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# Today

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in Phoenix

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## Nepalese diaspora of Arizona celebrated their New Year 2072

**N**epalese diaspora of Arizona celebrated their New Year 2072 BS with varieties of events and cultural program in Chandler on Saturday. Participants of the program exchanged the New Year wishes with each other. Bikram Sambat, BS, is the official calendar of Nepal • **More on P26**

## Fourth Khalsa Sirjana Divas & Sikh Identity Awareness Nagar Kirtan in Phoenix

**Dr. Jaswant Singh Sachdev**  
It is often stated that when God approves a generally beneficial and morally good act by a group of its people, It showers Its Divine blessings through rain and by bringing shift in the weather conducive to that particular action. This is what exactly happened in Downtown Phoenix on the afternoon of 26th of April, 2015, the chosen day for the celebration of Sirjana Divas and Sikh Identity awareness parade.

The streets of downtown Phoenix will be a disincentive to the Sangat members, given that weather usually turns somewhat hot at that time of the year. As it turned out, a cool wind along with sprinkles of rain brought the temperature significantly down, to an extent that the afternoon instead became very pleasant and cool. Inside the convention hall, Kirtan Darbar started with Japuji around 10:15 am followed by Kirtan by various groups

The organizers were concerned that afternoon Nagar Kirtan on foot in late April through

• **More on P16-17**

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# Az telugu Association arranged fancy dress competition

Ugadi Shubakanshalu" wished the president of Az telugu Association, Venkat Kommineni on a aptly decorated stage . After a fond welcome to the gathering, the events of the day rolled in as sporting boys and gorgeously dressed girls walked on the stage competing at the cute fancy dress competition. Simultaneously kids were encouraged to display their artistic talents, rendering pictures which portrayed their understanding of the festival, Ugadi that marks the beginning of the new year of lunisolar calendar followed by Indian, traditionally. While kids indulged in art, the volunteers set up the snack table with yummy pakoras and hot 'masala chai'.

Needed some new attire and accessory or some mehendi designs done to cherish the festival? Needed info on a good cause or wanted to make the realtor connection? The tables that bordered the hall with many non-profits and for-profits catered to their clients. As the evening progressed, dances, skits, instrumental performances, vocal performances and many more engaged the audience. Duly appointed photographers flashed away capturing the moments on stage as well as a specifically designed spot for pictures. Special guest, mimicry artist, Mr. Chiturri Gopichand amused and intrigued the crowd with his amazing talent and ASU andaaz dance group wowed everyone with their peppy dance numbers.

As the aroma of freshly cooked food that the volunteers toiled to make that morning was brought out, it's anyone's guess what the guests did next? Enjoying the feast to all senses, the evening saw guests complimenting the organization of the programs and all the activities. With high achieving students and scholars of the community felicitated and the competition winner awarded, the celebrations drew the curtains to yet another happy occasion of AZTA. For upcoming events, please visit <http://www.azteluguassociation.com/>.





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(Manjeet K Walia)

**Editor: Deepa Walia (MS CIS)**  
(Sandeep Kaur)

**Publisher & Designer:**  
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**Patron: Mini from California**  
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**Confidence...**

**C**onfidence...where does it come from and how do you know it is real? I have seen people be over-confident because they are trying to cover up for their lack of it and then I have seen those that I expect to be over-confident given where they are in life or the knowledge they have but they do the exact opposite – lack the confidence or at a minimum don't come across showcasing it. Is it their humble nature that makes them successful and if they became confident, would they become careless and lose the attention to detail or hard work or other characteristics that helped them achieve success. Does how you are raised, how much positive re-enforcement you are given growing up, and other such factors give you a confidence ceiling that you will never surpass because of where you started?

All these questions come to mind when I am faced with challenging situations and difficult decisions. I have noticed that sometimes I am not 100% confident in my ability to overcome it but when I am put to the test, I am able to overcome it by some combination of skill and possibly dumb luck. But that initial hesitation or not knowing whether I will be able to overcome it is always there no matter how much success I see. And, at the same time, I see those with less experience and less accomplishments exude a level of confidence I cannot fathom even with all my experiences and successes and it makes me wonder whether that inability to have the confidence is what has led to my success. It makes me be extra careful, think about what I am doing a million



**Editor's NOTE**

times, and sometimes make me lose sleep as thoughts turn in my head when I am faced with uncertainty – all that over analysis has got to help with any unknown issues or factors that I may not think of initially surface. However, if I got stuck in that unsure mode, I would be in what people called analysis-paralysis and never have the ability to make a decision or take an action which would inhibit my ability to succeed.

As I look back, I always wonder what gave me the courage to finally move on with my decision and I realized it wasn't that I was more sure of my decision as I thought about it longer, but it was those that I am surrounded by. Even though they have no knowledge of the platform or situation in which I am trying to take a decision, they had confidence in me and it almost rubbed off for me to temporarily forget my fears and be able to take the action needed. So, even when I was unsure of whether I was doing the right thing, I had many around me saying I was doing the right thing and my mind thought all these people can't be wrong and all their trust can't be misplaced, I will be fine. This is exactly why it is important to always have a hint of self-doubt but surround yourself with those that show confidence in you to be able to overcome it to see the successes life has to offer. I don't know what made me this way whether it was my upbringing or my experiences in life but whatever it was, it has set me up to succeed. And that is one thing I would not change about my approach to life in personal, professional, or any other situation.

**-Deepa Kaur Walia**

**Editor, Asia Today, editor@asiatodayaz.com**



**Marketing Director NOTE**

**W**here march was so colorful on the other hand April was full of events of all the religions...people celebrated Ugadi, baisakhi, Nepali new year, Hanuman jyanti and many more. it was fun to be a part of these event. I like to devote may month to all lovely mom. On Mother's day I would like to thank my mother. Whatever I am today it's all

because of her. And I am very happy to be a mother of such a loving kids they have given me happiness just by being a part of my life. I'm grateful for that and I am proud of who you have become...an amazing mother that is worthy of respect, admiration, and praise.

Happy Mother's Day to all my readers.

**Manju Walia**

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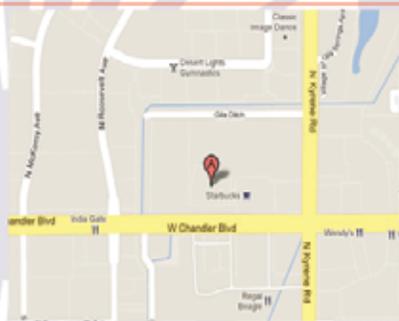
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# Stem cell research is very important and beneficial to the future of medicine and technology

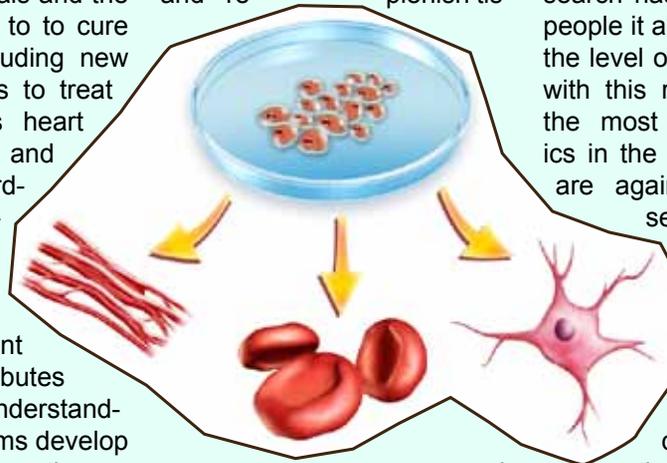
According to the National Institute of Health, "Stem cells have the remarkable potential to develop into many different cell types in the body during early life and growth." Two things that distinguish stem cells from other types of cells are that they are capable of renewing themselves quickly as well as being able to quickly adapt to specific tissue or organ cell functions. Stem cell research usually involves the three main types of stem cells which are embryonic stem cells, somatic stem cells, which is an "adult" stem cell, and induced pluripotent stem cells. While it is a huge controversy in society, stem cell research is extremely beneficial in that it is leading the medical world to advances and innovation that no one ever thought possible.

To start, stem cell research is very important and

beneficial to the future of medicine and technology. It will be able to open many doors for doctors and hospitals and the limits they can go to to cure their patients, including new potentials on ways to treat illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, and Parkinson's. According to the International Society for Stem Cell Research, stem cell research is important because it "contributes to a fundamental understanding of how organisms develop and grow, and how tissues are maintained throughout adult life." By continuing to research, this allows scientists to gain a deeper understanding on why disease occurs and what goes on in the body during disease as well as how disease can be treated.

Additionally, stem cell

research is capable of being used for a lot of different things. Stem cells can regrow and replenish tis-



sues and organs and repair any wear and tear that may happen to them. Also, this research is allowing scientists to gain a deeper understanding into the cure for cancer and other birth defects, as well as testing new drugs for cures to illnesses like the previous examples of

heart disease, diabetes, and Parkinson's.

While stem cell research has its pros, to some people it also has some cons; the level of ethics that comes with this research is one of the most controversial topics in the world. People who are against stem cell research believe that it is wrong to "play God" and mess with human life. They also believe that some of the scientific evidence that scientists use is flawed and make the entire concept seem glamorous. Some also believe that this method of research and the idea that it could lead to cloning is unethical. These are all very valid and reasonable concerns and considering them in research can lead to even stronger results and

outcomes on both sides of the controversy.

"Research on stem cells continues to advance knowledge about how an organism develops from a single cell and how healthy cells replace damaged cells in adult organisms. Stem cell research is one of the most fascinating areas of contemporary biology... research on stem cells raises scientific questions as rapidly as it generates new discoveries," per the National Institute of Health. Everything comes with pros and cons, but as a society it is our job to learn the topic, investigate and ask questions, and embrace all ideas with an open mind. We may not know it yet, but stem cell research could be the future of medicine.



-Sammy Mallik



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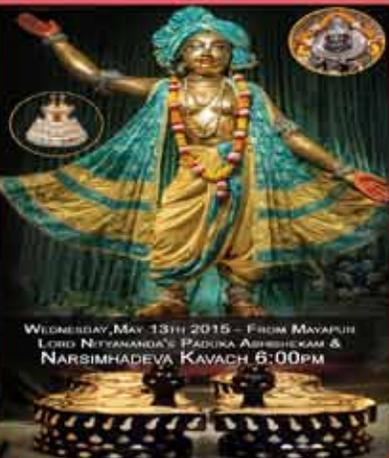


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# Glimpse of the Nagar Kirtan and program celebration in Nishkam Seva Gurudwara Sahib



# Rana Sodhi Honored at Golden Rule Banquet by Arizona Inter-Faith Movement

**Dr. Jaswant Singh Sachdev**

Arizona Interfaith Movement has been one of the most prominent and unique non-profit organizations in Arizona that has been trying to build bridges between different faiths. Representatives from 25 plus different faiths have been members of this organization. Supporting one another, Respecting different faiths and understanding the differences and similarities between them so that all of us could co-exist with one another peacefully and harmoniously has been the motto of this organization that has been in existence for over several Years. Every years for the past ten years different individuals ranging in numbers from different faith groups and communities are chosen for their work especially who try to live their lives in accordance with the Golden Rule.

One of this year's six recipients was Rana Singh Sodhi. After the death of his brother on September 15, 2001 due to hate crime, he has been instrumental, like few other members of the Sikh community, in helping spread the word of about Sikh Identity and Awareness. The event was held in Mesa convention Center in downtown Mesa on April 16, 2015 where about close to 1,000 people were in attendance. About close to 40-50 members of the Sikh community and other Indians as well as an entourage of his extended family including his two older brothers, specially arriving from India for this event, were all at hand to witness and celebrate his achievement. The author being on the Board of the AIFM, had the privilege to say few words about him in a specially prepared introductory video for him.



