



SPANDANA

26

ARKINA

Association of
Rama Kshatriyas in North America

Spandana-26

COMMEMORATIVE PUBLICATION



Celebrating
15 Years
of ARKINA

*Bekal Fort
Kerala, India*

A commemorative publication
celebrating the 15th Anniversary of ARKINA
released during ARKINA MEET - 2026

on
September 26, 2026

Venue :
Rio Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, USA

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— Smt. Suma & Sri. Raghavendra Sheregar (Kundapura) —

ARKINA

Association of Rama-Kshatriyas in North America



SPANDANA-26

A Commemorative Publication

Celebrating the 15th Anniversary of ARKINA

Editor-in-Chief

Rajesh Rao

A commemorative publication celebrating the 15th Anniversary of ARKINA,
released during ARKINA Meet-2026 on September 26, 2026,
at the Rio Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, USA.

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contained in this publication. Any inadvertent errors or omissions are sincerely regretted.

Association of Rama-Kshatriyas in North America (ARKINA)

<https://arkina.rkss.org>

ARTS



*Arts by
Kavana Kundapur
Lake Forest, CA*





EDITORIAL



ARKINA is honored to release Spandana-26 at Rio Hotel, Las Vegas, NV on September 26th. Spandana-26, like the previous issues Spandana (2011) and Spandana-22, has once again seen an overwhelming contribution from the community. As before, community members both youngsters and seniors, from locations across the US and Canada, have risen to the occasion to showcase their talents. Articles run the gamut, ranging from thoughtful commentary to historical to poetry to recipes. We hope you will be entertained and stimulated by their efforts.

Also included is an updated address directory of 119 families with their information and pictures. The purpose of including this address directory is to foster greater interaction among our community members. We hope that you will make the best use of this directory by reaching out to other families, especially in your vicinity.

Last but not least, we have tried to highlight the achievements of community members that we were informed about. We hope that this will spur and encourage other members to reach for greater heights of achievement in various fields.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank our members who sponsored page advertisements and family greetings. Their generous support is what makes it possible to bear the expenses to bring out Spandana-26.

All our best efforts notwithstanding, if any errors remain in the content, we apologize in advance.

Thanks

Rajesh Rao

San Diego, CA

Editor, Spandana-26



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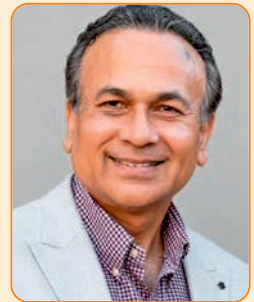
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ARTS



Arts by
Veena Kudlu
Concord, CA



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear ARKINA Families,

ARKINA-the Association of Rama-Kshatriyas in North America-a nonprofit association with 501(c)(3) status, founded in February 2011 to bring together Rama-Kshatriya families residing in the United States and Canada. Its mission is to provide opportunities for community members to connect, preserve our cultural heritage, and support deserving members of our community in India.

We estimate that approximately little over 200 Rama-Kshatriya families and individuals reside across the United States and Canada. Because of the vast geographical distances, meeting and interacting regularly can be challenging. ARKINA provides a common platform through WhatsApp groups, virtual gatherings, regional events, and triennial meetings. Over the years, we have connected with more than 150 families and organized several successful in-person and virtual gatherings.

In 2026, ARKINA proudly celebrates its 15th anniversary. To commemorate this important milestone, we organized ARKINA Meet-2026 at Hotel Rio, Las Vegas. We are bringing out SPANDANA-26, along with an Address Directory featuring family photographs and contact information.

One of ARKINA's major services to the community is its Scholarship Program, initiated in 2015 to support meritorious college students from economically disadvantaged Rama-Kshatriya families in India. Since its inception, ARKINA has awarded more than 600 scholarships and disbursed nearly \$100,000 in financial assistance.

I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all our donors, volunteers, members, and well-wishers for their generous contributions and continued support. Your dedication has helped ARKINA remain a vibrant, connected, and united organization.

As we celebrate this significant milestone, let us continue working together to strengthen our community, preserve our shared heritage, and support future generations.

Mohanchandra K.P.
President, ARKINA

ARTS



Arts by
Narasimha Kudlu
Concord, CA



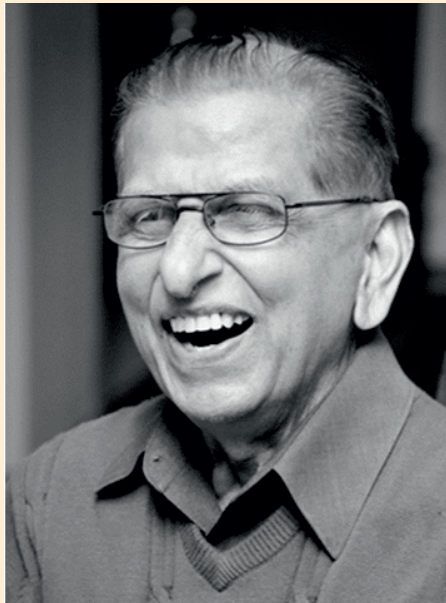
Arts by
Mahika Rao
Los Angeles, CA



In Memory of my father, Sri. Ramesh Rao



My father, Sri. Ramesh Rao was born in Kasaragod and received his early education in B.E.M.School. He then attended the prestigious St. Aloysius college in Mangalore. This was followed by a Bachelor's degree in Engineering in Coimbatore. He began his notable career as a civil engineer with the Indian Railways, where his technical expertise and commitment to infrastructure development contributed to numerous advancements. Pursuing his passion for technology, he later became a self-taught computer scientist, which propelled him into a successful career at Cray Research. His tenure at Cray Research, a leader in high-performance computing, reflected his passion and skill in a rapidly evolving field. He culminated his professional journey with a retirement from Lexis Nexis in Dayton, leaving behind a legacy of impactful work across multiple disciplines.



A man of diverse talents, Mr. Rao was an avid tennis player and a competitive chess enthusiast, pursuits that showcased his strategic thinking and love for challenge. He was also a skilled part-time magician, delighting those around him with moments of wonder and joy. His artistic sensibilities were expressed through his photography and art, capturing life's nuances with a keen eye. A keen music enthusiast, he enjoyed both Western and Indian classical music, and never failed to attend a concert. His vast collection of CDs bears testimony to his love of this fine art.



Nina Rao
Centerville, OH

He devoted countless hours to creating a Rama-Kshatriya genealogy website for our community—a true labor of love. He was also instrumental in establishing the Association of Rama Kshatriyas in North America (ARKINA). He served ARKINA as a director and later as an advisor to the ARKINA Board until his passing. Dedicated to maintaining his physical fitness, he enjoyed regular exercise and made health and vitality an important part of his daily life.

Above all, Ramesh was a loving husband and a dear father, roles he embraced with heartfelt devotion. His joyful spirit found a special place in his role as a grandfather, where he cherished time spent with his grandchildren. He is survived by his beloved wife, Nirupama; daughter, Nina Bekal; son-in-law, Prashanth Kumar; and grandchildren Arpan (Olivia) Kumar and Aashiq (Lauren) Kumar, alongside many other family members and dear friends who hold him in their memories.

Ramesh Rao's life was defined by a seamless blend of professional achievement. He expressed his artistic sensibilities through and personal warmth. His contributions to engineering and computer science, coupled with his rich family life and passionate interests, leave an enduring imprint. He will be remembered with respect, admiration, and profound affection by all who knew him.

ARTICLE

ARKINA Through the years

ARKINA, the Association of Rama Kshatriyas in North America, was established in February 2011 to unite members of the Rama Kshatriya community living in the United States and Canada. It provides a platform for community members from different regions of India to connect, get to know one another, and preserve the community's cultural heritage. ARKINA is also committed to supporting community members in need in India. Our association is registered as ARKINA in California and was granted tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the U.S. Internal Revenue Code.



First Meet - 2011

The first ARKINA Convention was held in Los Angeles on August 7, 2011. The event was inaugurated by Dr. Janardhan Haldipur of Rochester, New York, with the lighting of the ceremonial lamp. ARKINA's then-President, Mohanchandra, welcomed the gathering, and Secretary Rajesh Rao presented the annual report. The Spandana magazine was released by Sri Santhosh Kumar Kadlebele, President of Brindavana Kannada Sangha, New Jersey. ARKINA families from New York, New Jersey, Arizona, and California attended the event.

The Second ARKINA Meet was held in Sunnyvale, California, on August 31, 2014. The event was inaugurated by Prof. Ramesh Chandra Rao of Moodubidri, India, and Sri Narasimha Kudlu from Concord, CA presided over the function. ARKINA President Mohanchandra welcomed the gathering,

while Secretary Rajesh Rao presented the annual report. ARKINA families from Ohio, Florida, Arizona, and California attended the event.

In 2015, ARKINA established a scholarship program to support meritorious students



Third Meet -2014

from economically disadvantaged Rama Kshatriya families in India who are pursuing undergraduate, graduate, and professional education. Since its inception, the program has awarded scholarships to more than 600 students and disbursed nearly \$100,000 through generous donor contributions and corporate matching programs. As donations have increased over the years, ARKINA has steadily expanded the number of scholarships awarded annually. During the 2025-26 academic year alone, scholarships totaling \$22,000 were awarded to 125 students.



Third Meet -2014

The Third ARKINA Meet was held in San Jose, California, on November 24, 2017. The event was inaugurated by Sri Narasimha Kudlu and Smt. Veena Kudlu. ARKINA President Dr. Kishan Kumbla welcomed the gathering, and Secretary Rajesh Rao presented the annual report. ARKINA

families from Arizona and California attended the event.

Following the successful ARKINA Meets held in 2011, 2014, and 2017, another in-person gathering was planned for 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event was moved online and conducted via Zoom on October, 26, 2020. This elaborate virtual event was attended by more than 60 Rama Kshatriya families residing across the United States and Canada. The program was inaugurated by Sri Ramesh Rao and Smt. Nirupama Rao of Centerville, Ohio. Sri Narasimha Kudlu of California and our youth member Ms. Vidya Nayak of Texas delivered the keynote addresses. Cultural performances by community members were recorded and showcased during the event.

Although 2021 marked ARKINA's 10th anniversary, the decennial celebration could not be held due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the situation greatly improved, ARKINA celebrated its 10th anniversary in Santa Clara, California, on November 26, 2022. The event was inaugurated by Sri Rajendra C. H. and Smt. Anita Rajendra from Mysuru, India, with the traditional lighting of the lamp. On this occasion, Sri Narasimha Kudlu of Concord, California, released Spandana-22, which included an address directory featuring family photographs of Rama Kshatriyas residing in the United States and Canada.

ARKINA held its fifth triennial meet on October 28, 2023, at the Comfort Inn Hotel in Orlando, Florida, USA. The event, conducted both in person and via Zoom, was presided

over by Mr. Nagesh Rao Kandalur, Vice President of ARKINA. The chief guests—Dr. Janardhan Haldipur, Mrs. Veena Rao, Dr. Surendra Bekal, and Dr. Vijayanand Kundapur from Canada—inaugurated the event with the traditional lighting of the lamp. ARKINA honored Orlando-based businessman Sri Raghavendra Sheregar and



Smt. Suma Sheregar, whose family fully sponsored the event. More than 100 ARKINA members from California, Arizona, Washington, New Jersey, Georgia, Kansas, Texas, New York, North Carolina, and other states attended the event in person. In addition, members of more than 20 families participated virtually via Zoom.

