

KHAASBAAT

A PUBLICATION FOR INDIAN AMERICANS IN FLORIDA

NOVEMBER 2022

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33RD ANNUAL TAMPA INDIA FESTIVAL RETURNS NOV. 5

Photo credit: Shriyan Photography



Dr. Sanjay Navadia

By NITISH S. RELE – editor@khaasbaat.com
“Let’s get back into life, the routine,” says Dr. Sanjay Navadia, Chair, for this year’s India Festival set Nov. 5 in Tampa. We couldn’t agree more. After a three-year hiatus, the 33rd annual daylong event, organized by the Gujarati Samaj of Tampa Bay, is back at the familiar Florida State Fairgrounds. Over three decades, the event has become one of the most popular in the Southeast.

Between 12,000 to 15,000 people are expected to attend, according to Navadia, who revealed that all participants in the entertainment programs this year will receive a free entry. He also looks to “get some new young people involved in management of India Festival. Try to add new faces.” Undoubtedly, Covid-19 posed several challenges for the fest committee, especially when planning the event’s comeback.

Continued on page 16



SHREYA GHOSHAL RETURNS NOV. 18 TO ORLANDO

Story, page 4

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WHO'S WHO

Khaas Baat is a monthly publication that has been in circulation since August 2004. Issues are direct mailed to subscribers and also are available at South Asian grocery stores and restaurants. It presents exclusive, informative and relevant news about the Indian American community in Florida to its readers.

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EVENTS

TAMPA/ST. PETERSBURG/CLEARWATER

NOV. 5: 33rd ANNUAL INDIA FESTIVAL; organized by the Gujarati Samaj of Tampa Bay; 11 a.m.

to 10 p.m.; Florida State Fairgrounds, 4800 U.S. 301 N., Tampa; for information, call Chair



Sanjay Navadia

at (813) 943-1713 or visit <https://www.indiafestivaltampabay.com/>

NOV. 8: HANUMAN CHALISA; second Tuesday of month; Vishnu Mandir Tampa, 5803 Lynn Road; 7 to 9 p.m.; for information, call Deo Gajadhar at (813) 817-9714.

NOV. 11-12: HINDU MATRIMONIAL USA; Tampa Bay's fourth annual matrimonial meet & match; ages 25 to 45 years; India Cultural Center, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; for information, call (769) 241-0675, email FloridaHinduMatrimonial@gmail.com or visit www.hindumatrimonial.org

NOV. 12: DIVINITY WITH ANUP JALOTA; bhajans, geet, ghazals; fundraiser for Sanatan Mandir; Dr. Kiran C. Patel High School, 10721 Raulerson Ranch Road, Tampa; 7 to 11 p.m.; book tickets online at www.sanatanmandirtampa.org/fundraising or call (727) 238-5238 for information.



NOV. 16: ICC SENIORS GET-TOGETHER; India Cultural Center, 5509 Lynn Road, Tampa; 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.; free seminar, lunch and entertainment; no age restriction; for information, text email address along with your name to Bhikhu Nayi at (631) 560-2718 to receive details about seniors gathering every month; or call Mahesh Modha at (813) 476-1540.

NOV. 19: PRAMUKH SWAMI MAHARAJ'S CENTENNIAL CELEBRATIONS; BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir, 9556 E. Fowler Ave., Thonotosassa; for information, call (813) 986-5473.



NOV. 20: AKSHAYA PATRA WEST FLORIDA GALA; India Cultural Center, 5511 Lynn Road, Tampa; 5 p.m.; for information, visit www.akshayapatrausa.org

ORLANDO/CASSELBERRY

NOV. 13: MULTI-FAITH WORKSHOP; presented by HSCF Age Group; focuses on importance of collective prayer for global peace; Hindu Society of Central Florida (HSCF) community hall, 1994 Lake Drive, Casselberry; 1:30 p.m.; free event; RSVP to hscfnewagegroup@gmail.com

NOV. 18: SHREYA GHOSAL IN CONCERT; presented by Krish Patel; 8 p.m.; Addition Financial Arena (former CFE), 12777 Gemini Blvd. N., Orlando; tickets starting at \$51 can be purchased at www.bollywoodeventsfl.com; for information, call Krish Patel at (407) 454-3334.



DEC. 10: HOLIDAY GALA; organized by Indian American Business Association & Chamber; awards, banquet, entertainment; Caribe Royale Resort, 8101 World Center Drive, Orlando; 5 p.m.; for tickets and information, visit www.iabausa.com

DIWALI FESTIVITIES WRAP UP THIS MONTH IN FORT LAUDERDALE, ORLANDO/APOPKA, OCALA, MELBOURNE

SOUTH FLORIDA

FORT LAUDERDALE: The Indian Regional and Cultural Center will hold its Diwali festivities from 1 to 10 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 12, at Broward County Convention Center, 1950 Eisenhower Blvd., Fort Lauderdale. The program will include



music and dance performed, including bhangra, Bollywood, folk dances. Other attractions are food, fashion, jewelry and henna. For tickets and other information, call Sanjay Gupta at (954) 461-4003 or visit www.irccflorida.org

ORLANDO/CASSELBERRY/APOPKA

Orlando Marathi Mandal will be celebrating Diwali with kids, ladies and family competitions from 4 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 12, at the Hindu Society of Central Florida community hall, 1994 Lake Drive, Casselberry. The event is free for mandal members and \$25 for non-members

before Nov. 11 or \$30 at the door. For information, email orlandomarathi@yahoo.com

Indian Horizon of Florida will celebrate Diwali Mela from 4 to 9 p.m. Nov. 12 at VFW Post 10147, 519 S. Central Ave., Apopka. Admission is free. For information, call (321) 662-1887 or email indioanhorizon0674@yahoo.com

OCALA

India Association of North Central Florida will hold Diwali Celebration 2022 from 5:30 p.m. on Nov. 5 at 2030 N.E. 36th Ave., Ocala. Guest fee is \$50. For information, call Neel Koladiya at (352) 509-5830.

MELBOURNE (SPACE COAST)

The Indian Association of the Space Coast will hold Diwali and annual dinner on Nov. 5. For details, call (321) 271-7072 or visit <https://myiasc.com/>



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MONTHLY EVENTS	WEEKLY EVENTS
FRIDAY, NOV 4 (6:00 PM to 8:00 PM) • DEV PRABODHI EKADASHI • TULSI VIVAH SUNDAY, NOV 6 (5:30 PM to 7:00 PM) • SHRI JAGANNATH BHAJNA MONDAY, NOV 7 (6:00 PM to 8:00 PM) • KARTIK PURNIMA • DEV DIWALI DEEP DAAN SATURDAY, NOV 12 (4:00 PM – 7:00 PM) • MATA KI CHOWKI SUNDAY NOV 27 (4:00 PM – 7:00 PM) • VIVAH PANCHAMI SEETA RAM JI VIVAH	EVERY MONDAY - 6:30 PM • SHIV ABHISHEK AND PUJA EVERY TUESDAY - 7:00 PM • SUNDARKAND • HANUMAM KATHA EVERY THURSDAY - 7:00 PM • SAI BABA SATSANG • MAHA PRASAD Pandit Manikya Sharma 813-484-9568 Pandit Rushi Vyas 813-503-3388 Pandit Pranav Bhatt 813-720-1460

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IT'S THE CHOLESTEROL, MY FRIEND! SOME NEW INSIGHTS - PART 1

By **M.P. RAVINDRA NATHAN, M.D., FACC**



Three persons of Indian origin whom I personally knew died recently from acute heart attack, one was 62, the other two in the young 70s. One was obese, another diabetic and the third one believed only in 'naturopathy' and hardly ever saw an allopathic physician. The common factor in all three was their poorly controlled cholesterol levels in the blood – hyperlipidemia in scientific terminology.

Why am I talking about cholesterol now? Haven't we discussed this subject before? Yes, genuine questions. There are many modifiable risk factors

for coronary artery disease (CAD) leading to heart attacks. And all of us know 'high cholesterol' plays a major role in producing heart disease. However, even experts didn't know how important it is till recently. There are, of course, some naysayers who would say, "Oh, cholesterol is needed for our body." Yes, its main function is to maintain the integrity of cell membranes and is necessary for the synthesis of some vital substances in the body like steroid hormones, bile acids and vitamin D. However, what most people don't realize is that only little cholesterol is required for these functions and that is generally synthesized in your liver.

