



Utkarsa

An OSA News Letter

Editors: Sridhar Rana & Julie Acharya Ray

Editorial

Dear Members & Readers,

On this auspicious day - the day marking the win of Good over evil, we are glad to bring you the September 2009 issue of OSA newsletter - Utkarsa. This issue contains many news items of interest to you, such as Past Management round up, New Managements' forward-looking statement, Local chapter news, 40th Convention and Spot Light on Orissa. OSA is proud of its members. In this issue, we have made a sincere effort to make that visible by keeping you in the center stage. In future issues, we will keep focusing on you by having a Public Profile section in Utkarsa for members for which we solicit each of your help. For Spot Light on Orissa section, please be encouraged to let us know all the good things that are happening in Orissa. This includes all the good and selfless works that you are doing for Orissa in your individual capacity or in terms of NGO.

We thank all of you who have contributed these valuable timely articles. Your imaginations have made this issue possible.
Thank you.

Editors.

Vijaya Dasami,
28 September 2009

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Dear Fellow OSA Members

Namaskar!

I and my team members are greatly honored by your trust and support in giving us the opportunity to serve OSA, a distinguished organization of 40 years. We take our responsibilities seriously. At the same time we do enjoy our roles and we have set our goals for high performance.

However, our high performance cannot be reached immediately, nor can they be achieved without your support, cooperation, volunteering and inspiration. We hope that we could receive all the ingredients that we need to make this organization a powerful, productive and prestigious organization.

We take this opportunity to introduce three main ideas that we think are necessary at this point of time to cater the needs of present OSA and its future.

Grace, Growth and Glory: Our Theme

We have chosen our theme as "Grace, Growth and Glory". Please refer to OSA webpage for our inaugural message and for a detail discussion on this theme. During the next 22 months we will be focusing our effort on this theme. Respectful and nurturing OSA environment, new member recruitment and result oriented activities would be our goals. We request all the members to help us achieve these goals.

Modular Structural Design

OSA is currently structured to have four elected officials, President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and thirteen local chapter representatives to manage the society. The National staff members include newsletter editors, web site administrator and other non-voting positions. The thirteen local chapter representatives mostly manage local chapter events and at times do not get enough time to devote for OSA National affairs. We propose that OSA create 5 distinct permanent sections within OSA to manage certain activities efficiently. The proposed sections are:

- Development Section
- Cultural Section
- Section on Women
- Youth Section
- Future Focus Section

Presidents Message

ପ୍ରିୟ ବନ୍ଧୁଗଣ

ନମସ୍କାର ।

ଓସା ଭଳି ଏକ ଐତିହାସିକ ସମାଜର ଦାୟିତ୍ୱ ନେବାପାଇଁ ଯୋଗ୍ୟ ବିବେଚିତ କରି ଆମମାନଙ୍କୁ ନିର୍ବାଚିତ କରିଥିବାରୁ ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କୁ ମୋର ଅଶେଷ ଧନ୍ୟବାଦ । ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କର ଆଶା ଓ ବିଶ୍ୱାସ ରଖିବାକୁ ଆମେମାନେ ଯଥାସାଧ୍ୟ ଉଦ୍ୟମ କରିବୁ ବୋଲି ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କ ନିକଟରେ ମୁଁ ବଚନବନ୍ଧ ରହୁଛି । ଯଦିଓ ଆମେମାନେ ନେତୃତ୍ୱ ନେବୁ, ତେବେ ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କର ସହଯୋଗ ବଳରେ ହିଁ ଆମେ ଓସାକୁ ଦୃଢ଼ ଓ ଉଜ୍ଜ୍ୱଳତମ କରାଇପାରିବୁ । ଓସାପାଇଁ ଆମେମାନେ ଯେଉଁ ସୁନେଲି ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ ଦେଖୁଛୁ, ଏକ ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣପୁରର ଭିତ୍ତି ସ୍ଥାପନା କରିବାର ସ୍ୱପ୍ନ, ତାହା କେବଳ ଆପଣମାନଙ୍କର ସହଯୋଗ ବଳରେ ହିଁ ସମ୍ଭବ ହୋଇ ପାରିବ ।

ଅମୂଲ୍ୟ ରତନ, ତୁମ ସ୍ନେହ ଧନ
ସଦା ରହୁ ଦୀପ ଜଳି
ମିଳିମିଶି ଆମେ ଓସା ସମାଜକୁ
ରହିବା କୋଶାର୍କ ଭଳି ।
ସୁଶୀଳତା ସ୍ୱର୍ଣ୍ଣ କରିବା ସମୃଦ୍ଧ
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ସୁବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଓସାର ଭିତ୍ତି ପ୍ରସ୍ଥାପନା
ବରମ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ ଆମର ।

ବିଜ୍ଞାନୀ ଦାସ (ପ୍ରେସିଡେଣ୍ଟ୍)

Currently we have established committees for the above activities. Please check our page on committees to find out details on the committee members. We propose that these committees evolve into sections adding 20 or more members. These sections would have a governing structure with Section President, Section Vice President and Section Secretary/Treasurer. Section members would devote their time contributing and accomplishing goals of the particular section.

We request members interested in creating a particular section to contact the respective committee members. Once those committees report 20 members, they are ready to be a part of the section. The sections would then be ready to set their goals, do the necessary fund-raising, accomplish the goals and make a difference.

For more on the descriptions of the sections, please check OSA web page on sections.

Member Ethics

Member Ethics is an important ingredient for building the stability of any organization. Considering OSA's uniqueness in its structure and composition, we request members to be supportive to its unpaid, volunteer officers. We request members to help the volunteers to carry out their duties effectively and contribute to the society positively. Mistakes do happen. In a road with 35 miles per hour speed limit, one may drive 25 miles per hour or 45 miles per hour with the error still within the tolerance limit. When an organization completely depends on volunteers, we as members should be a little tolerant for errors that are within limits with an acceptable standard deviation.

Many times errors remain due to lack of time for a thorough analysis, lack of volunteers for activities and unpredicted situations. For an organization like OSA, assertiveness is the best way to report problems, state concerns, file complaints, address any issues and propose any changes. Please refer to the "Membership" page in OSA web for member ethics guidelines and be assertive while communicating on OSA affairs on OSA mediums.

Concluding Remarks

Please check OSA webpage <http://www.orissasociety.org> frequently to have updates on OSA organizational activities. Please become a member of OSAnet, an internet forum for communication among OSA members.

There are three ways that you can serve the organization, by volunteering your time to carry out an activity, being a critique and providing useful constructive ideas, and by making financial contributions.

As a credible and distinguished voice in North America, we can leverage our cultural talents, expand our community and make a difference in Oriya communities in North America and throughout the world. OSA is US. It's our society. It's the duty of all of us to protect the name and fame of OSA I invite you to extend your supporting hands. Together, we can create a glorious present and future for OSA.

Sincerely,
Bigyani Das
President

From Secretary's Desk

Dear fellow members:

Wishing you all a very Happy Fall, 09. We had a momentous occasion in celebrating the 40th anniversary of OSA in New Jersey. It was so well attended by our fellow Oriyas from different parts of the country! It was wonderful to see everybody enjoying the hospitality of the New York/ New Jersey chapter, especially with sumptuous food, breath taking cultural performances and many invigorating seminars. My team members and I thank you all for electing us to the OSA offices, 2009-2010. For the next two years, we all would try to live up to your expectations.

In order to define my goals, I remember a recent encounter with a fellow respectable member of OSA. He directly asked me, "What will OSA do for us? Is not it just a social club with its annual convention?" "I was puzzled. Since the year I came to USA in 1989, I have

been attending the OSA conventions, always looking forward to meeting so many fellow Oriyas on this occasion and encouraging our children to connect with other Oriyas across the country. I always felt, I am getting so much from OSA. What can I do for my organization?

I would like to emphasize a few goals. Firstly, I would reiterate that I owe a lot to my own home state. We as fellow Oriyas in the diaspora must take up some activities in order to promote cultural exchange between the people of the State and those of us living in the diaspora.

Second, I would try to increase membership of OSA among our fellow Oriyas in the USA. We would encourage parents to gift membership to their children in order to encourage them to participate in OSA activities. We must encourage the younger generation – our future- to play active role in the organization. We will emphasize on various ways of membership drive in California among other states.

Third, I would like to promote inter-state cultural exchange programs among the second generation Oriyas.

We hope that you will rededicate yourself to these efforts and together we will strive for a stronger OSA.

Sincerely,
Annapurna Pandey
Secretary

Call to Service

By Bigyani Das, President
Pradeep Mohapatra, Vice President
Annapurna Pandey, Secretary
Akhileswar Patel, Treasurer

Our organization faces new challenges. These challenges come from its structure, composition and its members. The heterogeneous nature of its membership and its own growth have added the challenge of more misunderstanding among its members due to difference in opinion while discussing and analyzing issues. There have been aggressive steps taken up by a few members against the

organization and its volunteers which are unexpected. These challenges are faced by every organization. The difference between those organizations and our organization is that those organizations have made themselves ready to face the challenges where as our organization is not ready yet.

We have created a Security and Defense Committee to analyze these types of security threats and challenges, find solutions and get ready to deal with the unexpected situations. It is our great pleasure to welcome Saradindu Misra of New Jersey, Sradhananda Mishra of Canada and Devjani Misra of New York as the members of the Security and Defense committee.

Our organization is based on the core values of friendship and fellowship. Extreme actions such as legal actions were not given any thought in the constitution before. However, considering recent occurrences, OSA should be ready with funds to face any legal challenges. We are fortunate to have Mr Sujit Mohanty, Esq providing Pro-Bono service as the legal-counsel of OSA. Considering the nature of legal system in USA that is not enough to provide us 100% protection and a worry free environment to move forward.

These challenges and their implications for OSA's mission require strengthening the financial resources.

OSA must have sufficient income for defending itself and for the essential expansion of its core activities in cultural propagation, promotion, development, education, public information and for improving the depth and diversity of our community. Currently OSA does not have any fund for defending itself. The other activities are currently supported in small scales by a few generous OSA members. Annual convention is never self-sustaining and it always creates a lot of stress for the convention organizers. Our annual souvenir publication and distribution suffer for lack of funds.

Our team's primary focus is to make OSA strong, stable and self-sustaining. This can be achieved by increasing its financial strength. We request members to contribute generously to OSA, OSA Security and Defense Fund and OSA core fund to make the

organization ready to face any challenges boldly and confidently.

From Outgoing Executives Office

Message from outgoing President

Dear Members:

I just want to say is that a relationship with OSA never ends. It's just like a relationship with family - children grow up but parenting does not stop. There is no retirement from OSA and OSA needs us more than ever.

My feelings for our Orissa Society of Americas (OSA) have not changed. I am responsible as an contributing member and the spirit is that I can make a difference. I can still contribute and I can join hands with the current office bearers to take OSA forward.

When I think of past two years - I take pride in my team. Each one of them were so dedicated and sincere. Ashutosh Dutta, Vice President and Priyadarshan Patra, Secretary are young members and future of OSA. Both of them brought enthusiasm, resources, objectivity, and community spirits to OSA. Sandip Dasverma, Treasurer who brought wisdom and perseverance to OSA. My Board of Governors gave me a diversity and different perspective to look issues objectively. I thank their support. More I respect the confidence of my members, who elected us to take the office.

I am privileged to enjoy the two best conventions - the 39th Annual Convention at Toronto under the leadership of Dr. Gagan Panigrahi and the 40th Annual Convention at New Jersey under the leadership of Dr. Uma Mishra. Among many mile stones, we started the Regional Drama Festival under the leadership of Dr. Srigopal Mohanty and Sandip Dasverma.

Our financial records are much transparent, audited and filed on a timely fashion under a CPA firm. DOLA was created to give a overall membership information

at our website. OSANet became operational and better managed to bring civility. Chapter were more counted and coordinated to get involved and elect responsible office bearers.

We were also not spared to experience with legal issues at the court. We got opportunities to deal with lawyers, summons, court appearances, conducting General Body Meetings to execute Judge's Consent Order etc. I thank for the opportunity.

We tried to achieve many other things to make it a better organization by revising the OSA Constitution etc. But we will pass on that to the newly elected OSA Office bearers under the presidency of Bigyani Das. I am sure, OSA will move forward. Our support will be there forever.

Let's make our OSA a better and stronger organization.

Pratap Das
Past President

Report- OSA General Body Meeting 2009

Dr Priyadarshan Patra, Secretary, 2007-09

July 4, 2009
11:30 AM-1:30 PM, Trenton Marriott, Trenton, NJ.

OSA general body meeting (GBM) took place in Salon A & B of Trenton Marriott on July 4, 2009. Mails were earlier sent to OSANET and individual members to send their proxy forms for the quorum purposes. About 200 OSA members physically attended the general body meeting. But there were about 131 members present at the end when the last vote was taken. This event was recorded. The Secretary, Priyadarshan Patra, made it clear at the beginning that this meeting was being recorded and that only members can vote or actively participate in the GBM. Guests and observers were allowed to sit in a separate section in the back of the room as observers. Members entered the member area of the GBM after checking in at the door.

Hard copies of the agenda and proxy forms were also kept outside the room to give a chance to the people to review or pick these up. Plaintiffs of the court case were also allowed to distribute their grievances to the attendees. Hard copies of those grievances were also made available at the entrance to the GBM room.

OSA president Pratap Das started the meeting by welcoming the members and described the current state of affair of OSA, and informed that OSA has been asked to include the recent court consent order, the case involving Amit Nayak et al, in the GBM agenda.

Pratap Das introduced OSA general counsel Sujit Mohanty and OSA attorney Sunanda Holmes to the GBM. He also introduced Saradindu Misra who would be the parliamentarian of the general body meeting and invited Saradindu Misra to the podium. Saradindu Misra briefly reminded members about the rules for an orderly meeting.

Minutes of 2008 were presented by the president. The president and the secretary went over the general body meeting minutes of 2008 and asked for the minutes to be passed. Darshan spoke about the minutes of 2008 and all the election procedures that were followed. There was a motion to approve 2008 meeting minutes it and it was seconded. Vote was taken to approve it. It was approved by the members present in the room unanimously.

