Fairgrounds	TBD	

President's message

Dear friends:

As we begin 2025, I would like to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to all of you – our members, Board Members, and supporters – for your continued engagement and unwavering support. 2024 was a truly special one for IC RCC, as we celebrated our 40th anniversary in a grand manner.

From the success of our Bollywood program, **Pancham**, to our grand Diwali celebration with live music at the Oncenter, 2024 has been one of celebration and growth. We wrapped up the holiday season with our Christmas celebration, alongside a Food and Toy Drive that truly embodied the spirit of giving. Please take a moment to read about all our events in this Newsletter.

Our General Body Meeting (GBM) is on February 1, 2025. All IC RCC members in good standing are encouraged to attend and familiarize themselves with the workings of the organization. Please consider becoming a member if you haven't already, and participate in this vibrant community.

We also have several vacancies for Board Members; if you are passionate about making an impact and helping guide IC RCC's future, we welcome your involvement.

Thank you for your continued support. We look forward to many more years of success, celebration, and community spirit!

Wishing you all a happy and prosperous New Year,

Shridevi Karikhalli

President, IC RCC

shridevi@icrcc.org

Connect with us:

email: shridevi@icrcc.org

facebook: www.facebook.com/ICRCC/

Written material can be mailed to:

IC RCC
1990 Meadowbrook Drive
Syracuse, NY 13224

Membership Information

by Jayant Datta

If you are already a member of IC RCC, **THANK YOU** – we sincerely appreciate your ongoing support. It validates our mission of sharing India’s rich heritage with the larger Central New York community.

As a 100% volunteer-run organization, we try to maximize the impact of your membership funds by planning a wide variety of events throughout the year to serve our community.

If you are not a member, please consider joining to enjoy the following benefits:

- attend IC RCC events at reduced rates
- attend the General Body Meeting (GBM)
- shape the future of IC RCC by becoming a board member

As a member, you will be eligible to influence the direction of IC RCC by participating and voting at the upcoming Annual [General Body Meeting](#) on 01-Feb-2025.

Membership details are shown below.

IC RCC Membership

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

Payment options:

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

If you have any questions, please contact the membership committee:
Chaitanya Halbe: chaithalbe@gmail.com

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

Update on ICRC Events

India Day Picnic Celebration

by Surabhi Raina



On Saturday, August 17, our community came together to celebrate Indian Independence Day with a vibrant picnic at the Bay View Shelter, Onondaga Lake. The picturesque setting, overlooking the serene lake, provided the perfect backdrop for the event, despite the windy weather and alternating clear and cloudy skies. Thankfully, the predicted rain held off, allowing everyone to enjoy the day without interruption.

The celebration began with the national anthems of both the United States and India, beautifully sung by children from the Indian community. This was followed by a heartfelt singing of patriotic songs by several attendees, which was warmly received by everyone present.



The picnic was a culinary delight, showcasing the diverse and delicious flavors of Indian cuisine. Community members generously brought a wide variety of dishes, including rice pulao, gobhi sabji, chole, Indian-style sandwiches, chaat, samosas, paneer curry, matar paneer, dal tadka, moong bean sprout salad, and parathas. Guests also enjoyed warm, tasty pakoras that were fried on the spot. For desserts, we had a full

tray of jalebi and a full tray of assorted sweets, kheer, gur jalebi, and kala jamun. For drinks, we enjoyed iced tea, and the ICRC provided watermelon, soft drinks, and water, ensuring everyone stayed refreshed throughout the event.



The successful event was possible thanks to the collaborative efforts of both the board members and the community. The picnic, which began at 3 pm and concluded around 7 pm, was a wonderful opportunity for everyone to come together, celebrate, and enjoy each other's company.

A heartfelt thank you to all who participated and contributed in various ways. Your support and enthusiasm made this celebration truly special.



Bollywood

by Falguni Vora

Who has not grown up listening to versatile and timeless melodies composed by R D Burman, affectionately known as Panchamda? To have an opportunity to listen to his songs right here in our own Syracuse (at the Palace Theatre on the 1st of September, 2024) was nothing less than a special privilege. The group consisting of 4 singers, 4 dancers and a presenter made a very entertaining team.



It was a great combination of soulful, popular, melodic and peppy dance numbers. Singing was beautiful and creative, dance choreography made it more interesting and it enhanced the performances while the presenter did an excellent job of keeping us engaged. What I liked the most was that even for those fast and popular dance numbers, dancers kept their moves very elegant and graceful. Salute to ICRC for hosting this unique and enjoyable and well organized event. Looking forward to more events like this in near future!!