You probably already know the basics about the lipid measurements in the blood. Total Cholesterol (TC), Low Density Lipoproteins (LDL), High Density Lipoproteins (HDL) and Triglycerides (Trig) are the basic fractions we measure. Of these, LDL, the so-called bad cholesterol, is the main culprit that promotes atherosclerosis or plaque formation in the arteries leading to heart attacks. A sub fraction of LDL called LDL(a) is also highly atherogenic and is separately measured. HDL, the good cholesterol, on the other hand, fights LDL, snatching the LDL particles from the circulating blood and also from the plaques and, carries them to the liver for disposal. However, many new studies show that its protective effects are over exaggerated and artificially increasing its level by drugs would not confer this protection as well. So, currently all eyes are turned toward LDL, the true culprit, and how to reduce it drastically. The new dictum is "the lower the LDL, the better." It can even be brought down to single digits and nothing adverse will happen to the body like cancer, etc., as once thought. And there are wonderful new drugs like PCSK-9 inhibitors that can

drastically reduce the LDL, which can be given once a month or even less often as an injection.

Risk Factors for Heart Disease

We discuss often the various risk factors for heart disease such as Diabetes Mellitus, smoking, lack of exercise, high cholesterol, obesity, especially abdominal obesity, high blood pressure, alcohol, etc. Which one among these is the most important cause? Cholesterol, of course. Generally, we measure all the lipoprotein fractions as mentioned above in the fasting state. The ideal normal range for these is TC <200, Trig <150, LDL<70 and HDL >50 and Lp(a) <50 mg/dl. In the past for those who have no risk factors whatsoever, especially Caucasians, an LDL of <100 has been acceptable but even for them a lower LDL is better.

Now, on to the problem in our hand. In spite of the recent advances in the management of coronary heart disease, it still remains one of the main causes of morbidity and mortality throughout the world. A global epidemic of CAD has evolved and more and more developing countries are being affected now. Among these, South Asians, especially Indians, seem to have a high incidence of the disease. Indian newspapers always report in the obituary columns, "The person collapsed and died while talking" or "He died in his sleep." They are all from sudden heart attacks or fatal cardiac arrhythmias and one wonders if these could have been prevented. It appears South Asians in general and immigrant south Asian Indians (that's all of us) especially appear to experience a disproportionately larger burden of CAD and show a three-fold higher risk of mortality as compared with native population, according to one researcher. Initially, many were skeptical about this observation but now the problem has been universally accepted. Even the American College of Cardiology has listed 'South Asian heritage' as a risk factor for CAD!

So, it's time for us to take this problem seriously, understand the causes and treat them appropriately.

To be continued ...

M.P. Ravindra Nathan, M.D., is a cardiologist and Emeritus Editor of AAPI Journal. For further reading, "Second Chance - A Sister's Act of Love" by Dr. Nathan from Outskirts Press, can be found at www.amazon.com

SHREYA GHOSHAL RETURNS NOV. 18 TO ORLANDO

'Bairi Piya' ("Devdas"), 'Jaadu Hai Nasha Hai' ("Jism"), 'Barso Re,' ("Guru"), 'Zoobi Zoobi' ("3 Idiots"), 'Radha' ("Student of The Year"), 'Manwa Lage' ("Happy New Year"), 'Deewani Mastani' ("Bajirao Mastani") and 'Ghoomar' ("Padmaavat") are just a few of innumerable hits by Bollywood singer Shreya Ghoshal. The native of Murshidabad (West Bengal) who was brought up in Rajasthan will re-visit Florida, this time Orlando on Nov. 18.

In a career that spans nearly 25 years, the talented and melodious Ghoshal has won a National Film Award, Filmfare Award and IIFA Award for Best Female Playback Singer, several times over, and a Filmfare RD Burman Award for New Music Talent. She has also been honored by the then Ohio Governor Ted Strickland who declared June 26 as "Shreya Ghoshal Day" in 2010.

It was with "Devdas" that Shreya Ghoshal launched her career as a playback singer and since then there has been no looking back with film songs recorded in not just Hindi but also Assamese, Bengali,

Bhojpuri, Gujarati, Kannada, Marathi, Malayalam, Nepali, Oriya, Tamil and Telugu.

Presented by Krish Patel, Ghoshal will take the stage from 8 p.m. Nov. 18 at Addition Financial Arena (former CFE), 12777 Gemini Blvd. N., Orlando. Tickets starting at \$51 can be purchased at www.bollywoodeventsfl.com; for information, call Krish Patel at (407) 454-3334.



2023 CHEVY TRAVERSE IS A COMMENDABLE PEOPLE AND CARGO-HAULER

Test-drive story by NITISH S. RELE motoringtampabay@gmail.com

Sharing its design with the Buick Enclave and GMC Acadia, the body-frame integral structure of this Chevrolet Traverse will boost the confidence of any driver. The three-row SUV is equipped with a 3.6-liter V-6 engine blasting off a strong 310 horsepower @ 6800 rpm and 266 pounds-feet of torque @ 2800 rpm. That is plenty of clout to push this nearly 4,400-pound SUV toward its destination briskly on challenging roads.

Power routed through the crisp-shifting 9-speed auto gear box delivers adequate performance. Standard active noise cancellation isolates occupants from road sound and imperfections in this front-wheel or all-wheel-drive ride.

Of course, it's in the passenger/cargo department that the Traverse truly shines. Have a seat up front in the muscularly-styled SUV and you will notice that the center stack offers MyLink with a 8-inch color touch screen for hands-free phone and audio. Underneath the infotainment system are large illuminated climate control knobs. The instrument cluster of two gauge binnacles with readings for speedometer, tachometer, water temp, battery and fuel, as well as a driver information center, is simple but clear.

Thanks to tri-zone auto a/c, the driver and all passengers can control their own individual temperature settings. The 60/40 second-row folds via a lever while the 50/50 third-row seat can be power operated. That opens up 98.2 cubic feet of stowing area. Simply put, throw in a stroller,



TRAVERSE (RS AWD)
Tires: P255/55R20 all-season
Wheelbase: 120.9 inches
Length: 205.9 inches
Width: 78.6 inches
Height: 70.7 inches
Suspension: MacPherson strut independent front; 5-link rear
Steering: electric variable power
Tow capacity: 5,000 pounds
Fuel capacity: 21.7 gallons
Highway: 25 mpg
City: 17 mpg
Base price: \$46,445
Price as tested: \$48,735
Web site: www.chevrolet.com

numerous pieces of luggage, backpack, ice chest, cooler, etc. into the cargo hold and the Traverse laps it all up. Lest we forget, there is a huge storage bin underneath the cargo hold.

Standard safety features include dual front and side airbags, side curtain airbag for both rows, front center airbag, four-wheel antilock brakes with brake assist, antiskid system, stability and traction control, remote vehicle start, rearview camera, rear park, rear cross traffic and forward collision alerts, lane keep and hill start assist, tire pressure monitoring system and daytime running lights.

Don't expect this virtually full-size Traverse to be a fuel-sipper. But a solid chassis and exceptional people- and cargo-carrying capabilities will serve the needs of large households quite well.

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GREEN CARD LOTTERY APPLICATION PERIOD IS NOW OPEN

By DILIP PATEL



Over the years, we have assisted many people attain their American Dream through the Green Card Lottery. This article will be of use to our readers or friends of readers born in countries other than India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and the United Kingdom. We know that many members of our community were born in Africa and other parts of the world – for them, the Green Card Lottery can be of great interest. The official name is the fiscal year 2024 U.S. Diversity Visa Lottery.

What is the Diversity Visa Lottery?

The Diversity Immigrant Visa program — a.k.a. the green card lottery — is a government lottery program for obtaining U.S. Permanent Residence (green card). The program makes 50,000 visas available every year to applicants from countries with low rates of immigration to the United States and with specific education qualifications. It provides an inexpensive and relatively simple path to a green card, without needing sponsorship from a U.S. employer or family.

