

ICAM'S NEWSLETTER

Fall 2025

Editor's Note

Samarpan's editorial team is pleased to share the Fall newsletter of 2025 with our readers. We are looking forward to publishing new contributions from our readers. Please submit your articles [here](#). Thank you!!

Newsletter Team

Subhankar Bhattacharya | Shatavisa Mukherjee | Anu Gupta | Sarika Gupta | Ram Kadirvel | Nisha Kurup | Alka Mehra | Anu Nair | Salitha Philip | Priya Sampathkumar | Ajay Singh | Namrata Tomer

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President's Message

Dear Friends, Namaste!

I hope you all had a wonderful summer and are now ready to embrace the upcoming festive season. Wishing you and your families a joyful celebration of Ganesh Chaturthi, Onam, Navratri, Durga Puja, Vijay Dashami, and Diwali!

We're delighted to share that Utsav 2025 – Festival of Colors was another resounding success. Over 150 participants joined the 5K run/walk, and nearly 400 community members came together at Peace Plaza to celebrate with music, dance, vibrant colors, and delicious food from all diversified groups. A heartfelt thank you to our partners—Hindu Samaj Temple, Rochester Downtown Alliance, Mayo Research Fellows Association, Telugu Association of Rochester Minnesota, and the Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation Department at Mayo Clinic—as well as to our vendors, sponsors, volunteers, and the entire community for making this event so memorable.

On August 17th, we hosted a community picnic to show appreciation to our sponsors, members, and volunteers. The event also marked the conclusion of the Hindi School academic year (2024–2025). Certificates were awarded to all students, teachers, and volunteers who contributed to a successful year. The Hindi School continues to thrive thanks to our dedicated teachers who generously volunteer their time. In the coming year, we'll be restructuring the team and introducing a new leadership role—Vice Principal. We're excited to welcome Rashmi Das to this position, supporting Shital Aranake in leading the school forward. To celebrate Navratri, we're thrilled to host a Garba and Dandiya Night on October 5th at the Chateau Theater. This grand evening will feature electrifying performances by Anushka Pandit, Bhargav Upadhyay, and their talented troupe—visiting us all the way from India! Their performances have graced major stages, including Gujarati films, and we're honored to welcome them to Rochester. For event details, please refer to the flyer included in this newsletter.

Looking ahead, our team is actively preparing for the Diwali Cultural Program on November 8th, 2025. This year, we've selected the Byron High School Auditorium, which offers modern infrastructure and allows us to bring in outside food—addressing a key concern raised by the community last year. Please save the date and join us in large numbers to make this celebration truly special.

Thank you all for your continued support. To stay updated, please visit icamn.org, subscribe to our mailing list, and become an ICAM member for 2025.

Warm regards,
Ajay Singh
President, ICAM Board



Since Last Newsletter

UTSAV 2025

Author: Namrata tomar.

Every summer, Rochester transforms into a vibrant canvas of color and joy as we celebrate UTSAV, The Festival of Colors. It's more than just an event—it's a bridge between my childhood memories and my son's growing experiences.

As a child in India, Holi meant waking up early, armed with water balloons and powdered colors, chasing friends through narrow lanes, and returning home drenched and laughing. The air smelled of gujiyas, samosas, and fresh gulal. Music echoed from every corner, and the joy was infectious.

Now, decades later, I find myself reliving those moments in a new setting. Rochester's UTSAV celebration, though thousands of miles from India, captures the same spirit. Peace Plaza becomes a hub of activity food stalls serve spicy chaat, mango lassi and a variety of other delicacies, vendors display colorful kurtas and bangles. The DJ spins Bollywood hits and the flash mob dance at the beginning of the event gets everyone dancing, regardless of age or background. Over the years the Color run has become a much awaited event among the runners in town with over 150 participants this year.

What makes it even more special personally for me is watching my son experience it with his friends. Their excitement as they throw colors, try new foods, and dance to unfamiliar beats reminds me of my own childhood. It's heartwarming to see him embrace a part of his heritage with such joy and pride.

UTSAV isn't just a festival—it's a celebration of community, culture, and connection. It brings together people from all walks of life, creating a shared space of laughter and love. And for me, it's a beautiful reminder that traditions, no matter where they're celebrated, have the power to unite generations and cultures.





Shri Krishna Janmashtami Celebration – Rochester, MN

Author : Shelly Goel.