Diwali

by Sunil Gupta

To celebrate ICRCC's 40th anniversary, this year's Diwali event was held on a grand scale on the 16th of November, 2024. The venue for the celebrations was the large ballroom at the Oncenter. Almost 300 community members participated in the festivities.

Dr Mantosh Dewan graciously lit the Diwali Diya to start the festivities. Everyone enjoyed a wide variety of food and socialized with friends. Neha Varma, a SaReGaMaPa finalist, along with a band of musicians from the Boston area (drums, guitars, keyboard) provided live entertainment with music that appealed to different generations. The audience responded enthusiastically by dancing to the tune of old and new Bollywood favorites, with tremendous energy in the room generated by the musicians as well as the dancers.

We thank all the sponsors for their support. Their generous contributions made this event possible and enjoyable for everyone.

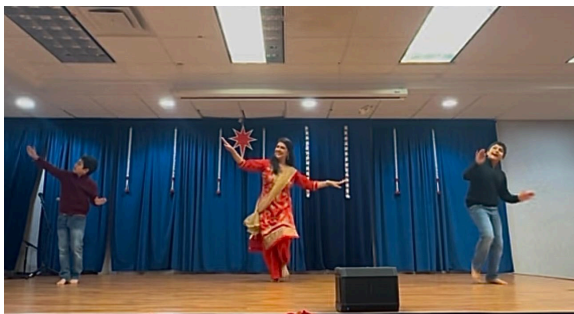


Christmas

by Jayanthan Karthikeyan

The Christmas celebration at IC RCC was an amazing time full of joy, laughs, and excitement. Having been the MC of the program, I can tell you how wonderful it was to see so many people together on a joyous occasion. Having so many beautiful and cute dance performances from our members truly brought the spirit alive. Kids coming together for a sing-along of festive songs with a great instrumental duo finale and a surprise guest – Santa!

Everyone delighted in the various sweet and savory goodies, enhancing the cheerful atmosphere. Embracing the true essence of the holidays, the community united in acts of kindness and goodwill to collect clothes and toys for charity. This unforgettable celebration blended gratitude, togetherness, and festive cheer, leaving hearts full and spirits soaring!





Community News

Jnana Mandir

by Vidyul Krishnan

Jnana Mandir (Temple of Knowledge) is a Syracuse, NY based organization serving globally, the spiritual and religious needs of the participants. Jnana Mandir conducts Purna Vidya, a children's class that teaches Yoga and Values, Hindi, and Mahabharata as well as adult programming that includes bhajans and Gita. To enroll in Purna Vidya, visit <http://www.jnanamandir.com/class> – registration for Spring 2025 begins now.

Currently, Bhagavatam web series have been going on for almost 5 years and Upanishad series are onto the third session, 'Kathopanishad'. Group chanting of Hanuman Chalisa is hosted virtually every Tuesday. More details of our events are at <http://www.jnanamandir.com/events>

Several events are conducted to celebrate various festivals throughout the year. Makara Sankranti will be celebrated on January 12, 2025. For more information, please visit our website and for any queries, Jnanamandir101@gmail.com

Special Article

ICRCC – from its genesis to today

by Kishan Mehrotra

In 1970, there lived a handful of Indians in Syracuse. Although they met at each other's homes, their main social activity was to watch a Bollywood film in Gifford Auditorium of Syracuse University, whenever available.

In 1968, Professor Robert Crane, born in India, a scholar of Indian History, joined Syracuse University. He was influential in starting Indian Studies programs in many universities across the US, including at Syracuse University. By the end of 1970s, he and other like-minded individuals felt that Syracuse lacked an organization that could promote Indian culture, art, religion and languages and instill Indian values in our children.

To get to this goal, meetings continued to take place among influential individuals, such as Umesh Patil, Kumar Ashutosh, Gurnek Singh, Mansukh Shah, Jit Turakhia, Yatish Goyal, Ram Choudhary, Narendra Bhandari, Ramesh Modi, and many more, to discuss the formation of such an organization.

Finally, after multiple discussions over the course of a few years, the most significant development took place in early summer of 1984. During this meeting, at Yatish Goyal's residence, which was attended by the above and many more individuals, concrete steps were taken, such as resolving that the organization will encompass all religions (Hindu, Sikh, Muslim, Christian, etc.).

Thus, India Community Religious and Cultural Center (ICRCC), a nonprofit organization, was founded in 1984, to bring together Asian-Indians of Central New York to promote, celebrate and appreciate their common bonds, culture, religion and social customs. Dr Umesh Patil was elected as the first president of the organization.

The Festival of India, together with an art exhibition was the first program organized by ICRCC in Everson museum, and it was a huge success. The association organized two anchor programs – Spring Festival and Diwali and also celebrated Republic Day, Independence Day, Navroz, and Christmas on a regular basis. In addition, jointly with other Syracuse University organizations, it offered high quality music, dance, and drama programs in the 1990s.