Who Can Apply?

To be eligible for the Diversity Immigrant Visa Program, you or your spouse must have been born in a country that sent less than 50,000 immigrants to the United States in the previous five years. The Department of State publishes a full list of the eligible countries on their website.

List of Countries of Birth Not Eligible

For the 2024 program, the following countries are not eligible to apply due to high rates of immigration to the United States:

Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, China including Hong Kong SAR (Natives of Macau SAR and Taiwan are eligible), Colombia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, India, Jamaica, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea (South Korea), United Kingdom (except Northern Ireland) and its dependent territories, Venezuela and Vietnam

NOTE: If your country of birth is not eligible but your spouse as born in an eligible country, you can each submit an application.

In addition to the nationality requirements, applicants must possess at least a high school diploma or its equivalent; or two years of work experience in an occupation that requires at least two years of training or experience. DOS publishes a list of occupations that are eligible on their website.

If you are eligible, you can apply whether you are currently in the U.S. or abroad. This includes those who are waiting to obtain a green card

through the labor certification program (if born in an eligible country).

When Can I Apply?

The entry submission period for the FY2024 Diversity Immigrant Visa program is ongoing through Nov. 8, 2022. The entry form will only be available for submission during this period. In years past, the last week of the registration period saw heavy demand on DOS's application website, causing website delays. Therefore, submitting your application as early as possible is encouraged.

How Do I Apply?

Entries must be submitted online through DOS's website. Paper entries are not accepted. Online applications are free, but visa processing fees may apply if selected. DOS releases detailed instructions on their website, which can be found here: <https://travel.state.gov/content/dam/visas/Diversity-Visa/DV-Instructions-Translations/DV-2024-Instructions-Translations/DV-2024-Instructions.pdf>

Call for Immigration Relief for Students and others in U.S. from Pakistan

The devastating flooding left one-third of Pakistan underwater, affecting 30 million people and leaving 6.4 million people in need of immediate support. Recent data showed that there are almost 10,000 F-1 students from Pakistan. Numerous organizations are now lobbying the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to grant Temporary Protected Status (TPS) or Deferred Enforced Departure (DED) to individuals from Pakistan and are also asking DHS-SEVP to grant Special Student Relief (SSR) to F-1 students from Pakistan.

TPS and DED are crucial tools the Biden administration has at its disposal to safeguard vulnerable people in the United States when safe return to their home countries is impossible. Crucially, Congress gave the power to designate TPS to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (as opposed to a determination by Congress) so administrations can work quickly to put protection in place at the onset of life-threatening conditions due to conflict, environmental disaster, or other extraordinary conditions. Regulations allow DHS to suspend or alter rules regarding duration of status, full course of study, and employment eligibility, for specific groups of students from parts of the world that are experiencing emergent circumstances. This collection of benefits is known as "special student relief." It remains to be seen if DHS takes any action.

Dilip Patel a partner at the Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney Law Firm is a Florida Bar Board Certified expert on immigration law and can be reached at (813) 222-1120 or dilip.patel@bipc.com

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OVERHAULED 2023 KIA SPORTAGE GOES HYBRID!

Test-drive stories by NITISH S. RELE motoringtampabay@gmail.com

Completely revamped for 2023, the Kia Sportage is an extra 3.4 inches in wheelbase and 7.1 inches in length than its predecessor. And more taller and wider too. But best of all, the compact SUV gets a fresh gas-sipping hybrid power train.

Our test-drive EX model was equipped with a 1.6-liter inline-4 turbo engine putting out a total of 227 horsepower (beating the Honda CR-V and Toyota RAV4 hybrids) and 258 pounds-feet of torque. Finding help for that extra energy is a 44-kw electric power backed by a 1.49 kWh lithium-ion battery pack. The fifth-generation crossover utility vehicle, also Kia's longest running nameplate, continues with the 6-speed auto gear box.

The all-wheel-drive Sportage, which has center-locking differential capabilities, distributes power between front and rear wheels depending on road and driving conditions to result in a safe and comfortable ride. A MacPherson strut front and multilink rear suspension ensure that the SUV handles the rigors of daily driving with comfort. The motor-driven power steering is quick and precise. Want to save fuel? Switch to eco mode.

A centered gloss black "tiger nose" radiator grille spanning the entire front fascia meets up with LED headlights in outer corners and boomerang daytime running lights to create

(AWD)
Tires: P235/60R18
Wheelbase: 108.5 inches
Length: 183.5 inches
Width: 73.4 inches
Height: 66.1 inches
Weight: 3,732 pounds
Fuel capacity: 13.7 gallons
City: 38 mpg
Highway: 38 mpg
Price: \$30,390
Price as tested: \$33,860
Web site: www.kiausa.com



a sleek and eye-catching appearance. The interior is spacious than before with rear legroom now at 41.3 inches and cargo capacity topping at 39.6 cubic feet. And yes, storage bins are scattered throughout, including a dual-level cargo floor. Two 12.3-inch screens, one for the digital instrument cluster, and the other for infotainment, float to sync as one. Standard amenities include dual auto a/c, 10-way power driver and 4-way front-passenger manual heated seats, D-shaped tilt/telescopic leather steering column, push-button start, 60/40 rear seat.

Kia needs to be commended for offering numerous standard safety features, which are optional in competitor vehicles. Some are dual

front and side airbags, side curtain airbag for both rows, rear-cross traffic alert, front/rear park and lane-keep assists, lane departure warning, blind spot detection, four-wheel antilock brakes, rollover sensor, electronic stability, traction and downhill brake controls, hill-start assist, daytime running lights and a tire pressure monitoring system.

The revamped Sportage hybrid is a good-looking, sizeable, sporty, useful and inexpensive vehicle. With gas prices still lingering over \$3 a gallon, it's a welcome addition to the Kia SUV roster. That it comes with a 10-year or 100,000-mile power train and battery, and a five-year or 60,000-mile basis warranty is a bonus.

ALL-NEW 2022 HYUNDAI TUCSON PLUG-IN HYBRID A FUEL SAVER!

First introduced in 2004, the compact SUV has undergone a makeover in the past. But the inside out redesign and power train transformation for the front-wheel or all-wheel-drive 2022 Tucson is major. So is the launch of its all-new plug-in hybrid version.

Undoubtedly, the Tucson is a bigger vehicle than the predecessor in every respect. Length is up by 6.1, width and height 0.6 and wheelbase 3.4 inches; cargo volume increases by 7.7 and passenger volume 6 cubic feet. In essence, there is plenty of leg room now for rear-seat passengers. Make it a total of 108.2 cubic feet for total passenger room. Cargo space is a cool 80.3 cubic feet with the rear seat down.

A 1.6-liter 4-cylinder turbocharged hybrid engine develops a total of 261 horsepower and 258 pounds-feet of torque with a 44.2kw electric motor and 13.8 kWh lithium-ion battery pack. The SUV can only electric-only for nearly 33 miles before fuel kicks in. You can juice up the battery in fewer than two hours with the on-board charger. Power routed through the 6-speed auto gearbox gives sufficient performance. The front MacPherson strut and multilink rear suspension have been re-engineered while body rigidity, sound damping and safety enhanced with advanced high-strength steel.