The secretary gave a brief report and indicated that as of July 1st there were 753 member registrations out of which a few were Single memberships. Secretary briefly reported the effort made to reform the constitution and the new constitution draft being circulated among members and OSA net.

He then suggested a "biennial convention" should be considered by members considering the cost and effort required every year and given that we did not have a bid for 2010 convention. It was mentioned that there was discussion among the board of governors about lack of contenders for the 2010 convention; some members suggested rotating the convention, taking to a new region/area, etc. However, the only bid received on the spot was from the DC chapter

president Sikha Sen proposed to hold the 2010 Convention.

Member Radhakant Mishra asked if OSA had emails of all members. The executives replied that we don't have correct emails of nearly 10% of members despite vigorous and lengthy campaign through repeated emails, osanet, web, mails to chapter heads and even some phone calls to members. The president reminded the members' responsibility to keep their record complete and correct, which has been facilitate through the DOLA electronic system. Members applauded the effort, acknowledging the treasurer's repeated reminders.

A member asked that the deliberations be done in Odia. After a brief discussion, the parliamentarian informed that the proceedings need to be in English as it's being recorded according to the court consent order.

Treasurer's Report was presented by Sandip Dasverma and the financial report was approved by the General Body. The treasurer mentioned the fixed-deposit account and a running account. The executives had made a strategic decision to have a fixed deposit to generate some reasonable earnings from the OSA corpus. The treasurer also mentioned the cash advance made to the convention committee, and the joint fund-raising effort.

Next, the Parliamentarian said that there are three resolutions on the table and allowed presentation, discussion and voting on the floor.

Resolution 1: The new constitution draft is ready to be sent by the 2009 officers for voting by members to adopt by a majority vote.

The resolution was moved by Umaballava Mishra and seconded by Digambar Mishra. The resolution was approved by the General Body.

Resolution 2: If any chapter raises funds for OSA through either annual memberships, or donations for OSA activities, OSA shall send a yearly "rebate" of 25% of that amount to that chapter to sustain & support the chapter.

The resolution was moved by Digambar Mishra and seconded by Dharendra Kar. The General Body passed the motion.

Members were concerned about frivolous law suits, and the observed penchant for legal actions based on minor disputes. After initial presentation, discussion and fine-tuning by the members, the following resolution was brought to the floor for vote.

Resolution 3: It is hereby recommended that OSA adopt the following process for mediating any disputes that may arise with respect to its constitution or by-laws through an amendment of OSA by-laws: A complaining member must file a complaint with the OSA’s Executive Committee outlining in detail the nature of the complaint. Within 30 days of the filing of the complaint, a 3 member Mediation Committee shall be convened by the Executive Committee. The Mediation Committee shall consist of one member selected by the Complainant, one member selected by the Executive Committee, then these 2 members shall select a third member of the Mediation Committee and choose the committee Chair among the three. The Mediation Committee shall hear the complaint and issue a written decision of its findings within 60 days of the convening of the Mediation Committee. If the Mediation Committee could not be formed or either party is not satisfied with the findings/decision of the Mediation Committee, any party may proceed on the matter to a court having proper jurisdiction. The complaining member losing the proceedings which they bring in court shall pay the legal costs, including but not limited to the attorney costs, of the prevailing party.

(There was a brief motion introduced by a member to remove the last two sentences arguing it was superfluous, but only 5 members supported it, so the two sentences with a slight fine tuning were kept.)

The resolution, drafted with attorney Holmes’ help, was moved by Priyadarsan Patra and Pratap Das and was seconded by Arun Das. The resolution was passed by the General Body by show of hands (only 3 said “no”). New OSA Executives are expected to propose suitable amendments to the bylaws incorporating this.

At this point, the parliamentarian introduced the 2009 Election-Consent Order from Montgomery County, MD. He gave an opportunity to the plaintiffs

OSA Balance Sheet as of May’09

From Sandip Dasverma
Past Treasurer

Current Status: Summery May 31st 2008		
Country Wide Bank(CWB)	Acct No 1	\$60,000.00
Country Wide Bank(CWB)	Acct No 2	\$25,000.00
Bank of America	Savings A/c	\$2,276.53
Bank of America	Checking A/c	\$1,381.54
Fixed deposits	Fdeposits	\$26,765.00
	Total:	\$115,423.07
Received from Previous Admin		\$ 94,799.91
Increase in deposit:		\$20,623.16

Current Status: Summery May 31, 2009		
Country Wide Bank(CWB)	Acct No 1	\$60,000.00
Country Wide Bank(CWB)	Acct No 2	\$25,000.00
Bank of America	Savings A/c	\$0.09
Bank of America	Checking A/c	\$12,515.28
Fixed deposits	Fdeposits	\$32,522.05
Convention advance		\$5,000.00
	Total:	\$135,037.42
Balance at the end of May 31, 2008		\$115,423.07
Increase in deposit in last one year:		\$19,614.35

and other OSA members who wanted to speak about any irregularities of the OSA 2009 election. Parliamentarian asked how many people want to speak about any OSA election irregularities. Amit Nayak, the principal plaintiff, was not present. Ansuman Bal, the second plaintiff, registered for the convention but did not attend the GBM. Agni Jandhyala, the third plaintiff, attended the meeting, spoke for some time and then he asked Lipishree Nayak to present their allegation consisting of some 28 points. At the end of the Lipishree Nayak's detailed presentation of the allegations to the general body, Anadi Nayak and again Agni Jandhyala spoke briefly. Considering that nearly an hour was spent on the matter already, the parliamentarian decided not to allow a rebuttal from OSA or its election commissioners (the defendants), in the interest of time, and the defendants did not object.

Then, all members present in the general body meeting at the time were asked to vote on the question if they considered that OSA conducted a fair election for 2009-11 and there has been no violation of the election procedures stated in the OSA constitutional guidelines. The general body voted the following way, by show of hands: 126 members voted in favor and 5 members voted against. As per the court consent order, the Secretary announced the said vote counts to the floor for reconfirmation and there was no objection.

Amiya Mohanty thanked the outgoing executive committee. President thanked the members for participating in the court's consent order.

President invited the incoming office bearers, Bigyani Das and her team, to the podium to speak to the members. Members congratulated the new team with a standing ovation and thanked the outgoing executive committee. Bigyani Das spoke to the present members for five minutes and spoke about how she can steer OSA in future years. Agni Jandhyala came and congratulated the president-elect Bigyani Das as well.

At this time it was already 1:30 PM and the meeting had continued for 2 hours exceeding its original

scheduled slot of 1 hour & 30 minutes. The Parliamentarian adjourned the meeting.

Appendix 1. The 2008 GBM Summary Minutes accepted at the 2009 GBM:

Purna Patnaik was chosen the parliamentarian.

The president, the secretary and the treasurer gave their reports and questions and answers from the floor were entertained. DOLA and Speak-your-mind e-voting system were demonstrated.

The BOG nominated 3 members (Purna Mishra, Chitta Baral and Deba Mallick) to serve as the Election Committee. There was no other alternative proposal and the present General Body formally accepted the nomination of the Election Committee.

A 5-year Membership category was discussed and the general body asked the executive committee to allow a month and e-vote on the acceptance of this membership category (in accordance with the resolutions about the reminders on OSAnet and e-voting.)

By show of hands, members accepted that OSA 2009 Convention will be hosted by the NY-NJ Chapter

Resolutions passed in 2008 GBM

- *We resolve that DOLA and Speak Your Mind Polling mechanisms be the primary vehicle for passing resolutions (other than election/voting of OSA officers).*
- *OSANET will be primary vehicle as debate forum for proposals.*
- *Three reminders (gap of approximately 1 week) will be sent on osanet before voting is closed.*
- *If a member does not still vote, it will be taken as abstained.*
- *Email notification about vote & debate will be sent to all registered emails.*
 - *OSA website will have a reminder about the motion, for the public.*

OSA Award Winners



Our Special Thanks to

OSA Awards Coordinator: Mr. Manoj Mahapatra
Meghna Memorial Award Coordinator:
Mr. Saradindu Misra
& The Judges for various categories



By Ashutosh Dutta, Past Vice President

Life Time Achievement Award Suramani Pandit Raghunath Panigrahi



Suramani Pandit Raghunath Panigrahi, a musical maestro of international repute, is famous for his renditions of devotional songs in Hindustani, Carnatic and Odissi style. Trained by music geniuses like Pandit Neelamani Panigrahi(his father), the late Muduppa Rao in Carnatic classical music, the late Pandit D.V. Paulskar of Pune in Hindustani Classical music, the late Pandit Biswanath Das and Narsing Nanda in Oriya classical style, he was groomed to become a versatile singer and composer. Singing in 12 different languages, he has earned a special place among contemporary Indian Vocalists. His mastery over Jayadev's immortal Geeta Govindam remains unmatched to date. He is the pioneer in singing Santh Tulasidas's Rama Charita Manas for the Odissi Abhinaya style of dancing. He has toured with his wife the Late Padmashree Smt. Sanjukta Panigrahi, a world renowned Odissi dancer, giving performances in music and dance festivals around the world.

Panditji has received recognitions from the President and the Prime Minister of India for his excellence in music. He was honored with the prestigious Grand Prix Award by Govt. of France for singing Geeta Govindam in the category of traditional music of the Universe (only Indian to receive this award). His other awards and achievements include Suromani Award by Soor Singar Samshad of Mumbai, best singer award for devotional songs by All India Radio, best playback singer award for singing in Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Oriya movies, Central Sangeet Natak Academy award for his contribution to the field of music, All India Cine Critics Award, Best music composer, Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja award from Govt of Orissa, and so forth. He has been honored with Doctorate in Literature from both Berhampur University and Utkal University in '06 and '09 respectively.

Subrina Biswal Award for Academic Excellence for 2009 Ashutosh "Ashis" Patra



Orissa Society of Americas recognizes Mr. Ashutosh "Ashish" Patra for his outstanding accomplishments as graduating High School Student by conferring on him 2009 Subrina Biswal Memorial Award. This award was initiated in 1990 by Dr. Nilambar and Annapurna Biswal of Maryland in the loving memory of their daughter, Subrina. and is jointly sponsored by Orissa Society of Americas, Dr. Nilambar and Annapurna Biswal and Dr. Sitakantha Dash. Mr. Patra will receive a one-time scholarship of US \$1000.00 and a plaque.

Ashutosh, affectionately called Ashish, was born in Austin, Texas to his parents Dr. Priyadarsan and Anu Patra. He graduated as the class valedictorian from Sunset High in Portland, Oregon with IB Diploma. Next fall, he will join the Jerome Fisher M&T program at UPenn/Wharton. His interests span from engineering, math to history and policy. A Taekwondo black belt, he earned scholar-athlete awards for all 4 years as a varsity tennis player, and lead his doubles team. He served as President of the Speech & Debate, the

Model United Nations and the Multicultural Club. He enjoys playing Piano and Sax. He has published a journal paper in the Water Environment Federation Journal. Ashish loves engineering, but also realizes that socially-conscious business sense must accompany innovations. He finds a higher purpose in scientific pursuits. One of his independent scientific innovations was in designing cheaper and efficient fuel cells where microbes work to generate electricity and clean waste water. His research in building "Water Lenses" earned a First place Grand Award at the Int'l Science and Engineering Fair. Some of his recent recognitions as a young scientist and thinker include the 2009 International BioGENEious Award, MIT Think Award and the US Stockholm Junior Water Prize for research in Low-cost Microbial Fuel Cells.

2009 Distinguished Oriya Award Mr. Manaranjan Pattanayak



Manaranjan Pattanayak is a remarkable self-made man. He has had a long journey from a barely educated rice farmer in village Menda, near Sonapur, Dist. Bolangir to a successful international consultant & adviser in the steel industry. Throughout this journey, Mr Pattanayak has kept close contacts with his roots and through his strong involvement in community activities has made a difference in many a lives. Along the way, Mrs. Minati Pattanayak, an accomplished physician, has been an equal and able partner.

Perhaps the greatest of his achievements are Mr. Pattanayak's contributions to the Oriya community in US and Canada. He was a founder member of the Orissa Society of the Americas. During his stay in Canada, he (along with Pratap Patnaik) started the famous weekend get together of Canadian Oriyas in cottages by the Rice Lake. Mr Pattanayak along with others immigrated to the US in the 80s. The 'Canadian Oriya' culture of the summer weekend cottage event, started by Mr Pattanayak, spread to other OSA chapters.

In 1984, he was elected to become the President of the then OSANY (New York Chapter of OSA). Has been a convenor of OSA conventions in 1984 and 1994 and raised the standards of convention cultural programs and lodging facilities

During his association with OSANY, Mr. Pattanayak was instrumental in setting up an endowed scholarship programs in the three universities of Orissa. For the last 20 years or so OSANY scholarships are being awarded to the best graduates of the three universities. Mr Pattanayak has also had strong interest and contribution to cultural activities of OSA.

Mr Pattanayak was a pioneer in the establishment of the Kaling Hospital Project in Bhubaneswar which started as a dream by a group of expatriate Oriya doctors and entrepreneurs. He took charge of the project, with no salary or travel costs, saw the project to completion, and saw the first patients admitted. By 2000, Kalinga Hospital emerged as the only multi-specialty hospital in Orissa, the only one with an Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Now that Kalinga Hospital has demonstrated that it is possible to run a state-of-the art hospital in Orissa.

2009 Utkalamani Gopabandhu Dash Memorial Award

Dr. Saheb Sahu



Dr Saheb Sahu was born in Mulbar village (old Sambalpur district and new Bargarh district) to a family of moderate means. His father is a farmer with 5 acres of non-irrigated land. Dr Sahu attended C.S Zila School, joined G.M College Sambalpur, and then completed M.B.B.S. from A.I.I.M.S, New Delhi. He is the first Oriya to be admitted to M.B.B.S Program. He immigrated to USA in 1970. He is an eminent and board certified Pediatric and Neonatologist. Dr Sahu was the director of Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Mercy Hospital Des Moines IA from 1974-2001, professor of Pediatrics at Des Moines University from 1973-2007. He is an author of 11 books including 'What Can Be Done for Abject Poverty of Orissa.

