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# Chakra

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August 2004

Volume 24, Issue 2

Special India Festival Issue

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## Welcome to India Festival 2004

When Columbus landed on the American soil he thought he was in India. That was a mistake.

As you come to Pioneer Square today and see thousands of Indians, hear Indian music and eat Indian food you might think you are in India. That would also be a mistake.

Today is the day for the descendents from the land that is India to display the culture they proudly brought with them when they made greater Portland area their homeland.

On behalf of the members of the India Cultural

Association, we welcome you to the 10<sup>th</sup> annual India festival. Fifty-seven years ago today India became Independent after years of British rule. ICA has celebrated this day by giving its members an opportunity to share their talents.

India may be one country but like Europe it is made up of many cultures and traditions. To see what you will see today on a single stage, you may have to travel the expanse of the land where culture changes one state to the next. We hope you enjoy the music, dances and food.

Most of the children performing today were born and raised outside India. They have worked hard to reproduce what they have come to know, second hand, what Indian culture has manifested into. Let us encourage them towards carrying on this tradition even after the first generation Indians, who originally brought the culture, are long gone. That is our hope and mission.

We also urge you to do your part in supporting this cause by becoming member of the India Cultural Association.

Thank You,  
 The ICA Board

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OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
STATE OF OREGON



PROCLAMATION

- WHEREAS:** India has been the cradle of an advanced culture and civilization; and
- WHEREAS:** India's unique philosophies and her exotic arts have fascinated people from all over the world; and
- WHEREAS:** India gave birth to Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism, provided refuge from persecution to the followers of Judaism, Christianity, and Zoroastrianism, and is home to the world's second largest population of Muslims; and
- WHEREAS:** India's past achievements in science, technology and medicine are marveled even today; and
- WHEREAS:** India, with a population of more than a billion, is the largest democracy in the world; and
- WHEREAS:** Asian-Indians have ventured to almost all continents of the world, including the United States of America, one of the OLDEST democracies of the world; and
- WHEREAS:** Asian-Indians have lived and worked in Oregon since the early 1900's; and founded their first organization in the United States of America, in Astoria, in 1913; and
- WHEREAS:** On August 15, under the leadership of the India Cultural Association, Asian-Indians from the Portland metropolitan area are organizing their 10<sup>th</sup> India Festival to mark the Independence of India in 1947.

**NOW,**

**THEREFORE:** I, Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor of the State of Oregon, hereby proclaim August 15, 2004 to be

**INDIA DAY**

In Oregon and encourage all Oregonians to join in this observance.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand and cause the Great Seal of the State of Oregon to be affixed. Done at the Capitol in the City of Salem in the State of Oregon on this day, July 26, 2004.



Handwritten signature of Theodore R. Kulongoski in black ink.

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Handwritten signature of Bill Bradbury in black ink.

Bill Bradbury, Secretary of State

# Whereas

*Whereas,* India has been the cradle of an advanced culture and civilization, and with a population of more than a billion it is the largest democracy in the world. India's unique philosophies and exotic arts have fascinated people from all over the world, and its past achievements in science, technology and medicine are marveled even today; and

*Whereas,* Asian-Indians have ventured to almost all continents of the world, and those in the United States are highly educated and employed in a number of trades, businesses and professions; and

*Whereas,* Asian-Indians have lived in Oregon since the early 1900's, registered a growth rate of 173 percent in the last decade and about 10,000 of them live in the Portland metropolitan area; and

*Whereas,* For the past 24 years the Portland India Cultural Association has been dedicated to promoting Asian-Indian culture through events and activities including: Diwali Dussera Celebration, Holi Celebration, classical dance shows, India Sports Day, the India Festival, a Spelling Bee, and many other activities; and

*Whereas,* on August 15, 2004, the India Cultural Association, along with Asian-Indians from the Portland metro area will be celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> annual India Festival to mark the Independence of India in 1947 and to share their arts, music, food and fashion with the City of Portland;

*Now, therefore,* I, Vera Katz, Mayor of the City of Portland, Oregon, the "City of Roses," do hereby proclaim Sunday August 15, 2004, to be

*India Day*

in Portland.

