



SANSKRITI

Indian Women's
Association Newsletter

Visit us at www.myiwa.org

Vol 22:1 Spring 2017

From the Board:

It is just March and we have already had an action packed first three months...

We started with our Welcome Party, on Feb 5th 2017 with the theme "Weaves of India", celebrating the splendor of our regional fabrics and weaves. The party was very well-attended with members colorfully dressed in beautiful saris and regional attire. Everyone enthusiastically participated in the Name 5 game and over delicious snacks and warm conversations enjoyed the party very much.

IWA mourned the sad and untimely death of a young man of Indian origin, Sriniwas Kuchibhotla, who died as a victim of hate crime. We called for a Solidarity Vigil of people of all race, religion and color. We realized that the hate that caused his death needed to be healed through empathy and understanding. Many members of the Greater Lafayette community came together at the Solidarity Vigil to support and gain strength from each other. It was poignant evening as different faith practitioners read from the Holy books and people of different origins shared their experiences.

IWA Holi Celebration was a great fun event. A day long celebration with colors, desi music accompanied by chai, *thandai* and *pakodas* in the morning; an evening of food and fun beginning with fantastic cultural program by our own talented members and children, finally ending by a rocking performance by the melodious Meghna Rajaram. Thanks to all the volunteers and talented performers.

As has become a tradition with IWA, we will continue to have other events: a picnic in the early fall, the Celebration of India around the time of Diwali, and finally, the Holiday Party in December.

We would like to continue and hopefully strengthen our existing partnerships with ASHA, ICMAP, and the YWCA. And as such continued to partner with ASHA for the 5k run on April 15th, 2017.

We will also be joining a coalition of organizations to participate in a One Community activities, so stay tuned to hear more on this.

Last year we collected recipes from many of you and created a spectacular recipe book. We worked hard to showcase your culinary skills in four color splendor. A testament to our lifestyle and its reflection in our kitchen and cuisine, this book is a must have for your cook book collection.

You will be glad you added A Dash of Desi to you life.. Don't forget to pre-



IWA Welcome Party

In This Issue

- From the Board
- Featuring Goa
- Tips to make life easier
- Women Weavers as Entrepreneurs
- IWA Cookbook Coming Soon



order the book on our sign-up sheet to be among the first to get it hot off the press. A portion of the revenue from the sale of the book will be going to two organizations that serve women and children, LUM After School Program and Heifer International Women's Empowerment Gift.

This year, we would like to make an additional effort in supporting two local organizations: Food Finders and the Lafayette Urban Ministry's Immigration Program. We have already started the non-perishable food and goods drive and donated to Food Finders. We need your support to make this effort successful throughout this year.

This year too, we are proud to continue with the awarding of the IWA Graduate Research Scholarship to a student pursuing research on gender issues at Purdue University.

So, friends, welcome to another exciting, fun-filled and purposeful year with IWA.

Please feel free to contact us at board@myiwa.org with your ideas and suggestions.

A Snapshot of 2016 Financials			
Summary			Donations Details
Total Revenue	\$40,803.23		Donation-Community \$500.00
Total Expenses	(\$41,911.48)		Donation to YWCA \$2,500.00
Net Loss	(\$1,108.25)		Donation to ICRW \$2,000.00
INCOME			Donation to ICMAP (COI) \$750.00
Event	Income	% of Total	Donation to ASHA (COI) \$1,000.00
Amazon smile Revenue	\$42.70	0.10%	Total Donations \$6,750.00
2015 COI and Holiday Party	\$5,171.59	12.67%	EXPENSES
Sanskriti Magazine	\$9,950.00	24.39%	Event
Celebration of India	\$15,738.36	38.57%	Expenses
1st Cook Book sale	\$23.32	0.06%	% of Total
Dance exercise	\$11.00	0.03%	2015 COI and Holiday Party expenses (\$5,281.00) 12.60%
Directory/News letter	\$280.00	0.69%	Sanskriti Magazine (\$2,873.89) 6.86%
ASHA 5K Run (Donations)	\$300.00	0.74%	Celebration of India (\$20,321.48) 48.49%
Holi	\$4,857.70	11.91%	Directory/News letter (\$509.13) 1.21%
Membership and donation to IWA	\$4,087.20	10.02%	Total Donations (\$6,750.00) 16.11%
Picnic	\$341.36	0.84%	Administrative and Miscellaneous (\$568.07) 1.36%
Total Revenue	\$40,803.23	100.00%	Holi (\$4,309.04) 10.28%
			Picnic (\$661.40) 1.58%
			Service Award (\$39.98) 0.10%
			Welcome Party (\$597.49) 1.43%
			Total Expenses (\$41,911.48) 100.00%



Featuring GOA

- Goa/Chennai Travel Blog
- Goa on my mind

Goa/Chennai Travel Blog

By: Arun Cayon Raman

Let me tell you about our 2016/2017 trip to Goa and Chennai, India.