He is one of the Promoters of Kalinga Hospital, Bhubaneswar. Dr. and Mrs. Sahu established Shakuntala-Bidyadhar Trust of Sambalpur. Over the last twenty years the Trust has established and run one high school, seven middle schools, four girls' hostels, plus two science colleges. The trust has installed more than 60 tube wells in schools, provided school supplies to more than 30 schools and provided scholarships to hundreds of students. The Trust with the help of Trees for Life from Wichita, KS, has planted more than one million trees in Bargarh and Sambalpur districts. This program started 20 years ago and still continues today. Dr. Sahu has also constructed and funded, along with A.A.P.I, a health clinic near his village. This clinic has been serving 16 villages for the last 18 years.

His advice to OSA members both young and old is: Big ideas will come but do something *now* and *this year*. Help your village/town, school/college or help a student, especially girl student. Provide financial help, become a mentor. US\$200 to \$500 a year will go a long way in Orissa. Become the torch bearer and do something for Orissa this year.

2009 Utkalamani Gopabandhu Dash Memorial Award

Dr. Indu Bhusan Misra



Dr Indu Bhusan Mishra was born on Feb 10, 1938 in Kujahala which is now in Jajpur district. From his childhood days, he has had an inclination towards social service and volunteering. It started as small activities such as cleaning of the village; later on contributing to disaster relief activities such as floods. Mr Mishra immigrated to USA in 1966. He has been a strong advocate and role model for making a difference in the society through volunteering; he has done that through own involvement in many projects. He was awarded volunteer for the disaster action team (DAT) by the American Red Cross in 1997. Since 2000 he has done relief work for Our Village Trust in joint collaboration with Habitat for Humanity India. Thereafter through Mishra Charity, he helped build homes for a Harijan village in Jagatsingpur area,

supported the school for the blind, helped educate Harijan girls to earn engineering degree and helped education for the Adibashi students in Kalahandi. During Tsunami he and his son Tinu personally went to Sri Lanka and with the help of Habitat for Humanity Sri Lanka, helped build houses in Galle and Batticaloa. A proponent of offering vocational training in schools and 2 year colleges, he has been trying to implement it in Orissa for the last 15 years. He hopes that Orissa or at least a district there will one day adopt the concept and create employment for the mass as it has happened in US, all western countries and especially in Korea. A life member of OSA and a member since its inception, he lives with his wife Kanan (Jhunu) in Scottsdale, AZ.



2009 Youth Volunteer Award Ms Supriya Misra



Supriya is a recent graduate of Health Careers High School, a science and medical magnet school in San Antonio, TX. During high school, Supriya conducted research at the UTHSC in hopes of finding an alternative/supplemental treatment for cervical cancer – presented findings at science fair, earning distinction from the US Army. From a young age, Supriya has been conscious about social activities. During summers, Supriya volunteers at Children's Association for Maximum Potential, a summer camp for physically and mentally disabled children. She has also volunteered at the Methodist Children's Hospital in San Antonio, TX for the last three years to help make the hospital more child friendly, especially for long term patients. In the summer of 2008, Supriya visited a school for disabled children called *Sahaya* in Cuttack and exchanged ideas and teaching tips with the staff. In 2008, Supriya was elected the Vice-President of the Children's Advisory Board at the hospital. In addition to her interest in

community activities, Supriya has excelled as a student and in school activities. She has consistently excelled in history, latin, and persuasive speaking; has earned gold medals in the National Latin Exam. She has also been an active member of the Student Council and Mu Alpha Theta, the Math Honors Society. Her history fair project of 2007 focusing on two Oriya freedom fighters was invited to be presented at the Bob Bullock Museum in Austin, TX and the Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio. As President of National Honor Society, Supriya organized and hosted a school wide talent show; tutored peers in Latin, English, Math and Biology before and after school. She also has strong interests in arts and music; earned seats in youth, varsity and regional orchestras, awarded Outstanding Violinist at every solo and ensemble competition for the past 7 years. In the fall of 2009 Supriya will be joining University of Texas where she plans to pursue business, liberal arts, and pre-med subjects.

spare time as well as actively learning Oriya. She is an avid reader, cyclist, music aficionado, and artist, as well. Her main influences include her parents and her grandparents including the ones in California, Boston and North Carolina. Thanks so much to all her family for all their wonderful support.

2009 Meghana Memorial Award for Creative Writing [A]

Ms Malina Maharana



Malina, daughter of Sasmita and Madhab Maharana, resident of Houston, Texas. She is currently a 6h grader in Conerstone Academy. She loves to read at any free time, likes listening/singing/dancing to hindi and oriya music, likes writing mystery stories. She is also taking odissi dance lessons.

2009 Meghana Memorial Award for Creative Writing [B]

Ms Lipsa Panda



Lipsa Panda is the daughter of Lalit and Meeta Panda who currently reside in Long Island. She is in 12th grade and attends Syosset High School. Lipsa enjoys writing in her

2009 Yuva Kala Vikash Award

Suraj Patnaik



Suraj Patnaik is a promising young artist who has been groomed to preserve and promote Oriya music outside Orissa. He is trained in Hindustani classic music from Guru Smt. Mani Majumdar (Chicago). He has received training in Odissi music and Gita Govinda from Guru Sri Keshab Ch Raut and Pt. Raghunath Panigrahi respectively. Through his association with Chinmaya Mission, Suraj has been a role model for many by chanting the Bhagavad Gita and reciting stutis and vandans. Chinmaya Mission released his first Sanskrit and Hindi Bhajan CD - Madhuras in 2004. His first music concert was arranged by Raaga (a cultural organization to promote Oriya music) in 2006 at Bhubaneswar, Orissa. Suraj has been actively engaged in OSA activities since his childhood. He was a recipient of the Subrina Biswal Award for music at the age of 4 and again at 7. Suraj is also trained in the western style of singing. He recently got selected to an elite Jazz Vocal Group called Wildscats led by Grammy Award winning music department of Nequa Valley High School in Naperville, Illinois. Suraj is an apt violinist and enjoys playing piano in his spare time. An honor student in the class of 2011, Suraj wishes to use his musical and academic talents to serve the community.



2009 Kalashree Award

Dr. Gagan Panigrahi



Mr Gagan Panigrahi comes from a village named Barunsing near the town of Balasore in Odisha. His village life helped him interact with nature as well as the community: the vivid color of nature and seasons inspired him to draw and paint whereas the community life awakened his love for people. During his school and college years he used to go with his mother to watch daskathia, pala and jatra in the village while his peers were more interested in the cinema. He has acted several times in school dramas. The school headmaster Mr Gourikanta Kar who was also a good actor, influenced him tremendously to take part in dramas. His acting continued during his M.Sc. days with some interruptions. He has been awarded first prize in painting in college and acted in several award winning dramas. However his main acting interest came to life after his marriage with Sabita who had keen interest in Drama and upon coming in contact with Sri Gopal Mohanty and Niranjana Mishra in Canada, both of whom are Kalashree award winners of OSA. He acted as "Bhagia" for the first time in North America in a major drama *Chha Maana Athaguntha* under the direction of Srigopal Mohanty in 25th anniversary of OSA convention in Pomona, New Jersey (1994). For the last fifteen years he has been acting in and directing several plays in CanOSA and OSA. The drama performed under his direction at the Detroit convention (2007) was judged as the best drama in Pramode Patnaik Drama Competition. In the Toronto OSA convention (2008) for the first time in North America, he produced a Geetinatya, *Karnarjuna* where he acted as *Karna*. His artistic ability allows him to create stage scenery with ease and heightened aesthetic appearance. Recently he has shown tremendous interest in Odia poetry and has written approximately a hundred poems, some of which have been published in newspapers and OSA journals. His poems are heavily influenced by his village life, people and experiences. He is a molecular geneticist by profession and works in the MaRS district for The Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto. He obtained his

Ph.D from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He has received a National Scholarship and other Fellowships from various agencies during his student life. He has published several research papers in international peer-reviewed scientific journals.

Guest of Honor

Ms. Kalpana Dash



Kalpana Dash, a mountaineer from the Sariapara village in Dhenkanal district of Orissa, now resides at Kumbhar Sahi, Dhenkanal Town, successfully climbed the 8,848-meter the highest peak of World Mount Everest. She is the first Oriya everester. A team of 5 climbers from Canada- US and Nepal climbed the peak with the leadership of Miss Kalpana Dash. She reached the peak at 11.30 AM on 21st May 2008. Kalpana Dash is an advocate by profession. Kalpana Dash was born to late Gunanidhi Dash and Smt. Silabala Dash.

Guest of Honor

Ms. Abasar Beuria



Born on November 1941, Abasar Beuria acquired Bachelor of Arts degree from Ravenshaw College, premier educational institute and a Masters of Arts degree in Political Science from Utkal University. After attaining his masters degree, he started his career as a lecturer and then as a bank officer in the State Bank of India, before joining the Indian Foreign Service in the mid sixties. Throughout his distinguished career and significant diplomatic assignments, Mr. Beuria was critically involved as a member of the Indian delegation in bilateral and multilateral/international talks like G-77, Non – Alignment Summit, Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, and served in important Indian diplomatic missions in Japan, former Soviet Union,

United States of America, United Arab Emirates, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Madagascar.

He is presently residing in Bhubaneswar, Orissa and is closely associated with leading socio-cultural and philanthropic organizations, namely Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage, Sarvodaya International Trust, and Rotary International. He contributes regularly to leading newspapers and Oriya magazines. He is the author of a recently published book, titled "Desha, Videsha, and Pradesha".



Special Guest

Mrs. Arathi Krishna



Arathi Krishna was born in Karnataka, India to Mr. Begane Ramiah, former Cabinet Minister in the Karnataka Government and Mrs. Seetha Ramaiah. Her academic qualifications include BA in Political Science, History & Economics, Masters in Political Science and another Masters in International Commerce & Public Policy from George Mason University, USA. Having studied and worked in the United States, and given her close interactions with the NRIs and PIOs in the US, Arathi Krishna built up and maintained extensive contacts with the influential Indian American community in the US and understood their dynamics and compulsions. She subsequently accepted the post of Adviser to the largest Indian American organization in the US namely the National Federation of Indian American Associations (NFIA) in an honorary capacity. The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Government of India, appointed Arathi Krishna as the Community Development Officer in the Indian Embassy in Washington DC in 2007. She was also one of the Panelist at Pravasi Bharathiya Diwas, 2008 held in New Delhi. Arathi Krishna's contribution to Karnataka was recognized by the Sahyadri Association on February 24th, 2008, at Ambhedkar

Bhavan wherein she was honoured by the Governor of Karnataka. Arathi Krishna was facilitated by Global Organisation of people of Indian Origin On June 30th, 2008, at a function in Washington DC. She has also written an autobiographical journey of her life - "A Quest Across The Sea."

Special Guest

Mr. Pratap K. Mohanty



Pratap K Mohanty, joined the Consulate General of India as its Consul [Education] in February, 2009. Prior to this assignment he was the Deputy Educational Advisor in Ministry of Human Resource Development, Govt. of India during which he was involved in some of the flagship programs in social sector such as Universalization of Elementary Education, and Mid-day Meal scheme. He also held charge of the national program of ICT usage at High Schools. He holds a Master Degree in Political Science from JNU, New Delhi. His interests are: social sector planning, issues relating to poverty alleviation and use of technology in pedagogy.



Chapter News



Chapter News

CANOSA News May –Aug 2009

By Jibanjit Tripathy

Bisuba Milana – Sunday May 27th, 2009

Annual Bishuba Milana Cultural event was held on May 17th at the Chinguacousy Secondary School auditorium in Brampton. The event started with opening song Vande Maataram, followed by welcome address by the CanOSA President and a souvenir was

Minister Stephen Harper, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty and several contributions of articles, poems



& drawing from members and children. The highlights of the evening cultural performance were, Odissi Dance Guruvandana & BATU NRITYA (STHAI NRUTYA),



released by Niranjana Mishra to mark the occasion, which included congratulatory notes from Prime



children drama Raja Harishchandra, group remix folk dance. Smt. Sumitra Padhi gave away certificates and trophies to young participants. CanOSA Treasurer thanked everybody for their contributions for the event. Finally drama bana-nAsika was presented



CanOSA President in Panorama India Board
Saturday May 23rd, 2009

CanOSA President was inducted into Panorama India board of directors for 2009-2010 and was appointed Secretary for the same Period. Panorama India is a pioneer not-for-profit umbrella organization, established in 1999, helps unite various cultural associations, groups and individuals in Canada to project a common identity based on their Indian Heritage and to showcase their arts and culture.

CanOSA 2009 One Day Picnic
Saturday July 25th, 2009

Traditional annual CanOSA One Day picnic was organized at the Mississauga valley Park on Saturday July 25th. Around 85 people stuck together under grey sky and pouring rain and still it was full of fun, everyone were laughing, enjoying and never stopped



cooking without caring about the rain even when drenched. There was so much of water from outside that we did not cut watermelon! We made mutton curry, rice, dal, tomato chutny and vegetables. In



between, we had tea several times and garam garam pakoda and French-fries. So many people ready to help. We did not give up but the rain gave up and stopped and finally we enjoyed our dinner under sunny sky.

Cottage Picnic: Friday July 31st-Aug 3rd, 2009

After a gap of almost 2 years, CanOSA's annual cottage picnic was revived and organized at the Sunrise tourist and Trailer Park on the picturesque Rice Lake.