*Vera Katz*



## Entertainment Program

### MORNING (11am to 2pm)

Opening Ceremonies  
National Anthem  
Sanskrit Slokas  
Bharatnatyam Dance  
Group Songs  
Bhangra Demonstration  
Bollywood Dancing  
Tabla Performance  
Impromptu Speech Competition



### EVENING (4pm to 9pm)

Kashmiri Dance  
Bhangra Folk Group Dance  
Youth Fashion Show  
Bharat Natyam  
Snake Dance  
Bollyhood Dances  
Children Folk Dances  
Vote Of Thanks



### AFTERNOON (2pm to 4pm)

Introduction Of Chief Guests  
Congressman Earl Blumenauer  
Oregon Attorney General Hardy Meyer  
An Interactive Game of Antakshari  
Traditional Indian Wedding Demonstration  
Bharatnatyam Dance  
Modern Dancing Songs



## Just for Kids

The entertainment show is not all of what India Festival has to offer!

Come check out the children's booth for activities including coloring, origami, play dough, puzzles and other activities running throughout the day! You can get your name written in numerous Indian languages from 2 to 4 PM and there will be face painting from 4 to 6 PM. Come on by for a great time!

There will also be Mehendi (Henna) in the ICA Booth periodically throughout the day at the ICA booth.

## Diwali Mela 2004 October 9, 2004

A fun-filled evening to welcome the Festival of Lights with Games, Housie/Tambola/Bingo, Fun, Amusement, Eats, Drinks and Fusion Dandiya/Bhangra. This is *your* event to showcase your talent of hosting games like Lucky 7, Housie, Ring the Bottle etc, or show off your cooking talents and business acumen in putting up a food stall for Bhelpuri, Cholle Bhature, Idli-Sambhar, Dal-Baati or anything you think you can sell. For game/food stall information please contact [diwali@icaportland.org](mailto:diwali@icaportland.org).

**Where:** Portland State University – Smith Center Ballroom

**When:** Saturday October 9th 2004 from 11am to 10pm

**Admission:** Free to All!

**Added Attractions:** Raffle Drawing with Grand Prizes (ICA Members will get a free raffle entry); Fusion Dandiya/Bhangra from 8pm onwards, and more!



# India Sports Day 2004 Results

Is Cricket the only sport that comes to mind when you think of India? This stereotype was put to an end when ICA organized India Sports Day 2004 on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2004 at the Tualatin Hills Athletic Center featuring Table Tennis, Carrom, Chess and Basketball. We had over a hundred Indians participate in this all-day event. There were various categories for each of the sports including Men's Singles, Women's Singles, Kids, and also teams of 3 for basketball. The table tennis tournament was graciously sponsored by the Portland Table Tennis Club and the prizes for the winners of Table Tennis and Carrom were worth \$200 each, sponsored by Premier Dental. The highlight for the day was the spectacular display of speed and accuracy coming to life during the finals of the Table Tennis tournament. The excitement and the thrill of the game had everyone on the edge of their seat. No one wanted to miss a piece of the action. Thanks to all of the enthusiastic players for making this first ICA event for the year 2004 a grand success!

Some of the winners for the day were:

### Table Tennis:

#### Men's Singles

Dr Navin Sachdev (Winner)

Ashok Kabadi (Runner Up)

#### Women's Singles

Sunita Mody (Winner)

#### Under 14

Roshin Patel (Winner)

### Carrom:

#### Men's Singles

Prabhakar (Winner)

Amod (Runner Up)

#### Women's Singles

Shalini (Winner)

Banita (Runner Up)

### Basketball 3-on-3:

#### Adult Winners

Sarin Tharakan

Jerry Mammen

Kashif Zafar

Please make sure to attend another sporting event organized by ICA:

A Tennis Tournament to be held on Saturday, September 5<sup>th</sup> at the THPRD Tennis center.



*India Cultural Association*  
*presents*  
**Tennis Tournament 2004**

**Sunday, Sept 5th**  
**9am - 5pm**

**Venue**  
THPRD Tennis Center  
15707 SW Walker Road  
Beaverton, 97006

**Categories**

Men's Singles	Boys (12-18yrs) Singles
Men's Doubles	Girls (12-18yrs) Singles
Women's Singles	Under 12 Singles
Mixed Doubles	

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## Avuncular Musings by Dr. Yogesh Atal

I feel greatly honored to have been asked to contribute a piece in this special issue of the Newsletter. As a retiree, an occasional visitor, called “uncle” by all the acquaintances of my son here— so is the case with all of my vintage sojourning US – I offer my avuncular blessings and greetings on the festive fifteenth day of August to all the readers.