In 2024, the ARKINA Board decided to organize annual regional meets, in addition to the triennial meet, to connect with more community members. Since then, regional gatherings have been held in Georgia, New Jersey, Texas, and California throughout 2024 and 2025. In 2026, the Board decided to combine ARKINA's triennial meet with its 15th-anniversary celebration, marking another significant milestone in the organization's history.



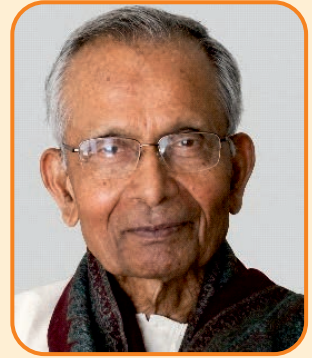
My Memorable Meetings

Nineteen fiftynine was an eventful year for me. I received my Engineering Degree from the University of Madras. I got my first job as Assistant Lecturer in Mechanical Engineering in Government College of Technology (GCT) Coimbatore. I ventured to take the tough Indian Engineering Services (IES) competitive examinations based on which I got my second job as Class I Officer in the Federal Government two years later. I met interesting people in that year. One of them was philosopher Dr. Radhakrishnan, the Vice President of India. Another was an elderly woman, who invited me to her house.

After joining GCT Faculty, I learnt that my friend Ramamurthy, an Electrical Engineer, had joined the GCT Faculty. He and I rented an apartment in Coimbatore until we got our college residential houses. He was a bright and cheerful person and we discussed various interesting subjects at night. As I had a fascination for the writings of T.P.Kailasam, I discussed about his writings one night. He was a good listener and enjoyed my narration.

T. P. Kailasam (1884-1945) was a brilliant Kannada playwright and an outstanding writer in Kannada literature. His theatrical comedies earned him the title “the grand old man of humorous plays”. He wrote more than 20 plays in Kannada and the first one was published in 1920. He was born in a Tamil family of scholars and professionals in Southern Karnataka and he went to England to study geology and became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Geologists (FRGS). On returning to India, he worked for a while as a geologist and later left it to pursue wholeheartedly Kannada literature. He changed the landscape of Kannada plays-from that of kings and queens to that of ordinary people and their lives.

Narasimha Kudlu
Concord, CA



Ramamurthy's cousin lived about a couple of miles from our apartment, with her husband who had retired as high court judge. He visited her regularly every Sunday evening. A few days after my narration of Kailasam's writings, Ramamurthy told me that his cousin was very eager to see me. She had asked him to bring me with him to her house the following Sunday. I wondered why she wished to see a stranger like me. I was not enthusiastic about meeting her. Ramamurthy did not know why she wanted to see me. But he let me know that he had narrated to her all the things I had said about Kailasam to him. He thought that she must have liked my stories of Kailasam and she desired to listen to more of those stories.

I went to her house with Ramamurthy. It was a large house surrounded by a beautiful garden. The living room was very large and there was a swing in the middle of it. Ramamurthy asked me to sit on the swing and the servants brought coffee and some eatables and placed them on the swing near me. After a few minutes, an elderly woman wearing a gorgeous sari and with a dignified appearance entered the room. She was smiling at me as she approached me and sat on the swing next to me. She put her hand on my back like a mother and told me that she was very delighted to hear my account of Kailasam's writings through Ramamurthy. She said, “Son, you know so much about him. Please tell me more. I feel really happy to listen to them”.

I was feeling a little bit uneasy to talk about Kailasam's writings at that evening. I asked her why she was so much interested in his writings. I was taken aback when I heard her say that she was Kailasam's younger sister. She wanted to see me because I was an admirer of Kailasam who died years ago. She wondered why anyone in Tamilnadu would talk of him very highly since all his works were in Kannada and not in Tamil. That

evening, she told me more about his extraordinary abilities. In his younger days, Kailasam used to gather his siblings in one place and narrate his self-created new stories to them without pausing to think and create those stories.

I was indeed delighted to meet her. It was a memorable evening for me.



Arts by
Nikshah Gulvady
Land O' Lakes, FL



Women Deserve Better Mental Health Care During Perimenopause and Beyond

Dr. Malini Prabhu, MD, MRCPsych is a board-certified adult psychiatrist and Founder and Medical Director of Boston Premier Psychiatry. She serves as Chief of Neurotherapeutics at the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and as Chair of Wellness for Women in Medicine at Newton-Wellesley-Mass General Brigham Hospital. With more than 20 years of international experience, having trained and practiced in the United Kingdom, Australia, and the United States, Dr. Prabhu has a special interest in women's emotional health, particularly the mental health challenges associated with perimenopause and postmenopause. She is passionate about providing compassionate, evidence-based, and personalized psychiatric care that empowers women to thrive at every stage of life.

Born and raised in Koteshwara, India, Dr. Prabhu is the daughter of Shyama and Prema Neramballi. She remains deeply connected to her roots and is actively involved in multiple initiatives dedicated to promoting women's emotional health and well-being in India and abroad. Through community education, advocacy, and public outreach, she works to increase awareness of mental health, reduce stigma, and improve access to compassionate, evidence-based care for women across cultures.

As a psychiatrist, I have noticed a recurring pattern in my practice. Many accomplished, resilient women in their 40s, 50s, and early 60s come to see me



**Dr. Malini Prabhu,
MD**

saying, "I don't recognize myself anymore." They describe worsening anxiety, low mood, poor sleep, difficulty concentrating, irritability, loss of confidence, and overwhelming fatigue. Many worry they are developing dementia, burning out at work, or simply "not coping."

In reality, many of these women are experiencing the profound effects of perimenopause or postmenopause—life stages that remain surprisingly under-recognized despite affecting half the world's population.

Menopause is often viewed as the end of menstrual periods, but it is far more than a reproductive milestone. It represents a major hormonal transition that influences nearly every system in the body, including the brain. Fluctuating estrogen levels during perimenopause and persistently low estrogen after menopause can affect neurotransmitters involved in mood, memory, sleep, motivation, and emotional regulation.

The physical symptoms are well recognized: hot flashes, night sweats, joint pain, vaginal dryness, weight gain, changes in metabolism, reduced libido, headaches, and disturbed sleep. Less

frequently discussed—but equally important—are the psychological and cognitive symptoms. Women may experience anxiety, depression, panic attacks, emotional sensitivity, brain fog, forgetfulness, difficulty making decisions, reduced motivation, and a diminished sense of well-being.

For some women, these symptoms represent their first encounter with a mental health condition. Others who have previously experienced depression, anxiety, postpartum depression, or severe premenstrual mood symptoms may find that their illness returns or worsens during this transition.

Postmenopause does not necessarily mean these challenges disappear. Although hormonal fluctuations stabilize, persistently low estrogen can continue to influence sleep quality, cognitive function, bone health, cardiovascular health, and emotional well-being. Many women continue to struggle with insomnia, anxiety, chronic stress, sexual health concerns, and changes in self-identity long after menopause has occurred.

Mental and physical health are inseparable during midlife. Poor sleep worsens anxiety and depression. Chronic stress contributes to hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, and cognitive decline. Likewise, untreated depression increases the risk of physical illness while reducing quality of life, productivity, and healthy aging.

Fortunately, women do not have to suffer in silence. Effective treatments are available and should be individualized. Depending on symptoms and medical history, management may include psychotherapy, lifestyle interventions,

regular exercise, improved sleep habits, nutritional optimization, antidepressant medications, hormone therapy when appropriate, and collaboration between primary care physicians, gynecologists, endocrinologists, cardiologists, and mental health professionals.

Equally important is education. Women deserve to know that mood changes, anxiety, cognitive difficulties, and sleep disturbances are not signs of personal weakness or failure. They are common medical symptoms that deserve the same attention as high blood pressure or diabetes.

Society has become increasingly comfortable discussing pregnancy and postpartum mental health, yet menopause remains a topic many women hesitate to mention—even to their physicians. This needs to change.

Perimenopause and postmenopause should not be viewed simply as the end of fertility but as an important chapter in a woman's lifelong health journey. With early recognition, evidence-based treatment, and compassionate care, women can continue to thrive professionally, personally, and emotionally for decades after menopause.

As psychiatrists, we have a responsibility to recognize the powerful interaction between hormones and the brain. As healthcare professionals, we must work together to provide integrated care that addresses both physical and mental health. Most importantly, as a society, we must ensure that women feel heard, supported, and empowered throughout this transition—not just to manage symptoms, but to enjoy healthy, fulfilling lives well beyond menopause.

What Women Can Do to Stay Healthy During Perimenopause and Postmenopause

1. Prioritize Regular Physical Activity

- Aim for 150 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise each week.
- Include strength training 2–3 times per week to preserve muscle mass and bone density.
- Practice balance and flexibility exercises such as yoga or tai chi to reduce fall risk.
- Stay active throughout the day and reduce prolonged sitting.

2. Eat for Healthy Aging

- Follow a Mediterranean-style diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, fish, and olive oil.
- Consume adequate protein (about 1.0–1.2 g/kg/day for most healthy midlife women) to maintain muscle mass.
- Ensure sufficient calcium (approximately 1,200 mg/day after age 50) and vitamin D intake.
- Limit highly processed foods, added sugars, and excessive saturated fats.

3. Protect Your Sleep

- Maintain a regular sleep schedule.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol close to bedtime.
- Keep your bedroom cool if hot flashes disturb sleep.
- Seek treatment for persistent insomnia rather than accepting it as “normal.”

4. Take Care of Your Mental Health

- Recognize that anxiety, depression, irritability, and brain fog are common and treatable.
- Stay socially connected with family and friends.
- Practice stress management through mindfulness, meditation, breathing exercises, or prayer.
- Consider counseling or psychotherapy if

symptoms persist.

5. Keep Your Brain Active

- Read, learn new skills, solve puzzles, or play a musical instrument.
- Stay intellectually and socially engaged.
- Challenge your brain regularly to support cognitive health.

6. Maintain a Healthy Weight

- Metabolism naturally slows after menopause.
- Focus on portion control and nutrient-dense foods.
- Build muscle through resistance training to improve metabolism.
- Avoid crash diets.

7. Protect Your Heart

- Monitor blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar regularly.
- Stop smoking if you smoke.
- Limit alcohol.
- Exercise consistently and maintain a healthy weight.
- Discuss your cardiovascular risk with your healthcare provider.

8. Protect Your Bones

- Perform weight-bearing and resistance exercises.
- Get adequate calcium and vitamin D.
- Discuss bone density testing (DEXA scan) when appropriate.
- Prevent falls by improving balance and maintaining vision.

9. Don't Ignore Sexual and Urinary Health

- Discuss vaginal dryness, painful intercourse, decreased libido, or urinary symptoms with your clinician.
- Effective treatments—including vaginal moisturizers, lubricants, vaginal estrogen, and other therapies—are

available.

10. Stay Up to Date with Preventive Care

- Annual physical examinations
- Mammograms as recommended
- Cervical cancer screening
- Colon cancer screening
- Bone density testing when indicated
- Vaccinations (influenza, shingles, pneumococcal, COVID-19, etc.)
- Regular dental and eye examinations

11. Review Your Medications

- Discuss whether hormone therapy may be appropriate based on your symptoms and medical history.
- Review all medications and supplements with your healthcare provider.
- Report any new mood, memory, or sleep concerns promptly.

12. Build a Strong Support Network

- Talk openly with your partner and family about what you're experiencing.