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# Report on Recent Sikh Awareness Activities in April 2015



## Dr. Jaswant Singh Sachdev

1. Sikh Awareness Program at The Beatitude Campus.

On March 30th, the author was invited to present Sikh Awareness Program to the Adult residents of The Beatitude Campus, a large facility for Independent adult living located at 1610 W. Glendale Ave in Phoenix Arizona. About 25 Adults arrived to attend the event to learn about Sikh people and Sikh Identity. A detailed program providing about Sikh history, Sikh presence in U.S. Role of Sikhs in WWI and WWII, Sikh Philosophy, Sikh religious Place, Sikh Articles of Faith as well as incidents of hate crime against Sikhs and Sikh Identity were highlighted. The program was followed by a 20 minutes documentary prepared by the Department of Justice. Mrs Rangji and her husband also graced the occasion.

## 2. Sikh Awareness Talk to a Batch of Non-Sikhs

With the efforts of Mrs. Rangji and the author a group

of about 25 people were hosted at Nishkam Seva Gurdwara Sahib on April 5th Monday. The Author again delivered his specially prepared power point preparation as was detailed in the above paragraph. The presentation lasted for about 45 minute

was followed by a 20 minutes documentary. The group was welcomed by snacks and at the end a hot freshly prepared Langar was served to the guests.

## 3. Teaching Sikh Awareness to the Students from Prescott

Once again as usual Mrs. Rangji was instrumental in inviting a group of 20 students to Nishkam Seva Gurdwara Sahib along with their teacher from Prescott to take a detailed lesson in Sikh Awareness, specially prepared and delivered by this Author with the help of power point presentation. The



presentation lasted for about 45 minute was followed by a 20 minutes documentary prepared by the Department of Justice. A deliciously prepared fresh vegetarian food was then served to all the guests. Such programs about Sikh Awareness have become a regular feature and have become popular with the American audience.

## 4. Desert Edge High School, Goodyear, Arizona Children Attend Sikh Awareness Program.

A group of about 45 young children from Desert Edge High School in Goodyear Arizona

presentation discussed above was presented again. Finally a tour of Gurdwara Sahib Sanctuary was also included. They were also served a hot breakfast of Aloo Parautheys prior to the beginning of the program.

## 5. Rio Salado College in Tempe Invites the Author for Sikh Awareness Talk

About 25 teachers and few students of the Rio Salado Community College in Tempe invited the author on April 15 to present his specially prepared Sikh Awareness Power Point presentation. The intent was so that teachers could further

disseminate the information about unique Sikh Identity and Sikh faith to their students. The detailed information about Sikh faith and Sikh identity including turban was provided. This was followed with a fifteen minutes documentary show prepared by department of Justice and SALDEF. Several questions were then posed by the teachers that were appropriately discussed by the author.

## 6. High School 15 Students from Flagstaff Learn about Sikhs

About a group of 15 high school students from Flagstaff arrived along with their teacher to spend Friday afternoon in Nishkam Seva Gurdwara Sahib and learn about Sikh faith and Sikh Identity. Mrs Rangji arranged for their visit to Gurdwara Sahib. A 45 minutes power point specially prepared by author detailing highlights about Sikh faith was once again presented followed by a documentary from SALDEF. Finally they joined the Sangat to partake Langar before their departure around 9:30 PM

# Sixth Vaisakhi Mela in Phoenix, Arizona

**Dr. Jaswant Singh Sachdev**

Phoenix, Arizona has become an oasis in the desert in as far as the events related to Punjabi culture are concerned, thanks to Phoenix Desi Sports and Cultural Club (PDSCC.) The open heartedness and evergreen philanthropy as well as love with Punjabi Sikh culture shown by its members has turned this town into one of the most fertile grounds for dissemination of Punjabi-Sikh culture especially as it relates to Vaisakhi mela.

In fact celebration of Vaisakhi Mela in this town dates back to approximately 20-25 years when this author first took initiative to celebrate it in rented halls of high Schools. At that time, not more than two to three hundred Punjabi Sikh families were residing in the valley. With the opening of Indo-American cultural center a couple of years later, this event shifted to that locale. The program during that time was celebrated in the evening. A few volunteer families would cook dinner in the kitchen of the hall and a variety program of Bhangra and Gidda followed by dinner will take place. By then about five hundred Punjabi families had made the valley their home.

But the entire scenario changed approximately a decade ago with the creation Phoenix Desi Sports and Cultural Club. Six years ago, the celebration of



Vaisakhi Mela moved to daytime in a city park in Good Year and event restarted with full gusto. Suminder Singh Sodhi took over President-ship of the club a couple of years ago. Assisted by a dedicated team of volunteers consisting of Chamkaur Singh Raiké, Darshan Singh Gill and Harminder Singh Dhanoa as well as a few others, the event has been truly re-energized. Lately in its latest Avataar, the venue has been changed to Hammer Park in Avondale located at 99th Ave and 101 loop in the West Valley.

This year's program on Saturday, April the 4th 2015 started in the early noon and continued late into the evening. Elaborate snacks consisting of Samosas, chole, Pakoras, Jelabis and various other sweets

cooked on site by the volunteers of PDSCC were so abundant that one did not feel the need for the lunch. This was followed by free full Punjabi dinner. Thanks to the volunteers of PDSCC, it was all free.

The stage was professionally handled by Hardip Singh Sodhi and Gursharan Kaur Gill where several children groups exhibited their excellent skill in Punjabi dances such as Bhangra and Gidda entertaining the guests. In between, Mayor of city of Phoenix, Greg Stanton who was in attendance was asked to come on stage where he was introduced by the author and then honored. All the participant children were awarded trophies. A huge selection of very expensive prizes such as big smart TV, big speaker sets and too many other items difficult to count were handed over to the winners of the raffle.

Several Punjabi games such as Rassa Khichhi, Discus throwing and races by the boys and girls were concomitantly carried on to the awe of the audience. The visitors were all seated under a huge canopy while the hot food was served on the sides under separate canopies. Over all, it was one of the most memorable and enjoyable day in the history of such events in Phoenix. Interestingly the entire program was continuously broadcasted live by Global Punjab TV throughout the event.



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For more information program about the Abacus with Singapore Math program and our abacus summer program, contact us at [Info@CapstoneEducationCenter.com](mailto:Info@CapstoneEducationCenter.com) or call Catherine Kolodin at 480.239.7447.

Catherine Kolodin, an educator for sixteen years, is the managing director of Capstone Education. She attended the Graduate School of Education at UCLA, specializing in math education for young children. She has taught in public, private, and charter schools. She spent two years studying math education in Hangzhou, China. She is grateful for the opportunity to learn under expert abacus instructors in both the United States and in Singapore.



**Catherine Kolodin**

Managing Director  
4750 North Central Avenue  
Suite 120  
Phoenix, Arizona 85012  
**480.239.7447**

[Info@CapstoneEducationCenter.com](mailto:Info@CapstoneEducationCenter.com)  
[www.CapstoneEducationCenter.com](http://www.CapstoneEducationCenter.com)



# My House is Bigger than Yours! But Then What?



It is not unusual to come across many well-settled immigrants in the North America from the Indian subcontinent owning beautiful large houses, much better and bigger than many indigenous people with similar incomes and status. Most of these immigrants are professionals and rich businessmen. Despite having beautiful residences, they still yearn for newer and bigger ones.

While this may, in fact, be a universal phenomenon among all rapidly growing immigrant communities in North America, somehow it conspicuously seems to have turned into a kind of fixation within the immigrants from South Asian countries. More often than not, it is a consequence of their plentiful hard-earned resources, yet at times it may be an attempt to fulfill their undersurface desire of pseudo exhibition. By owning a bigger house, they may be trying to prove themselves to be a step higher than their friends and relatives in the same profession for it often makes them fly high as if they have won the competition of their lives. But have they truly? What is forgotten here is that there always will be someone having a residence more beautiful and bigger. And there is no winning this sort of competition.

The majority of our people, especially those from South Asia involved in this rat-race belong to medical profession, the so-called healers of the people. Yet instead of healing others, they decide to take care of themselves first. My intent in this chapter is not to criticize any one single individual; rather, if it brings some solace to my readers, I will hesitate not in pointing it out that at one stage of my life, I was also a patient of the same illness with similar kinds of symptoms. There is a sincere need for us to further explore this particular behavior with an open mind. By no stretch of imagination, do I intend to suggest that such behavior is totally wrong or

uncalled for. I didn't act differently than my peers and I fell for the same trap.

The factors underlying such actions can be easily understood. The most important and fundamental reason relates to the fact that for many people a personal residence, despite being what it is, also happens to be the most important piece of real estate that they'll ever own. Regardless of the ups and downs in the stock market and other means of saving or growing personal portfolio, a house is a relatively safe long-term investment. And when someone has the money to spend, a personal residence is the one where one would like to spend money. It not only is a reasonably secure financial venture but it also serves as a visible show-piece of one's success.

I often have the opportunity, at least once a month if not more, to attend housewarming religious celebrations at newly acquired residences of many of my friends and acquaintances. In these religious functions, the hosts, the owners of the newly acquired mansions usually invite their relatives, friends, and even some distant acquaintances from all walks of life. While arrangements of such functions may have underlying ulterior motives, yet in a way it is good to have religious gatherings for nothing could be better than thanking one's God for all the blessings showered upon the family. It induces a sense of humility in the host at that particular occasion which otherwise might be in reverse proportion to the size of the house, and in some cases may not even exist at all.

Moreover, such kinds of religious functions indirectly help in keeping one away from gallons and gallons of Chivas Regal and Johnny Walker that



otherwise could have been gulped on that occasion in the kind of house-warming celebrations we otherwise would tend to have. Turning vegetarian for religiously oriented house-warming functions, even if only for that day, also spares many of those poor little broilers assigned to the death row, waiting to be executed so that their legs and breast could be chopped off for the pleasure-seeking ever-expanding bellies of the guests.

At the beginning of the function, when a new guest, colleague, or another countryman enters the house and utters a few congratulatory words about the house, the hosts, he or she may start floating on cloud nine. But soon thereafter, some guests will turn nosy and, at times, a little envious. They may even get bothered as to how come the host, their friend, relative or acquaintance whatever the case might be, is able to own such a palatial residence while they couldn't. I say this because it is simply human nature that compels us to compare our achievements with those we know. Yet it does not rattle us at all, if the other person owning a dwelling much better than what we could have ever dreamt about, does not happen to be our countryman, a close friend or a relative.

While our houses may be getting bigger, our wallets fatter, and our pockets deeper, we are diminishing internally, becoming poorer and poorer, especially if viewed from higher perspectives. Our minds are being polluted with newfound riches that serve no useful purpose to anyone. When a need arises to help the poor, the dejected, and the needy, our hands don't reach deep into our pocket. When there is a call to support research for a disease, or for a need to care for an orphaned

child suffering from poverty and hunger, our hands seem not to move and our pockets start shrinking. Likewise when there is a need to assist with a civic affair or social matter, we try not to make those big, beautiful houses available for fundraising events. We simply hide under the excuse that this isn't our job and then justify in trying to leave it for someone else, for after all, we happen to be extremely busy in our other important assignments of this mortal life.

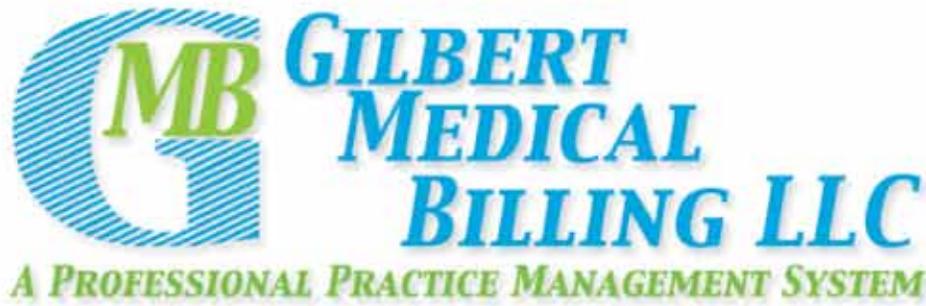
When the sunset days of our lives approach, and the road finally nears the end, the issue will crop up about what to do with those beautiful large houses and Estates. No doubt, the option of passing it to our children, like rest of the world, will always be there. The majority of human beings have been doing it ever since life appeared on this earth. In fact, this is one path that many of us will ultimately end up traversing. Yet a little perusal makes it fairly obvious that our children may not need it, provided they were put on the right track at the outset of their careers. Or conversely, they may end up misusing their inherited resources, if parents didn't work hard enough for the successful growth of their children. "Easy come, easy go" is likely to be the outcome. The

following well-known religious statement is self-explanatory and describes the above stated scenario pretty well: "Poot Spoot to keeon Dhan Sanchay; Poot Kpoot to Keeon Dhan Sanchay." Translated in English, it simply implies. "If son is able and intelligent, why collect and leave money for he could take care himself; but if the child is not worthy, why collect as whatever is left, will be wasted anyway."

