

April-July 2005
Volume 3
Issue 2 & 3



Sandesh

The Message: A Newsletter from IndUS of Fox Valley

From Editors' Desk

Dear readers,

What you have in your hands is a combination of issues 2 and 3 of *Sandesh*. The reason for combining the two issues was not the lack of material to report. On the contrary, there was so much important news in the making we felt justified in consolidating the two issues.

The October issue of *Sandesh* will be devoted to the theme of IndUS-2005, which is *Health and Wellness - Perspectives from India*. We solicit short articles of 250-300 words on any aspect of this theme. These articles should be of general interest, and should also avoid extreme views!

Sandesh
An IndUS of Fox Valley
Publication

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Dr. Badri Varma
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The views expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the editors.

IndUS: Thinking Globally, Acting Locally!

B. S. Sridhar

An organization's mission and goals, however well stated, require repeated articulation and elaboration, from time to time. We have to constantly return to the drawing board to re-confirm whether our programs, activities, behaviors reflect the spirit and words that we often publicize.

The principal aspiration of IndUS is to promote Indo-American friendship and goodwill. The exclusive focus is neither on India nor on Indians. Nor is it focused on America or Americans. It is principally on the people in the Fox Valley community, who irrespective of their national, cultural, racial, religious, social or political origins want to come together in a spirit of learning and celebrate our diverse cultures. Among our members and participants are people from India, U.S.A., Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Kenya, Nigeria, Japan, Lebanon, Peru, Russia, Taiwan, U.K., to name a few. Our programs and activities are about learning from one another, enjoying the fruits of our collective culture through art, music, dance, food, and charity by serving those in need. We believe in enduring partnerships

with individuals and organizations that make our community a better place to live. (Please read a letter from Professor Stephen Leahy reproduced in *Reader's Forum* of this issue of *Sandesh*).

Expanding our collective horizons is an important task. This means, we define the community as not being confined to Fox Valley, but the entire world around us. We think globally and act locally. Resources permitting, we act globally too! It is a tribute to the Fox Valley residents who have come together to raise approximately \$200,000 for tsunami relief and reconstruction effort in Thailand, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and more recently in India. The community has sent a clear message. They trust and expect IndUS to provide quality educational, social, cultural and charitable programming that challenges our minds, opens our hearts and makes this community a great place to live and build.

Successful completion of Phase II of Tsunami Relief

IndUS of Fox Valley is pleased to announce the successful completion of Phase II of Tsunami Relief and Reconstruction effort.

On June 5, 2005, the residents of Sothikuppam village, one that was virtually wiped out by the tsunami, celebrated their friendship with the Fox Valley at a colorful ceremony. IndUS presented five boats, equipped with sea

worthy outboard motors and fishing nets, to fishermen who had lost in addition to their families, their livelihood and material possessions. In addition, 50 fishing nets were donated. Together, these boats and nets purchased from \$35,000 collected by IndUS, will enable approximately 220 families of Sothikuppam become economically self-reliant and look forward to a brighter future.



Senior government officials, representatives of several NGOs, and prominent Rotarians, attended the ceremony. Messages from Mr. Ravi Candadai, Acting Consular General of United States at Chennai, India, and Dr. B. S. Sridhar, President, IndUS of Fox Valley, together with translations in Tamil, were read.

The boats and the fishing nets were provided by IndUS of Fox Valley and its partners including Time Warner Cable of Green Bay, Affinity Health Systems, Secura Insurance, and Neenah Joint School District and countless other friends in the Fox Valley. We take this opportunity to thank our partner organizations for



their generous support. To ensure the successful implementation of the project, Dr. Ram Shet, representing IndUS worked closely with Dr. Karoon Agarwal and Ms. Usha of Rotary Club of Aurocity, Pondicherry, India. They deserve our special

commendation. Future plans include forging collaboration between students and teachers of Sothikuppam with schools in the Fox Valley to further cement the relationship with the newly adopted community.

The credit for the successful completion of Phase II of the Tsunami Relief and Reconstruction belongs to the team consisting of Mr. Bill Harke and Mr. Steve Kim of Time Warner Cable; and the IndUS team of Dr. Ram Shet (Chair, Fundraising Committee), Mr. Tim Higgins, (Chair, IndUS Board), Mr. Shekar Rao, and Dr. Sandhya Sridhar.

Music and Medicine

By Venu Vemuri

As a current resident in Orthopedic Surgery who holds an advanced degree in cello performance, I am often asked how the two relate. At first glance the two disciplines seem vastly different, lacking any connection. On the contrary, music and medicine compliment each other, and are similar in unexpected ways.