Around 65 people participated. This time the venue had a mixed type of accommodation. One cottage, 7 motor homes and to accommodate more families



some tents on the campground were taken. On 31st night everybody dined on Bhuguni, Samosa and



Jalebi. We had an introductory session and a little bit of history about CanOSA cottage picnic tradition, remembered about seniors and how they started the cottage picnic. At the end some opted to stay inside for antakshyari. Since the sky was clear & telescope was arranged, some went out for stargazing. Next day, upama and sambar as breakfast for the entire group. Batch by batch, many went for boating in the beautiful Rice lake under clear sky and sailed over the glittering blue water & some enjoyed fishing. Lunch was served under the lush green trees with hanging branches over the green freshly cut lawn of the property. The picnic tables were filled with people eating home cooked food and making all sorts of fun. Kids were playing around in the small park. Dinner was prepared including mutton curry. Volunteers were always around the cooking area. All the time the area was bustling with jokes and laughter. It was time for entertainment program. At the beginning we got chance to listen to the melodious voice of some while quickly a small piece of dance and they presented by the children. Then game of Pass the purse was quite entertaining with some impromptu acting and dancing. The night ended with a heated antakhayri session between girls and the guys. Both were ready to fight not only with songs but physically. In the Sunday morning all were ready for 30 mm of rain. Managed quickly to make Halwa, Aloodum, Chat and Garam Garam Puri and headed to Couborg beach. We arrived there and put two tents. Volunteers served the



lunch and then it was time for varieties of activities. I played volleyball from the beginning till the end. By the time I felt hot it was time for me to go inside the water. While some played volley ball others played rumal chori on the sand. Many just enjoyed the fresh air and played cards. Some took nap under the tent. At the end we ate chat, took group photographs and it was time to pack and return to the cottage. After a busy day at the beach we were all exhausted. Immediately dinner was cooked with fish curry, potal

& Alu tarakari etc. After the dinner people listened to astronomy lecture. It was time to sleep. Next day morning every body got up late and all were nourishing the body ache. Hurriedly the breakfast was served and cottage was cleaned. Then it was time to depart and say goodbye. Participants thanked the organizers. Many exchanged phone numbers and email ids. Kids felt it to be very short.

CanOSA at Panaroma India's 2009 Indian Independence Day Event : Sunday August 9th, 2009



Indian Independence Day Gala event was organized by Panorama India in association with Consulate General of India at the downtown Toronto on Sunday August 9th. Members of CanOSA participated in the day long event in traditional Orissan attire representing Orissa in the parade. In cultural programme CanOSA presented dance performance on "Vande Utkal Janani and Vande Mataram" fusion, showcasing combination of traditional Oriya touch assimilated with Indian theme in our costumes, song & dance. The song selection, choreography, costumes & directed by Sasmita Tripathy. Sarthak, Aniket, Satwik, Yuvraj, Chetna, Anukriti, Sabita & Gagan Panigrahi joined lead participants Ineka, Nikita, Madhusmita & Sasmita in this great presentation which was appreciated by 10,000 strong crowd.

OSA NY-NJ News

OSA NYNJ Celebrates Ganesh Puja

By Hemanta Panda & Hemanta K Pradhan

With Lord Ganesh's blessings and OSANYNJ members overwhelming co-operation, Ganesh Puja (2009) was successfully completed at Balaji Auditorium, Bridgewater, NJ on 22/Aug/09.



Around 60 families attended the puja event. The puja comprised of homam, coconut breaking, arati recital by all the community members, pushpanjali, vidyarambha / khadichuan. Members honored dry prasad (chuda-ghasa, rasi-ladu, boondi/ladu, halwa, peda/burfi, chena-poda) prepared by devotees.

This was followed by cultural program on devotional themes by our young kids. Lunch prasad was served at the end. Around 10 kids started the knowledge



acquisition process by doing vidyarambha / khadichuan in front of Lord Ganesh.



Around 30 volunteers worked hard in making this event enjoyable for attendees. Several members volunteered to prepare dry bhoga for Lord Ganesh for offering.

Let's pray and pay obeisance at Lord Ganesh's feet for giving us an opportunity to serve him. May Lord Ganesh bless all of us and clear all obstacles in our life.

Humble Regards,
Event Coordinators

OSA Michigan News

By Pushpita

Welcoming Kalpana Das on Sep 18, 09

On August 9th we all got a chance to meet Kalpana Das (the first Oriya mountaineer who reached world's highest peak, the Mount Everest on 21st May, 2008). She narrated the story of her personal struggle to achieve the only dream she ever had in her life. She is an inspiration to all of us as we all go through hardships in our life. She inspires us not to give up in the face of adversity but to go for your dreams and try to achieve them.

Special thanks for Pinky and Jitu Samal for hosting her stay in Michigan and Pushpa apa for helping us making all the arrangements and co-coordinating the event. All of us had a great time.

Ganesh Puja Celebration

We celebrated Ganesh Puja on August 23rd at the Troy Masonic Temple in Troy, which is a suburb of Detroit. There were more than 80 attendees including adults and children. The ceremony was conducted by our very own Jogesh Panda and eager volunteers contributed towards all aspects of the event.

Announcement of upcoming events

Our next event is the much awaited Kumar Purnima which will be held sometime towards the end of October or beginning of November. Adults and children look forward to this event with eagerly as it gives them an opportunity to get together with friends every weekend and also showcase their talents, which is abundant in our community.

Did your Chapter participate in OSA Convention in NJ?

In the words of one of our attendees, Bhawani Tripathy

"Six families attended from Michigan -- Prof Subhendra and Ranu Mahanti, Ranganath and Bunu Misra, Natabara and Bali Khuntia, Santosh and Swayam Kar, Bhawani and Mamlu Tripathy, and Jitu and Pinky Samal.

Thanks a lot to Swayam Kar, in a very short time she was able to well organize a representation of Michigan at the convention.

Among the highlights:

Ananya Kar won the FIRST prize again in the Subrina Biswal competition. This is her 5th win of the award. She performed a classical medley and won the hearts of the audience and the judges.

The trio of Swayam Kar, Mamlu Tripathy and Santosh Kar own the FIRST prize (\$100.00 for MI-OSA -- Santosh will talk to you) in the Inter-Chapter Antakshari Competition in Mehfil. They bagged the perfect score with all Oriya songs that delighted the audience.

Ranu apa and Prof Mohanty made presentations in the Orissa Development and Educations seminars.

Swayam Kar and Mamlu Tripathy also sang the Inauguration chorus song with a vocal and instrumental team from NY/NJ, DC and MD chapters.

Our youngsters Swagat, Ananya and Swaraj and their moms Mamlu and Swayam also represented MI in the theme dance "Loka Nrutya" presenting a rhythmic "paika nacha".

In the cultural program opening theme presentation of "Sata Dariya Parire" (Beyond the Seven Seas), MI presented Oriyas' love for "pakhala" presenting a "chasa" (farmer) family played by Swayam, Ananya, Swagat, Swaraj, Mamlu and Bhawani.

Does your Chapter have any issues/problem?

Every chapter will have issues every now and it's best to try to resolve it amongst themselves.

The people who created our organization wanted to recreate the feel of their homeland, Orissa. They wanted to create a home away from home. I feel that we should not loose the very essence of our organization which should be more like an extended family as opposed to a being political organization. I am very proud to say that our Michigan chapter has always managed to maintain that essence

Welcome New Life Members

Nishikanta and Prativa Sahoo , NH
Nishant and Shipra Shah, TX,
Kalyan and Suvasri Das, NJ
Saroj and Rina Pani, NY
Abhijit and Julie Acharya Ray, UT
Nihar Kumar and Babita Chopdar, NJ
Tushar Waghmare and Nivedita Das, AZ
Debashis and Rajashree Panda, AZ
Sandesh Dev and Leesa, S. Misra Dev, AZ
Sucheta Misra, AZ
Bibek A. and Kuku Das, CA
Nivedita Panda and SK Ganapathi, CA
Sarebeswar and Tara Acharya, MD
Sneha(Tuni) Trombley , MI, 5-year Member

Organized by New York – New Jersey Chapter

July 3rd & 4th, 2009
Trenton Marriot & Patriots Theatre

OSA 2009 Convention

By Lalatendu Mohanty



The Orissa Society of the Americas, New York & New Jersey Chapter, organized the 40th Annual Convention from 2nd to 4th July, 2009 at Patriots Theatre at the War Memorial & Marriott Hotel, Trenton, New Jersey. Thousands of people of Orissa origin across North America joined this fun filled three-day event to celebrate the culture, ethnicity and their existence in America. The event was packed with Seminars, Symposiums, Workshops, Round Table Conferences & Mentorships followed by superb Cultural extravaganza.



The inauguration was followed by a gala presentation boasting more than forty participants together showcasing their talents on a Broadway like musicals filled with traditional and modern dance forms, a never seen before fusion between east and west, introducing Broadway theatre artist Amy Hedrick (also seen in hit television drama "Prison Break" from FOX). Twelve beautiful compositions that



Many dignitaries in and around the country were invited including Ms Kalpana Das, first Oriya Mountaineer to Mt. Everest. Governor John Corzine was invited as Chief Guest who had to request Deputy Speaker Mr. Upendra Chivukula to represent him due to some last minute scheduling conflict. His message was well delivered by Assemblyman Chivukula. A message from Governor of State of Orissa was also delivered.



had flavors of folk, rap, hip-hop, paala, romance, soft ballad, blues, club songs & Sambalpuri that left all

humming and tapping their foot. It was produced, directed & choreographed by Tirtha Das, an established Producer & Musician of New York.

The convention theme “Saata Daria Pare” or across the seven seas, showed the revealing facts that smears the life in America with realms of nostalgic feeling for the Orissa and its rich ethnic origin. The songs were nicely choreographed by local artists depicting the pledge these oriyas have taken to preserve their culture at this far land. It also included various classical & ethnic dance forms of Orissa including Odissi, Sambalpuri, Ghoda (horse) dance, Paika Naacha and many forms of tribal dances. Rannapa dance was immensely spectacular with artists dancing while balancing over stilts like long wooden sticks.

Mahanadi to Mississippi episode showed a tradition still active far from motherland while preserving the



adopted western tradition and a convergence of both cultures.

The depiction of epic Oriya story Kaali Jaai made the crowd numb and speechless. Other cultural items included live performances from Baboo Panigrahi (who represented Pandit Raghunath Panigrahi who was hospitalized due to some health conditions), Classical Oriya songs including Champu & Chhanda, Gazahls, Drama competitions & Dance competitions.

There are over forty speakers discussing many topics critical to American Oriyas starting from Entrepreneurship, Women’s challenges, improving life, education, Health in Orissa & Poverty Eradication, Integrating Next Generations, Youth Mentorship & workshops for college & beyond. Various dignitaries

were invited to enrich youth and young and to build a mentorship bond for the next step in their life. The Seminar fulfilled the organizers aim to translate the ideas into reality, covering topics of practical usefulness and long term value beyond the seminar, and most importantly, provide an enjoyable and valuable experience for our Oriya Diaspora in the Americas and the mother land Orissa.

Over forty unique dishes from different cuisines



including Oriya, North Indian, South Indian, Indo-Chinese, Gujarati, and Italian to commemorate the 40th Anniversary. Some of the highlights were freshness of on-site preparations & live food stations, Hot Jalebis, Ice creams, Chocolate Fountains and not to miss the paan. The quality of food & the hardship the volunteers took to feed more than a thousand of people throughout three days was exemplary.

Many dignitaries received recognitions for their contribution to the society and guidance. Pandit Raghunath Panigrahi received a Life-time Achievement Award, Mr Manaranjan Pattanayak, KS received distinguished Oriya Award for 2009, Gagan Panigrahi, Toronto for Kalashree Award and Suraj Patnail, IL received Yuva Kala Vikash Award. Convention Committee also recognized past Community Leaders who has left sweet memories among us.

A souvenir was published to mark the occasion with collection of articles from various eminent artists. For the first time in the history of any conventions, an audio version of the Souvenir was prepared with voices from 36 young artists and 22 child artists.

Attendees greatly enjoyed the quite Trenton neighbourhood, nice weather and the close proximity

of the Hotel & the Theatre. The General Body Meeting brought a different flavor to the convention but was enjoyable with a large attendance.

This was a planning for over a year with strong commitments from many individuals to do nothing but the best and the enthusiasm from local



performers to show the greatness of their culture was the greatest highlight in the convention history.

All dignitaries were impressed by the hospitality by the organizers and felt the Marriott Hotel & the War Memorial more looked like a world class Oriya resort. According to Gyana Patnaik of IL, "One of the best conventions I have ever attended. Most spectacular aspects were the organizers strong willingness, hospitality and performing the tasks with humility". Mrs. Leena Mishra of Washington, DC congratulated the amazing team of volunteers for holding a highly successful OSA Convention said, "We came back with high optimism that our OSA will keep shining brighter in the hands of our younger talents. Thank you all for this wonderful feeling"

Convener, Dr Uma Ballava Mishra was humbled by the warm feedback from all attendees and was convinced that this organization is as solid & strong as a rock.

Past Leaders recognized

Late Amiya Patnaik, Late Anil Pattanayak, Late Mrs Annapurna Kanungo, Late Mrs Basanta Kumari Das, Late Bijan Rao, Late Braja Kishore Swain, Late Hemanta Senapati, Late Jagat Subudhi, Late Mrs Kalyani Mishra, Late Krushna Mohan Das, Late Manindra K. Mohapatra, Late Pramod Pattnaik

Service Excellence Recognition

Arjun Purohit, Late Arun Das, Bhagabat Sahu, Bijoy Misra, Chitta Baral, Debasish Mishra, Devi Mishra, Dhiraj Panda, Dharendra Kar, Jitendra N Mohanty, Jogesh Pati, Joysree (Ranu) Mohanti, Kali Mishra, Kabita Pattnaik, Lata Misra, Nandita Behera, Niranjana Mishra, Ramesh Raichoudhury, Santanu Das, Sarthak Das, Sashi Mohanty, Sitakantha Das, Sri Gopal Mohanty, Subhash Mohapatra, Sulekha Das, Surendra Roy, Sushree Sangeeta Kar, Tara Prasad Das, Rabi Mohapatra, Maheswar Sahoo

Past Executives recognized

Amiya Mohanty, Anadi Naik, Annapurna Biswal, Annapurna Pandey, Anuradha Ihrke, Ashok Das, Ashutosh Dutta, Babru Samal, Bhabagrahi Mishra, Bigyani Das, Biju Mishra, Dasrathi Ram, Digambar Mishra, Gagan Panigrahi, Gauri Das, Gopa Patnaik. Jnana Ranjan Dash, Joy Gopal Mohanty, Kanan Mishra, Keshab Dwivedy, Kirtan Behera, Kula Chandra Misra, Ladukesh Pattanaik, Lalu Mansinha, Laxminarayan Bhuyan, Leena Dehal, Mahendra Misra, Mary Ann Pattnayak, Nagabhusan Senapati, Niranjana Tripathy, Nivedita Mohanty, Parikshita Nayak, Pradeep Rath, Prafulla Mishra, Prakash Patro, Prasanna K Samantaray, Pratap Das, Pratap Patnaik, Priyadarshan Patra, Purna Patnaik, Rabi Patnaik, Rabindra K. Ray, Radhakanta Mishra, Ravi Rout, Renuka Panigrahi, Samar K. Bhuyan, Sanak Patnaik, Sandip K. Dasverma, Saradindu Misra, Sarat Misro, Sarat Mohapatra, Saroj Behera, Saroj Mohanty, Satyabrata Shaw, Sreekanta Nayak, Sudarshan Misra, Sujata Patnaik & Surya K. Mishra.