But does this mean that one shouldn't have a large and beautiful residence even if one were in the position to afford it? My simple response would be to have what you want, provided you avoid putting yourself in a trap out of which it might become difficult to pull yourself out. Owning a big home shouldn't be done for the mere purpose of showing it off or for a mere ego trip. Blessed with bountiful resources, there is a need to put them to good use to help others.

Sharing with others, especially the needy will bring real comfort, perhaps much more than what a larger house and a soft bed could ever provide. Ignore not the weak, the downtrodden and distressed one. Giving back to the society in which we live and the community to which we belong while also keeping in mind the ultimate Giver, opens the way to happiness that otherwise might not come our way easily. Take flight and rise high but do so with the body, wings, and soul as one and in unison.

\*Author of 1. "Square Pegs, Round Holes" [www.SquarePegsRoundHolesBook.com](http://www.SquarePegsRoundHolesBook.com) and 2. "Sikhism: Points to Ponder; Perspectives of a Sikh Living Abroad," as well as a recently published masterpiece about the cross-cultural dilemma of Indian subcontinent diaspora, 3. "One Coin, Two Sides," For details of the this new book, please go to the LINK <http://inkwellproductions.com/one-coin-two-sides.htm>



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# Fourth Khalsa Sirjana Divas & Sikh Identity Awareness Nagar Kirtan in Phoenix

of children from Gurdwara Sahib, Nishkam Seva and Gurdwara Sahib, Guru Nanak Dwara. One by one, groups of children arrived on stage to perform Kirtan Seva. The children kept the Sangat involved until 11:45 am when Ragi Jethas of the three local Gurdwaras followed by Dhadi Jetha from India performed Kirtan. This was followed by two speeches on Sikh Identity first by Bibi Manmeet Kaur in Punjabi and then by Maanik Singh in English. While Manmeet emphasized the role of Sikh women in helping maintain the Sikh identity, Maanik dealt with the subject from males' perspectives. He also high-lighted the present day statistics about how our fellow Americans see and feel about the Sikhs, detailing the issues related to the turban.

Thereafter the trophies for the Hemkunt Speech competition were presented to about 50 children who had taken part in earlier speeches. They were honored by the main sevadaar-organizers of respective Gurdwara Sahibs. In between, five individuals who had taken Amrit on the Vaiskhi at Gurdwara Nishkam Seva were honored by Bhai Niranjn Singh and Bibi Sharanjit Kaur. The author was honored to co-ordinate the event with Suminder Singh.

The beautiful large hall of the convention center had been decorated by about 20 volunteer sevadaars who had arrived at 6 am to make everything ready for the Kirtan Darbar. All around the walls, 50 specially prepared banners each 4X8 feet in dimension were hung detailing salient features of the Sikh Identity, Sikh Turban, Sikh history in this country, the role of Sikhs in WWI and WWII as well as the Sikh Philosophy. The continuous Langar of hot breakfast of several items such as Chhole, Somasas, Aloo Tiki, Chaat, French fries hot pakoras and various kinds of Indian sweets as well as hot tea were made available to each and every one including passers-by. This lasted until 1 pm and then was followed by Lunch Langar again consisting of several items. All this had been prepared with devotion and dedication by the members of PDSCC through selfless seva for two days. Chapaties were prepared at Nishkam Seva Gurdwara Sahib by its volunteers. Chamkaur Singh and Darshan Singh took the lead roles in the preparation of the Langar and arranging the transportation etc.

This was followed by Sikh Identity Awareness Nagar Kirtan under the auspicious of Guru Granth Sahib ji placed on a specially decorated eighteen wheeler and led by Punj Pyarees. Dhadi Vaars were continuously sung by Dhadi Jethas whereas the Sangat followed Guru Granth Sahib Ji on foot. Several of the banners mentioned above were carried by the children in the procession to let the public know about the Sikhs and Sikh Identity. The Nagar Kirtan concluded around 4 pm. It is estimated that over two thousand people, including non-Sikhs, attended or partook Langar at this spectacular and colorful event at different times of the day.





# INDIAN SENIORS ASSOCIATION OF ARIZONA (ISAA)



Mar 31, 2015 was slightly warmer than normal but a sunny day. It was fun at the Rio Vista Park. Over eighty members and guests enjoyed the weather, and first thing in the morning with gotas, onion pakodas, pepper bhajiyas and badshahi chai. After an hour of bhajans and dhuns by Shantiben, Deviben, Amritaben, Vaswaniji, Jayshreeben, Surjit Kaur, Kanubhai and jokes by many, lunch was served. This consisted of fresh Subway sandwiches, chips and soda sponsored by ISAA. Sharadbhai celebrated his birthday today too by serving ice cream. Jitubhai coordinated entertainment hour as we celebrated Ram Navmi, Mahavir Jayanti and Hanuman Jayanti with bhajans and some kirtans. The picnic was a great hit again.

On April 14, 2015, Padda Saheb paid a hearty tribute to all those "shaheds" who sacrificed their lives for Indian Independence during Jalianwala baugh massacre by the British soldiers. Prakash Gandhi introduced a novel idea to help members' dementia/Alzheimer's problems with some light fun activity. Everyone enjoyed it. Need many more. Jitubhai showed some video clips of dance, music and education. Here are some of them for those who would like to



know more. A moving story of a girl with faulty immune system <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=pFExgTJzEV4>; 'Kanhaiya, Yaad Hai Kuchh Bhi Hamaari' by Farid Ayaz & Abu Mohammed - YouTube [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_detailpage&v=GHAMyHerv90](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=GHAMyHerv90); Padharo Maro Des - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=heHxA8G\\_yOw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=heHxA8G_yOw) and Muslim girl in Mumbai wins Bhagwad Gita contest - <http://timesofindia.india-times.com/videos/news/Muslim-girl-in-Mumbai-wins-Bhagwad-Gita-contest/>

[videoshow/46796607.cms](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=heHxA8G_yOw)

ISAA also celebrated "Baisakhi" with Bhangra dance and music with the help by Meena Sharma & Surjit Kaur. The hall was packed with over eighty-five in the attendance. Jitubhai conveyed the message by Deepika Bhalla who was very grateful and appreciative of the blessings by the ISAA members. She has been able to open a mind-blowing state of the art resort called "Chateau Luxe" in Phoenix metro. The resort is located at 1175 E. Lone Cactus Road. It's open for weddings, par-

1. Bhajiyas & pakodas are seniors favorite at yet another picnic
2. April 14th luncheon sponsors
3. Blasting celebrations of Baisakhi by ISAA
4. ISAA celebrated Sharadbhai's birthday at the Picnic
5. Picnic Pakodas are in progress

ties, seminars, conferences and much more.

On April 21, 2015, it was a great day at the Rio Vista Park. The weather was just fantastic. Over seventy of us had fun. Entertainment was led by Jitubhai with the help from great artists namely- Vaswaniji, Harshadbhai, Shrikantbhai, Minaben and Kanubhai. Pangs of hunger were relieved by the pleasant surprise from the Tangris who just happened to arrive on time with bananas. Due to detection of engineering glitch in content of cooking gas the serving of bhajiyas and chai fell behind schedule. Thanks to good work by the volunteers' garam garam bhajiyas were served to the heartfelt content of all with masaledar chai. Kichadi was not far behind at the lunch time. Many thanks to all the volunteers in cooking, cleaning and entertainment. ISAA was the sponsor of today's picnic too.



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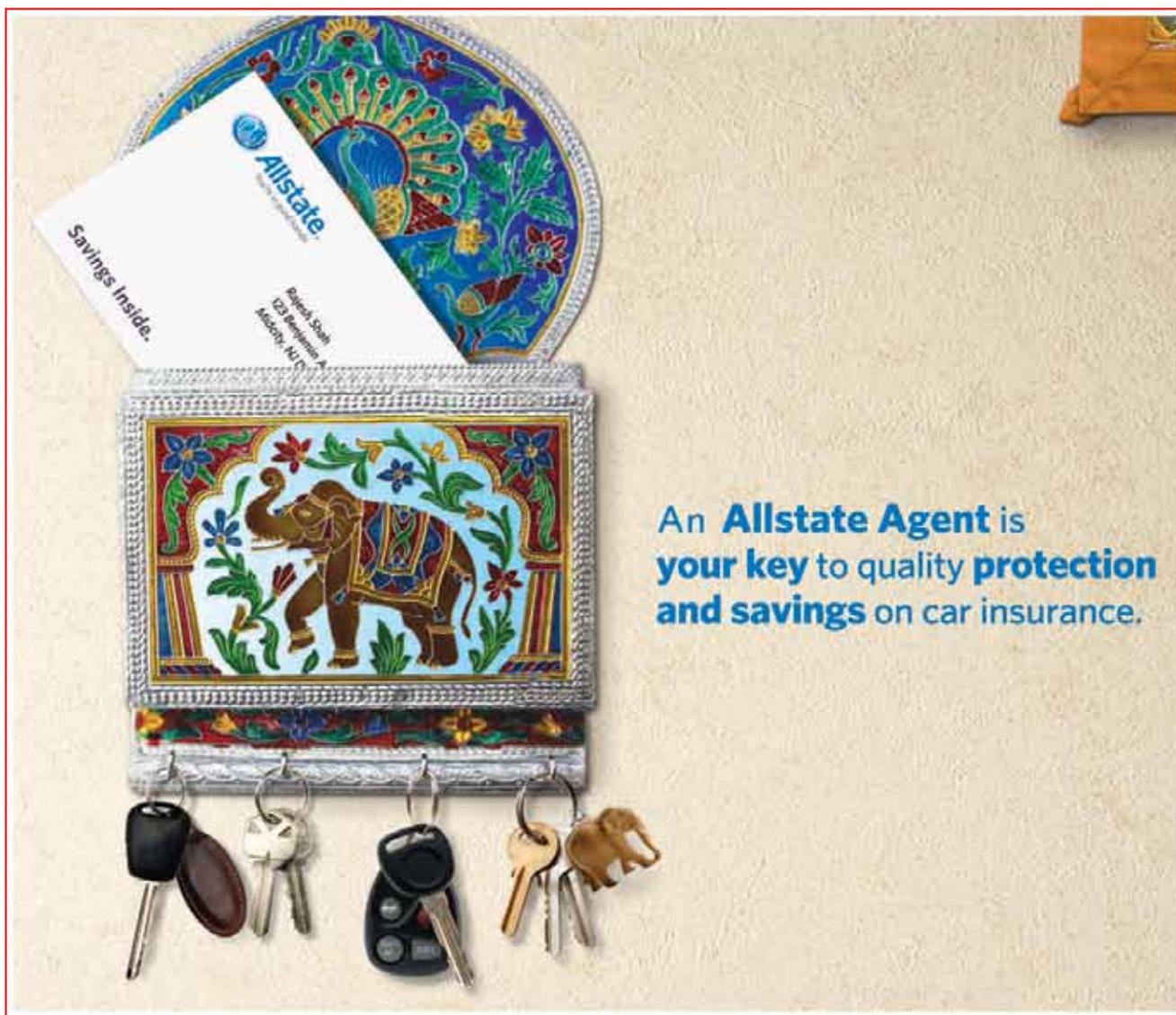
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sonia@allstate.com  
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# Senior Group Enjoys Spring Picnic

Contributed by Bhagubhai Patel and Prakash Kotecha  
**Future Programs:**

- Mothers' day celebration will be on May 7th. Seniors, interested in singing on Mother's Day are requested to give their name and the song title to Srikanthbhai Vaidya or Jayshree Khatriya.

- Picnic in mountains is - Prescott or Payson - will be in June, date to be finalized.