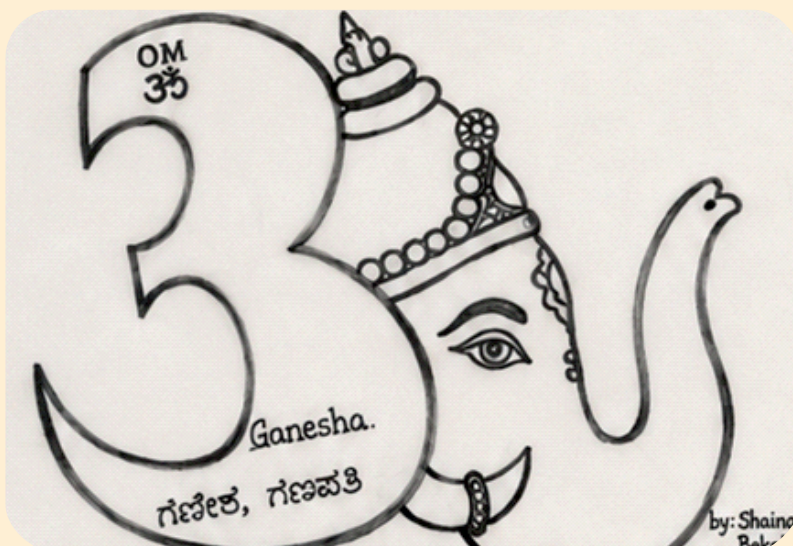
- Join menopause support groups if helpful.

- Seek care from healthcare professionals familiar with menopause and women's mental health.

Remember

Perimenopause and postmenopause are natural stages of life—not illnesses. With healthy lifestyle habits, preventive care, attention to mental well-being, and appropriate medical treatment when needed, women can remain active, productive, and healthy for decades after menopause. Taking care of both your body and your mind is one of the best investments you can make for healthy aging.

My website: <https://bostonpremierpsychiatry.com/>



Arts by
Shaina Bekal
Dallas, TX



ಕಿತ್ತಳೆ ನಾಡಿನ ಸುತ್ತ.....



Tanjuja Gulvadi
Land O Lakes, FL

ಮೂಡುದೆಂಕಣದೆರಡು ಕಡಲಿನ ನಡುವೆ ತೂರಿ
ಮೇಲೇರಿ ಮೂಡಿ ನಿಂತ ಭುವನ ಮನೋಹರಿ
ಅಮೇರಿಕಾ ನಕಾಶೆಯ ನೀ ಭೂಶಿರ ಕನ್ಯಾಕುಮಾರಿ
'ರವಿತೇಜ ನಾಡು' ಎಂಬ ಧರಿಸಿರುವೆ ಬಿರುದ ಗರಿ
ಸುಂದರ ವಿಶಾಲ ಸಾಗರ ತೀರಗಳೇ ನಿನ್ನ ಐಸಿರಿ

ನಿನ್ನ ಭೂಮಿಯ ಅಂಗಳದಿ ಇಲ್ಲ ಏರು ತಗ್ಗು
ಸಮತಲ ವಿಸ್ತಾರ ನೆಲವೇ ವಿಶೇಷ ಸೊಬಗು
ಕಣ್ಣು ಹಾಯಿಸಿದಲ್ಲೆಲ್ಲಾ ಹಸಿರು ಕಂಗಿನ ಸೆರಗು
ನೀಲಿ ಬಾನಿನ ತುಂಬ ಬೆಳ್ಳಿಮೋಡಗಳ ಮೆರುಗು
ಆಕಾರದ ನೀ ಕಾಣಿಸುವೆ ಪೆನಿನ್ಸುಲಾ ಚಿಗುರು

ಸೂರ್ಯನ ಸುಡು ಬಿಸಿಗೆ ಕಾದು ಕಾಯುವ ನಾಡು
ಚಳಿಗಾಲದಲಿ ನೀಡುವೆ ವಲಸಿಗರಿಗೆ ಆಶ್ರಯದ ಬೀಡು
ಮಳೆಗಾಳಿ, ಹರಿಕೇನ್ಗಳಿಗೆ ತುತ್ತರಿಸುವುದು ನಿನ್ನ ಪಾಡು
ಮಕರ, ಕೂರ್ಮ, ಸರಿಸ್ಪೃಷ್ಠಗಳಿಗೆ ನೀ ಜಾಗಿನ ಗೂಡು
ಬಾಳಸಂಜೆಯಲಿ ನಿನ್ನ ಮಡಿಲಲೊಂದು ಮನೆ,ಮಾಡು

ಕೈ ಚಾಚಿದನತಿಯಲಿ ಶ್ವೇತ ಮರಳಿನ ರಾಶಿ ತೀರಗಳು
ಶುಭ್ರ ನೀರಿನ ಟಾಂಪಾ ಕ್ಲಿಯರ್ ವಾಟರ್, ಸೇಂಟ್ ಪೀಟರ್
ಸ್ವಟಿಕ ಮರಳಿನ ಚೆಲುವ ಹರಡಿದ ಸಿವಸ್ವ ಕೀ, ಸರಸೋಟ
ಪಚ್ಚಿ ಹರಳಿನ ಹಸಿರು ಜಲದ ಮನಮೋಹಕ ತೀರ ಡೆಸ್ಟಿನ್
ಮೋಜಿನ ಜಲದಾಟದ ಮೋಡಿ ಮಾಡುವ ಕೊಕಾ,ಡೆಟೋನ

ಪ್ರವಾಸಿ ತಾಣಗಳಿಗೆ ನೀ ಮಾಡಿರುವೆ ಅತ್ಯಂತ ಹೆಸರು
ಥೀಮ್ ಪಾರ್ಕ್‌ಗಳಿಗೆ ಸರಿಸಾಟಿ ನಿನಗಿಲ್ಲ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಯಾರು
ಡಿಸ್ನಿವರ್ಲ್ಡ್, ಯೂನಿವರ್ಸಲ್, ಸೀವರ್ಲ್ಡ್ ನಗರ ಒಲಾಂಡೊ
ಬುಶ್ ಗಾರ್ಡನ್, ಡೈನೋಸೋರ್ ವರ್ಲ್ಡ್, ನಾಸ ನೆಲೆ ನೀನು
ಇತಿಹಾಸದ ಕಥೆ ಹೇಳುವ ಗತ ಪಟ್ಟಣ ಸೇಂಟ್ ಆಗಸ್ಟೀನು

ಇರುಳಲಿ ಮಲಗದ ಥಳುಕಲಿ ಮೆರೆಯುವ ಊರು ಮಯಾಮಿ
ಕಾರುಬಾರಿನ ಟಾಂಪಾ, ಪೈರೇಟ್ ಉತ್ಸವ ಜರುಗುವ ಜಾಗ
ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ನಗರ ಗೇನ್ಸ್‌ವಿಲ್, ರಕ್ಷಣ ನೌಕಾ ವಲಯ ಜ್ಯಾಕ್ಸ್‌ನಿಲ್
ರಾಜಕೀಯದ ರಾಯಭಾರದಿ ರಾರಾಜಿಸುವ ರಾಜಧಾನಿ ಟಲ್ಲಾಸಿ
ನಗರಗಳಿವೆ ಇನ್ನೂ ಕೆಲವು, ಹಲವು ವಿಶೇಷತೆಗಳ ನೀ ನೆಲವು

ನಿನ್ನ ಮಣ್ಣಿನ ಕಿತ್ತಳೆ ಹಣ್ಣಿನ ಗಿಡಗಳ ಬೆಳೆಯುವ ಸಾರ
ಚೆಲುವಿನ ಭಂಗಿಯ, ರಂಗಿನ ಫ್ಲೆಮಿಂಗೋಗಳ ಸಂಚಾರ
ಜಿಮ್ಮುತ ಓಡುವ ಮಿಂಚಿನ ಕಂಗಳ ಸಾರಂಗಗಳ ವಿಹಾರ
ಅಳಿವಿನ ಅಂಚಿನ ಬೆರಳೆಣಿಕೆಯ ಚಿರತೆಗಳ ಕಾಂತಾರ
ಕೆಸರಿನ ನಿನ್ನ ಕೆರೆಕೊಳಗಳಲಿ ಮೊಸಳೆಗಳದೇ ಅಧಿಕಾರ

ಬಣ್ಣಿಸಲುಳಿದಿದೆ ಕಾರಣಗಳು ಇನ್ನೂ ನೂರು ಅಪಾರ
ಅಂದದ ಚಂದದ ನಾಡಿನ ಪರಿಕಲ್ಪನೆಯ ನೀ ಸಾಕಾರ
ಸಾಗರ ತೀರದಿ ಕಂಗೊಳಿಸುವ ಕಿನ್ನರಿ ನೀ ಕಿತ್ತಳೆ ನಾಡು
ಸೂರ್ಯನ ಪ್ರಭೆಯಲಿ ದಿನ ಬೆಳಗುವ ಭಾನಿನ ಮೂಡು
ಹೊಂಬಣ್ಣದ ತೇಜದಿ ಹೊಳೆಯುವೆ ಫ್ಲೋರಿಡಾ! ಫ್ಲೋರಿಡಾ!
ನೀನು.

Ode to Sunshine State...

Thrusting between the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico
A land of beauty, you emerged in the southeast
Shaped out in a unique Peninsular on US map
'Sunshine State' title is a feather you wear in your cap

With No hills or valleys across your vast landscape,
A plain and flat courtyard is the pride of your charm
Eyes see palm trees all over, painting you in green

Floating silver clouds decorate the blue sky's screen.

Beautiful, sprawling seashores are your real opulence.

The scorching summer sun burns and sears your floor.
In winter, you welcome snow birds under your shelter.
Storms, cyclones, and hurricanes make your soul shatter,
Gators, turtles, and reptiles nestle in the swamp water,
When days are numbered, your lap offers a homeland forever.

Stretching for miles and miles are shores of white sand dunes,
A calm beach in clear water, a vibrant sunset in St. Pete.
'Emerald Coast' Destin, a pristine shore of green water
And the crystal sandy shore of beauty, Siesta Key in Sarasota.
The water games of Cocoa, Daytona make all go cuckoo bananas!

Your name is famed for wondrous, captivating tourist spots,
No place can equal your amusements and thrilling theme parks.
Disney World, Universal Studio and Sea World in city Orlando,
While Busch Gardens, Dinosaur World, and Legoland span your land.
Tales of history whisper through the pavers and bricks of old St.
Augustine.

Miami, a scintillating city of sleepless nights shining bright,
Commanding downtown Tampa, where the pirate festival in sight.
'Collegehub' Gainesville, is home where the University of Florida sits,
While Jacksonville is a mighty center of Navy defense and logistics,
And politically active governance in your proud capital, Tallahassee.

Orange plants flourish in your rich and nourishing soil,
A parade of lamingtons glides with radiant shades and grace
Frolicking, sparkling-eyed deer are leaping and sprinting.
The forests of panthers that are on the brink of extinction
And your swampy ponds and lakes are ruled by millions of alligators.

The desire to savor your beauty is forever strong and fresh.
The sunshine state on the ocean shore, you glow in golden hues.
O Florida! You are truly a vibrant paradise in this American land.



Tanjuja Gulvadi
Land O Lakes, FL

My Father's Village

I closed my eyes to visualize the setting, my father's village, Kudlu, for the children's story I was writing.

I had visited Kudlu many times with my parents. I remember the first time I saw the L-shaped home with the thatched roof. At that time, one side had no walls. The elements filled the main room, except when large straw mats were leaned against the roof to cover the opening during the monsoon season. Seven paces in front of the house was the back of the temple my grandfather had built. Both the house and temple sat in the corner of my grandfather's five acres of land.

My father was the youngest of six siblings – two brothers and four sisters. Babu, as his family lovingly called him, lived in a busy and hardworking household.