At their core, both music and medicine are rooted in science. A look into history reveals that the great Greek philosopher and mathematician Pythagoras discovered the numerical relationship governing the basic intervals of music. By tying strings to beams, he calculated the proportions necessary to reproduce an octave,

fourth, and fifth; intervals which form the basis of Western music. In this example we see from the earliest times the marriage of music and science. In fact, the theory of tonal harmony taught in music conservatories worldwide is a complex language governed by rules not unlike any advanced course in mathematics or say organic chemistry. Coming from a musical background, the transition to the pre-medical curriculum of math, physics, biology, and chemistry was not as much of a leap as I expected perhaps because of a shared history dating back to ancient times.

Music is most assuredly a performing art, while practicing medicine may be

considered an art. “The art of medicine” is a term commonly used by its practitioners. Diagnosis and treatment of disease are subject to interpretation much like a musical composition. The physician must use all his or her skill to meld scientific evidence with intimate knowledge of the patient to arrive at a treatment protocol. This is not a formula found in medical textbooks, but rather a talent based on experience. In medicine we often refer to “textbook” answers for treating patients. Any good doctor knows this is not always the right thing to do for our patients. We interpret the needs of the patient and combine these needs with current evidence based medicine to arrive at a

gestalt, which is like a performing art. In music this is akin to the multitudes of ways a score can be interpreted, depending on the performer.

The craft of surgery and music performance have many parallels. I have often used the analogy of the symphony conductor in describing what surgery is like. The surgeon in the operating room and the conductor on stage represent merely a fraction of their life's work. Waving the baton in front of a hundred musicians may be ten percent of a conductor's job. The rest is the hours of preparation, learning the dozens of parts that make up the whole symphony. The maestro must know every note, tempo, rhythm,

dynamics, and key change of the score so that the wave of the baton looks effortless. Similarly, a surgeon using a knife and tools is only the culmination of his or her work. The real craft is in the pre-surgery stage where patient selection requires knowing who will and will not benefit from surgery. There is also the prior knowledge of anatomy, which the surgeon studies before wielding the knife. It is this preparatory phase of surgery that feels familiar to me from my days practicing cello before a performance.

Perhaps by now it is no surprise that cities such as New York and Los Angeles have Doctors' Orchestras,

where all the members are practicing physicians. The combination of art, science and disciplined learning blend together enriching the musician doctor.

Dr. Venu Vemuri has a degree of Doctor of Osteopathy from Midwestern University/Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine and is currently working at University of Chicago's Weiss Hospital doing a rotation in Total Joint Arthroplasty. He is equally passionate about music and before entering the medical college he obtained a degree of Bachelor of Music in Cello Performance from Lawrence University Conservatory of Music, Appleton and a Master of Music in Cello Performance from Indiana University School of Music, Bloomington.

News ...

Mr. Tim Higgins, Chair, IndUS Board

IndUS is pleased to announce the election of Mr. Tim Higgins as the new Chair of its Board, effective February 2005.

Tim and his wife Jonna have been frequent volunteers and ardent supporters of IndUS for many years. Tim joined the board as a



current president of Professional Chiropractic Services Network, Inc., Appleton. His other affiliations include: Director/Treasurer, Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce & Industry; Board Member, LEAVEN (Local Emergency Assistance Valley Evangelical Network); Former Director, Wisconsin Alumni Association; Formerly, he served as Member and Chairperson of United Way of Fox Cities and as President, University of Wisconsin Club of the Fox Valley. We welcome Tim in his new capacity and look forward to his valuable contributions as a leader.

Good news for IndUS Future Fund

member in 2004. He was instrumental in forging an alliance between IndUS and Time Warner Cable that resulted in the NEWSTAR Concert on February 26, 2005. The concert raised \$20,000 toward the adoption of Sothikuppam, a tsunami-devastated village in Tamil Nadu.

An attorney by profession, Tim is the

window, toward IndUS Future Fund. Upon successfully meeting the challenge, the Community Foundation will match our effort with a matching \$10,000 contribution. .

IndUS Future Fund was set up two years ago and currently stands at approximately \$13,000. The goal is to reach \$100,000 by the year 2008. At that time the investment income from the endowment will become available for charitable activities by IndUS. The policy is to spend 60% of the investment income locally on mission-appropriate activities.

The matching grant is a shot in the arm. Yet, much remains to be done. IndUS can use any help it can get in this collective effort to give back to the community that so handsomely rewarded us all. Gifts of cash, securities, property or real estate are simple, convenient ways to donate and receive maximum tax advantages. We appeal to all friends of IndUS to help achieve this goal.