**Current Activities Report:**

- Senior Group members enjoyed a Spring picnic on Thursday April 23rd at Rio Vista Park in Peoria. With mild weather it was a perfect day for being outdoors - that is why we live in Arizona. The freshly cooked Pakora and Masal Chai was a nice welcome sign, followed up by usual games and socializing. The main meal was Khichadi, Shak and Pickles - simple but delicious menu!

- Screening of Lion dance performed by Indians during recent Prime minister Modi's visit to Germany as part of inauguration ceremony of the Industrial Exhibition. The program included Indian dance diversity and heritage sites in a truly unique way and surprising way of introducing Lion - symbol of "Make In India".

- Ramnavami celebration Vallabh bhai, Srikant bhai, Kali Parmanand, Harshad bhai and Deviben presented devotional Bhajans with everyone joined in sing along. However dynamic Meenaben Bhavsar's absence was felt.

- We welcomed Mr. Pentella Sheshaia who served for Prime Ministers of India for a long time heading Telecommunication department. We bid farewell to our Winter season members Babulal & Naina Mehta returning to Canada and Abbas & Kaniza Bunglwal going to New Jersey who and we hope they will be returning in November

- We have delicious hot lunch each Thursday, sponsors during recent past were Jagdishbhai & Sheelaben Trivedi, Jayaben & Bhagubhai Patel, Kali & Mani Parmanand, Jagan & Uma Lingamneni, Madhav Rao & Parvati Tummala and Prem & Krishna Lahoti.

- Thursday program schedule is getting full of activities with Light exercises to get started, Playing cards - Duplicate Bridge and Judgement played by men and women and other games. The Table Tennis is attracting a very spirited participation, Carom Board and Darts are also available.

**News Update:**

- Jagan Lingamneni and Charan Khurana are appointed by the IACRF Board of Directors as liaison for the Seniors Group. Lalitbhai and Bhagubhai will be facilitators.

- Senior program management committee has finalized different Task Leaders and Associates, thanks to all volunteers on the Task Groups who devote their valuable fun time during our Thursday session for smooth operation of the program.

- A Group Discussion session after lunch initiated on current topics, monitored by Jagan Lingamneni. On April 4th, Jaganji led the discussion on two broad areas that are eternal current topics - one was safety as Asians in USA and the discrimination that is experienced by m and how to cope with it.

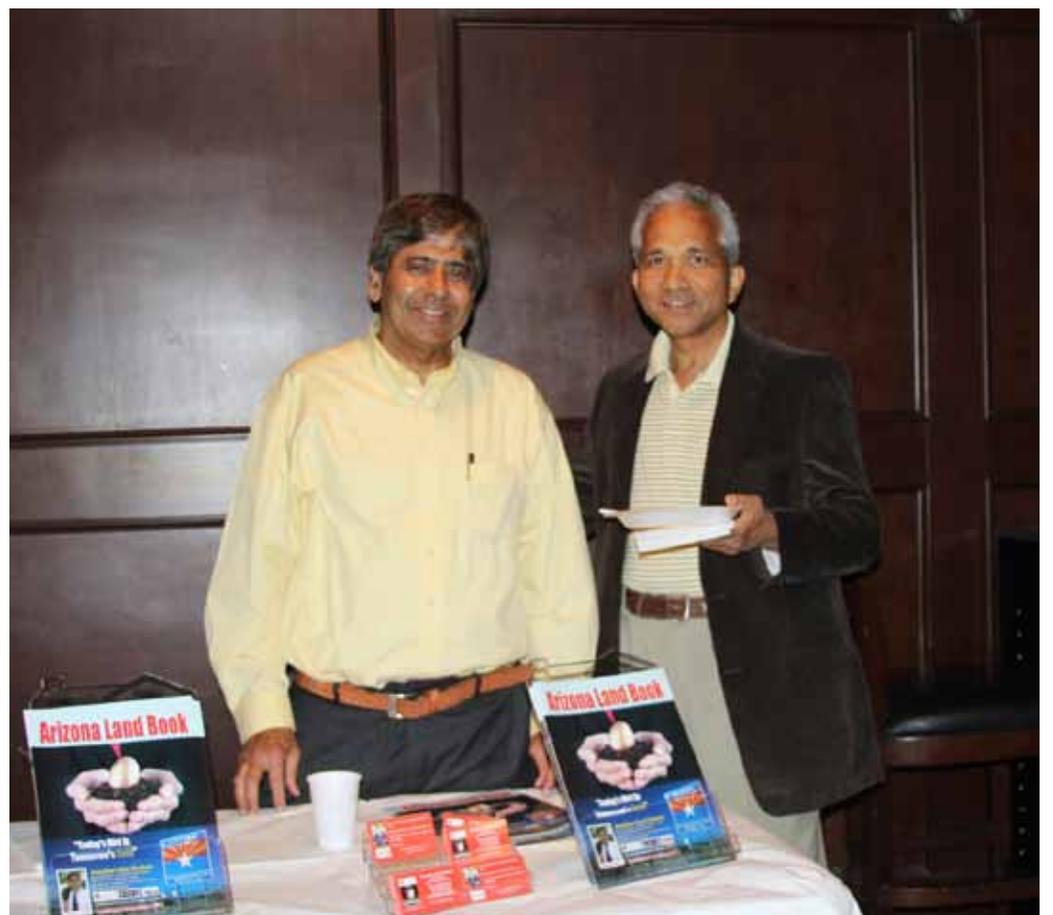
- IACRF Management recognized services of seniors in the Grand India Festival - volunteers were Mahendra & Malti Davgania, Kishor Vyas, Meena Bhavsar, Lalit Patel, and Dinesh Trivedi.

- Chandrikaben's heart operation and Meenaben Bhavsar's knee operation were successful and they are recuperating at home. We wish early and complete recovery to both of them.

*Photos by Sevanti Shah*



Sam Thomasson, Founder and CEO Zounds Hearing Inc. attended Pratham Bollywood Bhangra fundraising event in support of childhood literacy at India Oven in Mesa with Zounds staff and their family members.



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# Dr. Ram Krishna family makes a One Million Dollar donation to the University of Arizona Cancer Research Center



**D**r. Ram Krishna and his wife, Dr. Meera Krishna, made a \$ 1 million gift to the University of Arizona Cancer Center in Phoenix. Dr. Ram Krishna, the only Asian member of the Arizona Board of Regents, is a well know orthopedic surgeon practicing in Yuma, Arizona. Then-Gov. Jan Brewer appointed him to the Board of Regents in 2012.

The donation was made in memory of Dr. Meera Krishna's older sister, Dr. Mandira Jalajakshi, who passed away in England in 2012. Dr. Jalajakshi was a caring physician who worked in England most of her life taking care of the needy and sick. After having worked in many hospitals

across England, Dr. Jalajakshi finally settled down in Louth, England, where she worked as an emergency room physician. Dr. Jalajakshi was a simple, honest and loving person and the Krishna family chose to keep her memory alive through this donation. In recognition of the Krishnas' gift, a space in the new center will bear the name of Dr. Mandira Jalajakshi and serve as a memorial honoring her work as a physician.

The \$ 1 million gift will go toward the construction of an Outpatient facility at the University of Arizona Cancer Center in Phoenix, which is a state of the art cancer care and research facility in part-

nership with the St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center/ Dignity Health Outpatient facility. The center, which is under construction on the Phoenix Biomedical Campus in downtown Phoenix, will be equipped to serve over 500 patients. It is scheduled to open in September 2015 and will offer comprehensive cancer services including radiation oncology, patient wellness and support services, clinical lab space and several specialized cancer care clinics.

The University of Arizona hosted a reception on Thursday, April 9, 2015, to recognize the Krishna family for their generous donation. The invitation only event hosted by Dr.

Ann Weaver Hart, President of the University of Arizona, was attended by members of the Arizona Board of Regents and major donors and benefactors of the University. Dr. Ram and Meera Krishna were presented a beautiful vase by the University as a token of appreciation for their gift.

In his speech, Regent Dr. Ram Krishna stated that their family had a long relationship with the University of Arizona as his younger daughter, Rupa, was born at the Banner University Medical Center in Tucson. Both their daughters, Sunita and Rupa, attended the University of Arizona for their undergraduate and graduate studies, having graduated

from the University Law and Medical School respectively.

The Krishna family had wanted to give back to the University of Arizona as they strongly believe in supporting education and medical research- a subject that is very important to all of them. At the same time, they were also looking for a suitable way in which they could keep the memory of Dr. Jalajakshi and her spirit of caring alive.

The Indian-American community of the greater Phoenix area is proud of their generous donation and would like to commend the Krishna family on their philanthropic work.

*Humbly Submitted By  
Kalpana Batni*

## INDIA ASSOCIATION and IACRF will host the Indian Consulate General's Visa Camp

**When: 9:00 AM to 2:30PM Sunday May 03, 2015**

**Venue: Ekta Mandir, 2804 W. Maryland Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85017**

### SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED:

Accepting visa applications from those holding US Passports. Only applications for Visa, OCI and Renunciation Certificate will be accepted. In case of a family applying for visa, documents could be accepted from only a member of the family on behalf of the entire family. Applications will NOT be accepted from travel agents.

### PLEASE NOTE:

(1) Applications will be accepted on appointment basis between 9:00 A.M. to 2.30 P.M. To take appointments, please visit the website: <http://www.in.ckgs.us/> and click the "INDIA VISA CAMP, PHOENIX".

Only those applicants who have made prior online appointments and bring hard copy of the application along with all supporting documents will be allowed entry.



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# PPGA held its first inaugural Vaisakhi Open at Wildfire Golf Club



Phoenix Punjabi Golf Association (PPGA) is a new but well recognized sports organization in the Phoenix metropolitan area. Even though the organization is based locally in Phoenix, it has a wide membership base including all over Arizona, other US states and even in Canada. Phoenix Punjabi Golf Association is a brainchild of few individuals who always played together as a small group but had a vision to advance this fun loving activity amongst all of their colleagues within the Punjab community. During

one of the golfing events these individuals thought of extending this opportunity to all others who may have an interest in the game of golf, similar to the participants of their own group. During one of their out of town trips they decided to create the organization representing all Punjabi golfers in state of Arizona. Every body was excited and agreeable to the idea. Dr Sraow, from this group, took the initiative to develop the organization and file the necessary paperwork with Arizona Corporate Commission. The organization was of-

ficially called PPGA (Phoenix Punjabi Golf Association).

PPGA held its first inaugural Vaisakhi Open at Wildfire Golf Club in the J.W. Marriott resort on April 14, 2012. This was an extremely successful event. Since then PPGA has been organizing annual Vaisakhi Open at Whirlwind Golf Club in Chandler.

This event has now become an international event attracting players from not only United States but from Canada and even from India. In addition to the annual Vaisakhi Open, PPGA also orga-

nizes monthly golfing events and regular free golf clinics for our next generation of golfers throughout the year.

Dr. Jagwinder Sraow is the CEO of the organization with his wonderful team including Sandeep (Sonny) Singh as the President, Jagdeep (JD) Saran as Vice-President, Raj Bharaj as Treasurer and Onkar Kang as the Secretary. Baltej Grewal, Daljit Singh and Davinder Monder are also on the Executive Committee.

The whole team is fully dedicated to the success of the organization, spending

numerous hours every year organizing all the activities of the organization.

Phoenix Punjabi Golf Association is a premiere sports organization promoting the game of golf while helping our community through various local charities. During our past events, we have supported many charities like The Red Cross, Phoenix Rescue Mission and St. Vincent De Paul. PPGA thanks all of our sponsors for helping us help our community.

Their support is invaluable.



## Nepalese diaspora of Arizona celebrated their New Year 2072

and is 56.7 years ahead of Gregorian calendar and usually falls on mid April every year.

The event was organized by Nepalis and Friends Association (NAFA) of Arizona. The event started with the welcome note by president of the association Bishnu Malla. Kids participated in the quiz contest that was mostly based on the information around Nepalese culture, geography and heritage. Then the cultural program followed it. Kids and adults from various ages participated on the traditional Nepalese dance program. Renowned Nepalese pop singer Nalina Chitrakar was the major attraction of the evening.