It is exactly after forty years that I am celebrating India’s Independence Day in this land. First time it was in 1964 when I sailed from Southampton to New York in an Italian Student Ship SS Aurelia. That was a long nine-day journey. Somewhere in the mid of the Atlantic Ocean we got a chance to celebrate our Independence Day. The Indian students aboard put up an exhibition, and organized a cultural evening. We all got dressed up in Indian attire. Surely, we were thrilled to go to America, but that day we all missed India.

Arriving in the US then was a different experience. The contrast between the home and the host country was enormous. With 18 per cent literacy and 85 per cent rural population living without electricity and poor connectivity, India of the 1960s evoked images of a land of elephants and snake charmers amongst the Americans. Not many Americans were exposed to India, but America had begun to arrive in India via the books and media, and via the people returning after a stint here. Post-independent India changed her reference groups. Harvard-Cornell replaced Oxbridge.

In the 1960s, there was very little of India in the US. Indians living in New York had to order Indian merchandise from Chicago. There were five or six Indian restaurants in New York. Run by Bangladeshis with Black wives, most of them were like *Dhabas*. Near Columbia University was a restaurant called Bombay-India Inn. Another one was in the midst of Harlem – New Pakistan-India Inn. The Juke Box installed at this restaurant offered good Indian film music – *Abhi na Jao Chhodke...* was my favorite.

The message of the song notwithstanding, most of us who came for an exposure to the American academe went back. We took pride in not being part of the “brain drain” – the key worry of the country then. My son’s decision to study at Cornell in the mid 1980s offered second exposure to this land.

The second visit gave a different kind of cultural shock. New York was a changed city with a series of Indian restaurants lined up in and around Times Square. Even the small township of Ithaca had an Indian restaurant much better endowed than the Bombay-India Inn, near Columbia. But the New York subways got deteriorated, and Harlem became a forbidden locality. Already in the 1980s one could witness the growth of Little Indias in all the major towns of this country.

Forty years later today, in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, not only India has changed for the better, America has also become very different. While American culture and business have overwhelmed the countries of the so-called Third World, including India, Indians have also changed the demography of this host country, as also of several others. The Indian has become ubiquitous. So large is the size of the Indian immigrant group that it has become part of the phenomenon of Diaspora and is addressed as NRI – the Non- Resident Indian. The NRI -- the *Pravasi Bharatiya* – has become the conspicuous carrier of Indian culture.

Compared to the 1960s when there were severe restrictions on immigration, the doors today are wide open. Now, people trained in India are being hired to work for American companies, both here and there. Outsourcing has made India a great resource. One can live in India and yet work for the US, and one can live in the US and yet remain continually in contact with India. Earlier we came as individuals, now most come as families and get instant entry into the community of Indian migrants. Indians here live simultaneously in two cultures. At the place of employment they become part of the American culture; at home, they return to their base. The twin pressures of the host culture and the parent culture have effortlessly concocted a new *sandwich culture* that helps NRIs to relate themselves with the host culture on the one hand, and facilitates preservation of their indigenous identity, on the other. IT revolution has broken the geographical barriers, and created patterns of mobility without physical journeys. Geographical distance no longer obstacles cultural proximity. Promoting TV ASIA, Amitabh Bachchan talks of a “home away from home”. More than CNN, it is ZEE or TV ASIA or SONY that entertains and informs the Indian audiences abroad. The old theory of modernization has proven wrong: modernity has not been able to erase tradition, in fact modernity is a “fusion” or a newer mix of two cultures You do not lose Indian-ness by becoming American. Change of citizenship is political, it marginally affects cultural connotation.

It is in this respect that India and the US share some commonalities. Both are multi-cultural nations. Of course, India has a long history of migrations compared to the US; but the fact that most of those who have made India their home have come from elsewhere is undeniable. The composite culture of India is a result of several mixes and re-mixes. It

*Continued on Page 12*

# Essay Contest Results

Congratulations to this year's essay contest winners: Susmita Awasthi (9<sup>th</sup> Grade); Vidushi Bhargava (6<sup>th</sup> Grade); Devanshu Awasthi (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade); Krishna Somayajula (5<sup>th</sup> Grade). We received many great essays and had a tie in the K-5 category. ICA extends a thank you to all the participants who made the contest a success. The winning entries are printed on the following pages. Participants' names are listed below.