A top-selling SUV for Hyundai, the fourth-gen

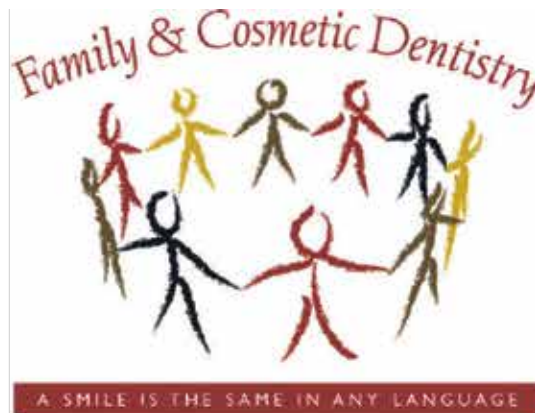


TUCSON (LIMITED, AWD)
Tires: P235/55R19
Wheelbase: 108.5 inches
Length: 182.3 inches
Width: 73.4 inches
Height: 65.6 inches
Weight: 4,235 pounds
Fuel capacity: 11.1 gallons
Combined gas only: 35 mpg
Combined MPGe: 80
Base price: \$44,640
Web site: www.hyundai.com

Tucson boasts a sporty, modern, sleek look up front as diamond-cut elements gaze at you from the sharp parametric-jewel grille. The cabin is "hidden tech" as the Hyundai folks likes to call it with a lowered and hoodless digital instrument cluster, button less center stack, capacitive touch controls, multi-air mode, ambient lights, 10.2-inch color touch infotainment display, Hyundai digital key (lock/unlock vehicle with phone), latest version of Bluelink and remote smart park assist. Standard features on the Limited trim include a 10.2-inch digital instrument cluster, heated/cooled and power front seats, Bose

premium audio, hands-free power liftgate, tilt/telescopic steering column, and 60/40 fold seat with recline/center armrest.

High gas prices on a burden on daily driving? The Tucson PHEV may be the perfect alternative, especially if you drive around 30 miles every day. Regardless, this is a promising start from Hyundai as the Korean carmaker seeks to electrify more of its vehicles. The hybrid engine shows off plenty of power to result in a well-balanced ride, with sharp handling and decent overall balance. A roomy, attractive and well-crafted cabin is another plus.



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BETTER, NOT FASTER ... YOU DIG?

By **ROBERT LEVINE**



Every year, students and families fall prey to the siren call of colleges and universities across the U.S. "Apply early" they say. "Look at the statistics" they say. But those are words for their purposes, not yours. We represent the applicant, not some educational institution. And trust me: what they say is usually not true, at least not for you.

Still, there are reasons to apply early (especially for graduate school, where early really is better). Even so, do not get too hooked on the drug of "I may get in!" In our experience, filing early won't increase the chances of most college applicants (likely including you).

But ... that's ok!

For future undergraduates, the admissions season is (basically) split into two stages: what you do before Nov. 1, and what you do after Nov. 1. Yes, most people apply somewhere early. However, every year we tell our students

not to hibernate after submitting their first applications. That's not only bad karma; it also ignores an advantage you gain in your later work ...

As the season progresses, you're going to get better at writing application essays.

Better essays lead to better results. By reason of more intelligent thought – not repetition – students who "work smart" after Nov. 1 invariably achieve amazing schools.

Yes, there is technique to writing better essays, but the real difference between great and not-great writing is not better writing. The real difference is more intelligent research.

Many admissions offices will want to know why you wish to attend their institutions. They want to collect ("yield") students, not just make offers, so they often require "why" essays to hear your rationales.

"Why" essays are by far the most challenging of the bunch. While the world focuses on Personal Statements, admissions officers focus on why you wish to attend their school. In an uber-competitive admissions environment – for both sides – you better convince them that you have a good reason to attend.

Unfortunately, most of you do not have good reasons. Oops!!!

The starting point for a superior "why" essay is understanding that these are schools, and schools develop and adjust and evolve their educational paths constantly. They are not the same. Curricula aren't even the same in the same college. One major will have different requirements than another, both in quantity, quality and type of learning. Distribution requirements are not the same. Truth? Upon so many potential paths, nothing is really the same.

So, go to the admissions website and look deeply. By "deeply," I do not mean find a college motto, or name a professor, or list some classes or a club or a study abroad opportunity. Dig! Take a close look at all their required courses. Do they make sense for you? How many electives can you take? How flexible is the curriculum? In short, how does your path merge well with their specific teaching structures?

But going to the admissions website should not be the end of your inquiry. Dig! If you know that you want to major within a particular department, study that department's website. Find their internal newsletters. Check out what they are presenting on social media (after all, they have decided what to put out there).

But even that is not enough.

Dig! Do you want to attend a school? If so, perhaps considering talking to the school.

After researching the admissions website and whatever else you can find online, look for their telephone numbers. Call them. Seriously, call them. They want to talk with you. They bring in people for the purpose of talking with you. They have information that you will not find online. They can help you understand their school better.

By calling them, you can ask them intelligent questions that may help you understand their education better. With better knowledge comes better writing.

We see it every year. Those who dig as deeply as possible tend to achieve better admissions results. They write better essays. They convince admissions officers of their desire to study at that school. And perhaps most importantly, those who better understand the schools can make more sophisticated decisions about which school is best for them. Your decision about where to study can lead to lifetime success, or not.

Guess what? Almost nobody digs hard enough for their earliest applications. You have time to improve your work for your upcoming applications. Dig!

Robert Levine is the founder and CEO of University Consultants of America, an independent educational consultancy assisting students around the world with applications to colleges, universities and graduate schools. For more information, call University Consultants of America, Inc. at 1-800-465-5890 or visit www.universitycoa.com

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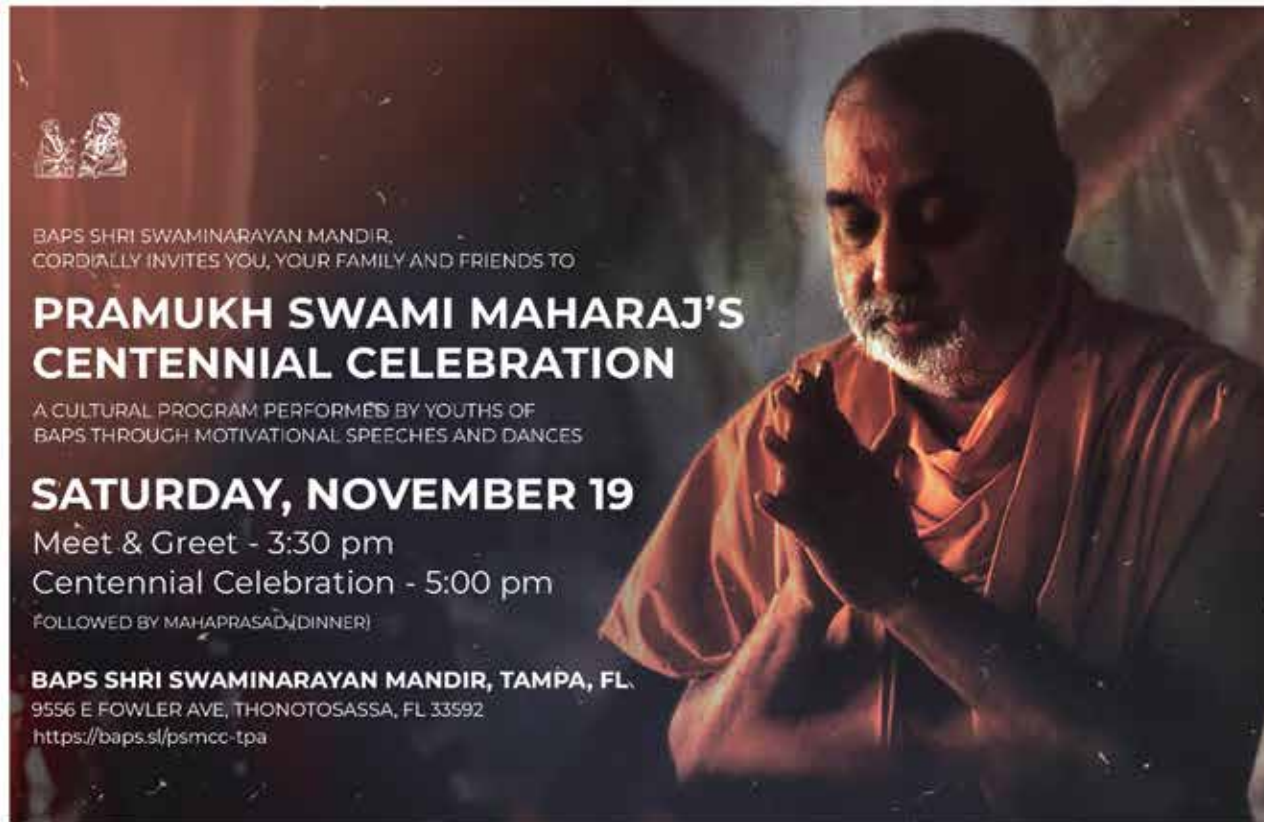
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TOWARDS BETTER LIVING

Wisdom from the life and talks of HH Pramukh Swami Maharaj



Nurtured With Selfless Love

His Holiness Pramukh Swami Maharaj's divine love cut across barriers of young and old. He naturally connected with children because he gave them his support, evoked humor, instilled dignity, and nourished their souls. His love was pure, selfless, and liberating.