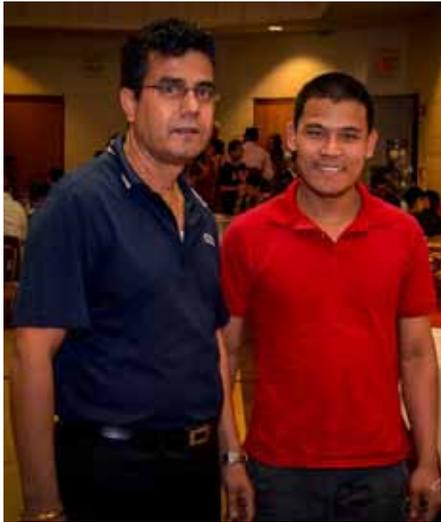
Prem Tamang and Anil Bibhushan Dhakal who are originally from Nepal....they own restaurant in Avondale name India Garden.

They served all the traditional Nepali food which added the fun in the cultural program. I was great experience for me and my family shooting the entire program

We loved watching lovely kids dancing and we really enjoyed good food served by India Garden.



# Nepalese diaspora of Arizona celebrated their New Year 2072



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# Real Estate News of Arizona - May 2015

Hello Friends,

The official pool season kicks off. School days are coming to an end and summer vacations are around the corner. That means time to clean those pool vacuums, maintain the chlorine levels as the kids will be jumping into the pool, cooling off and pool parties everywhere. Just as the summer kicks off with a dash to the pool, the real-estate market is also making a dash with more buyers in the market, a lot of families moving, out of state movers, etc that make the real-estate market really move fast during the summer.

ASU's housing expert Michael Orr reported Thursday that home sales were up 9% in February compared to a year ago and 19% over a sluggish January. The median sale price in the Valley was \$212,500 in February, also up 9% from 12 months ago. New homes were up about 37% in the Phoenix area last month compared to a year ago, and existing home sales surged 29% as the real estate market looks for improvements after a slow 2014, according to new industry data. RL Brown Housing Reports monthly real estate statistics show a healthy bump for housing permits taken out by builders in the Phoenix region for both March and the first quarter.

There were 1,373 housing permits for new construction in March, according to RL Brown. That is up 37% from March 2014. For the quarter, housing starts were up 25% over a 1Q 2014 (3,214 permits vs. 2,578). The March permit volume is the highest since July 2008, according to the Scottsdale real estate research firm.

Scottsdale-based Harvard Investments and Phoenix-based home builder Brookfield Communities are partnering to build the final phase of a 900-acre development along the Colorado River in Bullhead City. It sits on the Arizona side of the Colorado River across from Laughlin, Nevada. The builder focuses on so-called active adult communities aimed at retirees and the semi-retired. The two companies also will jointly develop 20 acres of commercial property at the Bullhead City project.

New home sales were up 11.5% in March compared to a year ago but are just up a modest 2.1% quarter over quarter. Existing home sales were up 28.9% in March vs March 2014 are up 6.9% comparing the first quarters of 2015 and 2014.

Now let's look at the March sales of Residential Homes in Maricopa county-

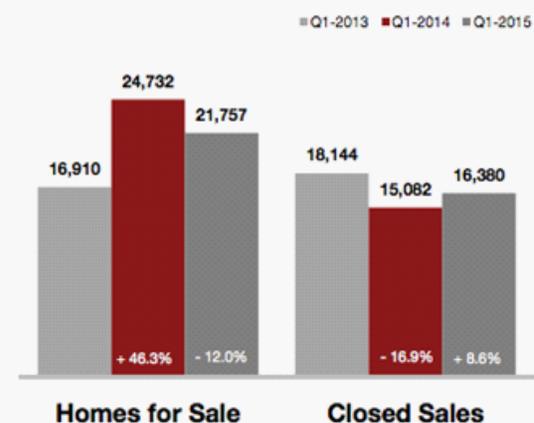
- Total sales for Single Family, Town-homes, Condos for March was 6,896, whereas February were 5,185 and January was 4,172
- The Active listings for March was 21,684, whereas February were 22,313 and January was 22,243
- Pending sales for March were 7,144 whereas February was 5,617 and January was 4,506

**Now let's take a look on commercial side-**  
 ICON Builders sold the 144-unit W 35th multi-

## Maricopa County

Key Metrics	Q1-2015	1-Yr Chg
Median Sales Price	\$206,000	+ 6.7%
Average Sales Price	\$264,491	+ 3.4%
Pct. of List Price Received	97.4%	- 0.0%
Homes for Sale	21,757	- 12.0%
Closed Sales	16,380	+ 8.6%
Months Supply	3.8	- 11.4%
Days on Market	68	+ 9.1%

## Market Activity



### Bank Foreclosures

Residential foreclosures have been trending downward for some time. Year-over-year pending foreclosures have dropped 28%, and lender owner sales have dropped 24.5%. On average 268 homes revert back to the bank each month, of those 75% are valued under \$200,000 by our valuation model. Simply put, foreclosures aren't going to put enough entry level homes back on the market.

Year	Residential Notices	Residential Foreclosed	% Notices To Foreclosures
2015 *	1,576	637	40.42%
2014	10,004	5,312	53.10%
2013	17,044	9,668	56.72%
2012	39,793	22,615	56.83%
2011	54,339	42,510	78.23%
2010	79,653	49,343	61.95%

family community at 15615 N35th Ave in Phoenix to Univest Inc for \$8.82 million, or approximately \$61,000 per unit. Built in 1983 the 92,789 square foot property is situated on a 4.5-acre parcel. The property received extensive renovations during 2011 and 2012, and was reported to be 96 percent occupied at time of sale.

Omni American LLC sold the 664 unit self-storage facility at 17635 E Riggs Rd in Gilbert for \$7.9 million or about \$12,000 per unit. The 115,266 square foot facility was constructed in 2013 and sold for about \$69 per square foot. The buyer was CubeSmart LP headquartered in Malvern, PA. CubeSmart is a national owner and operator of self-storage facilities, reportedly the fourth largest owner-operator in the US. The property was formerly operating as Omni Self Storage and is located in the Gateway Airport/Loop 202.

A Scottsdale Road Starbucks building has sold for \$2.42 million to Silicon Valley buyers. The building is located at the Scottsdale and McKellips roads in Tempe. The building totals 1,850 square feet.

Class A office building at Camelback Road and 32nd St in Phoenix was acquired by Lincoln Property Co and Oaktree Capital Management. The pair acquired the 259,000 square foot Biltmore Commerce Center for \$58 million. It sits on the northeast corner of the Biltmore area intersection.

Kansas City based VanTrust Real Estate LLC has bought a 44th Street office building for \$22.9 million. VanTrust acquired Gateway Four, a 137,069-square-foot office building, located at the corner of Van Buren and 44th st in Phoenix.

Hope this article gives you a peek in what's happening in our valley. As always, I love all the questions, comments & feedback. Please keep them coming at [arti@artiier.com](mailto:arti@artiier.com) or call me at 480.242.8573



*Disclaimer: This article makes no representation or warranties of any kind as to the accuracy of the data. The source of data has been taken from several sources such as Armls, cromford report, Better Homes and Garden, Costar, Globest, BizJournal, NewsGeni, Realty times, azcentral, wall street journal.*

**MAY 2015**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 * Happiness Program May 2015	2 * Srinivasa Kalyanam * Strings in Springs * Nrsimhadeva Caturdasi * "Our Founder Acarya" Seminar series
3 * Satyanarayana Puja * Santoor Concert * "Our Founder Acarya" Seminar series * VISA Camp Indian Consulate	4	5	6	7	8 * Murti Prana Prathistapana Kumbhabhishekam * Shobhana's Krishna * Prana Prathishta Kumbhabhishekam for Bhaktha Hanuman and Ram Parivar	9 * Murti Prana Prathistapana Kumbhabhishekam "Our Founder Acarya" Seminar series
10 * Murti Prana Prathistapana Kumbhabhishekam * DB Bridal Expos - 6th Annual Phoenix 2015 * Swaranjali * Swami Anubhavananda's Spiritual Discourses in English "Our Founder Acarya" Seminar series	11	12 * Swami Anubhavananda's Spiritual Discourses in English	13 * Swami Anubhavananda's Spiritual Discourses in English	14	15	16 * 12-hr Kirtan Cooking class-Mediterranean
17 * Mahima 2015 * Reach the Treasure Within  Swami Mukundananda * On a Quest (The life story of Swami Chinmayananda)	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 * Ghazal Night	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

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You'll find it easy to deal with government agencies or large institutions. You may have a problem dealing with elders. This will not be the best day for communication or travel. You must take care of health problems that have been lingering. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Friday.

**ARIES**



Mar 21 to Apr 20

Sudden disruptions will cause upset and a change of routine in your home environment. Sudden good fortune will help you cover your debts. Take care of any paperwork concerning institutional or governmental agencies. You may interest some of them in a service you have to offer. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

**TAURUS**



April 21 to May 20

You will enjoy interacting with those who come from different backgrounds. You'll have great insight. Try to think things through. Try not to get into disputes that will lead to estrangement's. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

**GEMINI**



May 21 to June 21

Art investment will pay big dividends in the long term. You will meet new and exciting people if you attend social activities or sporting events. Minor health problems may lower your vitality. You must be extremely careful not to let relatives or friends interfere in your personal life. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Thursday.

**CANCER**



Jun 22 to Jul 22

Take part in stimulating debates that will allow you to show off your intelligence. Go out with friends and avoid the situation on the home front. You will attract new love interests. Electrical problems may be an issue. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

**LEO**



Jul 23 to Aug 23

You can pick up information that will give you an edge. You need to concentrate on the areas where you can make a difference. You can get your point across and make valuable connections. Try to make your lover understand that you need to do things with your friends. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Wednesday.

**VIRGO**



Aug 24 to Sep 23

Follow through on some of the good ideas that come up, and you could have a real winner of a deal. Put some energy into getting back into shape. Listen to reason. Call a good friend. You will not be able to trust someone you work with. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

**LIBRA**



Sep 24 to Oct 23

You can make a big difference to children if you are understanding of the difficulties they are experiencing. Don't play on your partner's emotions. Compromise may be necessary. Positive changes regarding your personal status are evident. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Monday.

**SCORPIO**



Oct 24 to Nov 22

You could be tempted to overspend on unnecessary items. Avoid confrontations with coworkers who aren't pulling their weight. Risky ventures may turn in your favor. Ideas may sound good, but be careful if people are just looking for handouts. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Sunday.

**SAGITTARIUS**



Nov 23 to Dec 21

Secret affairs will only lead to heartache. Catch up on correspondence. Be careful when dealing with loved ones. Family get-togethers will be interesting. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Saturday.

**CAPRICORN**



Dec 22 to Jan 21

Try to take care of the needs of those you love. Don't give in too quickly. Sudden romantic infatuations could lead to a significant and prosperous connection. Misunderstandings could cause confusion and upset. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

**AQUARIUS**



Jan 22 to Feb 19

Don't let your personal partner hold you back or slow you down. Large organizations may try to talk you out of your hard-earned cash. You can make money if you work on personal investments. It's time to let loose. Your luckiest events this month will occur on a Tuesday.

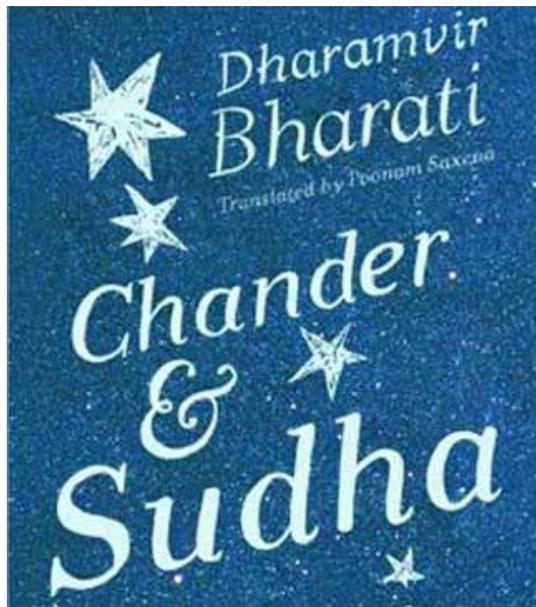
**PISCES**



Feb 20 to Mar 20

## Book review: 1949 love story, Chander and Sudha relevant even today

**Title:** Chander and Sudha; **Author:** Dharamvir Bharati translated by Poonam Saxena; **Publisher:** Penguin Viking; **Pages:** 351; **Price:** Rs.499



It is almost impossible to imagine a 23-year-old man way back in 1949 thought of cultural symmetry in marriage and envisioned a progressive India where the caste system will break down and inter-caste marriages will flourish. He also raised questions about the association of sex and marriage through a grieved and confused protagonist whose conflicted personality is a story of many among us.