On August 15, 2025, our Hindu Samaj Temple in Rochester was brimming with devotion, joy, and community spirit as we came together to celebrate Shri Krishna Janmashtami, the auspicious birth of Lord Krishna. Families, children, and devotees of all ages gathered to honor this special day, making it a memorable and spiritually uplifting event.

As described in our sacred scriptures, Lord Krishna, the eighth avatar of Lord Vishnu, was born at midnight on the eighth day (Ashtami) of the dark fortnight of Bhadrapada during the Dwapar Yuga, a time when the earth was burdened by adharma and injustice. His birth symbolizes the victory of righteousness, truth, and love over wrongdoing, fear, and ignorance. Janmashtami reminds us of Krishna's eternal teachings: to live with devotion, compassion, and joy while following the path of dharma.

The celebration began in the early evening with sacred chanting of mantras and melodious bhajans. Both children and adults participated enthusiastically, creating a deeply spiritual and joyous atmosphere in the temple. The kids brought extra charm to the program with their bhajans and recitations of shlokas, showcasing their love and devotion to Krishna. Their innocent voices and smiles reflected the delight and purity of Krishna leela's, warming the hearts of everyone present.

One of the most exciting moments of the evening was the Dahi Handi, celebrated here in the USA with a pinata-style pot filled with treats. Children eagerly tried to break it, reliving Krishna's playful adventures and mischievous spirit. Despite the rainy weather, their laughter, energy, and excitement filled the temple hall, making it a truly delightful moment for families and devotees alike.

Devotees also lovingly prepared and offered sweets, prasad, and Krishna's favorite foods, including freshly churned sweet butter (makhan-mishri). The offerings honored Krishna's love for simple village foods and reminded everyone of the joy in sharing and giving. The Rochester Satsang Group generously sponsored a delicious prasad dinner, and volunteers worked tirelessly to ensure the food was served with love and care. From setting up the hall to distributing prasad and cleaning up afterward, the community came together in the true spirit of seva, reflecting Krishna's teachings on service and togetherness.

The celebration continued late into the night with bhajans, chanting, and prayers, creating a sacred and joyous ambiance. At midnight, devotees joyfully welcomed the divine birth of Shri Krishna, and the evening concluded with a heartfelt Aarti, filling the temple with light, devotion, and blessings.

Lord Krishna reminds us in the Bhagavad Gita (2.47):

“कर्मण्येवाधि कारस्तेमा फलेषु कदाचन । मा कर्मफलं लहेतुर्मा मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्रवकर्मणि ॥”

“You have a right to perform your prescribed duties, but you are not entitled to the fruits of your actions.” This Janmashtami celebration was a perfect blend of devotion, music, food, and community spirit. It highlighted the importance of coming together, serving selflessly, and celebrating with love. A heartfelt thank you to all the families and volunteers whose dedication made the event possible and so memorable for everyone.

Jai Shri Krishna!



ICAM Hindi School Graduation & Volunteer picnic

Author: Sarika Pandey

As we near the end of summer, ICAM organized its annual picnic to thank all the volunteers, including the dedicated teachers and staff of Rochester Hindi School (RHS). A special part of this event was recognizing the students and parents of RHS for successfully completing the 2024–2025 academic year.

As a parent and active volunteer teacher, I couldn't help but reflect on our journey over the past three years. The fun — and sometimes challenge — of attending Hindi language classes on Friday evenings, while other students kick off their weekends, is truly unique. And I admire the students, parents and RHS staff for their commitment.

I feel fortunate to have the opportunity to serve the next generation and share the Hindi language, which connects me to my family, friends, and community.

I'd like to share a poem I wrote for India Day in January 2025, celebrated by RHS, titled “Mann Mera Harshaya Hai”, which means “My heart is filled with joy and happiness.”

मन मेरा हर्षया है

तुम छोटे छोटे बच्चों को
पढ़ा कर मन मेरा हर्षया है
कल जब तुम बड़े हो जाओ
तो याद राखना जो सिखाया है

छोटी छोटी बातों में,
हल्की हल्की मुस्कराहटों में
दुलार भरी मेरी डांटों में,
हिन्दी भाषा तुम्हे सिखाकर
बहुत सुकून मैंने पाया है
तुम छोटे छोटे बच्चों को
पढ़ा कर मन मेरा हर्षाया है