IndUS-2005

IndUS -2005 will be held on Saturday, November 12, 2005 at Reeve Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. This year's theme is *Health & Wellness-Perspectives from India.*

In a meeting on June 11, 2005, the Steering Committee was formed. Badri Varma and Sandhya Sridhar were elected as co-chairs. The other team leaders are: Aruna Shet and Mona Dugal (Banquet and Cocktails), B. S. Sridhar (Cultural Program), Ritu Tannan and Richa Mehrotra (Decoration), Shekhar Rao and Rakesh Kaushika (Exhibition), Vivek Kulkarni (Finance), Kavita Shet (Participant Feedback), Mahendra Doshi (Publicity), Kadambari Karandikar and Kamal Varma (Reception), and Kamal Varma (Ticket Sales). Each year the credit for the success of this event goes to a fine group of volunteers. Depending on your interest and expertise, please contact any of the above team leaders to be a part of the exciting team of volunteers!

Each year IndUS banquet has been a sold out event! To avoid disappointment, please contact Kamal Varma, 920.731.0834 for tickets, at the earliest opportunity.

The Annual IndUS Board Meeting

The Annual IndUS Board Meeting was held on Sunday, February 27, 2005, at University of Wisconsin-Fox Valley. The annual report of activities and financial statements were presented and accepted by the board. The Board adopted resolutions to explore ways to widen the participation in the annual IndUS banquet, creating an efficient mechanism to select annual themes as also to examine new proposals for

expanded participation in inter-organizational activities and programs. The IndUS Board inducted Professor Chuck Lauter as a member. Chuck served as Academic Dean at Lawrence prior to his retirement and is recognized for his contributions to international studies and various community activities.

Mr. Doug Dugal, a founding member of IndUS who served as the Chairman of the IndUS Board stepped down as planned. Doug has been a great force since the inception of IndUS and has contributed immensely to the growth and development of this redoubtable organization. IndUS expresses its deep sense of appreciation of Doug's service and looks forward to his continued guidance and best wishes in future. Mr. Tim Higgins was elected to serve out the remainder of the term. Tim will be eligible for re-election when the biennial elections are held in 2006.

Honors and Recognitions

Badri Varma was chosen the Volunteer of the Year by *Toward Community: Unity in Diversity*, a local organization which has been active in fostering, educating, advocating, and celebrating diversity in the Fox cities for more than a decade. He was an honoree at the event *Celebrating Our Volunteers*, organized by Community Foundation and The Post-Crescent at the Paper Valley Hotel, Appleton on April 19, 2005.

Events ...

Film Festival

IndUS of Fox Valley in collaboration with Green Bay Film Society organized a film festival *CineFest*

India: The Best of Contemporary Indian Cinema. Over two weekends in March (March 12, 13, 19, 20) four national and international award winning films were screened at the Valley Value Cinema, Appleton. Each movie was in 35 mm format and had English subtitles. The films are highly acclaimed for their accurate portrayal of everyday life in India. They dealt with social issues that concern us all. The movies were:

Bawandar (Sand Storm) (Hindi, 2000) A shocking true story of a low-caste village woman, who speaks up against the custom of child marriage, is gang-raped by upper-caste men and against all odds, who maintains her dignity and courage as a woman and from a rape victim becomes a rape activist.

Deveeri (My Sister) (Kannada, 1999) A film adaptation of a story by a celebrated Kannada writer P. Lankesh about Deveeri, a prostitute who lives with her twelve year old brother in a slum and tries to protect him from her corrupt and shallow world.

Paromitar Ek Din (House of Memories) (Bengali, 2000) A sensitive film about Paromita, wife of an oppressive husband, and her mother-in-law who despite differences in age, backgrounds and temperaments, build a strong bond together by the struggle to raise children with disabilities.

Shwaas (A Breath) (Marathi, 2003) Based on a true story a tale of a small boy who suffers from a rare form of retinal cancer. An operation may save his life but could also render him blind. His grandfather, who brings him to the town for operation, sneaks the child out of the hospital and takes him around giving him a last look at the world he may never see again.

Asia Awareness at University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh

Annual celebration of our Asian heritage started with a “Kick Off” on Monday, April 4, 2005 at University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh. Albee Hall buzzed with people dressed in their colorful best to share their culture. The evening was filled with music and dances from China, Fiji, Hmong/Laos, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Korea, Laos, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. Attendees enjoyed appetizing aromas and delicious foods from many countries, and also had a chance to appreciate various nick-knacks and curios. Truly a feast for all senses.