Sometimes, even parents overlook requests from their children, but Pramukh Swami Maharaj was different. He understood the youth and nurtured them with selfless love and compassion. Abhay Jaiswal, a six-year-old boy, once asked Swamishri to come to his home. He said, "Why don't you come to my village Karvan, in Gujarat? I will invite all my friends, and we can play together and have so much fun."

Swamishri was 70 years older than the boy, but Abhay asked him as if he was asking a friend to come over to play. In March 1997, Swamishri visited towns and villages in the Vadodara district. He remembered Abhay's casual request but unknown to anyone, Swamishri revealed his wish to go to Karvan. After arriving in the village, he went straight to Abhay's house. Years had passed by, and no one remembered the young boy's invitation. But Swamishri never forgot such things, not even in the middle of his busy schedule. He had set aside a special day for Abhay Jaiswal. How can Abhay ever forget such love?

Once, at the request of a five-year-old boy named Shambhu, Swamishri graced that boy's hut in the tribal district of Panchmahal in Gujarat. He always understood and cared for the needs of children. On another occasion, during the end of a public assembly in Amdavad, a young boy came over to greet Swamishri seated on an ornate chair on the edge of the stage. The boy, standing on his toes, tried to touch Swamishri's feet, but his effort was futile.

Before he left, he slipped a scrap of paper next to Swamishri's ornate chair. Swamishri quickly asked for the small note and kept it safe until a few days when he pulled it out and showed it to the local swamis in Amdavad. The little boy had written that he could not touch Swamishri's feet because Swamishri was seated so high up on the stage. He added that it would have been nice to receive Swamishri's blessings. Hearing the young child's sentiments, Swamishri requested the organizers to lower the height of the stage so that children could meet him easily. He reiterated that meeting and talking to children was far more important to him than the grandness of the stage.

In 1988, during his spiritual tour of North America, Pramukh Swami Maharaj was in Flushing, New York. A young boy named Yogi was singing a bhajan while Swamishri was having a meal. Just then, a few touring swamis walked in, and soon they were busy conversing with Swamishri. Yogi stopped midway through his bhajan. Someone asked, "Why have you suddenly stopped singing, Yogi?"

"But no one is listening to me."

Upon hearing that, Swamishri looked up and said, "I am sorry, Yogi, for not listening to you. Please continue." Everyone was taken aback by Swamishri's simplicity and humility. He had actually asked for forgiveness from a small boy!

This year, the year of his Centennial Celebrations, may we share Pramukh Swami Maharaj's divine love with others and make our world a better place.

Jnanpurushdas Swami
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NOVEMBER FORECAST

By PANKAJ KOHLI



ARIES / Mesha (Fire sign, ruling planet is Mars) - (March 21-April 20) Mars Sign – Stars covered Ashwini, Bharani, Krittika (1st Part) Domestic peace returns, creating a cordial atmosphere. Marriage alliances and business partnerships may work in full favor. One may prevail over enemies and emerge victorious. Wealth and prosperity show signs of rising. Do not plan any job changes. Your perspective toward life is maturing for the better. Good times are ahead.

TAURUS / Vrushabha (Earthen sign, ruling planet is Venus) - (April 21-May 21) Venus Sign - Stars covered Krittika (last 3 parts), Rohini, Mrigashira (first 2 parts) Stay away from hot temperament, which may lead to unnecessary arguments. Your enemies could vanquish, making you wealthy and victorious. You command respect in society and your circle. Matrimonial alliance is on the cards. Expenses equal income. You may get angry over trivial issues at home and work. Control over emotions is advised.

GEMINI / Mithuna (Air sign, ruling planet is Mercury) - (May 22-June 21) Mercury Sign - Stars covered Mrigashira (last 2 parts), Ardra & Punarvasu (first 3 parts) Despite tough domestic conditions, the month brings monetary success and security. Wealth and health are assured with substantial financial gains. Any purposeful activity performed may yield permanent results. Health requires care and attention, guard against excessive eating, drinking and driving. Job change is not recommended.

CANCER / Kataka (Watery sign, ruling planet is Moon) - (June 22-July 22) Moon Sign – Stars covered Punarvasu (4th part), Pushya, Aslesha Obstacles can be removed with proper planning and timely action. Marriage alliances and business partnerships look positive. Job changes may not be beneficial. You tend to remain happy despite adversities. Younger sibling requires time and attention. Financial condition improves.

LEO / Simha (Fire sign, ruling planet is Sun) - (July 23-Aug. 22) Sun Sign – Stars covered Magha, Purva Phalguni, Uttara Phalguni (1st part) Domestic and financial conditions are good. Your health can improve with a proper diet plan and exercise. Disputes may arise in connection with paternal property. It may not be a wise decision to change job or business. Spousal relation is good and needs constant time, love and care. Your health requires attention.

VIRGO / Kanya (Earthen sign, ruling planet is Mercury) (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) Mercury Sign – Stars covered Uttara Phalguni (last 3 parts), Hasta, Chitra (first 2 parts) Beware of rheumatic and bile-related troubles. Happy domestic conditions prevail. Monetary and wealth conditions are promising. One may be rewarded for efforts. Job change is on the cards. In short, it is a good time period for all ventures. Due recognition awaits in society and social circle.

LIBRA / Tula (Air sign, ruling planet is Venus) - (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) Venus Sign – Stars covered Chitra (last 2 parts), Swati, Vishakha (first 3 parts) It is a great time to enter into new business ventures. Unexpected monetary gains are seen. Luck is on your side. Domestic and spousal relations are somewhat lukewarm, tread carefully. Marriage alliances are on the cards. Job changes may produce beneficial results.

SCORPIO / Vruschika (Water sign, ruling planet is Mars) - (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) Mars Sign – Stars covered Vishakha (4th part), Anuradha, Jyestha Current situation demands you to curtail expenses and go slow on spending. Domestic peace and happiness prevail. Your health needs immediate attention; do not stress. Postpone any marriage alliances or business partnerships. Money flow may meet your expenditures adequately. Overall, good period is here to stay.

SAGITTARIUS / Dhanush (Fire sign, ruling planet is Jupiter) - (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) Jupiter Sign – Stars covered Moola, Purva Shada, Uttara Shada (first part) Expenses are equal to income; it may be difficult to save money. Spousal relations may not be the best; use of harsh words and speech may aggravate situation. Monetary gains possible with proper planning and timely action. People in government jobs could gain recognition. Stay away from unnecessary arguments and expenses.

CAPRICORN / Makara (Earthen sign, ruling planet is Saturn) - (Dec. 22-Jan. 20) Saturn Sign – Stars covered Uttara Shada (last 3 parts) Shrivana, Dhanistha (first 2 parts) Keep away from bad company and influences. Be careful, domestic family disputes may lead to problems. Harsh words might lead to difficult situations at work place and in business. Marriage and business alliances require more time and effort. Work hard and count less on luck.

AQUARIUS / Kumbha (Air sign, ruling planet is Saturn) – (Jan. 21-Feb. 19) Saturn Sign - Stars covered: Dhanishta (last 2 parts) Satabhisha, Purva Bhadra Pada (1st 3 parts) You may lose money on account of improper and irresponsible expenditure. Invest carefully, curtail unnecessary costs. Business partnerships may be beneficial, matrimonial alliances may materialize. Do not plan any job changes. Expenses are seen on domestic front.

PISCES / Meena (Water sign, ruling planet is Jupiter) - (Feb. 20-March 20) Jupiter Sign - Stars covered: Purva Bhadra Pada (last part) Uttara Bhadra Pada, Revathi Business partnerships and matrimonial alliances could work. However, one may face hurdles. At the moment, better time awaits you. Take care of health and that of your spouse's too. Expenses equal income. Jupiter, your sign lord, is in its own house, so you may be rewarded suitably.