होली की कभी कहानी हुई,
तो दिवाली पर आरती की थाली बनी
कभी जन्म दिन पर टोफी मिली,
तो कभी क्रिसमस पर ओरनामेंट भी
आज छबीस जनवरी पर,
तुम रंग रंग के कपड़े पहन कर
भारत का गान जो गाते हो,
हम सभी शिक्षकों के मन में,
छोटा सा घर कर जाते हो
तुम छोटे छोटे बच्चों को
पढ़ा कर मन मेरा हर्षाया है

पचिसो साल पहले किसी की
कोशिश से यह हिंदी विद्यालय शुरू हुआ
आज ईन शिक्षकों ने साथ आकर
तुम्हें पढ़ाना मुमकिन किया है

आओ आज हम सब मिलकर
छोटा सा यह प्रण करे
की आने वाली पीढ़ी को भी
हमें हिंदी भाषा सिखानी है
सच, तुम छोटे छोटे बच्चों को
पढ़ा कर मन मेरा हर्षाया है
कल जब तुम बड़े हो जाओ
तो याद राखना जो सिखाया है



India Day with CABERI

Author: Palki Sen

CABERI (Cultural association of Bengalees in Rochester Minnesota) hosted a vibrant and heartwarming India Day celebration on 23rd Aug 2025 that brought together the entire Indian community from in and around Rochester. This event was a true reflection of India's diversity

and unity, welcoming people from different states to showcase their unique festivals, traditions, and talents.

The day was filled with energy, color, and joy. Participants presented a variety of performances ranging from classical dances and folk songs to modern acts, each highlighting the rich cultural heritage of different regions of India. The stage came alive with music, rhythm, and the enthusiasm of performers, leaving the audience captivated throughout the program.

One of the biggest highlights for families was the kids' drawing competition, where children showed their creativity with colorful artwork inspired by Indian culture. There was also a kids' fancy dress segment, where little ones dressed up as characters from Indian mythology, historical figures, and festive-themed costumes, winning hearts with their adorable performances. To add even more charm to the evening, the celebration featured a fashion show representing Indian festivals, where participants proudly displayed traditional attire showcasing the diversity of Indian states and festivities.

And of course, no Indian celebration is complete without food! The food stalls were filled with lip-smacking snacks and delicious platters, offering flavors that instantly made everyone feel at home. The aroma of traditional Indian cuisines added an extra layer of warmth and nostalgia to the celebration, making it a treat not just for the soul but also for the taste buds. The India Day celebration was more than just an event; it was an emotional and cultural reunion for Indians living in Rochester and nearby areas. It reminds everyone of the spirit of togetherness, the beauty of cultural exchange, and the essence of India, diverse yet united. The success of this event gives hope that next year's celebration will be even bigger and brighter, with more people coming together to honor India's rich heritage.









Shri Ganesh Chaturthi

Author : Mrs. Vaibhavi S. Nawale

After reading this “shloka”, we visualize lord Ganesha in different ranges from a cute, small idol to a gigantic one. Lord Ganesha, the elephant headed diety symbolises wisdom and is worshipped as the remover of obstacles and the patron of new beginnings. Lord Ganesha is a master of 14 Vidyas and 64 Kalas (art). His unique outlook clearly makes him lovable and respectable. One more thing, I love about Ganesha is His flexibility of worship duration, devotees pray to him for 1.5 days, 5 days, 7days or even 10 days, in their homes. Ganesh Chaturthi is one of the Hindu festivals which is celebrated across India with a special cultural flavor from different states especially in Maharashtra, Karnatka and Tamil Nadu. The overseas indian residents miss the jubilant celebration of “Shri Ganesh Chaturthi” in the United States of America. Being nostalgic and to maintain the cultural tradition, the Indian community of Rochester celebrates Ganesh Chaturthi in Hindu Samaj Temple. Many families bring beautifully crafted clay idols of Lord Ganesha to their homes for installation (sthapana). Friends gather to offer prayers and traditional sweets, especially modak to Lord Ganesha. My family has had a tradition of Ganpati installation for more than four decades. My mother-in-law started the Ganpati installation in our home after my husband’s birth. She still does with all the devotion and spirit for 10 days. She makes different types of “modak”(special sweet) every day for prasad for Ganpati . On “Anant Chaturdashi”, she cooks different varieties of food and makes a plate (thali) for Ganesha which has all the food items, with each item a count of 21.