I pictured my father's childhood. Every day at 4:30 am, my father began his chores. He and his siblings drew water from the well. They stored water in copper vessels near the house for use during the day. They filled containers in the bathhouse. They watered the vegetable gardens and fruit and nut trees.

Someone in the family tended to the cows and chickens. The cows were milked and taken to the pasture to graze. The chickens were fed and the coop cleaned. My father was in charge of bringing home the cows in the evening. Sometimes, he even hitched a ride on top of one!

My grandmother and her daughters squatted over a wood fire to cook three times a day. They pounded whole spices into fine powders. They used a huge stone mortar and pestle to grind a smooth batter from rice and dhals. Cooking was meticulous work.



Viji K. Chary
Fremont, CA

At meal time, the men ate first. They sat on the floor and were served on banana leaves. Only after the men and children ate did the women eat.

All this was interesting to me, but what would capture a child's attention in my children's story?

Animals. Wild animals in Kudlu.

I remembered snippets of my father's stories of pesky animals. "During the day, we would have to scare the foxes away from the vegetable garden because they would eat the vegetables," he said. "Before I was born, my mother said that wild boars used to come all the way to the house."

He had memories of playful ones, like when he swam in the nearby lake. "Water buffalos waded there. I used to play with them," he told my nephew.

There were also fearsome recollections. In the evening, my father could hear tigers roaring in the forest. They would roar in his nightmares, too.

And alarming ones. "One day, the temple door was stuck," my father told me. "Something was blocking the door. My father (your grandfather) shoved it open. A huge cobra, which was behind the door, was thrown across the room. It raised its hood at my father. There was no remedy for a cobra bite in those days. My father stepped back.

For some unknown reason, it lowered its head and slithered away.”

I imagined my father walking to school after his morning chores - between the rice fields, by the lake, and through the thickly wooded areas before he came to the school grounds.

I was so immersed in my imagination that I was truly frightened of the wild boars, tigers, and snakes, and other animals like hyenas, monkeys, and porcupines that were in the Kudlu forests as though they were lurking in my backyard.

My heart raced and I sat on the edge of my seat. Could I have survived in such an environment? I didn’t think so. I was in awe of my father, his siblings, their parents, and the ancestors before them, and the grit they needed to lead their lives.

My thoughts continued to wander.

My father valued his education and worked hard. When the time came, he left his village to pursue a higher education. He was the first in the family to go to college. How

different it must have been to go from Kudlu, where there was no running water or electricity to Coimbatore, a bustling city.

My father’s life changed further when he moved to the US with my mother and me at a time when diversity was not welcomed. He dealt with a new land and new customs. He had planned to stay in the US for only five years. Over fifty-five years later, he had a successful engineering career in America, raised a family, and made a difference in the community.

I was amazed at my father’s journey- his life held so many surprises.

My thoughts had strayed far from the task at hand.

Back to my children’s story. Back to rural India. Back to Kudlu.

I began to write.

Babu lived with animals all around him in a South Indian village named Kudlu.



Aarav Nagaraja
Lake Forest, CA

Tracing the Ramaraja Kshatriya Story

An important early account of the Ramaraja Kshatriya community can be found in Castes and Tribes of Southern India, the seven-volume work published in 1909 by British ethnographer Edgar Thurston.

Writing under the entry “Servēgāra,” Thurston describes a community found principally in South Canara and known by several names, including Kotēgāra, Koteyava and Rāmakshatri. His account, much of it drawn from J. Sturrock's earlier Madras District Manual: South Canara (1894), offers useful clues about the community's origins, occupations and migration.

According to the tradition recorded by Thurston, the community was believed to be a branch of the Konkani Marathas of Goa, brought south by the Lingayat kings of Nagara to serve as soldiers and defend their forts.

This military association may explain the names Kotegara and Koteyava. In Kannada, kote means “fort,” suggesting an occupational identity connected with guarding or serving at forts.

The reference to the kings of Nagara points to the Keladi or Nayaka rulers, who controlled large parts of coastal and interior Karnataka. Their kingdom maintained a network of strategically important forts, making the employment of military families along the coast historically plausible.

Over time, communities identified as Ramakshatriya, Koteyar or related names became established along the western coastal belt, including areas around Kundapur, Udupi, Mangalore, Kasaragod and Bekal.

Thurston's account therefore provides support for a historical connection among three elements that continue to feature in



Veena Rao
Atlanta, GA

community tradition: the Konkani-Goa region, military service, and migration into South Canara.

It does not, however, establish exactly when this migration occurred or whether it happened in a single movement. Families may have moved south over an extended period as soldiers and administrators were posted to different parts of the coast.

One particularly useful aspect of Thurston's account is his identification of the community by several names.

He writes: “The Servēgāras are also called Kotēgāras, Koteyava, and Rāmakshatri.”

These historical names are significant because variations continue to appear in later community and government records. Ramakshatriya, Ramaraja Kshatriya, Koteyar, Kotegara and Servegara have all been used for the community.

The different names may partly reflect geography, language and occupation rather than separate origins.

The word Kotegara, with its connection to kote, or fort, is especially consistent with the military history recorded by Thurston. Other traditional titles associated with the community, including Nayak, Kotwal and Havaladar, also have military or administrative associations.

By the late nineteenth century, therefore, the identity now commonly known as Ramaraja

Kshatriya was already being documented under several closely related names.

Thurston records another interesting distinction. He says that members of the community in South Canara spoke Kannada, while their counterparts farther north spoke Konkani.

This linguistic pattern is relevant to the tradition of migration from the Konkan-Goa region.

If the community did move south from that region, the Kannada-speaking population of South Canara appears to have become well integrated into its new linguistic environment over generations, while communities farther north retained Konkani.

By the time these observations were recorded in the nineteenth century, the distinction was already established, suggesting that settlement in South Canara was not a recent development.

From Soldiers to Government Service:

The community's occupations also changed as the political landscape changed.

With the decline of the old kingdoms and their forts, Thurston noted that many members had become cultivators, while others found employment in the Revenue and Police departments, including as constables and orderlies.

There is an interesting continuity here. A community traditionally associated with military and administrative service under regional rulers later found employment in the institutions of the colonial government.

Thurston also records aspects of the community's religious life. Members wore the sacred thread, worshipped both Shiva and Vishnu, used Brahmin priests for

religious ceremonies and maintained an association with the Sringeri Matha.

Several of these practices remain recognizable within the community today.

What Thurston Can — and Cannot — Tell Us

Thurston's account needs to be read with some caution. *Castes and Tribes of Southern India* was a colonial-era ethnographic work, and British administrators often attempted to fit complex Indian communities into fixed social categories.

Moreover, Thurston was not claiming to have personally established the community's ancient origins. His description of its migration and military background relied heavily on the earlier South Canara District Manual and on traditions recorded at the time.

What it does establish is important: by the late nineteenth century, the Ramakshatriya/Kotegara/Servegar community was clearly documented in South Canara, was Kannada-speaking there, was associated by tradition with the Konkan and Goa, and had a well-established reputation for military and fort service.

Many questions remain, particularly about the community's earliest settlement in Mangalore, the specific forts its members served, and the exact circumstances of its migration into South Canara.

But the account preserved by Edgar Thurston provides a useful historical starting point. It allows us to trace the broad outlines of a community whose identity evolved from the military and administrative world of coastal India's old kingdoms into the Ramaraja Kshatriya community of modern South Canara.



My Reflection About Fencing Sport

I picked up a foil when I was nine years old because my parents wanted me to find somewhere to put my energy into after school. Eighteen years later, I am still fencing today, and it means more to me now than it ever has. I often find myself reflecting on why that is the case.

Fencing is a strange sport to fall in love with. Most people did not grow up watching it on TV. It does not fill stadiums, and even the best fencers in the world are nowhere near as well-known as athletes in soccer or football. It is also expensive, physically demanding, and outside of a small, tight community, most people have never heard of it other than through the Olympics. For a long time, the answer to why I fenced was simple. It kept me busy and disciplined. It helped me get into a good college and gave me a community of other like-minded athletes who understood the same schedule of practices and travel that shaped a big part of my childhood and teenage years.

In college, fencing felt like it had a clear purpose. I had a team and a program that required me to train seriously. Being a student athlete meant that my recovery, my schedule, and even the tournaments I traveled to around the world were all built into my daily life. That changed significantly after graduation.

There is no real path to becoming a professional fencer, not the way there is in other sports. If you want to stay competitive after college, you must build your training around a full-time job instead of the other way around. Often this means working out early in the mornings before work and training late after work ends. It requires taking vacation days to travel to tournaments and spending a good amount

Sidarth Kumbla
San Jose, CA



of money on private lessons and equipment. And even after all of that, there is no guarantee you will accomplish the goals you set out to.



There have been tournaments where I came back home confused and frustrated, wondering why I continue to pursue this sport at all. But when I sit with that question long enough, I keep landing on the same answer, and it does not really have much to do with fencing itself.

When I really think about it, the answer comes back to a goal I have carried since I

was young. I have always wanted to be the best at something and to see it through completely. It was not for what it could get me, but to find out what I was capable of if I gave it everything I had. My parents have supported that goal every step of the way. I think that is largely because they never had the chance to pursue something like this themselves. Their early years were spent building a foundation for our family rather than figuring out what they might have been good at if they had the time or the resources to try. Supporting me in fencing has become their way of giving me a chance they never got.

I think that is a story most immigrant families share in some form, of parents and grandparents giving up their own chances so their children could build toward something better, not just for themselves, but for the generations that come after them. Fencing has become my small part of that story. It was never about being recognized for it, or about what it could earn me. It has always been about honoring what my parents gave up, by continuing to commit myself fully to accomplishing what I set out to do.



Arts by
Aavya Kundapur
Santa Clara, CA, USA



A Martial People

**Bio: Aditya Rao is a statistician who specializes in econometrics.
Though born in India, he was raised in America.**

This essay details how I started my journey into martial arts, why it came about that I did so, and why I urge other members of this community to join me.

Though we are considered to be the kote ("fortress") people, it has likely been centuries since most of us have picked up arms, engaged in feats of martial prowess, or meaningful combat. This is expected in a country that went from a patchwork of interminable feudal rivalries to a pacified, though fettered, imperial domain. And it is especially expected in a world where, over the many years since the last fortress stood, strength in intellect far triumphs over physical strength itself.

However, modern life has, in many ways, dramatically hampered our inherently virile, if bellicose, spirit. I have always been prone to indolence throughout my youth; but by the time I was 31, I had ballooned into a slug-like creature weighing some 260lbs. A miniature gargantua, I did not walk, but lumbered; I did not breathe, but wheezed; and I did not eat for sustenance, but engorged myself in a frenzy on all manner of decadent foods.

I decided then that something must be done – something dramatic to free me of the corpulent prison that became my body.

So I sojourned to Thailand to learn muay thai. Muay Thai, or the "art of eight limbs," is the national combat sport of Thailand. Unlike the boxing we see in the West, it makes liberal use not merely of the fists, but also of the shins, knees, elbows, and the clinch. For much of its history it remained a peculiarly Thai institution, cultivated in

Aditya Rao
Atlanta, GA

local gyms and fought before frenetic crowds in the great stadiums of Bangkok.

It is now one of the foundational arts of mixed martial arts and among the world's preeminent striking disciplines. Muay Thai has since spread nearly everywhere; yet Thailand remains its undisputed home, and great fighters from the four corners of the world still travel there to learn the art from those who have practiced it for generations. As such, my fellow students at the gym I enrolled in on Phuket Island were Americans, Canadians, Persians, Khazars, Uzbeks, Arabs from the Gulf, Frenchmen, Dagestanis, Turks, Israelis, Palestinians, Ukrainians, Russians, Cameroonians, Poles, Koreans, Dutch; and of course, especially Australians, for Thailand is so near to their country as to make it a second home to a great many of them.