For almost 40 years ICRCC has been a vibrant organization holding many events and programs such as music, dance, festivals, plays, scholarly talks and seminars to highlight India's rich art and cultural heritage. ICRCC has also co-sponsored numerous community programs, and has participated in several philanthropic activities, such as donations to relief funds – Twin Towers, Hurricane Katrina, Golisano pediatric hospital wing at Upstate, Rescue Mission, scholarships to deserving high school students, and COVID-19 Community Support Fund (CNYCF).

ICRCC moved into its new home at 1990 Meadowbrook Drive in July 2019. Acquiring its own home was a significant milestone for ICRCC. The strategic central location, with ample parking, proximity to major intersections is very convenient and appealing to our patrons. Consequently, ICRCC now hosts many of its events at this venue, further enhancing the experience of attendees.

Throughout the year, ICRCC enriches the broader Syracuse area with a diverse range of cultural, religious, and educational programs. These include the celebrations of major Indian festivals such as Diwali, Holi, and Christmas, as well as Indian Independence Day, Republic Day, and Gandhi Jayanti. ICRCC also partners with Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency (OCRRA) for Earth Day cleanup activities, demonstrating its commitment to environmental responsibility.

ICRCC works collaboratively with other nonprofit organizations beyond the Indian community. ICRCC operates entirely on the dedication and passion of its volunteers, including its Board of Directors. ICRCC welcomes every individual or group to volunteer and/or attend its programs; irrespective of their background.

ICRCC celebrated its 40th anniversary in 2024, a significant milestone that reflects the organization's enduring impact and unwavering commitment to serving the community.

Details on Upcoming Events

Celebrate Rafi's Birth Centenary



Mohammed Rafi (Dec. 24, 1924 – July 31, 1980)

Please join us as we sing the melodious songs immortalized by the great singer Rafi!

When: January 18, 2025 at 4:30 pm

Where: ICRC, 1990 Meadowbrook Dr, Syracuse, NY 13224

Ticket Price: Love of music and 0 cents

Who: *Navneet Kharbanda* (from Columbus, Ohio)



And the Syracuse Singers led by Lakshmi Kavety!

With an open mike at the end of the program, for those who would like to sing a Rafi song!

(Please email mohan@syr.edu if you have a song planned, to avoid duplication)

[Tea and Snacks are planned]

ICRCC General Body Meeting

General Body Meeting (GBM)

- influence future plans
- recap 2024 activities
- elect board members

date: **01-Feb-2025**
time: 3 to 5 pm
where: **India Center**
who: **all ICRCC** members

Quorum is required

Please mark your
calendar and attend
this important meeting

ICRCC Board and Committee Members

Executive Board Members

Shridevi Karikehalli	shridevi@icrcc.org	(President)
Kishan Mehrotra	mehrotra@syr.edu	(Vice President)
Jayant Datta	icrcc.fin@gmail.com	(Treasurer)
Chaitanya Halbe	chaithalbe@gmail.com	(Secretary)

Board Members

Ari Chakraborty	archakra@syr.edu
Sunil Gupta	sunil4911@gmail.com
Hemant Kale	kalehemantd@gmail.com
Shalabh Maroo	scmaroo@syr.edu
Chilukuri Mohan	ckmohan@syr.edu
Jayshri Prasad	jayashriprasad2000@yahoo.com
Surabhi Raina	surabhiraina1@gmail.com
Bandaru Ramarao	ramarao.bandaru@gmail.com
Ashok Sangani	asangani@syr.edu

Committees

Building: Sunil Gupta (Chair), Ashok Sangani, Hemant Kale, Jayshri Prasad, Kishan Mehrotra, Chilukuri Mohan

Bylaws: Shalabh Maroo (Chair), Bandaru Ramarao

Cultural: Jayant Datta (Chair), Chilukuri Mohan, Falguni Vora, Uday Banerjee, Sudha Raj, Seema Sureshkumar

Finance: Jayant Datta (Chair), Ashok Sangani, Hemant Kale

Grants: Shalabh Maroo (Chair), Bandaru Ramarao, Kishan Mehrotra, Jayant Datta

Membership: Chaitanya Halbe (Chair)

Newsletter: Ramesh Gaonkar (Chair), Chilukuri Mohan, Jayant Datta, Kishan Mehrotra

Nominations: Vishnu Sishtla (Co-Chair), Pramod Varshney (Co-Chair)

Website: Sunil Gupta (Chair), Shalabh Maroo

The President is an ex-officio member of all committees except the Nominations Committee

Connect with us:

email: shridevi@icrcc.org

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Written material can be mailed to:

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