We tremendously miss all those things here in Rochester. As a parent of two kids, my husband and I always want, no matter where we live, our kids should stay connected with their heritage and bridge the cultural gaps by participating in the celebration of festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi. Our son, Shaarav loves to paint or make things out of clay. For every Ganesh Chaturthi, he makes either a painting or an idol of Lord Ganesha. This year, he made Ganesh idol out of clay. Our daughter Sharvari loves to dance, so she picks any song about Lord Ganesha and choreographs the dance by herself and performs at home in front of us. We chant Ganesh Aarti at home for 10 days and prepare modak for prasad too. That is how we celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi here and kids eagerly wait for the celebration every year.

In Rochester, many families install Ganesh idols and invite friends for Aarti and Mahaprasad. Here are some glimpses of Rochester, Minnesota Ganpati:





Youth Scape

Rochester Tamil Paadasalai

One of the centers of TWIN CITIES TAMIL Paadasalai

Every year school starts after Labor Day weekend and runs for 32 weeks every Friday starting at 6:30 PM and ends at 8 PM.

Teaches classes starting from Preschool-1 till grade 8, age groups 3-18 years.

Our goal is to make students become proficient in conversation and reading writing skills.

Venue: Northrop Community Education center

201 8th Street NW

Rochester, MN - 55901

Day: Friday

Time: 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Please contact: Sivapriya Natarajan: 507-226-2829 (leave message)

2025 - 26 Tamil School Year Registration

 *Step - 1*

Fill-in the Google form for your Students preferred school location and your Zelle Payment confirmation Id. [Link to Google Form](#)

 *Step - 2*

Please register your child(ren) on our CTA website:

<https://www.catamilacademy.org/cta/StudentReg.aspx>

 *Step - 3*

If you have already completed the CTA registration and made payment and If you are eligible and interested to request a Placement Test, please complete the Placement test request from the CTA website.

Please read the instructions on how to submit a request from the link below:

[Link to Google Form](#)

NOTE: Yes, it is important to fill both Google Form and register in CTA website. Its hard to trace the Parent Email Id and Zelle Payment received from another email Id and map the student. So we request all parents to fill in the Google form to help us identify the transaction detail for your Kids.

My eCybermission experience

Author : Vikram Kudva

eCybermission (<https://www.ecybermission.com/>) is an US Army funded science program supported by the National Science Teachers Association. The registration is free and easy but before you enter you need a project or idea. You then have to fill out a mission folder about your engineering and design, materials list and what it can do for the community.

Ecybermission was introduced to us by our mentor at John Adams middle school, Ms. Deb Las. We were a team of four sixth graders Vikram Kudva, Ari Kanwar, Vivek Kudva and Vincent Slivinski and we called ourselves the Exploding Turtles. Our project was an automated watering system that detected moisture level in the soil to decide if the plant needs watering or not. We designed and built this over a period of four months and the materials we used consisted of an arduinor4 minima kit, a 5volt water pump tubing conducting wires and a lot of plumbing and electrical tape.

After we submitted our project in February 2025, we waited eagerly to see if we had won state or not. Over the next few months, we learned that our project had won state and after a winning the MidWest regionals, we were invited to Washington DC, as a nation finalist in the 6th grade category. We were excited!

Our trip to Washington DC was nothing short of incredible. The Army hosted us at a beautiful 5-star venue, the food was extraordinary, and the rooms were really good. It was an all-paid trip and we got to meet Army lieutenants and Colonels. Some Generals and VIPs came by to review our project posters. We even got to present our project on a stage that was broadcast live to the entire world.

We plan to compete again this year and we encourage any kids who are interested in STEM activities to sign up at John Adams Middle school or at your own school. Can't wait to see you there!

.



Recipe

RECIPE FOR THE OCCASION

Author : Viralben Chauhan

It's a tradition to prepare Mohanthal in Gujarat during Krishna Janamastami. The dish is named after Krishna - Mohan and thal meaning a large plate, usually used to serve to king with all delicacy.

Here is the quick and easy 5 step recipe.

For the gram flour (Besan) Mixture:

- * 4 cups (500gm) of regular besan (gram flour)
- * 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ (400gm) cup ghee (clarified butter)
- * $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk

For the Sugar Syrup:

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ 350gm cups sugar
- 1 cup water
- A pinch of saffron strands
- 1/4 teaspoon cardamom powder

For Garnishing:

- Sliced almonds and pistachios

Cooking method:

Step 1:

Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup ghee in 500 grams of gram flour and set aside when it looks granular.

Step 2:

After 15 minutes, sieve it with a sieve, then add ghee to another pan and roast the gram flour in ghee until golden brown.