The Thais place fighters into the ring to fight for five rounds of 3 minutes each. Each student is given shin guards, boxing gloves, and a mouth piece to protect their teeth from blows. It must have been either an Emirati or a Saudi who first most violently snapped me out of the haze of decadence and indolence that had marked my entire life. He must not have been much older than 21; and he was as slug-like as I in appearance. He hooked me

solidly in the side of my face, so hard that I nearly twirled and then dropped. I had never fought anyone head on before; and the few martial arts classes I took back home never had live sparring elements to it. I had been coddled for so long and now it showed.

That was the first of many beatings I had received. The Dutch students, many of whom were inured to fighting because of their own lineage of Dutch Kickboxing, struck at me at a range, given their average height was at least 6 feet (my own); though many were taller. The Uzbeks, Khazars, and Dagestanis were unparalleled in the clinch, since in their own culture, prowess in wrestling is what they prize above all. Many of the other fighters belied their own country's national traditions and possessed more perplexing skills: an Austrian kung fu master once felled me; as did a Lithuanian taekwondo instructor. Though learning muay thai and following its rule-set, each fighter still leveraged their advantages from back home.

I was there for but one month. During the day, I would train, spar, suffer a minor annihilation at the hands of my fellow students, and then slowly lumber back to my dorm, bruised and exhausted. Though we were so sanguinary in the ring, we had nothing but the strongest camaraderie back in the dorms. We would carouse with the locals, enjoy the local attractions, and keep each other on track with training and diet adherence. And I would carry this ethos

back home with me. I enrolled in the muay thai gym near my home and trained constantly, twice a day like before.

As I write this now, I have dropped approximately 50lbs within the year. The weight loss was, in retrospect, only the most visible consequence. The greater change was that I became far less afraid of discomfort. Training taught me to appear even when tired, to remain composed while another man was trying to strike me, and to discover that exhaustion, pain, and embarrassment are generally much less terrible once endured than they appear beforehand. I became more disciplined because of the simple and frank reality that the lazy, indolent, and feeble are quickly destroyed in the ring.

We are descendants of a community whose very name recalls the fortress. We need not pretend that we still inhabit one; nor should we exchange the professions and accomplishments of modern life for some romantic vision of the past. But perhaps we ought not surrender entirely that older part of ourselves either.

I advise those of this community to at least try what I tried: remember that you are descendants of a long lineage of fighters; and that you will remember this long lost spirit when you step in the ring and fight. If gone unheeded, modern society will strip the koteavaru of the two things they know most: Pettukoduvudu, pettutinnuvudu.



My World In Sketches

For more than a decade, I've carried little sketchbooks with me everywhere, documenting my life through sketches. Think of it as a personal journal in art form!

Sketching allows me to slow down and truly soak in a moment, making even ordinary experiences feel special. Yet I also have to work quickly, because the moment may be gone in an instant. To tell a compelling visual story, I have to make snap decisions about what to capture, how to compose it, and which art medium to use.

Unlike meticulous studio work, sketches have a raw energy and sense of immediacy. Imperfect lines, messy finishes, and unfinished details often give them their character and charm. The spontaneity, and the way a sketch can preserve a fleeting moment, is what draws me to sketching. I'm sharing sketches from two special events this year here.

Yakshagana Performance by Kannada Koota (KADAK), Dallas. Capturing the essence of the Yakshagana scenes in just a few minutes was a challenge, especially since I didn't know how long they would remain on stage. The ever-changing stage lighting, which was my only light source, made it even trickier; I could barely see what I was sketching! But that unpredictability is part of what makes sketching live performances so much fun.



Reshma Beeranthbail

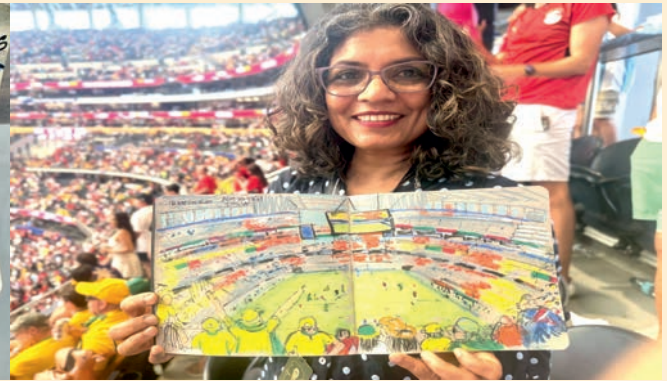
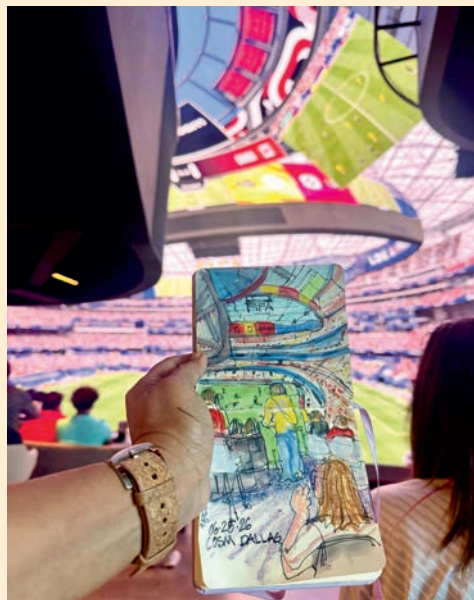
Dallas, TX



FIFA World Cup 2026 Matches. We're fortunate to live in Dallas, a FIFA host city, which gave me the chance to sketch at a few local Watch Parties as well as Live at the Dallas Stadium! The in-stadium experience was memorable: Australian fans inadvertently sprayed beer on my sketch during a goal celebration, I dropped my sketchbook several times, and curious spectators near me followed my sketching progress with interest. And then, to top it all off, the match ended in a nail-biting penalty shootout. Somehow, it's all captured in my messy sketchbook.



Curious about my art kit? I keep it simple: a small mixed-media sketchbook, a waterproof ink pen, a compact watercolor set, a few water-soluble crayons, and a water brush. Everything fits neatly into a small, stadium-approved bag. It's perfect for sketching on the go.



You can see more of my work on Instagram. My IG handle is @resh.r.b



My Saturday Morning with Sanskrit

The first day of school ice breakers were never hard for me, I always had something unique to share. When the new teacher for the school year asks the class to say something cool or interesting about themselves, my answer was always the same, "I've been learning Sanskrit for 5+ years!" The funniest thing was the repeated pattern of reactions from every audience, the surprised looks, excited questions, and even people admitting they didn't know Sanskrit was even a language. More often than not I get questioned as to why I bothered to learn a "dead language", if the world had forgotten it, then what was the point of learning it? Reflecting on my Sanskrit journey, I realised that Sanskrit didn't just teach me a language; it gave me valuable life lessons and a completely new perspective.

My journey began at the Samskritha Bharati program in Irvine. We met up weekly once at the local temple, and it helped me build my basic knowledge on the devanagiri script and vibhaktis. Fast forward two years later, I registered for the Samskritam as a Foreign Language (SAFL) three year program, which I am graduating from this year. Truthfully speaking, my Sanskrit journey had started when my mother enrolled me and forced me to go to class. As a child I resented giving up my Saturday mornings to Sanskrit classes, constantly thinking about all the cooler stuff I could be doing. If you ask me now, my mind has totally changed. Sanskrit became more than just a language for me, it allowed me to forge relationships, build disciplined habits, and, most importantly, reflect on who I am as a person.

I owe my transformation to a very special teacher in Samskritha Bharati, Sunita Bhagini, my teacher but also my friend. She

Ahana Ganesh Rao
Garden Grove, CA



really pushed me into SAFL and with her support I was able to come this far. Sunita Bhagini didn't just lecture us, she asked us deep and meaningful questions. She challenged us to go home, research and come back with our own answers and questions for her. I think from those moments, my willingness and curiosity spiked. Her questions were unique and interesting, they made me think about the world around me.

Sanskrit was not just grammar rules and dhatus, we incorporated real life lessons into our lectures and worked on various projects and skits. The most memorable experience for me was participating as an EMCEE for our annual Varshikotsava showcase. That year our program focused on the pañcāṅga jyotiṣaśāstrasya pramukhāṅgaḥ, exploring the Vedic translations on the science of astronomy and astrology. We performed a skit to teach the audience about tithis (moon phases) and nakshatras (constellations for which the moon is passing through). The program finally ended with all the students chanting verses from the Bhagavad Gita.

Sanskrit didn't just help me gain stamina in reading and writing, it forced me to step outside my comfort zone and be vulnerable. I learned deeper meanings of the Bhagavad Gita and how it plays a role in my personal life. I was able to connect many of these ideas

together and create questions of my own. The curiosity is what kept me coming back to class amidst my drowning school work. That's what I appreciate most about Sanskrit, how learning a new language helped me communicate in ways I didn't expect to. Telling people, I study it always gets me very mixed reactions. But if anyone asks me if I would recommend it, my answer

would be a whopping "YES!!!!". While it's also about preserving the beautiful language, it's more about how Sanskrit can offer people something greater than another language to your inventory. It changes who you are.



Arts by
Aarna Nagaraja
Lake Forest, CA, USA



Tanzania Safari – A journey into the wild

A safari in Tanzania had been a dream of mine for many years, and it finally became a reality. Our group of six traveled through the spectacular northern safari circuit, visiting Serengeti National Park, the Ngorongoro Crater, Lake Manyara, Ndutu, and Arusha.

A Tanzania safari brings you face to face with the legendary Big Five—the Lion, Leopard, Elephant, Rhino, and Cape Buffalo. Beyond these iconic animals, we witnessed countless zebras, wildebeests, giraffes, flamingos, monkeys, and many other species thriving in their natural habitat.

The safari exceeded all my expectations.



Watching wild animals roam freely across the endless African plains was an experience unlike anything I had ever imagined. The vast landscapes, changing scenery, and millions of animals created breathtaking moments at every turn. Herds of zebras and wildebeests often passed within a few feet of our safari vehicle, leaving us speechless with excitement and awe.

Puneetha,
Concord, NC



The Serengeti was simply magnificent, with



its endless golden plains stretching to the horizon, while the Ngorongoro Crater felt like stepping into a nature documentary. Surrounded by dramatic crater walls and abundant wildlife, it was difficult to believe such a beautiful place truly existed.

Every day brought a new adventure—from watching a lioness with her cubs, to observing majestic elephants, colorful flamingos lining the lakeshore, and playful monkeys in the trees. Each encounter reminded us of the incredible beauty and diversity of Africa's wildlife.



This journey will remain one of the most unforgettable experiences of our lives. Tanzania's breathtaking landscapes, remarkable wildlife, and unforgettable safari adventures have left us with memories that we will cherish forever.



My trip to Thailand

Hi everyone! I'm excited to share a little about my wonderful trip to Thailand. It was a journey filled with beautiful places, amazing experiences, delicious food, and memories that I will always treasure. From the lively streets and temples of Bangkok to the peaceful mountains of Chiang Mai and the breathtaking beaches of Krabi, every part of Thailand had something special to offer.

We began our adventure around Bangkok, visiting the Kanchanaburi Safari and exploring some of Bangkok's magnificent temples. Between sightseeing, we also enjoyed discovering different cafés and experiencing the energy, food, and everyday life of the city.

From Bangkok, we traveled north to Chiang Mai. The beautiful temples there had a very different atmosphere, surrounded by the history and culture of northern Thailand. One of the most memorable parts of the trip was visiting an elephant sanctuary, where we had the opportunity to see these amazing animals up close and learn more about them.