This was the magic iconic Hindi writer Dharamvir Bharati wove in his timeless love story “Gunaho Ka Devta” which, for the first time is translated into English, and narrates the tale of the platonic love between the protagonists - Chander and Sudha.

To surmise it in one line: it is a usual love story with a tragic ending. But what makes it unusual is the author’s ability to turn things around by building tension through situations that invariably affect the actions of its characters, who are forced to make decisions that are beyond their control.

However, this remote-control movement highlights the helplessness of many relationships whose fate is hinged on societal approval and how many lives meet catastrophic endings because they have to abide by the rules laid down by society.

The recipient of the Padma Shri, India’s fourth highest civilian award, cleverly and wisely plays around the theme of “marriage culture” and how in those times it meant that a daughter would be at the mercy of her in-laws even if she has to meet her family; it focusses on the nagging attitude of a single-mother who constantly abuses her only girl-child, fearing she

might take an unwarranted step in the absence of a father-figure from their life; how situations change a father’s view about inter-caste marriage and a continuous battle between the mind, body and soul to fit into social norms.

The playful friendship between Chander and Sudha is devoid of any sexual attraction, yet one can read between the lines and see the dynamic chemistry they share as a couple - who couldn’t be together. But the choice was in their hands to break free from the norms, but the intention of the author was to highlight how a man who has all the great qualities can ruin his own life by opting for sacrifice at his own will.

The seeds of his ruin are sown when he convinces Sudha to get married as per her father Dr. Shukla’s wishes. Though his heart is not convinced, his mind believes he would overcome the void Sudha’s departure will leave in his life. And he does so successfully, though after several failed attempts, as he finds solace in Pammi, an open-minded Christian girl, who tries to demystify the language of sex, love and marriage for him.

Hence begins the downward spiral of his life that revolves around confusion, guilt and madness till he witnesses Sudha’s death....and then he dies a silent death.

Bharati, who is best known for the play “Andha Yug” and

novel “Suraj ka Satwan Ghoda”, uses this love story to hold a mirror against society’s brutal socio-economic divide that would tear apart people at the emotional level.

Interestingly, the story finds strange resemblance with Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay’s “Devdas” as in both stories, the male protagonist indulges in self-destruction after marrying off the one whom he truly loved.

Nevertheless, it surely isn’t an easy task to translate Bharati’s work, which is full of visceral observations and builds visual imaginary. But the translator has done justice in evoking an imagination that plays with natural elements like shadows and light, night and day, and sky and the sun.

Translating the work of a posthumous writer becomes a difficult task because one often runs into confusion; Poonam Saxena too met the same fate but she spent quality time with Bharati’s widow to understand his personality and perceptions.

“I would consult with his wife, Pushpaji, when I had some difficulties to understand what the author meant at some places which were open for interpretation,” Saxena told IANS, adding she read the novel almost 14 times during translation.

The younger generation might not relate with this love story whose foundation is laid on sacrifice, but Saxena has a different way of looking at things.

“You have to place yourself in another time because if you have to see how they are behaving in 2015 then it is very difficult to understand their turmoil,” she said.

She also pointed out that the caste system is yet to become irrelevant, even though the author wished it away way back in 1949.

“That is the irony, isn’t it? We are still battling what we were fighting decades back,” she said.

## POET OF MONTH Nomi Stone

Nomi Stone is the author of the poetry collection *Stranger’s Notebook* (TriQuarterly, 2008), an MFA Candidate in Poetry at Warren Wilson College and a PhD Candidate in Cultural Anthropology at Columbia University. She earned a Masters in Modern Middle Eastern Studies from Oxford and was a Creative Writing Fulbright scholar in Tunisia. Her poems appear or are forthcoming in *Poetry Northwest*, *Memorious*, *Plume*, *The Painted Bride Quarterly*, *cell-poems*, *The Bloomsbury Anthology of Contemporary Jewish Poetry*, *The Asian American Writer’s Workshop’s The Margins*, at *The Poetry Foundation*, and elsewhere. She is currently completing *Kill Class*, a collection of poetry based on two years of ethnographic fieldwork she conducted within combat simulations in mock Middle Eastern villages erected by the US military across America.



### Trapped on Djerba, Island of the Lotus Eaters

You are walking through a long grove. Pebbly sand underfoot. On the edge, a field of colossal flowers, sagging low with pollen. Have you been here before, you think?

The sky phosphoresces, broken triangles between branches and stems.

Above you, gigantic pistils and stamens mingling in the cups of the flowers.

Ticks twitch in grass. You feel alive. Also wary.

No one stops you when you climb inside those white necks, breathe into

those white necks and lose all sense. Like a girl’s belly, like the smell of her collarbone,

Like—And what’s more, the gulf was the same blue as the sky. We

(you were not alone) did not know which imitated which. Heavens stretched

out and up. Out, to that great sea roiling with histories.

Up, implying eternities. We lived equally between those blues. We still do.

“How to climb out of here?” asked one.

“Why?” answered another. Nothing exists except what is one eyeblink below, one eyeblink above.

*Previously published in Stranger’s Notebook (TriQuarterly, 2008)*

Film Review

# 'Dharam Sankat Mein' Review: Paresh Rawal shines, Naseeruddin Shah disappoints

What it's about: Dharampal Trivedi (Paresh Rawal) likes his nightcap, his early-morning playback of Manjeet Manchala's hits, his casual indulgences and making usual taunts directed at his Muslim neighbour. He's Ahmedabad's self-confessed number-one caterer. A visit to his mother's bank locker leads to a

Film Review

**Director:** Fuwad Khan  
**Cast:** Paresh Rawal, Annu Kapoor, Naseeruddin Shah  
**Rating:** \*\*1/2



discovery that he's Muslim by birth. Dazed by the discovery, he seeks solace at the local temple. When that doesn't put his mind at ease, he comes home and shares his confusion with aforementioned neighbour Nawab Mehmood Nazeem Ali Shah Khan Bahadur (Annu Kapoor). When he tries to meet his biological father who's staying at a local sanatorium, he is rebuffed by the imam running the place and is told he will only be allowed to meet him if he meets him as a proper man of the faith. Trivedi is also under mounting pressure from his son to get more dharmik, so he can marry his love, Shraddha, who's a devout follower of Neelanand

Baba (Naseeruddin Shah), a motorcycle-riding godman whom Shraddha's dad venerates.

He tried to fulfill his son's wish at the same time as trying to convince the imam to allow him to meet his biological father. Eventually his family finds out leading to even more uncomfortable situations. Does Dharampal meet his

father and does he reconcile with his son in time?

**What's hot:** Rawal rides solo on this one for the most part, driving each scene, despite Annu coming in as a competent foil and the back-and-forth between the two makes for some of the most emotional as well as hilarious moments of the film. The biggest triumph of this film is

that it has its heart in the right place and that shows.

**What's not:** You can't help but find Shah not just boring, but a little too overdone. If this film has uncomfortable moments, it's the preachy parts.

The film gets lost somewhere in the middle around some unwanted melodrama. The revelation of

Neelanand's real identity is slightly unexpected but not as impactful as one would have liked. One of the weakest climaxes ever. And don't get me started about the music!

**What to do:** The satire works at its best when Rawal is at the forefront of things. Thankfully, that's for almost all of the film. Without him, it would've been an also-ran.

## Katrina Kaif debuts on Twitter for Cannes red carpet

We think that this venture in social media by Katrina Kaif will only last until after Cannes.

Joining the ranks of ever growing tech savvy celebrities, Katrina Kaif has finally debuted on micro-blogging site Twitter.

No doubt that Twitter is the quickest way to connect with their fans, many celebrities still keep away from the inevitable internet trolls that come with the praising fans.

But Katrina has let herself to be bitten by the social media bug. For her Cannes trip this year for L'Oreal Paris, Katrina has used the handle @KatrinaAtCannes. No doubt it is created



especially to promote her appearance at Cannes red carpet.

For the announcement at a press conference, Katrina shared the stage with Sonam Kapoor, who is also one of the endorsers for the beauty brand along with Aishwarya Rai Bachchan. The experience ensured a string of tweets from both the beauties praising each other.

Katrina is known to be a private person. So we think that this venture will only last until after Cannes. Just like her rumoured boyfriend Ranbir Kapoor, who had created an account for six hours only to promote a tech brand.

# Swachh Salman Khan

Salman Khan's two releases in 2015 both feature him as the consummate conscience-keeper of the nation. Sooraj Barjatya's Prem Ratan Dhan Payo which releases in November sees the return of Salman as the Bhagwan Shri Ram-avatar Prem. The ideal son, brother and family-man which Salman played in Sooraj's Hum Aapke Hain Koun and Hum Saath Saath Hain was lost in an avalanche of bad-boy-with-a-good-heart roles.

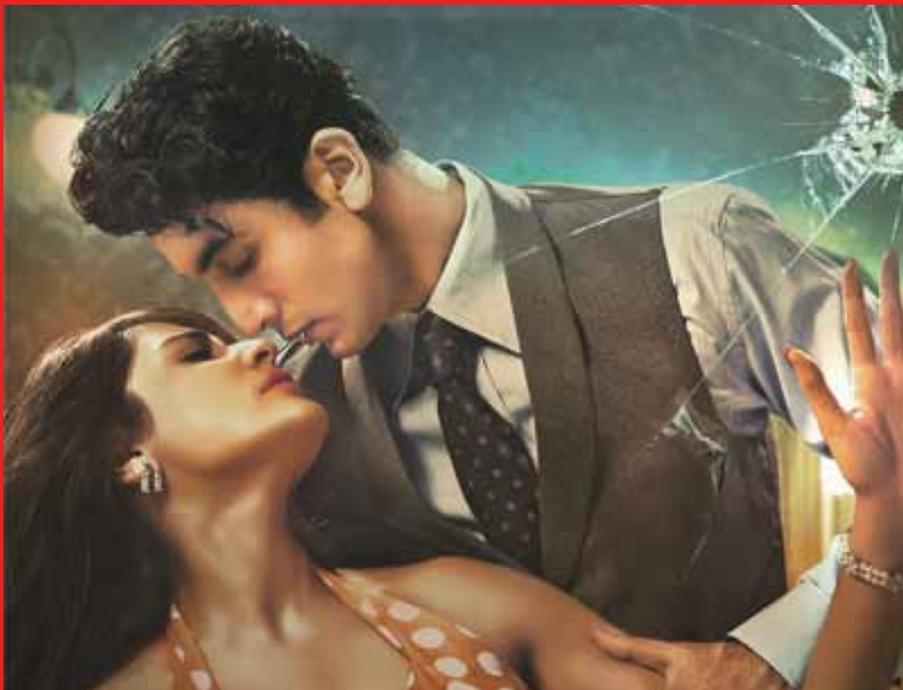
The Swachh Bharat government brings to us the newly-repackaged clean-boy Salman in not only Barjatya's Prem Ratan Dhan Payo and also in Kabir Khan's Barjraangi Bhaijaan where Salman makes a political pitch for Indo-Pak amity by caring for a little girl from across the border. Says a close buddy of the actor, "He is doing roles that have a certain image-consciousness about them. Earlier too he never played chichora roles. He would never misbehave with women no matter what the nature of the role. He never kissed his heroines. Now he's doing roles that are much more than time-pass. In Barjatya's film



he is the archetypal Ram from Ramayan. In Kabir's film he is a guy who wants peace between India and Pakistan." So is this a new politically conscious

Salman? "It's the same Salman. But more committed to making his films a tool for a better society," says Salman's friend.