IndUS of Fox Valley featured classical as well as folk dances. Three talented young dancers entertained the crowd. Vidushree Mehrotra and Maya Murzello delighted them with Kathak moves, a classical dance form northern India. Priyanka Kumar enthralled the audience with Bharatnatyam, a classical dance form South India. For the finale of the program, IndUS Volunteers involved the audience in a Gujarati folk dance, Dandiya Raas, performed to the beat of colorful batons. Many participants joined the dancers in this traditional folk art.

A major attraction of Asia Awareness this year was a classical Kathakali performance by a semi-professional



- photo by Badri Varma

group Vedika from Chicago on April 17th. Kathakali is one of the oldest theatre forms in the world. Through an elaborate language of gestures, Vedika brought to life stories from Hindu epic, the *Mahabharata*. This type of dance was performed for the first time in the Valley.



- photos by Badri Varma

One of the most interesting aspects of Kathakali is its elaborate make-up code. The dancers paint their faces with elaborate make-up, which can take up to six hours, to depict the various characters and moods they portray. The faces of noble male characters, such as virtuous kings and divine heroes like Krishna, are predominantly green. Characters of noble birth but with an evil streak have green make-up, slashed with red marks on the cheeks. Extremely angry or excessively evil characters wear predominantly red make-up and a flowing red beard. Women have lustrous, yellowish faces. The dancers wore large headdresses and elaborately designed costumes. They were successful in creating a magical aura to transport the audience to a world of wonders.

Vishwa Mohan Bhatt in Appleton: A Concert To Remember

Pandit Vishwa Mohan Bhatt, the world-famous, Grammy-winner, played his Mohan Veena to a large audience of two hundred, on Friday, April 22, 2005 at Einstein Middle School, Appleton. Pandit Bhatt was



- photo by Badri Varma

ably supported on tabla (percussion) by Shri Subhen Chatterjee. The first half witnessed a 100- minute elaboration of Raga Maru Behag. With strict adherence to the tradition, the artists explored the intricacies of this evening raga with a detailed exposition in the form of *alap*, *vilambit* and *dhrut*. The two artists engaged in a friendly, competitive exchange creative musical phrases that



- photo by Badri Varma

mesmerized the audience. The post-intermission fare, in comparison, was lighter in tone, as Bhatt played a *thumri* in Raga Kirwani, a *lori* (lullaby) and a folk tune in Raga Tilak Kamod (in his native Rajasthani language). The concert ended with a resounding rendition of his Grammy-winning composition, *Meeting By the River*.



- photo by Badri Varma

This event was made possible through a special grant from Community Foundation of Fox Cities Region, and corporate support from Kimberly-Clark Corporation, Georgia Pacific, and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. IndUS also would like to thank Appleton Area School District for the use of the beautiful auditorium and a number of IndUS volunteers for making it a success.

IndUS participates at iChild Annual Camp

IndUS and India Association NEW together organized the Indian Heritage component of the annual Midwest iChild Camp on Saturday, July 16, 2005, at Green Lake Conference Center, Green Lake Wisconsin.

Midwest iChild brings together American parents from Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana and Iowa who have adopted children from India. This is the second year of our collaboration. The day was marked by interactive sessions for children featuring Indian outdoor sports such as *lagori* and *kabbadi*, and workshops on *mehndi*, *rangoli*, flower making and Hindi lessons. A story telling session introduced the children to a *Panchatantra* tale. The parents enthusiastically participated in a cooking demonstration. The day ended with a delicious Indian dinner



- photo by B. S. Sridhar

followed by presentation of Kathak and Bollywood dances, *dandiya raas* and *bhangra* to the music provided by



- photos by B. S. Sridhar

Hangama DJs. The experience was very gratifying and pleasant.

IndUS thanks the following volunteers for their assistance: Arishna & Meenakshi Agarwal, Sujal Behrawala, Rakesh Kaushika, Mehrotras (Vidushri, Prateek and Richa), Maya Murzello, Julia Sherif, Viju and Shekar Rao, Aruna Shet, Sridhars (Paayal, Sameer & B.S.), Tannans (Jay, Ashi and Ashok), Hema and Gopal Udupi, Joban and Nila Vaishnav, and Kamal Varma.

Community Events

Here are the upcoming community events in which IndUS volunteers have participated for last several years with great zeal.

Foods Of All Nations

Celebrating Fox Cities Diversity

Saturday, September 17, 2005
2:00 – 6:30 PM

Food serving: 3:00 – 5:30 PM
Corner of Oneida and Washington Street, Appleton

Taste authentic foods from over twenty countries. Enjoy music and dance from around the world.