The final part of our journey took us south to Krabi, where Thailand showed us a completely different side. We enjoyed the beautiful beaches, clear blue water, and dramatic limestone landscapes. A boat trip through the Hong Islands was a highlight, with stunning views of the islands and the Andaman Sea.

What made Thailand special was the variety of experiences packed into one trip—from busy cities and peaceful temples to elephants, beaches, islands, cafés, and great food. Each destination felt different, yet together they gave us a wonderful glimpse into the beauty and culture of Thailand.

Shilpa Bekal,
Livingston, NJ



It was a trip filled with great memories and one that I will remember for many years to come. I would recommend this trip to anyone who wants to experience something close to India while they are on their India trip.



The Threads That Bind Us

My mother, Mrs. Vasanthi Naik, from Bombay, had a remarkable gift for embroidery. This beautiful landscape, created with scraps of embroidery thread that were available in her village of Kallianpur, is a true testament to her creativity, patience, and incredible talent.

It is at least 70 years old and is one of the few precious pieces of her work that we still have today. Like many women of her generation, my mom mostly embroidered things that were both beautiful and useful — pillow covers, tablecloths, and other everyday pieces that brought warmth and beauty into our home as we were growing up. Over the years, those functional treasures were loved, used, worn out, and eventually disappeared. But this little piece of art survived, carrying with it a piece of her story.

My mom was the one who introduced me to embroidery when I was growing up. I enjoyed learning it from her, but I never truly understood the gift she was passing on to me. Perhaps some things are appreciated only with time.

A couple of years ago, my daughter Tanvi gave me a small embroidery kit for Mother's Day. I recently found it tucked away in the basement and decided to finally use it — perhaps more because I didn't want it sitting unused than anything else. I suppose that desire to make things useful is something I may have inherited from my mom too.

Vindhya Bekal
New Jersey, NJ



But as I started stitching, something unexpected happened. With every thread, I felt myself reconnecting with memories of my mom — quiet moments, lessons learned, and the love woven into those childhood days. It became so much more than a hobby; it became a bridge across generations.

So here are two pieces of embroidery — one by a mother, one by her daughter; a guru and her shishya. Created 70 years apart, yet forever connected by these delicate silken threads.



Senior Spark: Bridging Generations Through Connection

Senior Spark started with the three of us—Areen, Ahana, and me, Anagha—and our relationships with our grandparents. We founded Senior Spark because we each understood how meaningful it can be to spend time with an older generation. Areen grew up painting and making pottery with her grandfather, creating some of her strongest memories together. Ahana spent afternoons practicing yoga and climbing trees with her grandfather. I remember having self-care days and doing my nails with my grandmother. These experiences made us realize that the simplest activities can create some of the most meaningful connections. We wanted to give seniors in care facilities the opportunity to experience that same feeling.

As founders, the three of us built Senior Spark together from the ground up. We developed our vision, reached out to senior communities and community organizations, planned our activities, recruited volunteers, and worked directly with seniors during our sessions. Each of us also brought a different perspective to the team. Our different strengths allowed us to work together while still bringing our own experiences and personalities to Senior Spark.

The problem we wanted to address was not simply that seniors needed more activities. We noticed that many seniors in care facilities experience monotonous daily routines, and while their physical needs are often met, their emotional, creative, and social needs can be overlooked. We wanted Senior Spark to go beyond traditional enrichment. Our goal was to combat isolation by creating opportunities for seniors and younger people to actually talk, create, laugh, and spend time together.

Our first major partnership was with Artesia Christian Home, where we hosted our first

Anagha Ganesh Rao

Garden Grove, CA



session on July 17th. We brought our volunteers into the community and organized pottery painting, nail care, and chair yoga. We also partnered with a yoga instructor who helped us bring chair yoga to the seniors. While the activities were important, we quickly realized that the conversations happening around them were just as meaningful. We weren't simply teaching seniors how to paint pottery or doing their nails—we were sitting with them, listening to their stories, and giving them our time.

The seniors' reactions showed us that our project was making a real difference. One resident, Marilyn, told us that she loved having young people come because it could feel lonely at the facility. Mary Lee told us, "You should come here everyday." Another senior, Will, explained that the foot exercises were helping him more than anything else, while Bert told us that he really enjoyed focusing on his breathing during yoga. Hearing these comments made us realize that what might feel like a few hours of volunteering to us could mean so much more to someone else.

After our first session, we expanded our reach through our partnership with Ivy Living Space and Ivy Park Homes. On July 20th, we held our second session and connected with even more seniors throughout Orange County. We again offered activities such as pottery painting and nail

care, but this time we saw even more clearly how activities could bring back memories. Betty, an Ivy Living resident, told us that getting her nails done reminded her of her younger years and made her feel “girly again.” Hazel said that even though people may be getting older, they still care about having pretty nails. Will also shared that he loved trying something new through pottery. These conversations reinforced why we created Senior Spark in the first place.

Our community partnerships were a huge part of making Senior Spark possible. In total, we established six partnerships: Trader Joe’s, our yoga instructor, the Hindu Jain Temple, Ivy Living Space, Artesia Christian Home, and Seal Beach Ivy Crest. Each partnership helped us expand our resources, reach more people, or create better experiences for the seniors we served. Our relationships with Artesia Christian Home, Ivy Living, and Seal Beach Ivy Crest helped us connect directly with senior communities, while our partnerships with Trader Joe’s, the Hindu Jain Temple, and our yoga instructor strengthened the community support behind our project. The impact we created together was larger than we initially imagined. We directly impacted more than 180 people, including senior citizens and volunteers, and indirectly impacted more than 1,000 people through families, donors, and community outreach. Our volunteers contributed 105 hours, and we were able to create these experiences at a cost of only \$4.04 per person. Most importantly, we received a 100% positive testimonial rate from the seniors who participated.

However, the numbers are not what I remember most. What stayed with me were the conversations. I learned that sometimes the most important thing I could do was simply sit down, listen, and let someone tell me their story. Through Senior Spark, I realized that connection does not always require a complicated program or expensive

resources. Sometimes it is as simple as painting someone’s nails, helping them decorate a piece of pottery, doing chair yoga together, or asking them about their life.

Senior Spark also changed each of us as individuals. I became a stronger leader and learned how powerful simply listening can be. Ahana stepped outside her comfort zone and became a stronger communicator and leader while building a connection with an older generation. Areen developed greater confidence through volunteering and formed meaningful connections with the seniors we served. As founders, we didn’t just create a project—we grew alongside it.

Our goal is for Senior Spark to continue beyond the work we completed this year. We want to maintain the relationships we have built with Artesia Christian Home, Ivy Living Space, Ivy Park Homes, and Seal Beach Ivy Crest, while continuing to work with community partners such as Trader Joe’s, the Hindu Jain Temple, and our yoga instructor. We also want to reach more underfunded senior homes and introduce new activities that give seniors more opportunities to socialize, create, and connect.

When Areen, Ahana, and I founded Senior Spark, we wanted to recreate the feeling we experienced with our own grandparents. We wanted seniors to have the opportunity to make memories with younger people the way we had made memories with ours. What started as an idea between three friends became six community partnerships, more than 180 direct connections, over 1,000 people reached indirectly, and 105 volunteer hours.

Most importantly, Senior Spark taught me that generations are not as different as they may seem. We all want to feel heard, valued, and connected. Through Senior Spark, the three of us were able to build a bridge between our generation and an older one—and that is a connection we hope to keep building long after this project ends.

Mangalore: Through My Eyes

As the plane wheels retract and we start our ascent into the hazy morning air, I reminisce on the past week that my family and I spent in Mangalore: from trying the food at Woodlands Hotel and jewelry shopping in Hampankatta, to the famous ice cream at Pabba's and the Car Street flower market, we kept discovering new ways to experience and explore the beautiful city.

The highlight, of course, was my cousin's beautiful wedding, which was the reason we were in Mangalore in the first place. There were so many events to help organize, traditions to learn, and people to meet. The chaotic flurry of excitement that accompanied each day was so different from the carefully orchestrated weddings I was used to, but it just made every function more of an adventure. I met relatives from all over India and the world, and felt immediately connected to them in a way I couldn't really explain. We danced together to songs I didn't recognize and talked in a combination of broken Kannada and English paired with plenty of hand gestures and enthusiastic nodding. I watched in awe as relatives, friends, and household staff slipped effortlessly between roles—cooking and chauffeuring, decorating and entertaining, doing whatever was needed to keep the festivities running smoothly. In between the spurts of work and commotion, we shared jewelry and makeup and saree-draping tricks, alongside childhood stories and jokes and homecooked meals.

Every conversation was a new revelation, and as I learned about where each person came from and what they were doing, I began to slot them into the ever-growing family tree I was building in my head. It was amazing to realize that despite work and school and bustling, busy lives, we all decided to come together to celebrate this occasion, and that that decision is what ultimately allowed us to meet. It was an



Tanvi Bekal
New York, NY

experience I'll never forget.

I landed in Mangalore knowing no one, clinging to my sister and my parents for some semblance of familiarity, overwhelmed by the new sights and sounds and smells of a city that felt foreign. After a week of traversing the streets looking for bangles and garlands and fresh coconut water, and a weekend of connection and love and joy, I left knowing that there was a community there that I could be a part of, if I chose to be. I've always known that family is important; it's one of the undeniable realities of life that has been ingrained in me since I was a child and proven to me time and time again. But this week, surrounded by people who share my name and features and laugh, it was an immovable and singular truth that impressed itself upon me. People who live across the world, speaking a completely different language and living completely different lives, these are people who know me, and know my life, and who I feel a deep and undeniable attachment to despite having never met them before.

So as the wheels touch down back in New Jersey, legs sore from hours of sitting in the cramped seat and everyone's thoughts already turning to the busy week ahead, part of me is still holding on: to a city that welcomed me, relatives who I cherish even from oceans away, and a thousand memories that will hold me over until I see them again.

Mangalorean Paneer & Mushroom Ghee Roast

Nothing commands attention on a plate quite like the deep, glossy crimson of a classic coastal ghee roast. This version trades the traditional meat for a brilliant pairing of soft paneer and rich, earthy mushrooms. A quick saltwater soak keeps the paneer incredibly tender, while dry-searing the mushrooms ensures the masala stays thick and concentrated rather than watery. When everything is tossed together, the intense crimson paste of bloomed Byadgi chilies, toasted spices, and ghee wraps completely around the paneer and mushrooms. You're left with a plate of



The Ingredients

- 200g Paneer (cubed & soaked)
- 10-12 Button mushrooms (dry-sauteed)
- 3-4 tbsp Ghee
- 2 sprigs Fresh curry leaves
- 1 tsp Jaggery (optional)

The Spice Paste Blend

- 8-10 Byadgi chilies (soaked)
- 1 tbsp Coriander seeds
- 1 tsp Cumin seeds
- ½ tsp Whole black pepper
- 6-7 Garlic cloves
- 1 tbsp Tamarind pulp
- Salt to taste

The Method

- Heat a dry pan over medium-high heat. Add the quartered button mushrooms and sauté until they release all their water, evaporate it, and turn lightly golden. Remove them from the pan and set aside.
- Drain the soaked Byadgi chilies. Grind them with the dry roasted coriander seeds, cumin seeds, black pepper, garlic, tamarind pulp, and salt into a smooth, thick, vibrant crimson paste, adding just a splash of water if needed.
- Add ghee to the same pan. Pour in the ground crimson masala paste. Keep stirring over a medium-to-low flame, patiently cooking out the raw aroma until the ghee begins to separate and rise to the top.