For detailed horoscope analysis and chart reading, courtesy Pankaj-Astro Jyotish, call Pankaj Kohli at (905) 910-1441 or e-mail Pathofastrology@gmail.com



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4TH ANNUAL MULTINATIONAL EVENT, HINDU MATRIMONIAL USA, SET NOV. 11-12 IN TAMPA

Story provided by HMUSA



Prospective brides and grooms, forget those online matrimonial sites full of promises and fake fronts. Instead, here's your opportunity to find the perfect person, face-to-face! Hindu Matrimonial USA (HMUSA) for Hindus, Jains, and Sikhs will be held Nov. 11-12 in Tampa.

The event was conceived by Devyani and Nainan Desai and Malti Pandya. Through support of over 30 volunteers, the group has brought the concept to fruition. The event is now backed by Mt. Kailash Foundation, a charitable 501c3 organization. "In previous events, participants came from Canada, U.K. and 30 states of the United States. The right life partner may not be in the neighborhood!" said Nainan Desai.

"The goal is to make finding a life partner more personal than the current online or app-based forums which are repetitive, distant, and often behind a computer screen" says organizer Malti Pandya. "Unlike similar events that have come before it, Hindu Matrimonial is open to all Hindus, Jains and Sikhs regardless of caste, language or regional background." Single men and women are encouraged to register to meet each other and "swipe right in person."

This year, the event has age group is 25 to 45 years. The benefits that come from an event like this are endless but mainly, participants can meet several in-person and get a better understanding of their personality, says Pandya. "This allows for a better first impression and true connections. Having been to similar events, I can honestly say that

I am more excited for HMUSA because the format is different, rather than the same old speed-dating. The organizing team has added a lot of unique and fun ideas, with a more modern mindset, and a proprietary app for the participants," says Pooja, a past event participant.

The Nov. 11-12 program is at India Cultural Center, 5511 Lynn Road. The program will consist of a variety of segments for attendees to connect with one another. Also, the HMUSA app will be active to use for one year for all candidates. Registration is open, visit www.HinduMatrimonial.org For more information, call (769) 241-0674 or email FloridaHinduMatrimonial@gmail.com



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100 YEARS OF 'BETTER 1 OR BETTER 2?'

By DR. ARUN GULANI



Every patient who has been to an eye doctor remembers the “better 1 or better 2?” test. While many enjoy this exam, some are daunted by the fact that their response will decide their glasses prescription and or surgery outcomes.

Invented in 1853, the phoropter was the start of determining refraction for the eyes and using patient responses to determine the endpoint, which would then translate into a prescription for glasses or contact lenses, and even surgery.

This equipment, which is essential in every eye doctor’s office, is now 100 years old and was

granted the U.S. patent in 1922. For those who need more in-depth knowledge, the “better 1 or better 2?” aspect of the phoropter was introduced in 1934 when “Jackson Cross Cylinder” was added to flip between the two options that the patient could confidently differentiate.

The phoropter is used for “refraction”; a test that results in determining a patient’s prescription (which translates into glasses or contact lens powers and even surgery endpoints). Therefore, Lasik, cataract and ICL surgeries (procedure to treat nearsightedness and astigmatism) are termed refractive and specialist eye doctors are called refractive surgeons.

Despite having some of the most advanced diagnostic technologies in the world at my institute, I still use the phoropter as my personal one-on-one examination with the patient and their brain potential of vision. That is especially because given many patients have had previous unsuccessful surgeries or complications elsewhere and I am repairing their vision or enhancing previous surgeries. Their own perceptive input becomes an important radar in my direction of how to correct poor vision and what surgery or technology to apply.

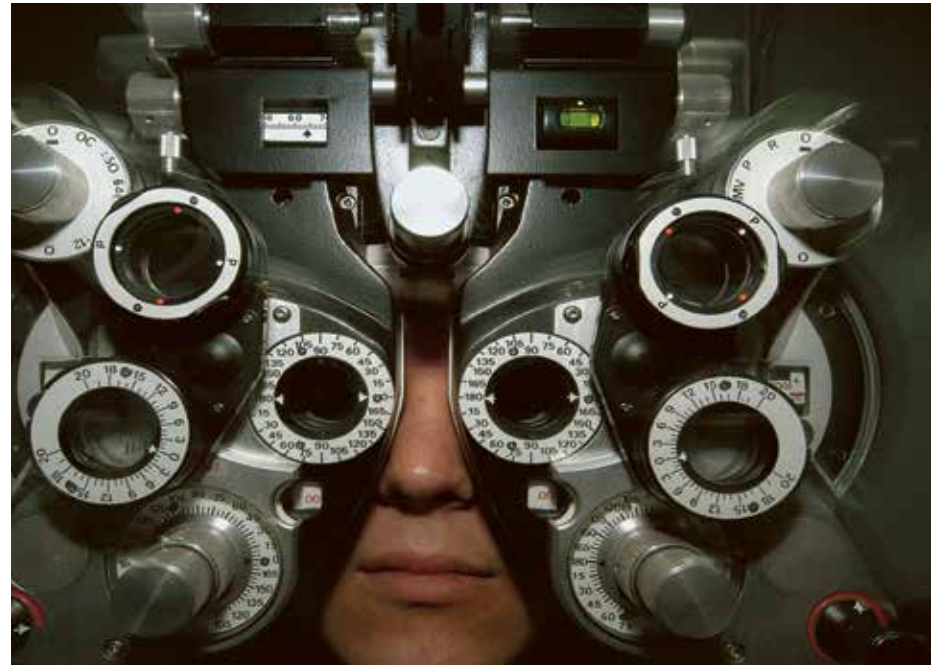
Using this personal information and perception from the patient, one can then apply over 40 different techniques to make people see without glasses or contact lenses after checking each patient’s vision optics for that eye, and then also compare the binocular vision aspect, which is finally controlled neurologically to their best vision potential.

This personal endeavor (which I encourage surgeons to do themselves) of custom-designing leads to successful vision outcomes for patients not only with Lasik, but also premium cataract surgery.

Unfortunately, the art of using the phoropter has declined steadily over time as this technology has advanced into automated versions. The talent of using this amazing device is an art and I don’t want that to disappear from the diagnostic realm of eye surgeons since this is one diagnostic equipment that allows the “patient” to be a part of the testing process and guide the measuring technician or surgeon to the correct surgical technique and expected vision potential.

I am involved in the evolution of these technologies, including automated phoropters that I’m collaborating with manufacturers worldwide wherein patients would be able to do this test by themselves. Thus, they would regain their power of deciding on what’s best vision potential in their own mind, as compared to a perceived 20/20 outcome, which may not be satisfactory to their surgery goals. I am also working on a concept of artificial intelligence-based feedback with the automated systems for patients, not only those with routine glasses and contact lens prescriptions that need refractive surgeries like Lasik or cataract surgery, but also complex cases like Keratoconus, irregular astigmatism, complications of Lasik, radial keratotomy, cross-linking and transplant surgeries. This would enable doctors to move forward with high confidence and patients to gain independence by being part of the process rather than a summative test result based on automation only.

Though I am involved constantly with innovation and progress of diagnostic technology in the field of eyecare and surgery, I personally do not want this equipment to land in the museum. I would like the phoropter to continue to be the foundation of any eye surgeon who dedicatedly wants to take each patient to the best vision potential.



As I share my passion with eye surgeons globally, to help patients see beyond 20/20, my statement on worldwide podiums resonates as I say it loud and clear, “A refractive surgeon must know how to refract!”

Here’s to another 100 years of everyday familiar music in every eye doctor’s office; “better 1 or better 2?”

Arun C. Gulani, M.D., M.S., is director and chief surgeon of Gulani Vision Institute in Jacksonville. He can be reached at gulanivision@gulani.com or visit www.gulanivision.com

33RD ANNUAL TAMPA INDIA FESTIVAL RETURNS NOV. 5

Continued from page 1

But despite the hurdles, “Within two months, we got lot of sponsors, performers, vendors, all due to hard work by the committee,” says Navadia.