Experiences of 40th Convention

This is an abstract of many comments and experiences of fellow delegates in their own words.

From Manoranjan Mohanty, University of Delhi

The most striking thing about the 40th Convention of the Orissa Society of the Americas was the professionalism and efficient management of the event that attracted over 500 members and guests to Trenton, New Jersey during 2-4 July 2009. There was a



well-planned balance between the cultural programs and the seminars each conducted with minute time management. The food arrangement was excellent having mouth watering dishes for the Oriya pallet. The



mutual warmth and cordiality for three generations of participants ranging from the old and retired to small children was overwhelming. What started as a get-together of a handful of Oriyas forty years ago has



grown into a large gathering of only a sampling of

people with origins in Orissa spread throughout North America.

No wonder that the bulk of the Oriyas in the US and Canada are professionals. Most of them are engineers, doctors, IT experts, scientists and academics. The 40 year history gave some opportunity to the participants to reflect on their history. The character of the community continues to be centered on the professionals.

Has there been some growth of entrepreneurship among the Oriyas? There are some positive signs. There are some independent service industry initiatives. But it is hard to find comparable enterprises to those of the Gujarati and Punjabi residents of North America.

A very pleasant feeling was to get an aggregate account of the many initiatives that the Oriya professionals from US and Canada have taken in Orissa. Some of them are as well-known ventures such as the Kalinga Hospital, Orissa's first major super-specialty private hospital in Bhubaneswar. Among the less publicized is the Rural Mathematics Talent Search program which is conducted with the help of the Institute of Mathematics in Bhubaneswar for the last few years. There are many interventions for rural development, micro-credit, women's welfare and other social programs in all parts of Orissa, including



Kalhandi and Balangir. Several large engineering and IT colleges have been set up in Orissa on the private initiative of OSA members. Many Oriyas in US are still deeply connected with their villages setting up schools, helping local NGOs and promoting local culture.

Most of the Oriyas present were very concerned about the continuing phenomenon of widespread poverty in Orissa despite the region having rich natural resources. Some thought the recent initiatives in industrialization were welcome as they brought in

much-needed capital into the state. Others felt that this pattern of industrialization was severely flawed as it continued the extractive nature of the economy that has existed since the colonial times and it neglected agriculture. There was a presentation on the Hirakud Farmers Movement protesting the diversion of water to mining and related industrial projects. Thus it was good to see that the policy debates taking place in Orissa were taken into account abroad. There were many different views on the nature of the ferment in contemporary Orissa, but everyone noticed that there



was ferment- a new state of consciousness among the people of Orissa.

A highlight of the Convention was the Women's Forum, which apparently has become a regular feature over the years. The dialogue among the second-generation young Oriya women and the first generation was very rewarding. They not only talked about what was the history of status of women in Orissa- relatively better than in North India even while under patriarchal domination-they also tried to grapple with many inter-cultural issues facing Oriya women in America.. How the mothers have to treat their daughters from the very beginning as equals and engage in reasoned discussions sharing their views frankly about personal health, psychological and sexual matters drew much attention. Oriya women professionals in North America- the doctors, engineers, scientists and communications experts had a lot of useful tips to share at the Forum.

It was everyone's privilege to hear the brief intervention of the renowned philosopher Jitendra Nath Mohanty. His profound remarks that there was no one monolithic culture called Oriya culture or Indian culture and that culture everywhere had many streams interacting with each other and were dynamic and changing constantly- would continue to echo in

the mind of all those who heard him. The need for respect for and tolerance of different cultural practices and the significance of critical scrutiny of one's own customs are extremely important. The plurality of religious and cultural traditions of Orissa connected with the Jagannath culture and the adivasis, Buddhism, Mahima Dharma, Pir shrines among others came up clearly through discussions and performances.

The cultural programmes kept the audience enthralled. The children's performances organized around the many awards instituted by OSA stole the show. The cultural legacies from different parts of Orissa are passed on to the next generation through these medium.

The annual Journal of OSA has become an important chronicle of creative expressions not only of the pravasi Oriyas but also a carrier of cultural linkages with the literary circles of Orissa. The state of Oriya literary thought and art can be seen from the contributions collected in the very competently produced publication.

In one session an interesting point of discussion came up as to how the achievements and capacities of the 10 per cent upper caste, middle class Oriyas can be harnessed to serve the interest of the large masses of



the poor, the adivasis ,the dalits and the other backward sections so that the people of the resource rich region did not remain poor and Orissa would enjoy greater significance at the all-India level. That is engaging everybody's attention in India as well as abroad.

[These are my personal reflections on the OSA Convention which I attended for the first time. I was happy to meet some of my old friends after forty years. I could attend only a few sessions, so this is not an exhaustive report.]

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From Gagan and Sabita Panigrahi, Toronto

On Canada Day (July 1st) we drove with our family to attend the 40th OSA Convention in Trenton, New Jersey. This time we chose the scenic route since Soman was with us as our navigator. The weather was good. The drive was pleasant and we reached Uma Bhaina (this year's convener) and Shanti Nani's house around 6 P.M. Their picturesque house is in Newburgh's affluent neighborhood overlooking the Hudson River. The view was excellent. We spent the night there and drove the next day to the convention venue. We were the second family to arrive at the hotel. First, we met the registration in-charge Mr Pravat Mahapatra who registered us with a smiling face. We received a beautiful sturdy bag as part of our registration package.

Inside the bag, there was the 2009 souvenir, directory and brochure about events/seminars; the badges were beautifully designed; all thanks to the registration committee.



The Marriott was decorated with Odisha's touch. Thanks to the decoration committee. Odiya music was fed through the main channel of Marriot hotel. Ladies were standing at the front each holding a tray full of chocolates as a welcome token for participants. Slowly the participants started trickling in and the whole Marriott turned into a mini Odisha. The atmosphere was friendly, hospitality was warm with full of excitement and expectations.

In evening, we attended NRO community – Entrepreneurship seminar. It was excellent. Sukant Babu (Mahapatra) did a marvellous job organizing the seminars. Many of them were well attended and

thought provoking. Even though we wanted to attend other seminars, we couldn't as they were run in parallel. We were fortunate to chat with Kalpana Dash, the mountaineer. The night was spent meeting with several friends and seniors and rehearsing theme song Amere Odissa basi on the stage. The theatre was a massive one. Though not as cosy and beautiful as Rose Theatre, it offered excellent facilities. Opening ceremony was in time and the cultural program immediately after the opening ceremony was excellent. The person behind the presentation was Tirtha Das who has a tremendous interest and talent in sound, music and light. (By the way, Tirtha did our lighting during Chha Manna Atha Guntha Presentation in 1994 Pomona Convention).



We must say the cultural program was well planned and executed. Many of the volunteers though took responsibilities on other areas participated in the cultural programs. Almost all the programs were on pure Odia theme or content. Many of them were highly charged for example Sata Daria Pare and Kalijai. We highly recommend you to buy the audio CD (Sata Daria Pare) specially made for OSA convention 2009, if you have not bought one so far. Fortunately, we did not find any Bollywood dances. Thanks to the cultural coordinators. The days have gone when we used to see people standing and singing boring Hindi film songs one after another or dancing to the tune of



Hindi film songs on the stage in the main program. The stage people were very courteous and helpful. Two names immediately come to our mind and they were Biswajit Mohapatra and Pradeep Mahapatra. It was

always a pleasure to watch Pradip Tripathy on the stage. The presentations of Ghoda Nacha and Ranapa nacha are commendable. At least we could explain to our 11 year old daughter what they are, staying far, far away from Odisha. Pramod Patnaik Drama competition was good. Our favourite was Chicago.

They put on an excellent show which we enjoyed most. The plot for NY-NJ was innovative - maybe the



reason that they got the prize. Our show was also well received by the audience and we enjoyed

every bit of it. Many came to us, congratulated and thanked for putting such an entertaining piece of work on the stage. We thank Lata Nani (Mishra) for inspiring us to participate. In essence the cultural program was well planned and co-ordinated with little bit of technical hitches here and there which could not have been avoided in a community set up. One thing we are still wondering why the opening piece was not presented as a grand finale.

The journal is great with a good binding. Last year a



nice formatted journal was messed up by the hopeless binder. The idea of making an audio CD of the souvenir is innovative. We two listened many of the recitations while we were holidaying in

Berkshire mountain area immediately after convention. People like Monalisa Panigrahi, Leena, Riti Mohanty, Bijayalaxmi Rana and Mrs Mahatwo and many other kids did excellent recitations. We felt as if we were listening to a radio station. Thanks to Sridhar Rana for making this a successful one. Many distinguished Odias were recognized with plaques for their contribution towards different fields such as agriculture, science, technology, culture, social service and medicine. It was a nice gesture to recognize

somebody's life time contribution. Not only that many were given a small pin to recognize their contribution towards OSA.

Compared to Detroit and Toronto, Odia Poetry reading session was not well planned. We were disappointed. We hope in future it will be well coordinated.



It was quite sad to attend this year general body meeting. The emotion was high and hot due to a court case regarding the

alleged irregularities in the past executive election. Friends, let us keep it open. If there are any irregularities it should be sorted out. If not, then let the person who filed the case learn the lesson in a hard way.

Thanks to the executives who managed the GB with difficulties. Another thing what we observed is that many do not know the norms of a general body meeting. We should learn.

The arrangement for food was excellent. The food was plenty. The line was moving fast and people were serving with a smiling face. Thanks to Lulu Babu and Jitendra Babu many other volunteers.

As usual, we met several of our old friends. We were fortunate to meet with many young volunteers personally. To



name a few they are, Biswajit Mohapatra and his wife Sangeeta, Eva Mohanty, Milu and Mahendra Kar, Tirtha Das, Pradeep and Ranjita Mahapatra, Pradip Tripathy, Saranga Mahatwo, Priya Mohapatra, Lalatendu Mohanty, Ranjan Mishra, Nageswar Prusti, Pravat Mahapatra, Riti Mohanty, Niranjan Pati, Antaryami Panigrahi, Amar Senapati, Sanat Pattanaik. We still remember many husbands and



wives were busy coordinating and participating in stage rehearsals while holding their small tired children. When we see these young people, there is no

doubt in our mind that OSA has a bright future. While driving we were looking back and discussing about the beauty of OSA which has offered a platform to its members where mother and daughters, fathers and sons, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives can get opportunity to share the stage at the same time. Many think that people come to the convention to have fun. Yes, that is true but fun is just a by-product of it. It takes tremendous amount of hard work, sincerity, planning and dedication to organize a convention like this. At the end what does it do? It helps propagate our culture in North America. The music, the dance and the sarees (you can say the art work) are admired by people in the city where it is organized. The Holiday Inn in Toronto will never forget the Odia convention. Where in North America will you get chance to see Ranapa Nacha or Ghoda Nacha? Where in North America will your daughter get a chance to sing "Nali Gulu Gulu Sadhab Bahu"? Where will you find people discussing about Orissa's development? We listened to Bhanu Bhai who taught at IISER recently. We got chance to listen to the person directly involved in Vedant University. The entrepreneurship meeting for youth was quite inspirational too. Thanks to Sradhananda (Bhaina) Mishra of Toronto who introduced the prize money from this year.

In theme song and dance we were around 100 people on the stage singing and dancing Ame Odisha Basire, Ame Odisha Basi. When we write this we get goose bumps.



CanOSA participated and we had participants young and old where the age ranged from 11 to 75. After the show we took a picture in front of the massive theatre's entrance stair case. There is always something for you at the OSA convention. It brings people from different parts of the continents to a single venue for a three-day period. We were delighted to see our friends Pradip and Sushmita. We were almost in tears when we hugged both of them. We build a lasting bond between the families. We grow as a community. We got an opportunity to talk to Ghanashyam Mishra Babu and Bhaskar Babu about their childhood and village life. A wonderful experience for us indeed. Now it is a ritual where we look forward to seeing Patnaik family from Chicago, Choudhuri and Mishra (Leena and Bimal) family from Washington D.C., Mallik family from Arizona. We meet new families every year.

Three days passed just like three hours and it was time to depart. At the time of departure, the organizers personally offered us Laddu. What a way to say good-bye? Tears soaked our eyes when we got into our car in front of the Marriott. We could not resist but thanked the pioneers who built an organization called



OSA for which we get an opportunity to meet with our friends and families once in a year. Without their effort, hard work and vision, in this alien country it would not have been possible. At the same time we thank the hard working volunteers of NY-NJ chapter, Lalatendu Mohanty, the chapter President and the convener Dr Uma Mishra for organizing the biggest ever convention in OSA's history with many unique features in it. We hope this will continue for years to come.

Thank you.

My Anubhuti by Sri Gopal Mohanty

Just imagine hearing continuous Odia music for two days on a USA street. You can't. Yea! In fact, that was what happened at the Hotel Marriot in Trenton, NJ during the 40th OSA Convention. On our arrival on July 2 afternoon, I could hear it. My memory rolled back to an earlier experience in a Montreal street when my eyes suddenly caught to a poster announcing Odissi Dance by none other than Indrani Rahman. Wow! Ebullient me could have danced on the street all day long but did not having been



enwrapped by peevish shyness. I did go to the performance and at the end tears rolled down. There was a transformation within me to clutch to my cultural heritage and to my Odianess. That was in 1960.

Today my youngish passion has mellowed down. I was simply elated to listen to the music. As we moved towards the registration desk we were immediately welcome by two smiling young ladies offering chocolates. I was innocently rude to ignore



them no sooner than I was greeted with "Namaskar" here and hand-shakes there. My age has numbed my earlier overflowing excitement in our meeting. Perhaps we have accepted the mutual relation and have lost its initial rapture. Perhaps the internet age has squeezed our emotional bonding desire. Yet I hear gleeful voices. "Hi, uncle" – waives Pepi (Lalu Babu's daughter) at me. She was with her husband Narinder and two little boys. "Meet Dr. Mohanty", introduces Darshan Patra to his son Ashis. "Mausa, ketebeLe Asile, register kaleNi?", a smiling welcome comes from Sridhar Rana. Reminiscing over past Conventions, I had a creepy feeling of losing familiar faces that I used to see in Convention after Convention. They were becoming hazy and replaced by unknown ones – but young and new who exude freshness. I noticed growing youthfulness in an evolving OSA.