## Here's how Ranbir Kapoor- Anushka Sharma's 'Bombay Velvet' got its name



Anurag Kashyap's period drama Bombay Velvet is set in the 1960's. While it is one of the biggest releases this year and there is great anticipation for the film, not many are aware about the reason behind the title of the film.

The name of the film comes from the name of the nightclub 'Bombay Velvet' in the film. Ranbir Kapoor is the manager of Bombay Velvet and Anushka Sharma is a jazz singer there.

The film revolves around the nightclub, where a lot of important events take place. Anurag Kashyap has recreated Bombay of the 60's and has made sure that everything is in sync with that era.

## Cyber crime cell investigates how nude clip of Bollywood actress Radhika Apte was leaked

The cyber crime wing of the Mumbai police has registered a case against unknown persons after a nude clip of Bollywood actress Radhika Apte, which was shot for a short film, went viral on social media. Director Anurag Kashyap, who directed the short film as a part of an international project, approached the Mumbai police and registered a complaint.

According to cyber crime personnel, the video was allegedly leaked and has been making the rounds of social media.

Confirming the registration of the FIR, Additional Commissioner of police (Crime) K M M Prasanna said "We were approached by Anurag Kashyap, who told us that a clip of a movie was leaked and has gone viral. Taking into account the sensitivity of the case, we have pulled it down from various websites and we are enquiring into the matter." He added "There is a possibility that someone who could be part of the team could be involved. We are probing the matter, and soon we will arrest the accused person."



# Chai with... Chai With Kuldip Verma of Vermaland

In the month of April, Asia Today had the pleasure of interviewing a well-known name in the Arizona area – Kuldip Verma of Vermaland. As the land industry has seen tremendous growth in the Valley of the Sun, we thought it best to get some answers from our very own local expert.

## About Mr. Kuldip Verma...

Mr. Kuldip Verma did his Bachelors in Engineering from the Thapar Institute of Engineering and Technology in Patiala, Punjab, India. He came to Chicago in 1970 and completed his Masters in Industrial Engineering from Illinois Institute of Technology. After living in Chicago for 7 years, he went back to India for a family business that was in collaboration with Toshiba. He returned to the US in 1992, this time to Arizona, and started this business in the mid 1990's.

When he moved to Phoenix in the 1990's, the area was experiencing a severe real estate recession, similar to the one that just took place. At that time, he was able to invest in real estate for extremely low values. As the market picked up and Phoenix began to grow, those investments grew in value. Overtime, he started investing in more and more properties. Not wanting to deal with the management issues involved in other real estate investments, he decided to begin investing exclusively in raw land in the early part of 2000. With raw land, there are no management headaches to worry about, which appealed



to him. In 2006, Vermaland had the largest land holdings from 50-1200 acre parcels.

Mr. Verma's best memory from this line of work is his development of a residential subdivision called Sonoran Ridge. He bought the land for this subdivision in 1995 for \$1,500/acre. During the boom in 2005, he partnered with a developer and developed a custom one acre, gated community called Sonoran Ridge. These lots sold for nearly \$300,000/acre during 2005 and 2006.

As with any line of work, there are good memories like the Sonoran Ridge experience and there are bad memories. The worse memory Mr. Verma has from land investment is the crash. During this time, the residential market was extremely slow forcing him to look at other markets for future growth opportunities. Looking

at the growth the solar industry was having in Phoenix at that time, he grew his business into that sector.

## Personal Thoughts on the Land and Real Estate Market...

Since we have watched this market go up and down in the last few years, we asked Mr. Verma to share his thoughts on the land and real estate market and how it has gone up and down in the last few years. "The land and real estate market in Arizona has definitely been very cyclical over the years. We saw a huge boom in 2005-2006, followed by a severe crash and recession that lasted for several years. We are finally seeing the market rebound and head in a very positive direction. In my opinion, we are headed for another real estate boom over the next few years and should

see a shortage of supply followed by an increase in prices.

Maricopa County has added the second highest number of new residents in the country, topped only by Harris County (Houston). The new home permits are currently only 10,000 to 12,000, however, according to the current population growth, we need 16,000 to 18,000 homes per year. This will create a shortage in homes over the next few years.

Furthermore, the median single-family home sales price has increased 5.6% from January of 2014 to January of 2015, \$197,000 to \$208,000.

According to Michael Orr, director of the Center for Real Estate Theory and Practice at the W.P. Carey School of Business, we are already seeing early signs of much stronger activity from buyers in Febru-

ary and March. There was a significantly increased demand in the lower and middle price ranges. Home prices are currently 75% of the peak value. Land in Phoenix has made a significant recovery, I don't know the exact number, but I read somewhere its about 60% of its peak value.

There is still a good opportunity to invest in raw land in certain areas in outskirts of Phoenix, such as Buckeye and Tonopah. Raw land in portions of these areas is still under 15% of the peak values, even though it has more than doubled in the last two years. Being less than 15% of the peak value, gives raw land in these areas a huge upswing potential. Investing in any other form of real estate will not give as high returns at this point, since prices have already increased so much.

Only 17% of land in Arizona is private and available to the general public. The rest is government and Indian reservation land. Although, we see lots of vacant land all around us, there is not much that is available for development."

Mr. Verma believes that there will be a major boom in the years to come. The last half of 2014, the real estate market and raw land in Phoenix was fairly stagnant. Prices were not necessarily going down, but sales were low. Inventory was not high either. But that has changed in the last two to three months. Builders are actively looking for lots to build and land for future growth. Experts





are predicting much stronger home sales in the spring. He shared with us that all this activity in the housing market, affects the movement in the raw land market and we have started seeing that in the last couple of years. From what he has seen and read, the more positive growth will happen in the later part of this year and 2016. The land in the outskirts shall see higher appreciation rates.

**Words of Advice...**

For those wanting to invest in land, Mr. Verma believes

that there will not be a better time to invest in raw land than now. The best time to buy a house in Phoenix Metro was July, 2011 when the market went down to 40% of the peak. The best time to buy finished lots was 2012-2013. And the best time to buy raw land was 2013 when the raw land went down to 5%-20% depending on the area.

However, he believes there are still good opportunities in land. There are good opportunities in the residential market as well but not quite as

many. Values are still low and the market is headed upward, creating a good investment opportunity.

His advice to investors is to make sure they invest in right location and do their due diligence. Investors should also work with an expert realtor for the area they are looking to invest. Raw land is an easy investment for those who are busy individuals that want to invest on the side. Investors should also diversify 15 to 30% in raw land.

For those wanting to get

into this line of work, he shares that this is a great line of work to be in. His advice for individuals wanting to take on this line of work is to understand that just like any other field, you have to put in the time to understand the market and gain as much knowledge as possible. Once you have invested in a few properties, you will understand how to invest and will learn to love it!

**Closing Thoughts and Gratitude...**

Our last question for Mr. Kuldeep Verma was what he

would do today if he could do anything else. As is common with those really content with their line of work, he stated that he would not do anything else.

He loves Phoenix and loves watching the city grow. As the city grows, the areas in which we invest also grow and that is fascinating for him to be able to experience.

Asia Today is grateful to Mr. Verma for his valuable time and wishes him and Vermland continued success in the coming years.



*Waheguru ji ka Khalsa! Waheguru ji ki Fateh!*

## GURDWARA MONTHLY

*A Monthly digest of Gurdwara Programs and Events*

### MAY 2015 Programs & Events

18 Vaisakh – 17 Jeth, 547 Nanakshahi Era (NE)

**May 3 (Sun) – Parkash Siri Guru Arjan Dev Ji (1563)**  
(Actual: May 2)

**May 10 (Sun) – Shahidi Day: Chali Mukte (1705)**  
**The 40 Liberated Ones (Muktsar Sahib)** (Actual: May 4)

**May 15, Jeth 1 (Fri) – Sangrand & Monthly Sehj Path**  
9:00 AM – 10:00 AM.

**Sirhind Fateh Day (Baba Banda Singh Bahadur)**  
(Actual: May 14) Evening Kirtan Darbar.

**May 17 (Sun) – Chhota Ghalughara; Smaller Holocaust (1746)**  
Over 10,000 Sikh men, women and children died in this Holocaust. Please google and read, e.g., [www.searchsikhism.com/holo1.html](http://www.searchsikhism.com/holo1.html). (Actual: May 17)

**Homeless Langar Seva.** Call 602 741 8021 for more info.

**May 22 - 24 (Fri-Sun) –**  
**Shahidi Siri Guru Arjan Dev Ji (1606)** (Actual: May 22)  
**Parkash Siri Guru Amardas Ji (1479)** (Actual: May 23)  
Akhand Paath Arambh: Fri. 10:00am  
Akhand Paath Bhog: Sun. 9:00am

**May 31 (Sun) – Bhagat Namdev Ji's message and life**

**Regular Programs:**  
Main Kirtan Diwans on Fridays (7 PM – 9 PM) and Sundays (10 AM – 1 PM).  
Morning Banis: 5:30 AM – 6:30 AM followed by ASA-DI-VAAR to 8:30 AM.  
Evening Banis: 7:00 PM – 8:00 PM.  
Sukhmani Sahib every Wednesday: 10:30AM - 11:30AM  
Please check Gurdwara notice board for latest details of all Programs and Events  
*Waheguru ji ka Khalsa! Waheguru ji ki Fateh!*



*Guru Arjan Dev Ji dictating  
Adi Granth*



*(Guru) Amar Das Ji,  
Perfect Sevak, Perfect Guru*

**NISHKAM SEVA GURDWARA SAHIB**  
& DR. JASBIR SINGH SAINI MEMORIAL HALL  
4950 W Tonopah Drive, Glendale, AZ 85308. (NE corner of 51<sup>st</sup> Ave and Hwy 101)  
Phone: 623-516-1413. [WWW.NishkamSeva.org](http://WWW.NishkamSeva.org). [NishkamSeva@Yahoo.com](mailto:NishkamSeva@Yahoo.com)

# Ringstrasse: World's most beautiful boulevard turns 150

In 1857, bushy-whiskered Emperor Franz Joseph proclaimed that his rapidly growing imperial capital Vienna needed a radical makeover befitting Austro-Hungary's wealth, might and technological prowess.

This year, the centrepiece of the mammoth urban engineering project that ensued -- the resplendent, five-kilometre (three-mile) Ringstrasse boulevard ringing old Vienna -- turns 150.

With its dizzying mix of palaces, museums and public buildings in a chocolate box of different styles, the 'Ring' is the 'most beautiful boulevard in the world', the tourist board says.

The Austrian capital is marking this with special exhibitions, showing how this street beloved of tourist and architecture aficionados -- including Hitler -- has played a central role in the city's happiest and darkest days.

## 'Like a museum'

Following Franz Joseph's decree, the city walls that had kept out two marauding Turkish armies -- but not Napoleon -- were torn down, opening up the claustrophobic centre.

Inspired by Baron Haussmann's renovation of Paris and by Ludwig I's transformation of his Bavarian capital Munich, Vienna summoned the finest architects of the day -- Gottfried Semper, Theophil Hansen and Heinrich von Ferstel.

The theme chosen was 'historicism', giving the designers free rein to give it all they had with designs inspired by bygone epochs in architecture -- and with no expense spared either financially, or in scale.

So what sprang up were the soaring Flemish-Gothic city hall, a 'neo-Renaissance' university, a 'neo-Romantic' opera house and the 'neo-Classical' parliament, a Hellenist's wet dream complete with ripped Greek heroes and an imposing Diana statue.

Others include the hallowed Burgtheater, the mighty Natural History Museum and its twin the Museum of Art History, the Neue Burg extension to the Hofburg palace and the Votivkirche church -- all in different styles, but still fitting together.

"It is fantastic, like a museum of architecture," said Rainald Franz, art and architecture historian at the Museum of Applied Arts (MAK), giving AFP a neck-cracking tour on a public tram conveniently going round most of the Ring.

"The aim was to say to the world this is an international metropolis."