Even though it is surprising, Portuguese ruled over Goa for over 400 years from the early 1500s to the late 1900s, and that influenced the culture in Goa. The Portuguese picked Goa because it offered an easy way to grow crops due to the fertile soil from all the water sources around the area. The water also facilitated trade.

On the very first day we spent in Goa, we naturally spent some time lounging in the hotel. The name of the hotel was Prainha, which means small beach in Portuguese. It was named this because it overlooked a small beach. But enough chit-chat about the hotel, let's talk about the real stuff, and that starts off on Christmas Eve with a yummy gala dinner at the Marriott Goa. This dinner included a very large vegetarian variety, and had a good host of meat, too. My favorite regular course meal was suckling pig, but my dessert of three tasty macaroons was the best.

With all this excessive eating we travelers needed to burn off some calories. We found a great way to do that the second day at Goa by walking around Old Goa. When Goa was under the Portuguese, since most Portuguese were Catholic, they built churches around the area. First we went to see a small and quiet but yet beautiful church St. Cajetan. Second we went to see the church of St. Xavier, which was packed with people, so it took us a while to move out and see the next church. Notice a pattern? First, Cajetan, with a C, then Xavier, with an X. We are climbing the alphabet! Wait, that doesn't apply to the next one, because we were climbing a mount. The last church we went to was Our Lady of the Mount, which, of course, was on a mount. This church provided views of all Goa.

On the third day, we went kayaking at Sal Backwaters. This tour went on for almost two and a half hours, and you would almost fall into a trance. The wild life was so spectacular and marvelous! We found so many different kinds of birds and plants or trees. At one point as we were kayaking through a narrow tunnel of water, we spotted a wild boar treading through a meadow! But, with so much peace, something must bring us back to the real world. This would be Calangute Beach in northern Goa, called the "Queen of Beaches", boasting a seven kilometer sweep of sand. It would be beautiful, if only it was not filled with Kingfisher beer bottles on the ground and about 10,000 or more people.

On the last day at Goa, I had fallen sick, so I wasn't able to experience any other amazing sites. Then, on the next day, we took the Spicejet flight back to Chennai, and that brings me to my last big experience.

Since I had two days at Chennai, we decided it would be cool to practice some tennis. We found just the place in Krishnan Tennis Center. It was founded by Ramesh Krishnan, whose dad was Ramanathan Krishnan. They were both famous tennis players. I ended up hitting groundstrokes with Ramesh's daughter and nephew. It was a lot of fun.

In conclusion, Goa is a nice place and very beautiful if you can see the right things. I would recommend you make a visit there sometime and make the most of *be/la* (beautiful) Goa. And if you want to hit better serves, pay a visit to Chennai!

Goa on my mind **By Smita Carneiro**

Hugging the west coast of India, Goa is the smallest state in India. Starting in the 3rd century BC when it was ruled by the Mauryas, it was ruled by different dynasties until 1510 when the Adil Shahis of Bijapur were defeated by the Portuguese led by Vasco da Gama. They named Velha Goa (now known as Old Goa) as the capital. This worked until the plague which led to Panaji being made the capital. In 1961 the Indian Army entered and took over Goa in Operation Vijay.

Being under Portuguese rule for so long, and becoming part of India much after 1947 has made Goa unique in many ways. It has the uniform civil code for one. The Portuguese left their stamp on food—sorpotel, vindaloo and the queen of desserts, bebinca. Its old churches and temples, many of which are World Heritage Sites, have enabled tourism to flourish and now it is the number one source of employment, beating mining, agriculture and fishing. Having beautiful beaches which were first 'discovered' by the flower children in the 1960s certainly helped. It has the oldest medical college in Asia, and Abe Faria the father of hypnotism is from Goa. Make sure you hire a motor cycle taxi, the only place in the world this is available. Take in a '*Tiatr*' - a unique theatre form in Konkanni which is one of the most beautiful and contradictory languages ever. And when you leave say '*hanv ietam*' which means 'I'm coming'. And your new friends will say '*io, io*', which means 'come, come'.