Let the old yield to the new!

Of course, there were our yielding oldies. Meeting Amiya and Sara Mohanty after a long duration had a flow of spontaneous warmth. Niru (Subhas Mohapatra's wife) who hardly comes to a Convention even though Subhas Babu does not miss any, was a great bonus. And there stood Radhakanta Mishra whose tall figure and his ever presence in a General Body Meeting could hardly be missed but who was conspicuous by his continuous absence in past Conventions.

You have seen Indian Bazaar and large gathering at Indian Fair. But for a few Odias scattered over vast

land of North America, it is always a dream to build an Odia colony somewhere in this Continent. That dream is fulfilled – temporarily though true to the nature of a dream.



This year the colony was Marriot Hotel with only Odia residents for three days during July 2- July 5. Why not? After all, it was OSA

Convention time.

NY-NJ Chapter was the perceiving dream maker. At the last year Convention in Canada, some of those



organizers made a surprise but clever announcement of their dream by wearing T-shirts with lines as if published in a Canadian newspaper. The momentum started building up since then.

Next to the Marriot Hotel was the gigantic Patriots Theatre, the venue of cultural activities. The mammoth lonely looking grey building became resplendent at its ground level being often adorned by ladies with their brilliant colourful sarees. The pleasant weather brought people outside to initiate a conversation or continue an unfinished one. This is their opportunity even to share tit bits of no consequence. Or are they sharing the current hot topic: Michael Jackson? Even the resolute bright sun could not have a deterring effect on the mood except to make them more resolute to move under the tent, the rendezvous arranged by the organizers. The

immense joy is sky bound and fluttering colours are all



around.

The tent, pitched between the hotel and the theatre became the symbolic “Bhagabata Tungi”, a place of gathering. Truly so – one would get “Pana” and on one occasion freshly prepared “jalebi”. It also gave shelter to enjoy a lonely puff and listen to the whispering wind.

Years rolled by. Unlike our earlier days when we and our small children dominated a Convention scene were searching for uniformity with scanty resources in promoting our much longing cultural heritage, today we are challenged by squeezing three generations that reflect enormous diversity into the same space and thus are striving to harmonize the east-west and generational cultural conflict so as to look for an identity. The hope is it will be



evolved in course of time. This in essence became the Convention theme “ SAta dariA pArere” – Across the Seven Seas - forty years of a few expatriates from Odisha in NA.

July 3 – the day show starts!

I was waiting for this occasion. Passing through Theatre entrance’s majestic columns to the traditional type foyer, enter into the Theatre’s auditorium. Under the dim shadowy lights one could not miss the ornate walls and ceiling, reminding the glory of America’s cultural past. But most of us were anxiously waiting to seek a view behind the tall red curtain. It is

OSA's celebration and let it begin!
Yes it began. The heavy curtain was lifted up to view a



long line of singers of opening songs all from Jayadeva's Geetagovinda. Well, I

recognized some of the stalwarts of Washington DC Chapter. Hey, on tabla there is Pratap Das, OSA President. No, he is more well known as Pratap, the first Kalashree Award recipient in 1991 (along with late Pramode Patnaik), who was the only tabla player of significance in the pioneering days, probably still a rare person among us in this respect.

His gliding hand movements with rhythmically raised shoulders remarkably identify him and his passion as an artist. Well, there were Surendra Ray (Kalashree recipient), Debaki Chowdhury (Kalashree recipient) and Nrusingha Mishra. Forgive me if I cannot name the ladies since I was lost in their immaculately dressed attire of soothing golden colour. But I am sure Lata Misra (Kalashree recipient) was there. How could it not be – she is again rare among us as a singer of Odissi, Chhanda and Champu in good old days although her passion for drama has left a stamp in the history of cultural presentations. This year's inaugural theme, "Mo Gaan Mo Odisha" is a contemporary story of two village boys' journey to the States in search for work and their episodes of nostalgia. Simple though it sounds, the show was an



extravaganza - a Broadway-like theatrical play. Yet the music, script, recording arrangements and the entire production were completely home made. The Chapter made it a record event – a never-happened stage production. At the end, the entire cast of around seventy appeared on the stage. Beamed with excitement Tirtha Das, the producer ran to the stage to introduce those who made it possible – the list was unending and the stage was full. He had every reason to be overjoyed and so were all of us. If I were to reflect on last year's Convention in Canada, I could see the venue at the newly built magnificent Rose Theatre right in the middle of Brampton downtown. Piercing through glass covered outer wall the bright light made the wide and tall foyer cheerful enough to make it an open stage. The auspicious beginning of the Convention theme, "Odisha – Ama Mati, Ama Manisa" started there with Medha Nacha of Puri to symbolize this holy city to receive the first sunlight in Odisha.



The morning scene moves to the stage where five ladies dressed like rural women (Gaan Bahu) in red sarees sang

the opening song in praise of Odisha. The inaugural theme "Jagannatha and Bhakti Movement" was a presentation of visual abstraction of the core concept that the historical origin of Odissi owes much to Mahari and Gotipua dances which emerged from dance rituals in Jagannatha Temple and Bhakti Movement of Chaitanya. As the curtain was to close, all participants raised their hands to surrender to the Lord – "Jagannatha Swami Nayana Pathagami, Bhaba Tume, Bhaba Tume, Bhaba Tume". I was amused by the sharp contrast between the two. Should I use an analogy: Last year's presentation was like serving matured old wine from a new bottle whereas this year's like a unique Austrian experience of tasting most recent year's wine (heuriger) at a famous heurigen (not a tavern in the usual sense). In fact the contrasts persisted. Yet my reflection turned to serene realization of the beauty of unity in

the complexities of diverse creativity. Every inauguration has a formal part, so had this Convention. Abasar Behuria, a retired diplomat from India was the guest speaker. His message was simple and direct: Odisha must move and could if three impediments, namely, lack of environment of working together, lack of “swabhiman” and lack of work ethics, were to be removed.



Items and events were rolling on. Subrina Biswal Competition, thanks to Subhas Mohaptra’s sustained interest, is an annual item to encourage children to participate. However, the evening air was filled with eagerness to watch the theme show - Sata Daria Parire. The curtain opens to show a boat ferrying across the blue sea and carrying symbolic Sadhabas to a distant land. These Sadhabas are none else but the Odia immigrants to NA. Their adamant zeal to retain the rich and unique cultural heritage in a foreign land was the essence of the theme, presented through segments of songs and dances by participants from many Chapters. “ Ame Odisha Basire, Ame Odishabasi” at the end of each segment could churn the emotion of anyone in the hall. As the show came to its close, all participants over more than 100 were holding each other’s hand in unison, solemnly chanting with pride: “Ame Odishabasi”. Its echo reached every corner of the hall and the audience responded overwhelmingly with a standing ovation - a spectacular show to remember.

By the way, I was on the stage as part of Canada Chapter team – quite certainly the oldest member (above seventy-five) participating in the cultural programme. I was there not by choice but by compulsion, since not many from Canada attended the Convention. Ultimately, the team to represent



consisted of Gagan (this year’s Kalashree recipient) and Sabita Panigrahi, their daughter Ineka, Hara and Sumitra Padhi, and my wife Shanti and I. Was I a reluctant partner? No, not at all. My unfulfilled desire to dance in a Montreal street eventually found the right opportunity in the famous Patriots Theatre and that too, to the appropriate chorus line: Ame Odishabasire. I could have danced the entire evening. Oh no, the lines are going too fast and are too short.

And and ...of course, I have to respect my director Sabita’s instruction!

My friend, Ababsara Babu, I am sure you were in the audience. Watch the flow of Odia Swabhiman. Can it flow into Odisha “Across the Seven Seas”?



The “Boat” became the symbol of the Convention. Besides in the inaugural presentation, it naturally appeared in Godabarisha Mishra’s Kalijai musical. The symbol did appear again in the last theme, “Mahanadi ru Mississippi” gliding over blue water under the vast blue sky. The ornate boat in the scene reminded of the glorious days of “Boita” and Odias as seafarer. *This set was built by artist Late Arun Das (Kalashree recipient) and if one is curious enough you can find his touch elsewhere.*

Ironically though the present day mode of transportation is the closed box like airplane which practically every immigrant is using, the “boat” on the other hand has a romantic appeal of embracing the freedom of spirit with open arms by looking at the unending expansion of sea and sky – an exquisite feeling to share with Leonardo DiCaprio and Kate Winslet while they were standing together at the bow of the ship in the movie Titanic. The “Boat” and the stage lights are merely to release your infinite imagination.

July 4 – the show continues.

The programme opened with Champu and Chhanda Competition – an absolutely new item that ever was part of any Convention. I was most impressed. While we



desperately try to preserve the gems in Odia music by identifying isolated singers in the entire continent, here on stage you see ten boys and girls below 14 years of age waiting silently to sing their piece such as Bata Chhada, To lagi Gopa Danda and others.

Amazing voice and training. I can not be mistaken if it was due to Lata Misra’s initiative. To top off, we listened Brajaku Chora and Sakhi He Kesi Mathana Mudaram (Astapadi) sand by the young budding artist, Suraj Patnaik who received this year’s Yuba Kala Bikash Award.

Children learning Odissi dance and music do not do well in Subrina Biswal Competition which has been designed primarily for entertainment value. They feel discouraged. Odissi dance has found recognition, but not the music. Well, I feel relieved – Odissi music is finding a niche in NA.

Of course, Pramode Patnaik Drama Competition in a Convention is a treat for me. This year’s entries were:



Sukhi Dampati – Washigton DC, Hatahatia Bhadataia – Canada, DraupadiNa Sita, Samastanka Mundabyatha – NY-NJ, Kala Bina Kalakara – Chicago. Except Canada’s script which was based on Phaturananda’ s story, the rest were prepared by the individual group. NY-NJ which won the competition presented a parody of episodes from Ramayan and Mahabharat in an interesting way. Chicago’s story was what to do to come to Convention Competition. The titles of DC and Canada are self explanatory. All were very enjoyable.

Time to go for snacks: Pani Poori, Kachori, Veg rolls and freshly prepared Jalebi with Rabdi. Wow!

This was just a sample of varieties of food served on different days. After the snack, I chose to become part of a chit-chat session with Lalu Babu and Anadi Babu, Lalu Babu talking about their first meeting in a restaurant and Anadi Babu narrating a funny story about a lawyer.



I could see hoards of them engaged in talks. Yet I remember Lalatendu Mohanty, Pradip Mohapatra and other volunteers who did not have this luxury

and were moving from one assignment to the other. Saranga Mahatwo was our leader on the stage patiently waiting for his turn to enter and we followed him all dancing as galloping horses. He finished his role and was present in the dining area with a smiling face to serve chicken curry.



NY-NJ Chapter prides itself with plethora of young talented volunteers. They are bursting with ideas and energy. Most striking asset the Chapter has is the number of male dancers. Did I notice at the end of "Chitra Madhuri" on July 4, one guy came out holding his baby in his arm? What a commitment.



Out of their desire to make the 40th Convention a memorable one, they became overly enthusiastic to include every type of event into the framework. While we as spectator/

attendee had hard time to keep up with the programme schedule, I found the Chapter organizers and participants to be amazingly cool in managing the events and the schedule.

As the National Coordinator of OSA Drama festival, I certainly learnt their reluctance to participate in the



Drama Festival during April and now have understood the reason. But the Chapter eventually articulated in



the Festival in Maryland on April 18 with a very unique concept of dramatizing the pre-publicity of the Convention by presenting what they called "Guaa Nimantrana" – the King receives the information of the Convention preparation in detail from his courtiers (dramatized) and invites the Odia community in NA to attend. Their demonstration on cultural events included a Ranapa dancer. Since then I was absolutely confident of the success of the Convention.

The evening of July 4 was filled with dances from Odia films and folk dances from Odisha, most striking being Ranapa (NY-NJ), Ghoda (Washington DC) and Paika (Michigan). Practically all items were performed by NY-NJ Chapter. There were a few by Washington DC Chapter, Ghoda Nacha by Devaki Chowdhury and two other film dances being choreographed by Sashmita Behera who was in Canada before moving to Maryland with her husband and daughter.



In contrast, with cooperation from other Chapters the first time unique presentation at Canada Convention was tribal dances signifying our recognition that 22% of Odisha's population is tribal. They were superbly performed. While Odissi dance became the focus of the last year, the emphasis this year was on contemporary group choreography and folk dances without ignoring Odissi some being excellently

performed by NA artists. Under “ Odisha, Ama Mati, Ama Manisa” Canada Convention

remembered such names as Mohan Dev Goswami , Baishnaba Pani, Jayadeva, Upendra Bhanja, Baladeva Rath, Gopalakrushna Patnaik and Mayadhar Mansinha. This year the theme being “Sata Daria Parire”, the Convention projects the experience of



Odia immigrants in NA particularly in preserving their culture. The unity in Canadian context was the rising morning sun, which touches Puri in the east coast inspiring a meditative mood leaves Odisha in Sambalpur instilling a joyous and vibrant mood to dance with “Rangabati”. This year it is the symbolic boat starting with much of excitement from Mahanadi in “Ama Mati” and leaving the past behind to reach Mississippi where the immigrants landed to settle down in search for the future without losing their identity and finally for their success offered prayers, “Om, Shanti, Shanti, Shanti”. What a contrast and yet how harmoniously the concepts are linked.

From technical point of view, lighting and sound management were well done. But something can not be ignored that there is a mark of professionalism if one could notice that in every scene there was a superbly designed change of costume. The colours were simply gorgeous.