## Superficial splendour

Indeed, the Ringstrasse became



Ringstrasse boulevard in old Vienna is a dizzying mix of palaces, museums and public buildings.

the main stage for Vienna's golden era, the boulevard's glittering cafes a haven for the intellectual elite of the day like composer Gustav Mahler, the father of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud or artist Gustav Klimt.

And filling the gaps between the public buildings were plush palaces erected by a new, confident and ostentatious class of Viennese grown rich from the vast empire's rapid industrialisation, many of them Jews.

These included for example the Ephrussi, the banking family made famous by Edmund de Waal's bestselling 2010 family memoir *The Hare with Amber Eyes*. Their former home still stands today -- inhabited by Casinos Austria and next to a McDonald's.

But according to Gabriele Kohlbauer-Fritz, curator of an upcoming exhibition -- Ringstrasse: A Jewish Boulevard -- at Vienna's Jewish Museum, this splendour was a facade, and not just for the city's Jews.

"On the one hand there was this wonderful Ringstrasse but at the same time the masses had to fight to survive, both Jews and non-Jews," she said.

Most of the bricks for the Ringstrasse's buildings were made in vast factories where workers, most of them Czech, would work in horrendous conditions for 15 hours a day, seven days a week, paid in company tokens, not money.

People living in 'catastrophic' conditions, and the lower middle classes left behind by the Industrial Revolution,

became 'highly receptive' to anti-Semitism, sowing the seeds for the rise of the Nazis and the Holocaust, Kohlbauer-Fritz said.

## Hitler connection

The man behind that genocide first visited Vienna in around 1906 as a teenager, and was blown away by the Ringstrasse.

"For hours and hours I could stand in wonderment... The whole Ringstrasse had a magic effect upon me, as if it were a scene from the *Thousand and One Nights*," Hitler later recalled in *Mein Kampf*.

He later lived in Vienna between 1908 and 1913, during which time he failed to get into the Academy of Fine Arts, stayed in a homeless shelter and sold respectable paintings of the many buildings on the Ring.

And when the failed artist returned in triumph on March 12, 1938 as Nazi dictator, he knew the best place to make a triumphant entrance and announce the 'annexation' of his native country into the Reich -- the Ringstrasse and the balcony of the Neue Burg palace.

The same night, with the streets of Vienna ringing with shouts of Heil Hitler!, recounts de Waal in *The Hare with Amber Eyes*, the first brownshirts barge into and ransack the Ephrussi Palace. It was a foretaste of the tragedy to come.

## Author Rudyard Kipling's Mumbai bungalow to become tourist attraction

The heritage bungalow in south Mumbai where author and Nobel laureate Rudyard Kipling was born will be converted into a tourist attraction by the Maharashtra government, a minister has said.

The bungalow is situated inside the shady campus of Sir JJ School of Art, close to the UNESCO World Heritage monument, Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus and other heritage buildings like Crawford Market and the Mumbai Police Commissionerate. State Education and Cultural Affairs Minister Vinod Tawde had proposed this week that the government would ensure the bungalow emerges as an important tourist hotspot and people get the opportunity to appreciate it.

All the artefacts in the house would be preserved and displayed with funding from the culture department which would also repair, restore and maintain the wood and stone structure, he added.

On cards is a Kipling museum, a library, literary and cultural events to attract domestic and foreign tourists to the birthplace of the author of classics like *The Jungle Book* and *Kim*, and many poems like *If...* and *Mandalay*. He was conferred with the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1907 -- the first English writer so honoured.

## Air pollution can cause changes in your brain, raise dementia risk

Long-term exposure to fine particle air pollution may cause subtle structural changes in the brain that increase risks of poor cognitive function and dementia, says a study.

Fine particle air pollution - smaller than 2.5 micrometers in diameter (PM2.5) - may be the most common and hazardous type of air pollution. It comes from burning wood or coal, car exhaust and other sources.

"Long-term exposure to air pollution showed harmful effects on the brain in this study, even at low levels, particularly with older people and even those who are relatively healthy," said lead study author Elissa Wilker, instructor of medicine at the Harvard Medical School.

Researchers analysed 943 adults



who were healthy and free of dementia and stroke.

The participants lived in the greater Boston area and throughout New England and New York -- regions where air pollution levels are low compared to other parts of the nation and the world. During 1995-2005, researchers used magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) to determine the effect of long-term exposure to air pollution on markers of brain structure.

They found a two microgram per cubic metre of air increase in particulate matter (PM) 2.5 was associated with a 0.32% smaller total cerebral brain volume and a 46% higher risk of covert brain infarcts, a type of silent stroke.

"The magnitude of association that we observed for brain volume was similar to approximately one year of brain ageing," Wilker said.

Fundamental changes in the struc-

ture of the cerebral brain volume and smaller brain size are markers of age-associated brain atrophy.

The small infarcts, typically located in deep regions of the brain, have been associated with neurological abnormalities, poorer cognitive function, dementia, and are thought to reflect small vessel disease, she concluded.

The findings appeared in the journal Stroke.

(IANS)

A lot has been said and written on what is to be done to have bright, glamorous skin. However, it is equally important to know factors which destroy your skin and cause it to look dull, leading to an uneven skin tone and makes one look tired and older than the actual age. Dermatologist Sirisha Singh addresses the six most common skin sins that many commit and that have the potential to destroy the skin. "The point is that these sins, if not controlled and if committed over a prolonged time, can cause significant damage which is irreparable," says Singh.

**\*Stress:** Stress causes damage to almost all organs of the body, the skin being no exception. During stress, our body releases a hormone called cortisol which reduces the blood supply to the skin and over a period of time, the skin may appear dull and develop acne. Yoga, breathing exercises, walking or gym-

## Six common skin sins you should avoid



ming could help beat stress.

**\*Unhealthy eating:** During summers, the heat and UV light cause significant oxidative damage to the skin and also other organs. Brightly coloured fruits and vegetables are rich in anti-oxidants which combat this damage. If we have inadequate anti-oxi-

dants in the diet, then there is extensive damage to the cells accelerates ageing.

**\*Wearing makeup to bed:** During the night the skin rejuvenates itself. The temperature of the skin goes up and the pores open up. Wearing makeup to bed clogs the pores and can cause break-

outs of pimples. Cleansing the skin every night is vital to get good skin.

**\*Skipping sleep:** The term beauty sleep is derived from scientific research. During sleep, our body releases growth hormones that help the skin to heal itself and can add to a healthy glow. People

who do not get the required amount of sleep or people who have a poor quality of sleep often do not produce enough of this hormone and can therefore have dull skin which also ages faster.

**\*Smoking:** Nicotine has the potential to not only destroy skin but also kill it. It affects the ability of the skin to renew and regenerate. Over a period of time this hastens ageing of the skin. Many heavy smokers also suffer from "fag lines" that radiate out from the outer edge of the lips.

**\*Unprotected exposure to the sun:** This comes a close second to nicotine in terms of skin sins. Cumulative UV exposure over years adds up to significant skin damage and adds years to the skin. The UV light causes pigmentation of the skin, damages the collagen (the elastic tissue) of the skin and in extreme cases also has the potential to cause skin cancer.

# Sania Mirza leads India to Asia/Oceania Group I in Fed Cup

The Sania Mirza-led Indian women's tennis team came out with a gritty performance to beat Philippines 2-1 in the Fed Cup Group II Asia/Oceania promotional playoff final on Saturday to enter Group 1, where they will play in 2016.

In the all-important playoff, India won the first singles rubber before the visitors rallied back to level the contest on the indoor hard courts of the SAAP Tennis Complex.

It all boiled down to the doubles match where World No.1 Sania and Prarthana Thombare helped the home team to win the tie and promote India into Asia/Oceania Group I.

With the victory, India extended their head-to-head against the Philippines to 4-2, having won the last four contests.

First up, Prarthana had an easy 6-3, 6-1 win over Anna Clarice Patrimonio in the first singles rubber, which lasted a little more than an hour.

In the second rubber, Ankita Raina looked well on her way to seal the contest with a 40-minute 6-2 win in the first set.

But the 22-year-old's Filipino opponent Katharina Lehnert displayed



pure grit to come back and win the next two sets with the same scoreline of 7-5 and bag the match in two hours and 45 minutes.

The momentum seemed to be with the Philippines when Katharina and Anna joined hands to take a 3-0 lead in the first set of the all-important doubles rubber.

But right then, Sania, who had

not played in the April 14-18 tournament so far and had reserved herself for this significant match, showed why she is the World No.1 doubles player.

From 0-3 down, Sania, who partners Swiss Martina Hingis on the WTA Tour, and Prarthana turned the tables on their opponents to clinch the next six games and win the set

6-3 in 36 minutes.

By this time, the Indian girls had made sure they carried the momentum into the second set, which they won 6-3 in another 32 minutes.

India had started the tournament with back-to-back wins against Pakistan and Malaysia in Pool C following which they defeated Turkmenistan in the promotional playoff on Friday.

## Pro Golf as a Career Option for All...an Interview with Gurbaaz Mann

Interview with Manju Walia, Article by Deepa Walia April 18, 2015

In his recent visit to Phoenix, Arizona, Asia Today had the pleasure to speak with Gurbaaz Mann, a golf professional from the Asian Tour who resides in Columbus, Ohio. In addition to being an Asian Tour Professional for 9 years, Mr. Mann also has his own technology company for Golf in Ohio and is working as the CEO for the Indo-American Professional Golf Association.

Mr. Mann was here spreading awareness for a cause to give all those wanting to pursue a career in professional golf the means to do it. Golf is seen as a sport for those that have the time and can afford it and have the resources to play it. Even though it is becoming more accessible to the common man, there are many that have an interest to play but not the opportunity. Mr. Mann is creating opportunities both here and back home in India, where the game has taken on a big shape. The Professional Golf

Tournament of India, of which he is a founding member, is now a body that is controlled by the players and not the Ministry which is a huge accomplishment for any sport.

Mr. Mann believes that those wanting to succeed in golf need the infrastructure, equipment, training, and funding to succeed. He has personally given over 1,000 hours of his time to this cause in the last 2 years and sees many other South Asian Professionals stepping forward to doing the same.

Their mission – impact children growing up that are looking for scholarships and looking at Pro Golf as a career option. For many years now, South Asians have succeeded as Doctors, Engineers, and Businessmen. He truly believes that it is now time for them to also step forward and shine in sports.

Asia Today wishes Mr. Mann and all those helping this cause continued success in the future and looks forward to seeing more South Asians take the limelight in a career in sports, especially Professional Golf.



# India Oven

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*The Best Indian Cuisine In The Valley*

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# Honored with the US Congressional Healthcare Hero Award for Innovation

# ZOUNDS®

## My Hero gave me the gift of hearing.



Kate at age 2

I remember being asked in school to write an essay on my 'My Hero'. Most of my classmates chose star athletes or other famous people. Some even chose comic book heroes. I chose my dad.

I lost most of my hearing when I was about a year old. As a child, I hated wearing hearing aids, because they squealed all the time and were painful. My dad, an electrical engineer, spent countless hours working on technology to create a better hearing aid for me. He even installed a miniature lab set-up just for me, so we could spend time together as he worked. I loved those hours working with Dad in our lab, and it's no surprise that now I'm becoming an electrical engineer too.

It's always a special experience to meet other Zounds wearers, and they often describe my dad as "their hero". Unless you have lived with hearing loss and had it restored to you, you cannot fully understand what it means to those of us who have. It's life-changing.

These people often express gratitude towards the wife, daughter, brother or friend who persuaded them to try Zounds hearing aids. I think they are heroes too, because they helped make a difference in the life of someone they love.

Last August my mom and I were so proud to watch my Dad receive U.S. Congressional Recognition as a Healthcare Hero for Innovation. Sitting there, I thought about all those hours spent in the lab. I thought about the difference he had made in my life, and the lives of so many other hearing impaired people. No one deserves the title of "hero" more than my dad.

Sincerely,

Kate Thomasson



Zounds® Founder and CEO, Sam Thomasson, his daughter, Kate and wife LaWana after receiving the U.S. Congressional Recognition as a Healthcare Hero for Innovation.

**You can be a hero too.** *If someone you care about is suffering with hearing loss, talk to them about getting a free hearing test at a Zounds location. You can help change someone's life.*

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