Tickets:\$7 (advance purchase)
\$8 (at the gate)
Age 5 and under free
Available at: Fox Cities Rotary Multicultural Center, 128 N. Oneida, Appleton
Harmony Café or any FCRMC member organization.

Octoberfest

September 24, 2005 from 9 AM to 6 PM.
Downtown Appleton
For delicious samosas, dosas, and other mouth-watering delights visit the booth of India Association NEW and IndUS of Fox Valley.

18th Annual Festival of India

Saturday, October 8, 2005
3:00 PM Workshops
5:00 PM Buffet Dinner
7:00 PM Stage Performances
Stevens Point Area Senior High School, Stevens Point
Contact: Jyoti or Jagdish Chander
Phone: 715.341.1538

IndUS – 2005

Health & Wellness – Perspectives from India
Saturday, November 12, 2005
Exhibition & Reception: 5-6:30 PM
Dinner: 6:30-8:30 PM
Cultural Program: 8:45-9:30 PM
Reeve Memorial Union, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, Oshkosh.

**IndUS Promotes
Indo-American
Friendship and
Goodwill**

We are a
Non-profit organization
under
Section 501 (c) (3) of the
IRS Code

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Please visit our website at
www.indusfoxvalley.org

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Reader's Forum

As someone from Iowa, I share the immigrant experience, although it is not a transnational one.

As a Roman Catholic, UW-Fox Valley is one of the first public institutions with which I have had extensive contact. I am well aware through my study of history that the United States has defined Protestant Christian values as secular. So many Americans are dismissive of religious values or values originating in religion or a foreign culture as anti-American, when often so-called "American values" reflect religious views. I guess that I share the immigrant experience, and I find IndUS comforting in that respect.

One of the ironies of American history is that 1960's radicals demanded a "counterculture," one that rejected excessive conformity, materialism, and self-gain at the expense of the broader community. Yet they often rejected the countercultural values under their own eyes, the experiences of American immigrant groups.

What is so valuable about IndUS is that it is a countercultural group emphasizing tolerance and community. It is telling that IndUS emphasizes this more than anything—suggesting that IndUS sees this as lacking in our community. (Is there even one or are we just a collection of small localities and in-groups?) Too often Americans think that tolerance means that America should accept MTV values and only MTV values.

On a professional note, I have always struggled with my involvement in the community. I would like to be more active, but I am always conscious that this is a state that declares my presence here as only transitory.

It helps that what I know about Indian culture—and it is shared with Catholicism—is that there is an emphasis on the transitional nature of human life and the need for all of us to work together in the meantime. It makes it easier for me to think in these terms.

While much of India is foreign to me, portions of it are like home.

Steve Leahy
Department of History
UW-Fox Valley

It is so exciting to see the results of much hard work and effort on the part of IndUS and community organizations. It is so great to see the boats which were mentioned to our students when they worked with designing the shirts sold in the NJSD. Loved seeing the pictures and knowing that the efforts of the Fox River Valley have been felt around the world. What a wonderful gift arriving today to remind all of us that when we work together we do make the world a better place. We have been saying this often with collaborative projects....seeing the boat pictures and reading your message warmed my heart. I will see that pictures get printed at school so the kids can see the impact. Thank you for including us on your emails and updates. I will send along the message to our Diversity Group Heart and to Mr. Duerwaechter. The educational exchange sounds interesting as well. Have a wonderful day and thanks for sharing. IndUS has been a wonderful group of people who walk their talk and beliefs. You all have supported our diversity efforts ten fold and these seeds planted will bless the future with goodness as well. Your examples have left an impression on NHS students. Thank you endlessly.

Jody Harrell
Neenah High School

Annual Membership Dues

(Per calendar year)

Please select your preferred category of membership and place an "X" in the appropriate box.

- Individual Member \$ 10.00
- Family Member \$ 20.00
- Benefactor \$ 100.00 to
\$ 499.00
- Patron \$ 500.00 or more
- Any Donation \$

Total \$

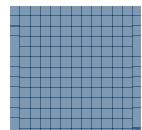
Please make your check payable to IndUS of Fox Valley and mail it to: IndUS, 3600 North Shawnee Avenue, Appleton, WI 54914.

Join the IndUS Team!

Name	
Address	
Telephone	
E-mail	
Would you like to volunteer?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes! Please contact me! <input type="checkbox"/> No. Not now.

IndUS
Of
Fox Valley

3600 N. Shawnee Avenue
Appleton WI 54914



IndUS 2005

*Health &
Wellness-
Perspectives from
India*

Saturday
November 12
At
University of
Wisconsin Oshkosh