Am I too much engrossed with art and culture? Are we imprisoned in cultural legacy? Apparently so but not exactly so. Is a Convention only a jatra and food fanfare? Not quite so. It is a “mela”, a festival of cultural programs of children, youths and adults, a conference to present and share ideas on various issues, an occasion to meet and renew interpersonal relation and what-not. Our garrulousness belched out under the tent and outside, our gregariousness spilled over in hallways, dining area and the theatre auditorium, our vivacity

and creativity occupied the vast expanse of the stage. And our intellectual stimulation found the expression appropriately within four walls of professionally set small conference rooms of the hotel. There were our zealous seminar lovers who were ready to sleep in the seminar rooms, no,no... to spend sleepless nights just to cover topics after topics with no end in sight. Huh, those seminar crazy guys and seminar edicts!

Excuse me! I am one of them. For me, every topic – Odisha development, Women’s Forum, NRO Community, Youth Forum – is equally interesting. The seminars sometimes were at odd hours, starting at 7:15 am and being scheduled in the afternoons against cultural programmes and even at 10:00pm. Some of the seminars were running in parallel sessions.

Frankly, I had to miss many of them. I did not plan the events though. Remnants of my rational thoughts got



tangled with my imaginative world.

My figurative “boat” which carried me from “Ama mATI” “over seven seas” to far away land is flying back home with my intellectual wings. The seminars were truly providing the magic of transformation. They were talking on issues related to “Ama mATI, Ama maNiSa” on topics such as, women helping women through nano-financing, a working model for poverty eradication: role of soil-less agriculture, Vedanta University, NISER, adopt a library, spread primary education. Deep down in their heart the presenters were serious. Some of them like Ranu Mahanti, Subhas Mohapatra and Sandip Dasverma are social activists. Anand Saha on Vedant University was very articulate and convincing. When Anand Saha’s presentation on Vedanta University in convincing style or some other talk were going on in Education seminar, the real challenge for audience came from Women’s Forum. That room was packed, strikingly

with many young people. They were discussing women identity issues and coping with cross-cultural conflicts in NA and at the same time showed concern for problems faced by women in Odisha. I should say this is one, which had vitality and enthusiasm.



ambition of seminar organizers was overwhelming. Besides Entrepreneurship Round Table, this time there were two new initiatives, one on youths to recognize their potential and talent – Kalinga Youth Entrepreneurship Competition (thanks to Shradhananda Mishra who sponsored it) and Youth Mentorship Round Table. – an excellent opportunity for the future generation to show the leadership in the community. I am reminded of last year's Convention where six youths were recognized for their challenging expression of talent, specifically in the field of creative arts (see last year's Souvenir Journal).

The second one was on Propagation of Odia language and music of which I was part in presenting my own experience on Odia music. But the best presentation was by Gautam and Tanuja Mohapatra on Developing Oriya Language Skill – A Unique Approach. Gautam who is born and brought up in NA has the talent and commitment to produce a CD to learn Odia, by combining sound for pronunciation, picture for association and the technique of writing. You may visit <http://www.virtualbharat.com/> . The CD costs \$10. I was impressed and felt very lucky that I was present during the presentation. If nothing else, this presentation made me delighted for being part of this Convention. In my view, Gautam needs to be encouraged.

I stop to remember the new book “A Place Within:

Rediscovering India” by M. G. Vassanji, a two-time winner of Giller Prize. His great-grandfather left Gujarat for East Africa and he moved from Africa to settle down in Canada. For him, “Rediscovering India” was one single continuous experience, twenty-eight days long...traveled mostly on land, eyes wide open. His journey surprisingly and coincidentally starts by Puri Express to reach BHUBANESWAR, of all places in India. I could distinctly visualize Gautam's children and grandchildren, or in that matter, your or my grandchildren and great-grandchildren making a voyage to that distant land Odisha-India and recording their story – a story of their ancestors, who were born there but they were not.

In addition to the unique session, two more events were planned in the same spirit, one being the Odissi music competition among children (I have mentioned about it earlier) and the other being poetry reading session which has become a regular feature in the past. However, even if the last event has been popular over years, this time it has to compete with Education Seminar and Women's Forum and unfortunately lost to attract people. Nevertheless, Odissi music competition was a hit success.



If the stage in Patriots Theatre displayed Odisha of Imagination, the seminar rooms in Marriot Hotel represented Odisha of Intellect. If cultural activities created joyous moments for children, youths, adults and families, the seminars attracted many young minds such as of Chitta Baral, Abani Patra, Dharendra Kar, Chitta Das, Sukant Mohapatra, Devajani Mishra, Ankita Mohanty, Nick Patnaik. If dignitaries or celebrities are to be paraded to boost the image of a Convention, there were none this time except one, a very special one – Kalpana Dash, the first Odia girl to scale Mount Everest. She defied all odds against her, being from Odisha and being of feminine gender. Her

simplicity, humility and determination were all marks of a dignified achiever. We salute her and wish her all successes in the future.

Pandit Raghunath Panigrahi received a Lifetime Achievement Award. Unfortunately, he could not come due to illness. In his place, his eldest son who entertained the audience by singing a few selections from his father and later by his ghazals in the Mehfil time received it.

OSA presents a series of awards. For me personally two awards of this year are of special interest, Distinguished Oriya Award given to Manaranjan Pattanayak and Kalashree Award to Gagan Panigrahi. Manaranjans contribution to Odia community and OSA is immense. His dedicated and unrelenting work to bring Kalinga Hospital in Bhubaneswar into existence is extremely praiseworthy. The man is very compassionate by nature and his commitment is like an iron rod. In case of Gagan, his dramatic talent impresses me, which is something inborn and spontaneous. He is a painter, writes poems and in his heart, he is an artist although by profession a scientist. Of course, in every drama he has joined with his wife Sabita, an excellent artist by herself. It is yet to test his dramatic ability without her on the stage.

There is however Suraj Patnaik, receiver of Yuva Kala Vikash Award which attracted my attention because of achieving something unusual at his age. He was one among six young creative artists,(Suraj Patnaik (Indian classical music), Pratik Dash (Jazz music) Sidhartha Misra (Opera music), Tirthankar Das (Film, video, music), Sarba Das (Film, latest film Karma Calling) and Arti Misro (Film))who have been recognized last year at the Convention for they have dared to explore, express themselves and achieved significant recognition in fields not belonging to the main stream. Then there is the Souvenir Journal of the Convention. Returning home empty-handed from Bali Jatra, or for me BALanga Muni Jatra or Durga Puja Jatra will be a catastrophic disappointment. Hold the Journal, which evokes the childhood feeling of possessing something from the jatra in your hand to play with or to keep it very close to your chest.

This years Journal will be a collectors item as it has the complete list of executive committees, the Conventions and Conveners and the cover page and the first page of each Journal, all starting from the beginning. I was curious to know what our next generation or the third one is writing about. A glance at the Section on The Future Vision will reveal an honest inner outpour of children and youths on their cross-cultural journey. Read from Ayesha Kar's My Connection Stays Strong, Back in sixth grade, I went on an overnight camping trip When I came home the first thing I said to my mom was - Mom, can you make me some pakhala and aloo chakta - ..., Suchismita Pahis Oriya: The Mother Tongue, ...I miss the random rhyming of words like katha patha and aypata, seypata and jinisa, phinisa..., Amit Kumars Odia-American,



What do you see when you look in the mirror? I see an American haircut. I see American clothes...what else do I see, underneath the American disguise? I see an Odia... and from Abhinav Mohapatras I Am Me, Through all these turmoil and conflicts within myself and all around me I struggle to reconcile my life and have finally come to believe that Ill always be different yet a part of this melting pot.. Yet, Soman Panigrahi, from Canada, in Sailing Your Ship through the Ethnic Maelstrom in North America views the North Americanism as an ethnic maelstrom rather than just a melting pot and consoles the reader by quoting Jimmy Carters words: We become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic. Soman ends by saying, Let us preserve and nourish our Odia culture in this land, far, far away from Odisha. Only then will we be able to truly add to the beautiful mosaic. He was guided by M.K.Gandhis words, I will let the winds of all cultures blow about my house; but I will refuse to be blown off my feet by any quoted at the beginning of his article.

But you have to read Lalu Babus article, Romancing a Sprite:

Remembering a Past That Never Was. Being brought up in a middle class family under social stigma against cinema, he after viewing colourised version of Mughal-e-Azam in 2004 for the first time says in his words, so in old age, I fell in love with this actress, with the film persona as the lovely Anarkali, with Latas mellifluous voice. How romantic he (we) could be! Just imagine listening to the poems and articles in the Journal while you are driving or in your home. Right on, you can do it. The innovative editorial team with Sridhar Rana has produced Swetapadma-White Lotus- an audio version of the Souvenir Journal precisely for that purpose. Listen to the hunting voice atitahin itihAsa of Arun Das (Mantu) introducing Swetapadma believe me it will mesmerize you, bring joyful tears in your eyes; you may not understand Odia but close your eyes and listen, it will be simply music to your ears. Then go on, listen to the poem Paint Me Like I am by Soumya Misra with words, I know this and on and on. OSAs General Body Meeting, an annual chore, has to take place. It did.

Usually the event is lacklustre. Not this time. There was excitement on the discussion about a legal case on OSA regarding the last election. Many felt very emotional they have worked hard to build it. It was painful for me. On a second thought, it may be we are maturing and will move on. But then this was the 40th anniversary of OSA. Let this event be memorable in some sense.



Yes, this was the 40th Anniversary of OSA and the organizers of the Convention carefully planned the Convention inch by inch to remind everyone every moment that it was so. It is a landmark and a

milestone in OSAs history. To commemorate it, quite a few people were recognized for their contribution to OSA or otherwise. It was a pride to see both Tara Prasad Das, Professor of Physics, University at Albany State University of New York and Jitendra Mohanty, Professor of Philosophy, Emeritus Faculty at Temple University being escorted to the stage to be recognized (incidentally, both have received the Distinguished Oriya Award). I recall that Professor Mohanty as the guest speaker at the last Convention (34th) organized by NY Chapter in Princeton, NJ emphasized the importance of the language and culture of a group in its progress, more so when confronted with the onslaught of globalization. His message is so befitting in the light of this Conventions theme. It may be worthwhile to mention that Professor Richard Shweder, another guest speaker of that Convention, in illustrating Odia values, told a heart touching anecdote, which is as follows:

A couple finding the father old and invalid decided to carry him in a basket to Puri Bada Danda and leave him there to breathe his last breath. The son overheard the conversation. When the due day came, he suggested to the father to bring back the basket, which would be used to carry the father when he was to confront with the same predicament.

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Obituary



Arun Das 1942-2009: The Oriya Signature

By Bijoy Misra

Arunbabu was different – artistic, intense, romantic and imaginative – a man who symbolized Oriya soul in its core elements. He spoke Oriya, his diction was clean and clear. He loved to recite Oriya; his renderings were indulgent and sentimental. He thought Oriya, his arts spoke of the culture of the land and her people. I have not seen another person abroad who was more dedicated to then Oriya cause than my friend, Arunbabu.

I met him in some late night hours of a summer Saturday in 1984, when he was busy making “gates” for Oriyas to enter the Convention site. The idea of a “gate” and its decoration is fundamentally an Oriya concept that has transported itself into other cultures and religions of the world. A “gate” is our entry to a domain, to clean ourselves from any mental distractions and to create a focus for the forthcoming sanctum or activity. It’s a separation between the body and the soul. It’s a fundamental metaphysical concept that we can leave the world outside when we concentrate in our activity. Everyday Oriya enters a “gate” to do his/her artistry, to create words in literature, to see the deity in his/her mind. I was overwhelmed to see the “gate” in preparation.

We became instant friends, possibly talked through the night. He had a few other young volunteers, who would cut cardboard or get colored crepe paper at his

command. The sculpture was coming along. I observed his paint strokes and finally his Oriya script. I was imagining how hundreds of artisans could work to build mammoth artistic structures. I found a friend, who had observed and who knew his origin. We met many times thereafter. Every time, he would talk about his ideas, always creative, always passionate. Never a time he spoke about his difficulties, though I heard of them from second hand sources unnecessarily. He did tell me of his marriage and then about his son. He was romantic to the core.

Arunbabu’s genius was his vision. He saw through a concept and could draw. Though he was rightly upset about the controversy ensuing from his OSA logo, one could see the depth of his insight in the drawing.

Arunbabu sculpted many “gates” to replicate his home culture in the foreign land. It would be pretty long time before we get another soul of his caliber. The very fact he cared for the Convention more neglecting his own health has the signature of the Oriya genius. A culture is built through sacrifice. Let his memory help us dedicate ourselves further into our culture and heritage through immersion and contemplation.

I have sympathy for his wife and son. They are Oriya icons. Our Society must recognize that a sacrifice is the cumulative effort of a family. All Oriyas stand together with them to remember their august husband and father, a second of which might not come too soon!

We salute the man and his genius!

Camp – Maryland. August 21, 2009.

A Memoir of Mantu

By Sri Gopal Mohanty

Arun Das. No, they call him Mantu, but to me and my wife Shanti he was our Mantu. Perhaps, in NA besides Dr. Bijoy Das, his brother, we knew him longer than anyone else did. Just after my joining IIT, Delhi in 1966, I attended Ganesh Puja celebration by Oriyas held at Biboy Babu's place in Green Park, which is very close to IIT Campus. Since then we became close to Bijoy Babu, Mantu and their mother. We used to consult Bijoy Babu for health reasons. For some strange reason, he used to address us as Bhai and Nuabou whereas Mantu as Bhai and Dei. Within a year, Bijoy Babu got married and left for the USA. His residential place was occupied by late Partha Sarathi Mohapatra, nicknamed as Bulu (who was my college-mate and whose lyrics such as Kanchi Abhijan were sung by Late Akshaya Mohanty), his wife Dhira and little son Lura (Sidhartha Mohapatra, presently living in Princeton, NJ with his family). Mantu called them Bhai and Nuabou. So for a year or so we used to visit Bulu's place almost every evening – it became a family circle of Mantu, Bhai and Nuabou, and Bhai and Dei - a splendid life indeed! Mantu was extremely affectionate, childlike, sentimental and a dreamer.