Tips to make your life easier

Submissions from IWA Members

Many of us have little tricks that we use to make our life's little problems better or simply go away. So we decided to share some of these tried and tested ones with all our readers. When next you are cleaning your silver or trying to get the burnt food off a pot remember our tips and you will be in good shape!

Tips From

Renu Bajaj: To clean burnt food off your pots, take your pot with burnt food stuck to it and add enough water to cover what you'd like to remove (1/4" is sufficient if everything is on the bottom of the pot). Boil the water, and add a dryer sheet (can have gone through the dryer) to the boiling water in the pot. Boil for 2-3 minutes. After boiling, use the dryer sheet to scrub the pot clean.

Wash the pot normally.

Smita Carneiro: An easy way to clean a food splattered microwave is to put a cup of water in the microwave, and heat it until it boils (about two minutes). Let it sit there for 5 minutes. Then just wipe off all the gunk with a dishcloth or paper towel.

To clean silver jewelry use a toothbrush and toothpaste to gently scrub away all the tarnish. Rinse and dry carefully.

Stains on clothes? Apply toothpaste and let sit until it dries. Then launder as usual.

Got a cast iron pan with food stuck on? Add some water and heat on stovetop until it boils. Use a stiff brush to brush it off.

Kid not practicing piano: Bribe them. They can play on the computer/Wii etc for the same amount of time they practice. That worked for me :-)

If planting tomatoes in your vegetable patch, plant basil and/or garlic in between. This helps drive away some of the insects that harm the tomato plants.

Uma Peeta: Use leftover coke in stained coffee canisters or also in stained washbasins or toilets to take away the stains

Microwave the dishwasher sponge for 20 seconds to keep it germfree.

Throw a bounce sheet or any drying sheets in the trash can to prevent odors.

Keep a small open container with baking soda and a cloves in the fridge to prevent a smelly fridge.

Fry Dal (toor Dal, chana Dal)before you boil it.Tastes better.

Add a little oil to the water before boiling the Dal.Makes Dal softer.

Add sugar to yoghurt and Besan mix before boiling while making Kadhi.Less chance of yoghurt breaking.

Add a little milk if you find the vegetable curry is getting too dry...Like in brinjal, zucchini or in any other vegetable

Add some cloves to dry Rice or dals to keep them fresh and bug free

Mix in some yoghurt to the idli or chapathi dough to get some softer idli's or chapathis

Add oil,salt, turmeric to fresh ginger or garlic paste to make them last long.

Separate bananas at the stalk if you want them not to ripen too fast.

Seema Mattoo: Make a few different *tadkas* (i.e. Masala mixes with onions, garlic, chilies etc) ahead of time and freeze them. That way, you don't waste time chopping and preparing the base masala mix every time you need to cook a new dish on a work day.

Keep your tips coming and we will continue to publish them.

Women weavers as entrepreneurs

By Mangala Subramaniam.



**Reprint from Deccan Herald, Feb 9, 2017*

The concept of producer companies is to enable artisans to pursue their existing livelihood. Woven fabrics, created by weavers, have always been a hallmark of India. Weavers are the third largest segment among the poor in the country. Official estimates put the number of weavers in India at about 65 lakh, unofficial numbers peg it closer to two crore.

Typically, all members of a household are involved in weaving. Hundreds of looms are used by women, men and children to weave cotton, silk, and other natural fibres. Weavers produce fabric that depicts India's own precious heritage. But it is not all nostalgia nor as simple as it appears. Buying threads, developing designs, dyeing the threads as needed, weaving as per the design, checking it for quality, and then marketing it or generating orders for supplies to earn some reasonable return is a complicated process that may be daunting for any weaver. These complexities were at the centre of my conversations with women weavers at the Godavari Women Weavers' Services Producer Company (GWWSPC) at Mandapeta, near Rajahmundry, when I visited them in December, 2016. Weaving is these rural women's livelihood. They are entrepreneurs doing business.

The GWWSPC, registered as a producer company (PC) in 2013, now has about 247 women members. Each member holds a share of Rs 1,000 in the PC. The basic concept of PCs such as GWWSPC is to improve the lives of artisans by enabling them to pursue their existing livelihood or consider alternative livelihoods, whichever choice the artisan makes. The concept of the PC was introduced through the Producer Company Act 2002 in India. A PC is a hybrid between a private limited company and a cooperative society.