Anushree Kumble

San Jose, CA



intensely fragrant, glossy, and deeply satisfying bites.

The deep crimson glaze relies entirely on pure ghee and perfectly toasted Byadgi chilies.

- Toss the sautéed mushrooms, paneer, and fresh curry leaves into the aromatic masala, stirring gently to coat every piece evenly.
- Sprinkle in the jaggery, stir for another minute until everything glistens and clings together in a thick roast, then take it off the heat. Serve hot.

The beauty of a true ghee roast lies in the patience of the slow stir. Once that vibrant crimson masala clings perfectly to the paneer and mushrooms, your kitchen will smell incredible. Serve it alongside steaming neer dosas or flaky parottas and enjoy.



The Culture you Carry

"Remember, class!" Ms. Read exclaimed,
"Your Personal essay is due on Friday!"

12-year-old Vruddhi Rao decided to make her project about what was important to her in her life. It sounded like something that she could elaborate on, and she thought it would probably be easy enough. But it was Thursday, and Vruddhi hadn't even started on the project. Vruddhi dragged herself out of the classroom in fear with her best friend, Mira, beside her. Mira looked at her with a concerned expression. "Are you good?" She asked Vruddhi, "It looks like you just saw a ghost." "I completely forgot about the project!" Vruddhi whispered. She felt her stomach doing backflips as she and Mira walked down the crowded school hallway. "This essay is going to be the end of me!" she exclaimed. Vruddhi flopped onto the bench next to the lockers with Mira. She yanked her head back in exhaustion.

"Oh, relax, you'll be fine," Mira explained. "If I bring home any grade lower than an A on this project, I'm going to be in so much trouble." Vruddhi hissed back at her. Vruddhi had told her parents she'd already turned in her essay. She HAD to finish this project. And FAST.

In the school parking lot, Vruddhi recognized her car by the small Ganesha statue sitting on the car's dashboard. As she got in, she was met with the sound of the chanting of shlokas playing from her mom's phone. She remembered her mom once explaining that shlokas are old Sanskrit verses that hold India's wisdom and cultural heritage and are mostly used in prayers. Sometimes, when Vruddhi couldn't focus, her mom would play Shlokas, and it would even help her finish her work. That brought her back to the present. She should get a head start on her essay. When her mom finally started driving, Vruddhi looked at the time. It was already 5:45. That meant she only had a couple of hours to finish her essay. Immediately, Vruddhi got out her earplugs and chromebook, searched up her project assignment, and put her shloka playlist on full blast. If Vruddhi was going to finish and get a good grade on this project, she had to be completely focused for the rest of the day.

Mahika Rao
Los Angeles, CA



"What are you working on?" Vruddhi's Mom questioned. "Nothing! I mean homework!" she squeaked back, a little too fast. Was her mom onto her? "Ok," her mom replied in a skeptical tone. "That was close!" Vruddhi thought to herself. Vruddhi finally got back onto her Chromebook and started to type up her essay. The typing of her name was interrupted by her older sister coming inside the car and slamming the door. "Guess what!" she squealed, "My teacher loved my Ethnic project so much she asked me to present it to the class!"

Vruddhi's 15-year-old, older sister, Anagha, had gotten into the car and went straight to blabbering about the topics she had already brainstormed. Vruddhi had always been amazed by Ancient India and its history, but Anagha had always been the one to treasure it the most. She'd always have random debates with Vruddhi's parents about Ancient India and would take any chance she got to make a project about it. Whenever Anagha was asked about ancient India, she would always light up and talk to her about it for hours. She especially takes pride in India's achievements. She'd once told Vruddhi about how India reached Mars on their first try, and about Sushruta, who lived in 600 BCE, is still known as the father of surgery because he was the earliest surgeon in the world. He wrote one of the most important ancient Sanskrit texts on medicine and surgery, the Shushruta Samhita. Half the time, Vruddhi would stay sitting there, acting like she already knew about all of it as Anagha blabbed more about India's crazy effects and developments in math. On top of all of that, Anagha was really smart. No one had ever

seen Anagha get any grade lower than an A+. Vruddhi was about to ask her for help, but then realized if she did, her parents would definitely find out about her not finishing her essay.

As soon as Vruddhi got home, she zoomed up to her room. She had no time to waste. If she got a bad grade on this essay, her life would be over. As she was running up the stairs, she was met with the calm voice of her grandma. "Be careful running up the stairs," Vruddhi's Grandma warned, "You might slip." "Sorry Ajji," Vruddhi replied. Vruddhi's grandmother was visiting America and had just arrived from India a couple of weeks ago. Vruddhi and her family would usually go to India and visit her during summer break, but now that her grandpa has died, they don't want her grandma to be alone for too long. Vruddhi has always looked up to her grandmother, especially when she was little. Whenever they visited her during the summer, Vruddhi would help her with all sorts of tasks. They would go to Temples, other relatives' houses, and even to the markets. At home, Vruddhi would help her grandma with cooking all the time. Vruddhi's favorite meal to make with her grandma was her favorite south Indian breakfast, "Dosa with Sambar". Dosa is like an Indian version of a crepe made from fermented rice and lentil batter, and sambar is a type of tangy soup or stew with lots of veggies and spices. At home, Vruddhi would also help her grandma with poojas daily. A pooja is a sacred ritual of worship in Hindu culture. Vruddhi's grandma always told her the importance of poojas in Hinduism and how it fostered a connection between themselves and the divine.

Vruddhi finally got to the top of the stairs and walked into her room. After getting in, she ran over to her desk. She took out the yellow project paper and read it aloud. "Dear student, For this project, you will have to write a Personal essay on your life. Be sure to include the influential things in your life and elaborate on them. You can also add on about important people to you and your role models. Minimum words: 900"

Vruddhi read the paper over again and started panicking, "900 WORDS!!!! How am I

going to finish this on time??!!" Sweat dripped down her face. "Arghhhhhhhhhhh," she groaned. Vruddhi grabbed a piece of paper from her drawer and titled it brainstorming. Vruddhi was going to plan out her entire essay on this paper. Vruddhi started out by listing out her hobbies, facts about herself, and anything else that came to mind. After she looked over her list and tried to figure out which one to make her essay on.

An hour had gone by, and Vruddhi still hadn't chosen what her essay was going to be about. Everything she had listed out was significant in her life, but none of them were important enough to make an entire essay about. It was 7:00 now, and if Vruddhi didn't come up with a topic, she might not be able to finish in time. Suddenly, Vruddhi was met with the gentle sound of her grandmother's voice. "Are you done with your homework?" she asked with a warm smile. "Not at all." Vruddhi sighed, "I forgot to do an essay that's due tomorrow, and I can't even figure out what the topic is going to be! I even made a list, but nothing seems important enough to write my essay about!" "Everyone has important things in their life," Vruddhi's grandma replied, "it's just your job to notice them."

"Thanks, Ajji," Vruddhi replied. "Maybe you just need a break to figure it out." Vruddhi's grandma offered, "I'll tell you a story about my childhood." Vruddhi spent the next 30 mins listening to her grandmother's story. She told Vruddhi all about her life in India when she was a child. Vruddhi's grandmother told her about how everyday life was in India and how much she loved her home and heritage. "Your culture plays a big role in who you are," Vruddhi's grandma finally said after she was done. "And through it you can find out who that person is." And suddenly Vruddhi knew exactly what her essay was going to be about.

The next day Vruddhi walked into class with a huge grin on her face. She had stayed up all night writing her story and couldn't have found a better topic. She got out her printed essay paper and confidently walked up to her teacher's desk to turn it in. She gave it to Ms. Read and saw a smile form on her face as she read the title aloud.

"The Culture I Carry".

Open air Museum in a small town – Udupi

Many of us heard there is a Krishna Temple, Malpe Beach etc. in Udupi town, but also there is an outstanding museum in Manipal 'Hasta Shilpa Heritage village' (Non-Profit) which is about 4.5 km from Udupi. Last December, I had visited the museum and it was fascinating how one man can do such marvelous job of conservation of centuries old structures and relocation and preserving in Manipal. The founder was Late Sri Vijayanath Shenoy and he worked as a Banker and after retirement, it took him 10 years to conserve and recreate about 23 house structures from various places and reconstruct in Manipal. With the support of Norway and Karnataka Government, the project was completed in 7 acres of land.

The museum consists of arts and crafts which was acquired from various sources which will depict the lifestyle and culture of different communities. It was very sad to

Mohan Nayak

Houston, TX, USA



see some of the old antique buildings in their last stage of getting collapsed or already fell due to family moved out to different places or reconstructed new concrete buildings. This became the motive for Sri Shenoy to preserve such arts and educate the people about our ancient culture and history. Some of the houses reconstructed are more than 150 years old. While entering each house, melodious regional classical music is softly played which will connect to the ancient time of history.



The Miyar house Entrance Block – 1856



Sringeri Priest House – 1856



Mudhol Palace Durbar hall – 1816



Deccan Nawab Mahal - 1912



The courtyard at one of the house



Bazaar Street (Shops for mainly Kitchen items)



Kamal Mahal – Private chamber of
Vijayanagara chief



Mangalore Christian house courtyard –
1886 Relocated from Chikmagalur



The Vishnu Temple – 18th Century



Heritage by night

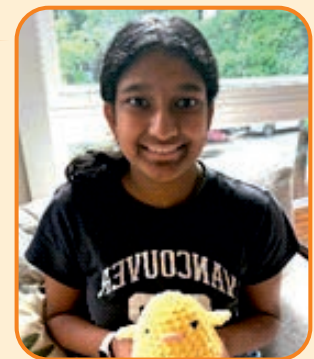
'Heritage by night' from 6.30 pm to 8.30 pm will be very spectacular to watch. Electric buggy and guided tours are also available. Visitors come to view this unique museum for cultural and educational purposes only. **For more info** <https://heritagevillagemanipal.org/index.html>.

Looped with Love

When Anika Chitale from Olathe, Kansas, heard the wonderful news a few months ago that her cousin, Sanju akka, was expecting a baby, she was overjoyed! ♥□

That sweet little bundle of news inspired Anika to pick up a brand-new hobby — crocheting! ☑ With nothing but YouTube videos and lots of patience, she taught herself this beautiful craft and created the cutest little chick for the new baby.

A handmade gift filled with love, creativity, and so many warm wishes — what a special way to welcome a little one into the world!



Anika Chitale
Olathe, Kansas, USA

ARTS



Arts by
Amitha Bekal
Atlanta, GA



Arts by
Anvith Bekal
Atlanta, GA



Arts by
Aarav Bekal
Atlanta, GA

Sarvika Mankar Reigning Miss Teen Bharat Texas

SarvikaMankar is the reigning Miss Teen Bharat Texas, proudly representing leadership, service, and cultural pride. A dedicated high school student and aspiring physician, she is passionate about serving her community and creating opportunities that empower young people to discover their potential.

As the founder of The Healing Pen, Sarvika promotes emotional well-being through creative expression, encouraging youth to use writing as a tool for self-reflection, resilience, and personal growth. She also developed and led The Magic Inside Me, an online workshop designed to help children build confidence, resilience, and self-awareness through engaging activities and positive mentorship.

Beyond these initiatives, Sarvika serves as an online mentor and actively volunteers in public health and youth outreach programs, reflecting her commitment to making a meaningful difference in the lives of others. A trained Bharatanatyam dancer, she proudly celebrates India's rich cultural heritage through classical dance, embodying the discipline, dedication, and artistry that have shaped her journey.