He was artistic by nature and had a refined taste. More than all these, Mantu was a community person and a good organizer. Just after we left Delhi in 68, Bulu and he organized the great musical event of Akhsaya Mohanty and party at Bigyan Bhaban in New Delhi. – something like having a function today at Kennedy Center. Mantu was closely associated with Delhi Oriya Samaj, the oldest socio-cultural organization for Oriyas at the Capital City and was also involved in Nilachal Seva Samiti, during the days of its building the Jagannath Temple in Hauz Khas, the first one by Oriyas in Delhi-New Delhi and in its management. Prior to his coming to the States, Mantu came in close collaboration with Prafulla Mohanty (my cousin), the renowned Director of films and TV series, whose film "Bhanga Silata" received National recognition in 1998 and the film "Magunira Shagada" received the best film award in Oriya language category in 2001. Mantu was the Art Director in "Bhanga Silata". Both Prafulla and Mantu

were keen to have further collaboration, but as Providence dictates, it never happened. In the mean time, Mantu's artistic talent and organizational ability turned towards OSA and other communities. He left many footprints in OSA and Conventions including the last one, visible as well as invisible. But his most distinguishable service was committed towards IPAP, an organization which has organized three Odissi International Festivals, two in DC area and one at Bhubaneswar. Just after 2008 OSA Convention in Canada, he called me, "Bhai, I heard the cultural programme was great this time. You could have asked me to do something there." I replied with humility, "Mantu, you are a professional. What we did was amateurish. What kind of help I could ask you for?" But it tells something of this person, of his character and respect to the noble culture in which he was brought up. This year's Convention organizers decided a novel idea to produce a CD to record the Souvenir Issue. Its title "Swetapadma" was certainly Mantu's idea since the picture on the CD was from his album. Listen to the Introduction by Mantu with his deep voice, "Atitahin itihAsa..." – only the past is the history... Wherever you are Mantu, be in peace! Your dream, your art and your narration of the history will continue...

Professor Emeritus
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario
Canada

Literary Column



ଗଂଗା ବିଭଳୀ

My Flight

By Julie A Ray

[This poem was written describing the many unanswered questions that we ask God/Nature/Time. What is death? When it is inevitable why do we feel the pain at the loss of a loved one? I imagine myself trying to catch up with Time asking her these questions. And every time she runs away. After eons she takes pity and stops by, pats my head and like a loving playful mother says "I like you to run behind me because the moment you learn the answer, you have attained salvation.]

Blind to lights
Bereft of smells
In search of
Memory less days
And
Guiltless nights

Endless flights
To ends of worlds
Where
I am flying
In quest of answers

I catch fleeting Time
By the end of her shadow
We look at each other
In defiant glances
She knows my question
But will not respond

Twisting her back
And tossing her forward

I continue following her
To find my answer

Millions of light years
I follow around
Tireless flights
In pace with her

Swinging past pools
Of tears and laughter
Flipping by mountains
Of past and future

Today I watch her slowing down
Turning back she
Comes around
Running a soft hand
Over my head
She says:
'Pardon me if I run away
Forgive me if I go astray
Your question is
My breath and life
The instant you realize your answer
I die'



(Pic: Glacier National Park, Montana)

ଆବର୍ତ୍ତନ

ଗଣେଶ ରଣା



ରଞ୍ଜିତ ଆକାଶେ ନିଶାର ପ୍ରବେଶ
ଅନ୍ଧକାରେ ସବୁ ଦୃଶ୍ୟ ହୋଇଯାଏ ଶେଷ ।
ଧରାବସେ ନିସ୍ତରତା ଯେତେ ମାଡ଼ିଆସେ
କାଳରାତ୍ରିର କ୍ଷୁରତା ସେତେ ପାଖେ ଦିଶେ ।



ଗାତକ ପକ୍ଷୀ ସମ ପ୍ରତୀକ୍ଷିତ ସର୍ବେ
ଉଷାର ପ୍ରବେଶ ବାର୍ତ୍ତା କେବେ ସେ ପାଇବେ ।
ପୁରବାସୀ ପଲ୍ଲବିତ ହୁଅନ୍ତି ଦର୍ଶନେ
ସ୍ଵାଗତ କରନ୍ତି ତାକୁ ସହାସ୍ୟ ବଦନେ ।



କିଏ ଧୋଉଥାଏ ଦାଣ୍ଡ କିଏ ଝାଡୁ ମାରେ
କିଏ ଗାଧୋଇ ପାଧୋଇ ଆରାଧନା କରେ ।
ଉଷାରାଣୀର ଆୟୁଷ ସେତେ ବେଶୀ ନୁହେଁ
ସଙ୍ଗେ ସଙ୍ଗେ ବାଳସୁୟା ମସ୍ତକ ଦେଖାଏ ।



ନିଦ୍ରାଗତ ଧରାବସ ହୁଅଇ ଚକ୍ଷୁକ
ଆଳସ୍ୟର ବୁକୁପରେ କର୍ମର ପ୍ରଚଳ ।
ତୃରାନ୍ୱିତ କର୍ମକଳ ମନ୍ଦିତ ହୁଅଇ
ପଞ୍ଜିତ ଆକାଶ ଯେବେ ରଞ୍ଜିତ ଦିଶଇ ।



ପୁଣି ଥରେ ନିଶାରାଣୀ କୋଳାଗ୍ରତ କରେ
ସମସ୍ତ ଦୃଶ୍ୟଜଗତ ତାହାର ବାହୁରେ ।
ଏହି ଚକ୍ର ଗଡୁଅଛି ଗତିଚାଲୁଥିବ
ଯେପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଏହି ସୃଷ୍ଟି ଚିଛି ରହିଥିବ ।



Member Achievements

On behalf of OSA our heartfelt congratulations are due to members for their achievement in their professional career.

Dr Prakash Patnaik, Ottawa, Canada

OSA Life Member

By Lalu Manasinha

Dr. Prakash Patnaik of Ottawa, Canada, has been appointed to the Research & Technology Organisation (RTO) of NATO and to the Applied Vehicle Technology (AVT) Panel. Dr. Patnaik is also the Chair of the Technical Committee on Mechanical Systems and Materials for the Applied Vehicle Technology panel. He will be responsible and contribute to the decision making process of all the AVT projects for the NATO-RTO.

The Research and Technology Organisation is the primary NATO organisation for defence science and technology. It promotes and conducts co-operative research and information exchange, develops and maintains a long-term NATO research and technology strategy, and provides advice to all elements of NATO on research and technology issues.

Dr. Patnaik is a Director at the Institute of Aerospace Research (IAR) at the National Research Council Canada. He is also the Chief Defence Scientist of IAR-NRC. Recently, in July 2009 he received a Fellow award by the Canadian Academy of Engineering in a special ceremony in Calgary, Canada.

Dr, Prakash Patnaik is the highest-ranking Oriya scientist in the Canadian federal government. Dr. Patnaik is first Indo-Canadian to be appointed to the NATO-RTO. He lives in Ottawa with his wife Pushpa (Ellie) and three daughters Priyanka, Pallavi and Purvasha.

Please join me in extending our congratulations to Dr. Prakash Patnaik for his achievements and recognition

in aerospace, metallurgy, defence and environmental sciences.

Mr Akshaya Parija, Oman

Benefactor

During 2008 Akshaya Kumar Parija produced a movie written, directed and edited by Prasant Nanda. It has a strong social cause. The details can be seen at www.thelivingghost.com. The film has been receiving good international recognition.

It is not commercially released yet. The film is selected for the South Asian Film Festival, Seattle, Washington and will be screened to an international audience and press on 4th October 09.

Mr Ranjan Dash, PA

MIT Technology Review's "2009 Young Innovators"



Nanoporous carbon could help power hybrid cars

Problem: Ultracapacitors, which last longer than conventional batteries and can deliver stronger bursts of power, hold great promise as energy-storage devices for applications such as hybrid electric vehicles. But ultracapacitors typically can't store as much energy as batteries, so they need to be recharged frequently. That drawback has limited their use.

Solution: As a graduate student in materials science at Drexel University, Ranjan Dash used a novel chemical recipe to engineer nanoscopic pores into the carbon materials used in ultracapacitors. The tiny pores, whose size can be tuned with subnanometer precision, provide more surface area for charged particles to stick to, doubling the amount of energy the ultracapacitors can hold. Dash cofounded Y-Carbon, a startup based in King of Prussia, PA, to commercialize the technique, and he now serves as its

chief technology officer. He says that his company has already developed a prototype ultracapacitor. The plan is to partner with other companies to develop this and other applications for the porous material, which Y-Carbon will manufacture. The first ultracapacitor products could be on sale in about two and a half years, Dash says. --Neil Savage

Spot Light on Orissa

Prince Dance Group winner of “India Got Talent”

OSA is proud of the accomplishments of Prince Dance Group and is currently looking for sponsors for their appreciation award. Mr Tapan Padhi is the coordinator. Please contact him at tpadhi@yahoo.com if you are interested to be a sponsor or have any questions.

State of Sport in Orissa

Being an Oriya, we are very much aware about the rich cultural heritage, natural resources and peace-loving people of Orissa. However, that is the story of the past. In the sports arena, the present scenario for Orissa is murky and the future looks dangerous.

In Orissa, sports continue to occupy the bottom place in the priority list of the State Government. A lion's share of the allocation for sports is spent to pay salaries to the employees of the State Sports Department. Overall, the Government uses sports as tool to get easy and undisputed publicity. Nevertheless, the biggest problem is the inefficiency in managing sports affairs. Office-bearers of all sports bodies function on honorary basis and are not accountable for their performance. They do not have the idea, vision and professional expertise to deliver good performance.

Our sportspersons are struggling to find sponsorship. They lack knowledge and sense of professionalism. They are ambitious like others, but are not willing to work their way to the top. Most of them take to sports with the sole aim of finding a job. Very few are interested to pursue excellence and raise the limit of physical prowess.

Disappointed with the fact that a concerted effort is not being made to address the problems, an Oriya with true sense of nationalism has raise to the occasion to deliver. He has come forward with a team and a website (www.orisports.com) on Orissa sports to help improve the standard of sports in Orissa by just keeping people informed about the state's performance, achievements and shortcomings on the subject. His name is Sanatan Pani, a sports journalist, working in print media since 1978-79. He has worked for sports magazines (Sports Information and Khela O Khela) for five years, `Sambad' for several years and is now working for “The Indian Express” as a senior sports reporter and sub-editor. His team comprises of his wife Smruti Rekha, Sudhansu Deo - a cartoonist and two IT professionals Dibakar Sahoo and Shibaram Mishra.

Orisports.com is facing many challenges, financial and technological. It is looking for guidance and support in these area from world Oriyas. If you are willing to support or have any question regarding this, please contact Sanatan Pani (Email: game4sports@gmail.com).

Announcements

OS

A Convention 2010 in Northern California

The 41st OSA convention will be hosted by the Northern California Oriya community during July 2nd-4th, 2009. Please plan to attend, assist and enjoy. For more information please contact Pradeep Mohapatra, Co-Convener at pagela@yahoo.com.

Membership Discount: Each one, please reach one and recruit a new member

OSA life membership is reduced to \$200 (normally \$300) and Patron membership is reduced to \$500 (normally \$600) till March 31, 2010. We urge you to consider joining the OSA as life members and patrons and take advantage of this offer. For current life members, it will cost only \$200 to update to Patron membership.

We request each one of you to reach another non-member Oriya and make him/her a member. The non-member Oriya can be your friend, your community member, your relative or your children. Talk to them, share your experience as a member, convince them and persuade them to become a member of OSA. Please check Membership page from OSA main page to get details on membership procedure.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Mrs Pushpita Bhuyan for being elected as the president of Michigan chapter. Thanks to Jogesh Panda for serving Michigan chapter for past two years.

OSA 2009 Souvenir Distribution

The annual souvenir distribution plan for OSA National's permanent members (life/patron/benefactor) for this year is as follows:

- 1) Copies of souvenir were sent with the chapter presidents and volunteer representatives. Most of them were distributed. We have got some reports on distribution and still waiting to hear from others. We have also contacted Oriya communities elsewhere and individual members and have distributed some copies.
- 2) Chapter presidents are in charge of souvenir and directory distribution to permanent members of OSA National. For the rest of the members who have not yet received the souvenir, mostly chapter presidents would receive their copies. To help them do this job effectively, we request you to attend chapter events. The upcoming chapter events Kumar Purnami, Diwali etc. are great opportunities for souvenir distribution.
- 3) Members that have not received the souvenir and directory, please contact us editor@orissasociety.org (tel 908-391-0823) with your address and let us know whether you would like to receive the souvenir and directory in book format or CD format. Please contact us by October 15, 2009. We would then compile the requirements and may send the copies in groups instead of individual copies and organize ourselves to make sure that we complete the souvenir distribution task by end of November 2009.

OSA Chapters will celebrate Kumar Purnami on October 3, 2009

This year Kumar Purnami falls on Saturday, October 3, 2009. Some of the OSA chapters will celebrate Kumar Purnami on that day and some other chapters will celebrate the event during other weekends in October. OSA Chicago will celebrate Diwali. Please attend your local chapter events.

Dear OSA members, if you live in a community that has many Oriyas, but no OSA chapters, we request you to take the lead and form a chapter. Please check the Chapter page from OSA main page to get information

on forming a new chapter. We request you to be the leader to create the history. Thank you!

Prabasi Oriya Diwas (NROFC Meeting) in December 2009

Prabasi Oriya Diwas (NROFC meeting) is planned to be held in Bhubaneswar during the last week of December 2009. However, the event will take place only if there is enough interest in NRO community from USA and other countries to attend the event. NROFC meetings provide great opportunity for NROs to actively participate in the development of Orissa and get the required information for any developmental venture one desires to pursue in Orissa. The development intent can be in any sector, educational, grass-root level, cultural, industrial etc.

If you are interested to participate, please let our International Relations Coordinator Jit Goel (jit@xcelcorp.com, **732-210-0391**) knows about it by October 15, 2009. Please send copies of your correspondence to Dr Annapurna Pandey (adpandey101@gmail.com) and Bigyani Das (bigyanidas_osa@yahoo.com).

Volunteers Needed

Volunteers are needed to serve in different committees. Please check <http://www.orissasociety.org> and check for various committees and current committee members. Please volunteer to be a member of any of any committee or committees if you have knowledge, skills, interest, ideas and expertise to make a lasting positive contribution.

OSA Management wishes you a Happy Dusehera



OSA Administration (2009-2011)

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