In the Expo Hall, more than 100 booths will offer a variety of fashion, jewelry, arts and crafts, and home décor. Just outside the hall, food vendors will offer a variety of Indian delicacies from samosas to chicken tikka to falooda and of course everyone’s favorite chai. In the adjacent Entertainment Hall, performers of all ages will be decked out in traditional attire for four categories of dance competition – garba, raas, folk and bhangra. India Festival dance practice has become a right of passage for many families, especially in the Bay area, one that has surely been missed the last few years. Throughout the hall, several closed-circuit TV monitors will be set up so people can shop and eat while watching the dances.



Photo credit: Shriyan Photography

Indian-American communities from Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach, Melbourne, Daytona Beach, Jacksonville, Gainesville and Ocala among others will be participating in dozens of competitions. Hillsborough County and Tampa City Council members are expected to be in attendance, as in the past years.

The India Festival will be from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Nov. 5 at the Florida State Fairgrounds, 4800 U.S. 301 N., Tampa. Tickets are \$12 for adults; \$10 for children 2 to 12 years of age. Parking is \$12.

For information, visit www.indiafestivaltampabay.com

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ART IN INDIAN WEAVES

By BRINDA PAMULAPATI



In continuation with our previous column “The Art of Indian Textiles,” this article will focus on two specific Indian fabric prints: natural dyes and motifs. Both are of key importance to the design and creation of Indian textiles, as well as to the history surrounding the craft.

Natural dyes of ancient Indian textiles

In the earlier days of textile creation, the colors and designs were exclusively handmade by artisans and rare in the general market. This was expensive, meaning only royals or rich people wore them during festivals and occasions. South Asian materials

were dyed from colors extracted from plants, minerals and even from insects. The dyes in the clothes were fresh as the materials lasted. Red and blue colored fabrics were primarily produced in India.

Listerine or red was extracted from the madder, a kind of root. An exceptionally vibrant blue color was extracted from the green leaves of the Indigo shrub. From as early as the Indus Valley civilization, Indian dyers used mordant to fix colors firmly to the textiles. Fundamental designs were symmetry, motifs and repeated patterns in Indian textiles. These were spread all over the textile or only in the borders of the textiles.

Motifs

A motif is an elaborate grouping representing a design, story or any creative ideas or works. A pattern is created and is then repeated. These can range from simple decorated fruit such as a mango, a flower such as a lotus, or an animal such as elephants, or can illustrate a more elaborate depiction, such as the epic “Ramayana.”

Two examples of common motifs found in Indian fabrics are paisley and jaali. Paisley patterns depict what many describe as an elongated mango or teardrop pattern, ornamented with intricate details. This motif is widespread across the subcontinent and even spread to Europe by the 18th century. This is where



Figure 1: Elongated Mango and floral pattern- silk brocade weaving in Kanchipuram

the name paisley derives from; a small Scottish town with the same name was one of its largest manufacturers in the United Kingdom. Paisley has numerous regional names, examples Kairi in Gujarat, and Kalka in Bengal.

Jaali is another geometric motif, this time inspired by lattice patterns in Islamic architecture. This style is largely characterized by its use of floral patterns. Figure 1 features a mix of paisley and jaali motifs. A geometric pattern of contrasting motifs is complemented by the vibrant alternating orange and pink hues. The design is then shrunk in the bottom half of the weave, where a rich green dye takes central focus.



Figure 2: Indian epic Ramayana, silk weaving brocade in Kanchipuram

Figure 2 illustrates the story of the Indian epic “Ramayana.” This recurring motif is similar to the Shikargah motif of Central and South Asia. While the Shikargah pattern depicts hunting scenes, the brocade utilizes repeating figures and ornaments to illustrate a narrative of Ramayana. An opulent gold hue is laid atop a red background, resulting in a striking contrast which further elevates the retelling of this Indian epic.

Brinda Pamulapati, owner/managing director, of Venvi Art Gallery in Tallahassee, can be reached at (850) 322-0965 or visit www.VenviArtGallery.com

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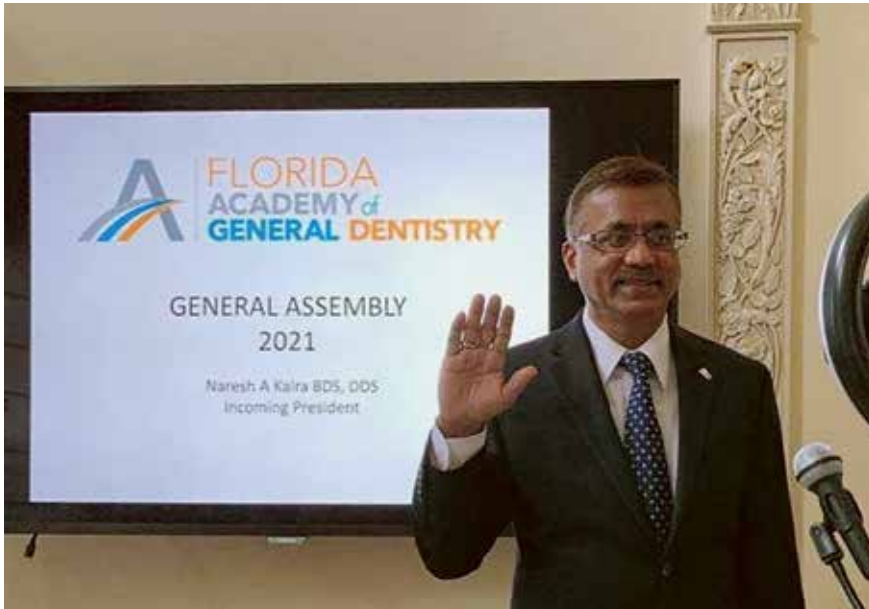
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Dr. Naresh Kalra

TAMPA DENTIST DR. NARESH KALRA RECEIVES FELLOWSHIP FROM ACADEMY OF GENERAL DENTISTRY

Naresh Kalra, BDS, DDS and now FAGD of Tampa, recently accepted the prestigious Fellowship Award during the Academy of General Dentistry convocation ceremony in Orlando.

The commencement celebration recognizes AGD member's commitment to excellence in dental education.

The Fellowship Award is presented to dentists looking to provide the highest quality of dental care by remaining current in their profession. To receive the award, Dr. Kalra completed 500 hours of continuing dental education, passed a comprehensive written exam and fulfilled three years of continuing membership with the AGD. As a recipient of this award, Dr. Kalra has joined an elite group of the dental community who understand that great smiles and good oral health for their patients are the result of going above and beyond basic requirements. Less than 9 percent of dentists in the country have achieved this award.

"The AGD is designed to influence professional growth and development through continuing education and we are proud to honor Dr. Kalra for his commitment and dedication to provide his patients with advanced and exceptional oral health care," says AGD President Gerald J. Botko, DMD, MAGD. "Dr. Kalra is exceeding industry requirements and paving a path of success distinguishing himself professionally amongst his peers and exemplifying his allegiance to the dental community."

Dr. Kalra graduated from New York University in 1991. In addition to the AGD, he is a member of the American Dental Association, Florida Dental Association, West Coast Dental Association and Hillsborough County Dental Association.

About the Academy of General Dentistry

The Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) is a professional association of more than 40,000 general dentists dedicated to providing quality dental care and oral health education to the public. Founded in 1952, AGD is the largest association for general dentists in the world and serves the needs and represents the interests of general dentists.

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ENTERTAINMENT

HINDI MOVIE PREVIEWS

By SHEPHALI J. RELE

“Mili” Starring Janhvi Kapoor, Sunny Kaushal, Manoj Pahwa; directed by Mathukutty Xavier; music by A.R. Rahman.