## Elementary School

Devanshu Awasthi  
Geetha Somayajula  
Krishna Somayajula  
Rama Somayajula

## Middle School

Amit Parikh  
Anupam Garg  
Gautam Pathial  
Jahnvi Ramanathan  
Tulsee Doshi  
Vidushi Bhargava

## High School

Akshay Patel  
Anarghya Vardhana  
Aparna Shrivastava  
Maneesh Arora  
Ravi Parikh  
Siddharth Gandhinathan  
Susmita Awasthi

# Essay Contest : Middle School Winner

## Topic: Indian Independence

From the 16th Century to the 18th Century India was a big attraction for European traders, especially from Great Britain, France and Portugal. India was a producer of quality textiles, jewelry and arts goods. India was considered so wealthy and prosperous that it was called "Sone ki Chidiya" which meant "a Golden Bird". During this time, India was under the rule of the Moghul Empire. There were a small number of independent Hindu and Muslim states under the sovereignty the Moghul rulers. The European traders gradually started gaining control of the import business from India. The British then formed a trading company called "The East India Company" which proved to be very important in Indian history. This company had the blessings of the British Crown.

After the breakdown of the Moghul Empire in the 18th century, several Indian states were formed. Some were ruled by Hindu rulers and some by Muslim Rulers. The East India Company gradually lured the rulers of these states and secured from them the trading rights in different areas. The East India Company also was successful in acquiring political powers in some parts of India. Soon, the rulers of Great Britain through this company acquired the rights to have all political, financial and administrative controls of a large number of Indian provinces and they were also successful in making all Indian state rulers look up to the British rulers.

The British Government began to rule India from Britain by appointing their administrative head which they designated as the Viceroy and Governor General of India. During their rule all the freedom was snatched from Indians and that led to many agitations.

Even while the Moghul Empire was breaking down and the East India Company was gaining control, several Indian leaders were agitated and not happy with the conditions such as Lokmanya Tilak, Gokhle and Motilal Nehru.

Then in 1917, World War I broke out and the Indians helped the British despite their grievances against the British Rule. The British promised to then give Indians relief but they never did. Instead they made legislation against Indian political leaders and their uprising. It was in 1919 had the notorious massacre of nearly 400 unarmed Indians at the Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar in April and this marked the emergence of a nation-wide movement against British rule. It was after this that the Indian nationalist movement emerged led by Mahatma Gandhi followed by "Civil disobedience movement" in 1930-31 and the "Quit India Movement" in 1942. It was a big success for the people of India. The British tried very hard to crush this agitation by putting a lot of Indian supporters in jail. But the agitation was so strong that the British soon realized that it was not possible for them to longer remain the rulers of the country and that there was no alternative for them other than to leave India. However they were successful in partitioning India into what is now known as India, Pakistan, Burma and Sri Lanka. They were also successful in making political rifts between these countries on the basis of religious and political divides.

It was on August 15th, 1947 that India became independent. Jawaharlal Nehru was the first prime minister of India. After Independence, despite all of the difficulties, India has made great progress in the last 57 years slowly but surely on its way to become the "Sone ki Chidiya" it once was.

**-Krishna Somayajula (5<sup>th</sup> Grade)**



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# Essay Contest : Elementary School Winners

## Topic: What does Being an Indian Mean to You?

What do I mean by being an Indian?  
When my dad asked me this, I thought "Nothing".  
Then I thought it must be something.

My dad says being an Indian means being respectful to elders.  
My mom says being an Indian means being polite and well mannered.  
My grandpa say being an Indian means being part of an ancient culture.  
My grandma says being an Indian means being part of a big family.

Being an Indian, I speak Hindi. Being an Indian, I can also speak English.  
I like to watch Pokemon. Being an Indian, I love stories of Hanuman.

Being an Indian, I call my dad's friends uncles.  
Being an Indian, I call my mom's friend's aunties.

Being an Indian, I love Pizza. Being an Indian, I love Roti-Daal.  
I like French fries. I love bhelpuri.

Being an Indian, I can sing "This land is my land!"  
Being an Indian, I love to sing "Vande Maataram!"

I say Hi to my American friends. I say Namaste to my uncles and aunties.

I love to pay soccer. I have begun to like cricket too. (I know that Sachin dude!)

I am proud of Indian Army. Being an Indian, I do not like fights (except on the video games).

I love to have gifts on Diwali. I just can't wait for Santa on Christmas.

Now I think - being an Indian, I AM A PROUD CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.

**-Devanshu Awasthi (2<sup>nd</sup> Grade)**



Even though I was born in America, I am very lucky and fortunate to be exposed to India and its very valuable culture. The number one thing I like about being an Indian is Indians are very, knowledgeable. Indians were first people to discover astronomy, and Nyaya Sastra (by Sage Gautama in 5th century B.C).

