



Manjari Sankurathri Memorial Foundation

(A Registered Canadian Charity)

Summer Issue

MSMF Newsletter

September 1998

Congratulations, Chandra Sankurathri !

It is indeed an honour and a recognition of his volunteer effort that Chandra Sankurathri was awarded a scholarship to attend the 1998 International Association for Volunteer Effort (IAVE98) 15th. Biennial World Volunteer Conference held from 23 - 27 August in Edmonton, Alberta. About 2700 delegates from 86 countries attended the conference organized by the Wild Rose Foundation of Alberta and the Canadian International Development Agency.

The Edmonton Journal provided extensive coverage of the IAVE98 and on 27 August staff writer Ms. Natalie Armstrong wrote about Chandra, "Tragedy opened heart to poor" *

Mr. John Stackhouse, The Globe and Mail Correspondent from Delhi published on June 23 an article, "Out of tragedy, a sense of purpose. 13 years ago, Chandra Sankurathri's family perished in the Air India explosion. He honours their memory by restoring sight to thousands."** , which touched many from all across Canada.

Mr. Nathan Vardi of The Ottawa Citizen wrote about Chandra and his mission on August 24, "Life after Air-India tragedy"*.

Dr. Annette D'Souza, ophthalmologist from New Westminster, British Columbia, volunteered her services at Srikan in October 1997 and a part of her report was published in "Profile"** , in the 1998 August issue of the Bulletin. of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons.

* For copies of the above articles, please write to us.

Sarada Vidyalayam, Kakinada, AP, India.

The school was reopened in July for about 75 children in 6 grades.



Play equipment donated by Ontario English Catholic Teachers Association, Toronto, Ontario.

Eye Camp sponsored by the Telugu Literary Society of Manitoba, Winnipeg.

The camp was conducted by Srikan Institute of Ophthalmology in Gollapadu village, in Khammam district, about 400 km from Kakinada, on 28 June 1998. This is a backward area inhabited by 'Lambada' tribals, who usually have higher incidence of cataract blindness.

A total of 311 (Female 166 + Male 145) were screened and 98 were identified as having operable cataracts. After counseling, only 43 came forward for the surgery. They were taken to Kakinada and 64 surgeries (both eyes for some) with IOL implants were performed. After recovery, the patients were provided with post operative medications and clear instructions regarding post operative care and transported them back to their villages.



We thank the Telugu Literary Society of Manitoba for the \$1000 donation. The rest of the expenses, about \$2500, were subsidized by the Institute and in-kind services and publicity were provided by the local Co-Operative Bank.

Telugu Cultural Association of Houston, Texas.
Recognizes Chandra's Humanitarian Work.

At a function on July 25, Chandra received an award and on that occasion, he and Dr. Vinod Mootha, ophthalmologist from Dallas, Texas, spoke about the educational and eye care services provided free of charge to the rural poor in the coastal area near Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh, India.

MSMF, 23 Mary Dr., Gloucester, ON K1V 1G9.
e_mail: msmf@cyberus.ca

Web site: <http://www.cyberus.ca/~msmf/msmf.htm>

The 1998 MSMF Annual Function.

The function was held on 21 August in Cumberland City Hall in Orleans, a suburb of Ottawa. His Excellency, Mr. Rajanikanta Verma, High Commissioner for India, was the Chief Guest. Dr. Indu Gambhir from the Canadian Medical Protective Association was the Master of Ceremonies.

After a short video presentation, Dr. Chandra Sankurathri, President of MSMF, Founder of Sarada Vidyalayam (School for Children) and Sriikiran Institute of Ophthalmology, illustrated with slides the backwardness of the coastal area around Kakinada and the real need for educational services for poor children and quality eye care services, most importantly, cataract blindness control program for the region.

Next, Dr. V. K. Raju, President of Eye Foundation Of America, Co-Founder of Sriikiran Institute of Ophthalmology and its Chief Medical Consultant, explained from his well over 20 years of experience, some of the problems found in children are due to marriages among first cousins, a common practice in that area. He showed in many cases how a simple surgery timely done rectifies the problem and restores the quality of life.