Step 3:

Now in another pan, mix 350 grams of sugar and one cup of water and keep the temperature between medium to low and let it boil.

Step 4:

When the syrup looks a little thicker than the gulab jamun syrup, take it between your finger and thumb and check its consistency, if a single thread is formed, it is ready. Get it off the stove.

Step 5:

Now add earlier roasted gram flour+ghee mix into the syrup. Mix cardamom powder and saffron in it and pour it into a ghee brushed mold, usually rectangle and shallow. You can use ghee brushed Indian thali.

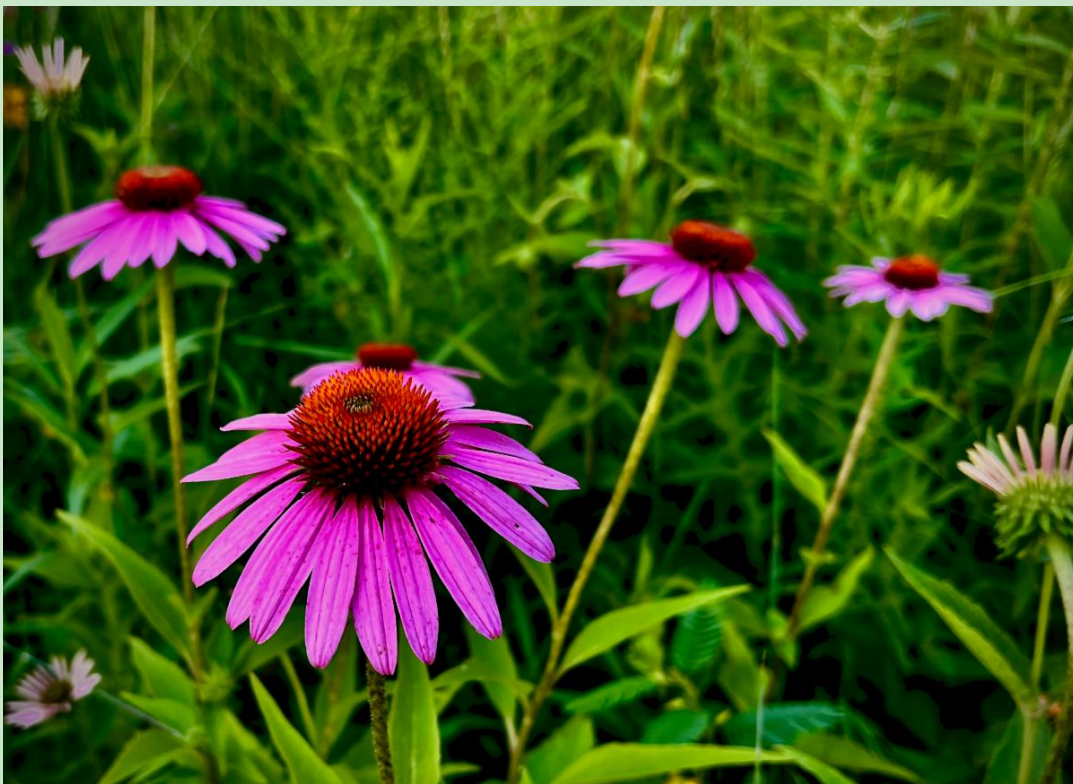
Step 6:

Garnish with almonds and pistachios. Cut it into pieces and serve after four to five hours.



Rochester through my Lens

A mobile phone capture - in Cascade Lake Park, Rochester. Summer memories.
Photographer : Subhankar Bhattacharya



Parampara

The Story of King Shibi and the Doves

(From the Mahabharata)

Once, there was a great king named Shibi who was renowned for his kindness, righteousness, and deep sense of justice. One day, while he was holding court, two doves flew into his palace and sought refuge. Hot on their trail was a hawk, determined to catch the doves for its meal.

The doves, trembling with fear, flew straight to King Shibi and pleaded for protection. The hawk, seeing the doves take shelter with the king, came forward and demanded, "O King, these are my rightful prey. I have not eaten for days. Please allow me to take them so that I can survive."

King Shibi, understanding the hawk's hunger, said, "I cannot turn away your request, but these doves have sought refuge in my palace. I am sworn to protect all creatures who come to me for help. I will not break my promise."

The hawk was not satisfied and replied, "But, O King, if you do not give me these doves, I will surely starve. What use is your promise of protection if you cannot uphold justice?"