I am inspired by the holy words spoken by majestic Saints visited from India. They are living expressions of the religious culture of India. I like all the Sages and Saints very much. But in particular I like Swami Vivekananda and Swami Chinmayananda. I think they are very great Role Models.

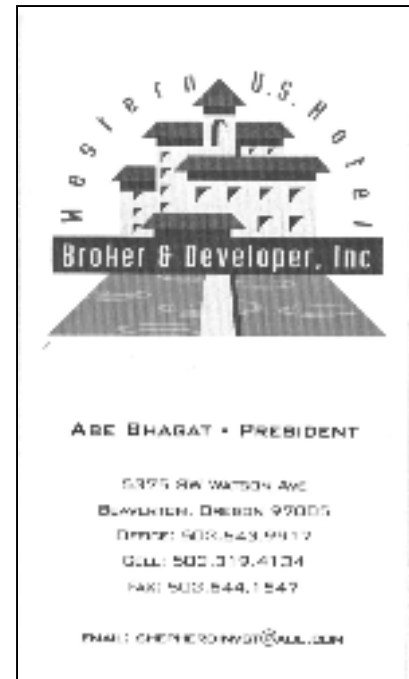
I also like to visit temples at the time of festivals. One of my favorites is when they light fireworks on Diwali. The stories behind these festivals are very interesting. And they are exciting to read and research on. The Ithihasas are stories like Ramayanam Mahabharata, and the Bhavagatam are the images of Indian culture and family values. I like the customs and manners. Those are the social conduct of a given society. That includes forms such as greeting and style of conversation, for example prostration (namaskaram).

The performing arts of India is very vast traditional and beautiful. Traditional Indian music and dance are art forms that are believed to have been handed down by the Lord himself. Indian music is characterized by creativity and improvisation. I am very lucky to be part of this tradition by learning Carnatic music as I do play the Indian violin myself.

I also love Indian food very, very much! They are many kinds of curries and dhals. And snacks like pakoda and papad. My extreme favorite is chapatti with rajma, what is something like backed bread and baked beans.

I hope you learnt a little bit about me and I am proud to be an Indian as well as an American.

**-Krishna Somayajula (5<sup>th</sup> Grade)**



## Avuncular Musings (Continued from Page 12)

is not the religion, but the culture that defines an Indian. So is the case with America. Both were colonized by the British, and now both are the flourishing democracies.

We need to remind ourselves on this day that attainment of freedom brought with it the partition of the country. Pakistan was created on the basis of religion, but the partitioned India remained multi-religious, and thus secular in its orientation. Despite the commonness of religion, Pakistan got soon fragmented with the creation of Bangladesh; but the multi-religious India has remained united, and democratic ever since its independence.

NRI communities are an extension of India. They are part of a pan-Indian Civilization that has crossed national political boundaries. So politically NRIs may, or may not, be Indian citizens, culturally they continue to be carriers of the living and changing Indian tradition. While carrying tradition, they are also enriching it.

A living culture does not dwell in the corridors of past; it builds its present on its foundations, and draws a road map for the future destination. May the future of our children be glorious, and may our culture continue to grow and flourish.

*Dr. Atal is a highly acclaimed social anthropologist and is a Former Principal Director of UNESCO.*

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# Essay Contest : High School Winner

## Topic: Improving India Pakistan Relations

After four brutal wars and thousands of painful riots, two siblings are still stubborn rivals. They are given the "honor" of holding the longest unresolved conflict in the world: Kashmir. They are the two neighbors, India and Pakistan.

Surely a man who does not know the insightful details would think this case to be utterly preposterous. However, there have been numerous macabre attacks on temples, such as the Akshardham and Raghunath temples (located in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh, respectively.) Countless counterfeit currency rackets have been run by the ISI, the intelligence wings of Pakistan. There were great intentions of trying to ruin the Indian economy then.

Not only that, but throughout the decades, there have been many tries to activate terrorism. For example, in the eighties, there was moral support for such act in Punjab. Although that has gradually been resolved, the same is occurring in Kashmir now. All these techniques to get back at India has been a way of life that Pakistanis have been living for a while.

Men who were either brainwashed, bribed or threatened were given shelter in Pakistan.

Truthfully, however, some injustice has been done to India's neighbor too. After the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1871, Kashmir, being a Muslim majority state, was allegedly occupied by India. There has been backfiring, murders, and other inhuman acts committed by soldiers and Indians.