Dr. Vinod Mootha, Ophthalmologist on Fellowship at Southwestern Medical Centre, Dallas, Texas, said that he felt good to volunteer for almost a year at Sriikiran, as Kakinada is his place of birth, which he left with his parents to the US, when he was a child. He spoke highly of the quality of eye care available at Sriikiran, beginning from screening camps held in villages to cataract surgeries done in the hospital and the follow-up visits by the patients. He observed that the team of ophthalmologists and nurses working at Sriikiran are well qualified professionals.

Mr. Pierre Barbeau, Executive Director of Help the Aged (Canada), spoke about the Andhra Pradesh / Uttar Pradesh Primary Health Care and Training Program. Under this program, Help the Aged is supporting Sriikiran with its capacity building and cataract blindness control programs. Mr. Barbeau mentioned that the program is supported by Help the Aged funds matched by grants from the Canadian International Development Agency. He remembered his 1997 visit to Sriikiran to monitor the Project and said that he is pleased with the progress.

The 1998 MSMF Humanitarian Awards were presented by His Excellency, Mr. Rajanikanta Verma, High Commissioner for India, to St. Gregory Catholic School and Dr. Vinod Mootha.

For the sixth consecutive year, the students and staff of St. Gregory Catholic School raised funds during Lent to share with the students of Sarada Vidyalayam. Over the years, these donations were

spent to equip the class rooms, and buy uniforms for the students. Students of St. Gregory and Sarada regularly exchanged greetings and gifts and wrote to each other. This contact established a continuing friendship between the two schools. For St. Gregory School, Mr. John Makadi, President of School Council, accepted the award.

Dr. Vinod Mootha obtained his M.D. from John's Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, Maryland, and did his residency in Ophthalmology at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin. He took a one year break before continuing with his fellowship at Southwestern Medical Centre, Dallas, Texas, to volunteer his services at Sriikiran. Dr. Mootha's services at Sriikiran are exceptional and his contribution a lasting one. Dr. Mootha accepted the award.

Ms. Mythri Kappagantula, a student of Rati School of Dance, Ottawa, Ontario, gave a wonderful Bharata Natyam (Indian Classical Dance) recital. Mythri is a Grade 12 student at Ashbury College. Her other interests are Western and Karnatik music and competitive rowing.

We congratulate the 1998 MSMF Humanitarian Award winners, St. Gregory Catholic School and Dr. Vinod Mootha. We thank His Excellency, Mr. Rajanikanta Verma, Dr. Indu Gambhir, Dr. Raju, Dr. Mootha, Mr. Pierre Barbeau, Mr. Makadi, Ms. Mythri Kappagantula and all those who have attended the function and helped to make it a success.

Donations & Income Tax - Canada & the USA

Sriikiran Institute of Ophthalmology and Sarada Vidyalayam are being funded by MSMF, a registered charity in Canada and EFA (Eye Foundation of America) a registered charity in the USA..

Donations to MSMF qualify for tax credits in Canada and donations to EFA qualify for tax exemption in the US.

Please send your donations to:

MSMF, 23 Mary Dr., Gloucester, ON. K1V 1G9, (or)
EFA, 1460 Anderson Av., Morgantown, WV 26505

Thanks for the support.

MSMF gratefully acknowledges the valuable support received from the following corporate donors:

Vision Plus Opticians, 1 Centrepointe Drive, Suite 201, Nepean, ON. K2G 6E2, Mr. Brian Kananagh;

Grandbois & Luesby, Financial Associates, 301 - 1785 Alta Vista Drive, Ottawa, ON, K1G 3Y6, Mr. Jonathan Luesby;

Holliday Auto Centre (Ottawa) Ltd., 54 Louisa Street, Ottawa, ON, K1R 6Y8; Mr. Joe Psihista.