This survival thriller is a Hindi remake of the 2019 Malayalam language film “Helen,” which won the National Award for best debut film by Mathukutty Xavier. In the Hindi remake, Janhvi Kapoor stars in the title role as a young nurse who lives with her dotting father. Manoj Pahwa plays her father, Mr. Naudiyal, who isn’t too keen on her wishes to travel abroad one day. Mili also works in a



mall fast food joint and has a boyfriend, Sameer, played by Sunny Kaushal. One night, while taking her home, they are stopped by police. The next day, Mili never reaches home after her shift. A frantic search begins and her father suspects Sameer’s involvement in her disappearance. Meanwhile, Mili has accidentally been locked in the freezer at work and she must fight to stay alive as the temperature slowly drops. The Malayalam original was a wonderful film. With the same director at the helm, this version should also resonate.

“Uunchai” Starring Amitabh Bachchan, Anupam Kher, Boman Irani, Danny Denzongpa, Parineeti Chopra, Neena Gupta, Sarika, Nafisa Ali Sodhi; directed by Sooraj Barjatya; music by Amit Trivedi.



This Rajshri production features an ensemble star cast and promises to be a complete family entertainer. The story revolves around four longtime friends played by Amitabh Bachchan, Anupam Kher, Boman Irani and Danny Denzongpa. After Danny’s character suddenly dies, the others plan to honor his unfulfilled lifelong dream to climb Mount Everest. Despite obvious hurdles, including their age and health issues, they are determined in their goal. Parineeti Chopra plays Shradha, their guide, on the trek. Neena

Gupta, Sarika and Nafisa Ali are featured in supporting roles. Scenic filming locations include Nepal, Delhi, Mumbai, Agra, Lucknow and Kanpur. The makers call the adventure a celebration of friendship, “a personal, emotional and spiritual journey as they battle their physical limitations and discover the true meaning of freedom.”



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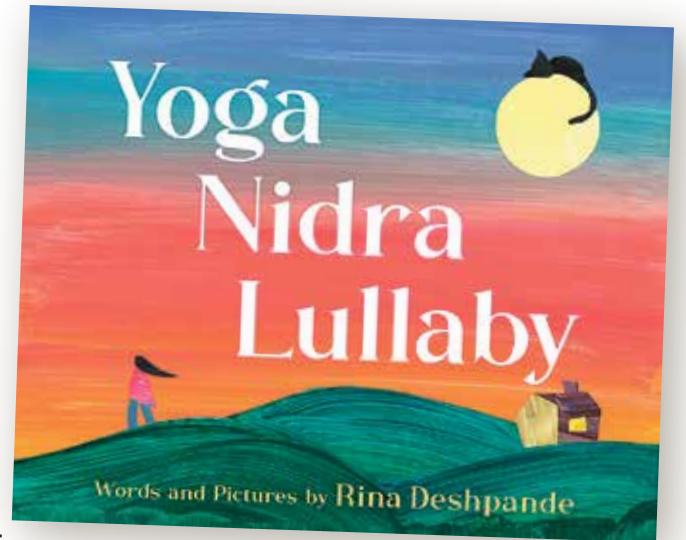


By Nitish Rele

“Yoga Nidra Lullaby” (32 pages; \$18.95) by Rina Deshpande; ages 4 to 8 years; published by North Atlantic Books (www.northatlanticbooks.com)

“The orange sun begins to sink. Skies are golden. Clouds are pink. What evening colors do you see? ... Birds are gliding on a breeze. Breathe in deeply. Feel at ease. Can you practice three cycles of deep breathing? 3...2...1.” So begins the sleepy-time tale elegantly illustrated with a watercolor-style montage for 4-to-8-year-olds to help relax before falling into

Nidra poem. It teaches children to say goodnight to their outer world such as clouds, moon and leaves, as well as bid goodnight to their inner being, as well as eyes, nose, arms and toes. Kudos to Deshpande, also a certified yoga teacher, for educating



a deep and peaceful sleep. According to the author Rina Deshpande, Yoga Nidra is a comforting way to relax the mind, body and breathing, step by step. When she was little, her mother created a lullaby called “Eyes Go to Sleep” inspired by yoga Nidra. That childhood inspiration led the Tampa native and pre K-12 educator to pen and sketch this Yoga

the young ones that sleep is a practice to be learned and yoga nidra can lead to deeper sleep, mindful awareness and lifelong practice. And she concludes: “Peace with you and peace with me. Peace with all the things that be. Om Shanti. Shanti. Shanti. Goodnight.”

“THE CLINIC” by Venkit S. Iyer, MD, MS, FACS, FRCS-C; Page Publishing; (<https://venkitiyer.com>); \$17.95
By DR. M.P. RAVINDRA NATHAN

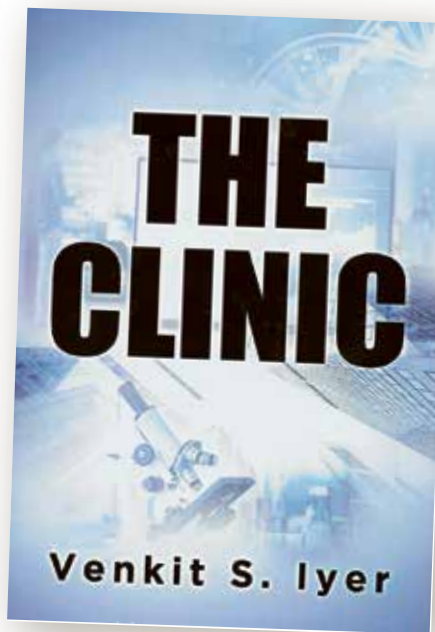


Dr. Venkit S. Iyer

“The Clinic”, a new book from Dr. Venkit Iyer, is a fascinating and engaging novel that shines a light on the complex topic of modern medical technology to treat a wide variety of medical disorders with illustrative cases and stories that are at once informative and heartwarming. The future of Medicine is going to be all technology –genetic technology, in particular. Genome analysis, genomic therapy and precision medicine will be the

buzzwords you are going to hear more often. ‘The Clinic,’ reads almost like a medical thriller and throws a lot of light on these new trends you want to read about at this time. With a facade of a science fiction, the entire book is based on solid facts culled from recent research data. It is a collection of stories and events of people from different walks of life who suffer from various medical problems, but eventually gets satisfactory treatment thanks to these innovative advances in Medicine.

The story of Rani and Suraj is about a couple who couldn’t have a baby by natural methods, but finally gets the job done through in - vitro fertilization. Karen and Vincent utilize a surrogate mother to get their baby. John Edwards, a young, tall, healthy and brilliant student from Yale finds out that he can make extra income by donating his desirable sperm to a sperm bank. Women who do not have husbands or steady boyfriends freeze their ova for future use. And all these are arranged through a ‘World Fertility Clinic’ that has a large international clientele. Some of the work that being done here is not legal, nor ethical, but customers can avail themselves of the use of a ‘dark website’ that caters to their fancy, and will arrange what they want. In the author’s own words, “Futuristic mothers will



have their own ability to custom create their baby with their choice of gender, color, IQ and longevity.” Simply unbelievable, right? There is more. Nora and Don Gerber’s baby is likely to be born with Down’s Syndrome and the baby of Nicki and Papas may go on to develop Thalasemia after birth. But with the new gene manipulation therapy offered by the ‘World Genetic Research Laboratory’, a fictitious lab, these problems are rectified while the baby is still in uterus! Some

of the events described in the book have already started happening and certainly will become the norm in the days to come. However, many of these treatments are still illegal or socially unacceptable but it won’t take long before they get accepted. Gene therapies are not confined to intrauterine manipulations to create desirable babies or treat congenital diseases. Many other fields will be benefited by these transformative trends. Cancer, the most fearsome disease, has new effective therapies that use these genetic techniques that include specific targeted therapy to control the disease. Yes, these new manipulations can be used even to delay the aging process and increase our life span! Truly mind boggling, right?

Needless to say, all these stories make fascinating reading. In summary, “The Clinic” unravels some of the critical breakthroughs in modern medicine. Gene therapy by altering the very essence of our DNA Coding can be and will be used for anything from fertility management and creating designer babies to behavior modification and cancer treatment. Looks like genes may be our destiny. Written in skillful conversational style by a master storyteller, this book is a must read for everyone.

Reviewed by M.P. Ravindra Nathan, MD, FACC, FACP, FRCP (London & Canada), FAHA

Author: “Stories from My Heart” and “Second Chance” – A Sister’s Act of Love

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