In order to survive in the long-run, PCs aim to provide business-oriented services and tangible benefits to their members. Covering the operational costs from the business income and engaging in collective marketing activities require producers to work closely with employees they hire to ensure that the PC sustains itself over a period of time. Farmers have formed PCs in many states but not all of them have been successful. Most PCs are formed through the assistance of non-governmental organisations (NGO).

A major activity preceding the formation of a PC such as the GWWSPC is mobilising producers; a challenging task because producers such as weavers do not always readily recognise the benefits of working collectively. Initial interest amongst a few weavers led to a larger house-to-house drive to share information about forming the GWWSPC. About 500 to 600 households were contacted in the hope of ultimately having at least 300 participants.

But that was a test. "It was not easy," said two of the women weavers I met. But then slowly as interest grew,

women from more households were convinced. “Why did you join the GWWSPC?” I asked Chandrakanta Kumari, the current elected president of the GWWSPC.

“The agent used to pay us about Rs 1,200 per warp (about 43 metres of woven cloth) and now, we earn approximately Rs 1,700 per warp,” she said. The returns are attractive for the weavers who also determine the production plan, generate orders, and fix the prices at which to sell the woven fabric. Other major benefits include ownership of the brand, exposure to market demands, and a share in the profits that accrue from sales.

Employment for youth

It also generates some local employment for youth. For instance, this PC employs seven people for monitoring purchases and dyeing of raw material, maintaining accounts, and checking quality of the woven fabric. In 2015-16, GWWSPC had a turnover of Rs 67 lakh and this is expected to rise to Rs 1 crore.

What can we learn from PCs like that of the women weavers in Mandapeta? First is that even poor women who have little education can learn and utilise their livelihood skills to become entrepreneurs ‘doing business.’ This was enabled in the early stages when Chitrika, an NGO implementing the project, organised ‘exposure’ visits for about 50 weavers – 40 women and 10 men.

These weavers had the opportunity to see production and marketing activities through the work of other artisans as well as fabric/dress retail outlets. Second, PCs of women entrepreneurs in semi-urban areas who are often dismissed in derogatory terms can prove that their skills extend to learning to manage businesses through collective ownership. Third, women’s involvement in PCs can facilitate changes in gender relations in the community and household.

Research for unravelling the complex dynamics of the effects of such entrepreneurship on gender relations within the household by social science scholars is much needed. The National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) supports the formation of institutions of the poor who will work together to leverage resources and connect with markets. But there is little systematic and rigorous research of initiatives such as the PCs to assess their impacts beyond the economic tangible measures of profits to consider social change.

Mangala Subramaniam, is an Associate Professor, Department of Sociology, Purdue University

Congratulations to Dr Mangala Subramaniam on being Saluted as a Woman Honoree, Woman of Distinction by the YWCA Greater Lafayette Area.

Dr. Mangala Subramaniam is Associate Professor of Sociology at Purdue University and a leading scholar in the area of gender. In addition to many articles and book chapters, she has published three gender-related books. Her research projects are global in scope and focus on gender politics particularly the challenges faced by poor and marginalized women to access basic needs. The topics she studies include the law and violence against women; the politics of HIV prevention, and access to technologically improved seeds to address food insecurity. Dr. Subramaniam’s public engagement activities bring gender inequities (and caste and racial inequities) to the forefront. Among her many international activities, is her contribution as member of the International Team of



Experts for Poverty Alleviation, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, Geneva.

Dr Subramaniam has been a long time friend of IWA and has been instrumental in establishing the IWA Graduate Student Scholarship at Purdue University. We celebrate her

this and many achievements and wish her continued success!

IWA Cookbook : A Dash of Desi : Coming Soon

We put our culinary soul in the creation of this one-of-a-kind cookbook. Recipes from Chefs and well known restaurants are peppered among the tried and tested recipes from the South Asian immigrant kitchen. A portion of the proceeds will be going to two organizations that serve women and children, LUM After School Program and Heifer International Women's Empowerment Gift. So remember to book your advance copy right away!

Here are a few behind the scenes pictures of the making of A Dash of Desi



Sanskriti



**Indian Women's
Association
Newsletter**

710 Noble Court
West Lafayette IN 47906

PLACE
STAMP
HERE