Yes, the treatment has been unfair on both sides and the two siblings have much to complain about. But there is a rose hidden, joined with every prickling thorn. Kind acts, such as hospitality and care for all humans alike, are always there. This was proven when an ill Pakistani girl came to India for an operation. Indians warmly welcomed her, successfully helped her and gave moral support to the family. It proves to many that we are all the children of God. One God.

It still seems as a totally impossible notion that these two can ever come together. However, Indian and Pakistani cultures are two intersecting lines. No matter how hard they try to stay apart, their love for certain types of music, their admiration for certain types of people, and their love for the same types of foods and spices bring them very close together.

Indians thronged Ghulam Ali, Mehdi Hassan and Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan shows. Pakistanis drove up to Kabul to watch Indian movies as they were banned in Pakistan. Lata Mangeshkar has many fans in Pakistan.

So what is the dividing issue? Is it religion? If it was, why was Bangladesh separated from Pakistan? If it is so, why is Shahrukh Khan a super star in India? Why is Mohammed Rafi a legendary singer in India?

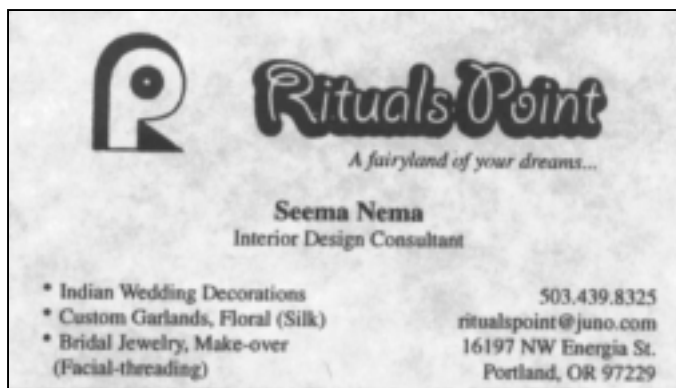
Religion indeed becomes a dividing issue when riots happen, when elections happen. However, one must keep in mind that religion, all too much of the time, is not God. It is what man perceives of God. Two conjoined countries have chosen different ways to listen to God, and varying ways to execute his thought of morality.

But it still does not divide the hearts of people when it comes to family life, love among each other, and a way of life. They are alike in more ways than they would probably like to be.

Although Kashmir is what the wars are all about, there is a lot of greed, hunger for the wrong type of power, and revenge in the hearts of many people. You cannot change history now; but the people in the past should have done more for their future. Your present.

However, you have the capability to come together and change it. For us and the generations ahead of us, we can resolve this conflict, we can gradually forgive and forget, we can become loving brothers and sisters once more.

-Susmita Awasthi (9<sup>th</sup> Grade)



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## What Did You Think?

Your opinion is very important to us in making next year's India Festival even more successful. Please take a moment to fill out the following survey and return it to us at the ICA Booth or email us at [survey@icaportland.org](mailto:survey@icaportland.org). Thanks!

<b>India Festival Survey</b>	1: Very Good
	2: Good
	3: Needs Improvement

1) Usefulness and quality of booths.	1	2	3
2) Dance performances	1	2	3
3) Music performanes	1	2	3
4) Overall rating of the event	1	2	3

## Thanks!

ICA would like to specially thank the following individuals and businesses for their support, which allowed this event to take possible.

- All of our talented performers
- ICA Members
- Dr. Manohar & Mrs. Zarina Punja
- Mrs. Vijay Reddy
- Costco Wholesale
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## Become an ICA Member!

For the past two decades, ICA has hosted many cultural events for our Indian community in Portland, the main one being India Festival.

All of these require a considerable amount of time and money. Our membership count once at 400 has now decreased considerably. We have also lost many grants that previously supported the financing of India Festival.

We are encouraging that you become a member and help us revitalize this organization. A sum of \$25.00 (for family membership) will go a long way in making us financially stable and allow us to plan several events for 2004 and the future.

India Festival has now become a major event for Portland, and ICA needs your help in continuing to host this event. Currently, ICA is planning a tennis tournament, for which members will get free admission; a Diwali Mela; and numerous events for 2005. Members will receive discounted or free admission to all of these events. The current membership year goes through June 2005.

### India Cultural Association

PO Box 91066  
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PHONE:  
(503) 645-7902

E-MAIL:  
info@icaportland.org

ONLINE:  
www.icaportland.org

## 2004 ICA Membership Form (Jan '04 - Jun '05)

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Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Spouse Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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(Family \$25, Individual \$15, Student \$10)

Child Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
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