Through leadership, education, cultural advocacy, and community service, Sarvika strives to inspire others to lead with confidence, compassion, and purpose. As she works toward her goal of becoming a physician, she remains committed to empowering others and making a lasting, positive impact in her community.

Mayank Rao 2026 NHSMUN Distinction Awardee

Mayank S Rao, a senior in the class of 2027 at Granada Hills Charter in Los Angeles, received the 2026 Award of Distinction at the National High School Model United Nations (NHSMUN) conference held in Manhattan, New York. Model United Nations (MUN) is a simulation of the United Nations where students from different Schools roleplay as delegates representing different member nations of the UN and simulate UN committees. Participants engage in discussions, negotiations, and debates to address global issues, fostering skills in diplomacy, public speaking, and critical thinking.

At the conference, he not only competed against American delegates from thousands of different high schools across the nation, but also competed against international delegates from over 70 countries worldwide. He was also given the Repertoire honor of presenting a speech at the closing ceremony of the conference in front of thousands of delegates.

Mayank started his Model United Nations conference right after the Covid-19 lockdown in 7th grade. Including NHSMUN, he has competed at numerous conferences all over California, achieving in competitions including Bruin-MUN hosted by UCLA, SCMUN hosted by USC, Jack-Rabbit-MUN hosted by Long Beach Polytechnic High School and so much more.

Outside of school, Mayank enjoys playing cricket and singing Carnatic music. He has represented the Southern California-



Arizona West Zone squads at the U13 and U15 levels. He has also trained in Carnatic music under Guru Smt. Indu Nagarajan for 11 years. Mayank served as president of Karnatak Cultural Association's Youth Committee and received its Cultural Award in 2023.

His achievements reflect not only his dedication and hard work but also the unwavering encouragement and support of his parents, Sudhir Shankar and Kavitha Rao, who have guided him throughout his journey. Mayank and his family reside in Los Angeles, California.

Samarth Kumbla

2026 NCAA Men's Foil Champion

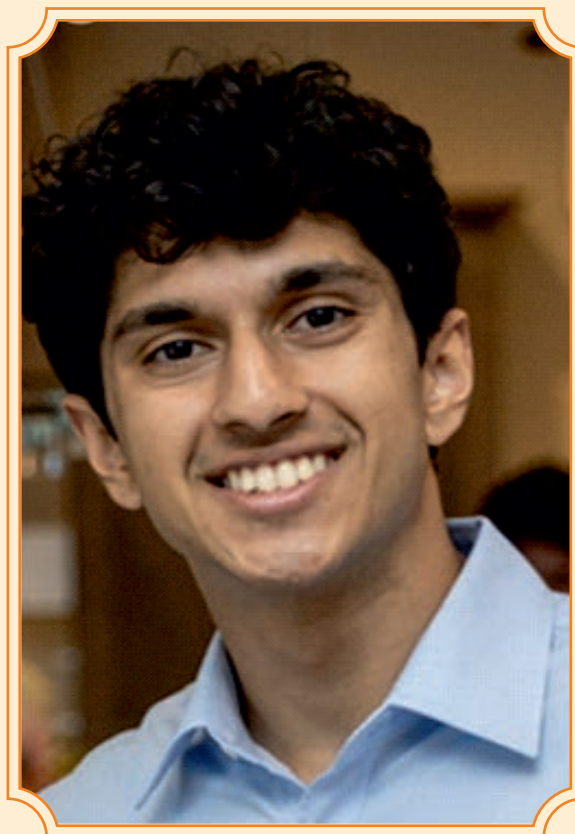
Samarth Kumbla, a Columbia University student-athlete studying computer science in the Class of 2027, is the 2026 NCAA men's foil champion. At the NCAA Championships held at Notre Dame, he captured the individual title by defeating defending champion Chase Emmer 15–8 in the final. Earlier, he edged Columbia teammate Marsel Nagimov 15–14 in a thrilling all-Columbia semifinal. With this victory, Samarth became Columbia's first men's NCAA fencing champion since 2022 and the 31st individual NCAA champion in the program's history.

In April 2026, the U.S. Fencing Coaches Association named him the National Men's Foil Collegiate Athlete of the Year.

Samarth has also achieved remarkable success internationally. He is a two-time Junior World Championships double medalist, winning an individual bronze medal and a team gold medal in consecutive years—at Plovdiv, Bulgaria, in 2023 and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 2024. He also held the world No. 1 ranking in junior men's foil throughout the 2023–24 season.

At the collegiate level, Samarth is a two-time individual Ivy League men's foil champion and a multiple-time All-American.

A native of San Jose, California, Samarth's outstanding accomplishments are the result of extraordinary talent, discipline, and years of dedicated training. His proud parents,



Smitha and Kishan Kumbla, played an invaluable role in his journey. They devoted countless hours to driving him more than 40 miles each way, four times a week, so that he could train under an internationally renowned fencing coach. Their unwavering encouragement, commitment, and sacrifice have been instrumental in helping Samarth reach the highest levels of collegiate and international fencing.

GREETINGS

With Best Wishes for a
Successful
ARKINA Meet
Las Vegas 2026



Raghavendra Sheregar & Suma Sheregar
Shreya Sherigar, Shwetha Sherigar,
Priya Sherigar (Daughter in law),
Grand Childres: Aarav Sherigar, Ishaan Sowkar
Orlando, FL USA

GREETINGS

With Best Compliments From



**Mrs. Vasudha Sheregar, Mr. Manjunath Sheregar
Anvitha, Ankitha and Anirudh**



4141 Old William Penn Highway
Monroeville, PA 15146
412-373-5581



3837 Northern Pike
Monroeville, PA 15146

310 Newbury Drive, Monroeville, PA 15146
Ph : 412-607-6551
sherigarmanjunath@gmail.com

GREETINGS

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**Prabhakar Kandlur, Rathnaprabha
Raksha & Aneesha**
Orlando, FL, USA

GREETINGS

With Best Wishes to

ARKINA

Community Meet 2026



**JAYANTH, AMBIKA BEKAL, ROSHNI,
MANISH, DIVYA & NEAL**

GREETINGS

Congratulations & Best Wishes to

ARKINA

Community Meet - 2026



**Sudhir Kasargod, Veena Kasargod
& Anvi Kasargod**
San Jose, CA

GREETINGS

With Best Wishes to

ARKINA

Community Meet 2026



**Rajendra Kundapur, Reshma Kundapur,
Aryan Kundapur & Aavya Kundapur**
Santa Clara, CA, USA

GREETINGS

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Mohanchandra K.P. & Indumathi M
Pranathi M. Rao
Los Angeles, CA

GREETINGS

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Narasimha Kudlu & Veena Kudlu

Concord, CA, USA



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Ravi, Sukanya & The Kotekar Family

Phoenix, AZ, USA

GREETINGS

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Kumbala Family



With Best Wishes to ARKINA Community Meet 2026



Rajesh Rao, Rachana Rao, Rohan Rao & Ria Rao
San Diego, CA, USA

GREETINGS

With Best Wishes to ARKINA Community Meet 2026



Vinaya Kundapur, Sunil Mankar, Sarvika & Svastik
San Antonio, TX, USA



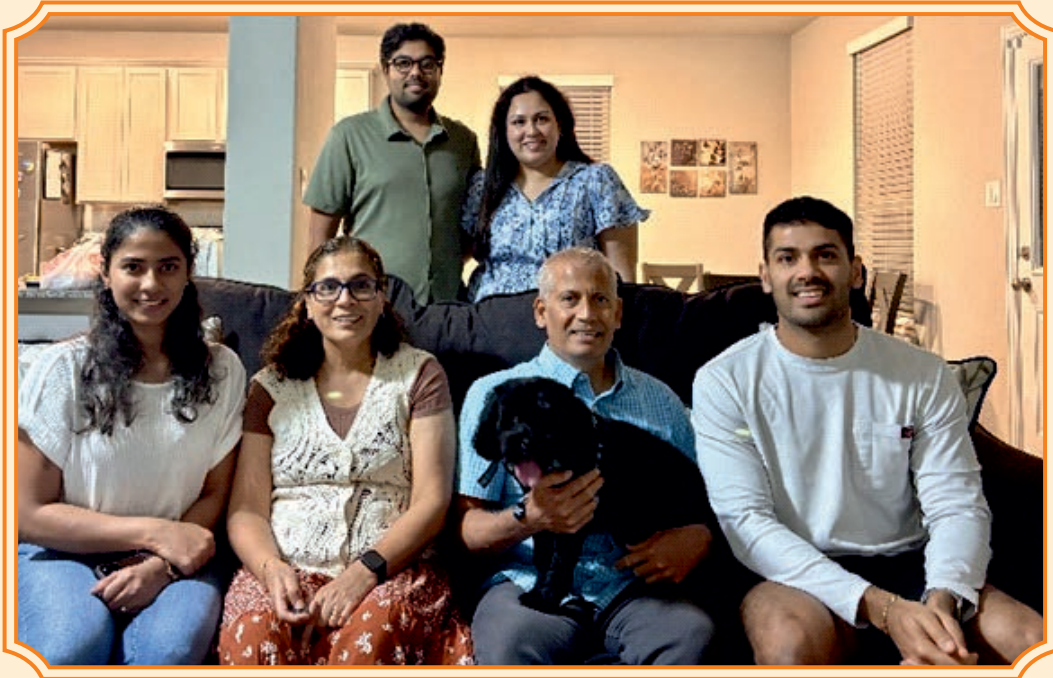
With Best Wishes to ARKINA Community Meet 2026



Shravan Rao, Nikitha Rao & Vamika Rao
Atlanta, GA, USA

GREETINGS

*Thank you ARKINA for community initiatives
and Best wishes for the 15th anniversary*



Sitting: Spoorthy, Shalini, Mohan, Raja (Pet), Vinay
Standing: Kandarpa Sai, Vidya - Houston, TX, USA



With Best Wishes to ARKINA Community Meet 2026



Swati Naik, Sukrit Mukhopadhyay & Iira
Houston, TX, USA

GREETINGS

With Best Wishes to ARKINA Community Meet 2026



**Mukesh Kasargode, Reshma Beeranthbail &
Ashwin Kasargode - Dallas, TX**



Wishing everyone in the ARKINA family happiness, good health, and togetherness. May our community continue to grow with friendship, unity, and shared traditions. We are grateful to be part of this wonderful family and look forward to creating many more cherished memories together.

**Veerendra Sheregar,
Shaini Sheregar,
Rima Sheregar &
Shrima Sheregar**
Philadelphia, PA, USA



*The Kumbla family from Arrikady got together
in Seattle in August 2026 to celebrate*

Raveendra Kumbla's 90th Birthday



Standing from left: Mithun and Anushree Kumble, Preeti Kudrekod, Roshan Rao, Sudesh Rao, Annia Cotturruelo, Kalpana Kumbla Rao, Nishant Rao, Kishan Kumbla, Smitha Kumbla Bolar, Ashwin Kumble, Sushmita Rao, Arya Rao;

Sitting from left: Lakshmikanth Kumbla, Anju Kumbla, Raveendra Kumbla, Varijakshi Beerntbail, Jyothi Rao;

Sitting on floor from left: Jithendra Kudrekod, Shaina Kudrekod, Vandana Kumbla, Lakshmi Cotturruelo Rao, Samarth Kumbla, Sidarth Kumbla and Mihir Venkatesh.



Best Wishes to
ARKINA



Fairfield by Marriott Inn & Suites



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FAX: +1 407-270-6495

Proud Supporters of
ARKINA's 15th Anniversary Celebration

Raghavendra Sheregar (Kundapura)

&

Prabhakar Kandlur (Kundapura)