The king thought for a moment and then said, "If you must have them, then take my own flesh instead. I offer it to you as a substitute for the doves."

The hawk, amazed at the king's offer, agreed to the arrangement. The king, with his own hands, cut a piece of his flesh and placed it on the scale in front of the hawk, but as soon as the weight was placed, it was still unbalanced. No matter how much flesh King Shibi offered, the scales would not balance.

At that moment, the two doves, who were actually the gods Indra and Agni in disguise, revealed themselves. They had come to test the king's righteousness, and seeing his unwavering commitment to justice and his selflessness, they declared that no further sacrifice was needed.

Impressed with King Shibi's purity of heart, they restored him to full health and left him with the lesson that true justice is not merely about balancing the scales, but also about the selflessness and sacrifice one is willing to make for others.

Moral:

True justice is about sacrifice and selflessness. A righteous person is one who is willing to put the welfare of others before their own, even at personal cost.

Source:

This story is part of the Mahabharata, one of the two great epics of India, composed by the sage Vyasa. The story of King Shibi is often cited to illustrate the importance of dharma (righteousness) and the selfless nature of true kingship.

Upcoming events

ICAM
Culture, Education
Collaboration

INDIAN CULTURAL ASSOCIATION
OF MINNESOTA
PRESENTS

GARBA & DANDIYA NIGHT

**05
OCT**
4 PM

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NATIONAL PROMOTER
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VERSATILE SINGER
**ANUSHKA
PANDIT**

GUJARATI MOVIES'S
PLAYBACK SINGER
**BHARGAV
UPADHYAY**

VENUE
CHATEAU THEATRE, ROCHESTER, MN

FOR TICKETS VISIT : **ICAMN.ORG**

FOR QUESTIONS OR SPONSORSHIP : **CONTACT@ICAMN.ORG**

ICAM
Culture, Education
Collaboration

save the date...

ICAM

Presents...

**DIWALI CULTURAL
PROGRAM**

Date : 8th November



More info to come





at Hindu Samaj Temple of Minnesota, 911 11th Ave NW, Rochester, MN 55901

27th September, Saturday Morning:	28th September, Sunday Morning:
8:30-10 am- Puja preparation	8:30-10 am- Puja preparation
10-12 noon- Maa Durga Puja, Pushpanjali	10-12 noon- Maa Durga Puja, Arati
12-12:30 pm- Prasad distribution	12-12:30 pm- Prasad distribution
12:30-2 pm- Lunchtime	12:30-2 pm- Lunchtime
2-4:30 pm- Cultural Program	2:30 pm onwards- Sindur Khela

27th September, Saturday Evening:
 7:30-8:30 pm- Sandhya-Arati, Dhunuchi Nach
 8:30 pm onwards- Dinner

Puja Subscription: \$17 per person
 (for each time Puja, includes Archana, Prasad and Bhog).
Full Puja package available
 For any queries and/ or participating in the Cultural Program.
 please RSVP to Caberi.ec@gmail.com or via text to 612-227-9359.

SUR AUR TAAL AND SUNSHINE FAMILY PRESENTS
ALFAAZ AUR AWAAZ

Experience the magic of timeless Bollywood Classics, reimagined with new soulful Ghazals and poetry penned by Ajay Sahaab brought to life by Indian Idol talents Piyush Panwar and Gyanita Dwivedi accompanied by some famous Bollywood musicians.....

28th September 2025 Sunday 4 PM till 7 PM Oak Grove Middle School, Bloomington MN 55437
A Nostalgic Poetry & Musical Journey



Piyush Panwar
Singer/Indian Idol Finalist



Ajay Sahaab
Poet/Lyricist



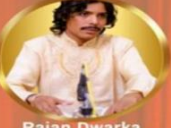
Gyanita Dwivedi
Singer/Composer



Sushant Sherma
Guitar



Madhav Jawad
Keyboard



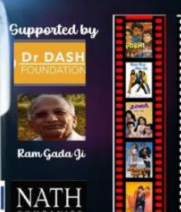
Rajan Dwarka
Tabla

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- # WhatsApp sensation...
- # Poetry rewriting...
- # Ajay Sahaab Fan Club

Have you considered becoming an ICAM member?
 Check out <http://icamn.org/membership> to learn about the amazing benefits you can enjoy!



ICAM | 911 11th Avenue NW | Rochester, MN 55901 US

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