



# SERENDIB

A NEWSLETTER OF THE SRI LANKA ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON D.C.

VOL.3 NO.1 July 2006

## Message from the President



Dear Members and Friends:

As mentioned previously at the Annual General Meeting on March 25, 2006, I am honored and humbled to accept the baton as the Eighteenth President of our 30+ year-old Association. I would like to make use of

this opportunity to thank my predecessors and all the pioneers of this area, who established this Association back in 1975. Thirty years later, your Association has grown tremendously in membership, and has established itself as the main social organization for the majority of Sri Lankans in the Greater Washington Area.

First and foremost, I would like to convey my sincere appreciation for the record attendance and your enthusiastic participation at the AGM on March 25, 2006. The concerned involvement of as many as twelve past presidents, several life members and numerous long-standing and new members, reinforced my belief that this is an Association of the Members, by the Members and for the Members. You have all made it very clear to me, and my Board, as to what you expect from this Association and how its business affairs should be conducted. The Board of Directors has worked hard in the last couple of months in getting the necessary mechanisms in place to fulfill your wishes, and we look forward to your continued participation in the upcoming months. Personally, I would like to thank you once again, for your vote of confidence in electing my entire slate. You have given me an efficient, talented, selfless group of individuals to work with, and for this I am extremely grateful.

As the first order of business, during the first Board meeting on April 29, 2006, the Board of Directors unanimously elected Dr. Hilarian Codippily and Mr. Prasanth Cherubim as Vice Patrons of the Association. Both these individuals have served this Association with distinction for many years; as members, on various committees and as past presidents, and were recognized worthy of this honor. Please join me in congratulating them.

Due to the concerns raised by the membership at the AGM, The Board of Directors established a committee

to produce a "Tsunami Report" to enlighten the members on all Tsunami related activities. This report will include all of the financials, funded projects, and feedback of projects completed. The Board appointed President-Elect, Dakshi de Silva, SLAGW Treasurer, Suraj Navaratne and Director, Kenneth Abeywickrama to serve on this committee and produce their report by the end of September.

If you have not visited our website lately, please do so today at [www.slawdc.com](http://www.slawdc.com). Mahil Abeywarna our original Webmaster, who established the SLAWDC website a few years back, handed over the reigns to his brother Upul in April. Director Upul Abeywarna with Mahil's guidance and additional support from his talented wife Dilini, has launched our new and updated website. You will be amazed at the amount of information that is available on this site. Two special noteworthy additions to our website are: the "Community Calendar" which is a long overdue feature that will help members of our community stay informed and prevent the overlapping of events, which seems to occur frequently; and the "Community Business" component, which will allow members to advertise their products and services on our website for a nominal fee. Please contact Upul for further information at [webmaster@slawdc.com](mailto:webmaster@slawdc.com).

As you can see, we have made a few changes to the structure of our newsletter. On recognizing the importance of obtaining an independent view, and the need to open the newsletter for inclusion of events relating to our ever-growing community, we have appointed Director Rashika Padmakumara as Editor of the newsletter. During the last few weeks, Rashika has diligently collected information and articles, from various group leaders, to give you an overview of the events, and happenings within the community. Please forward any announcements, suggestions/comments to Rashika at [editor@slawdc.com](mailto:editor@slawdc.com). I have also requested the Secretary, Treasurer SLAWDC, Treasurer SLAGW and Chairpersons of various committees to submit their reports to be included with every newsletter for your perusal. This I believe, enables the respective Officers to correspond directly with the members, and facilitates full disclosure and complete transparency, with regard to every aspect of the business of the Association.

As I previously stated, I am fortunate to work with a great group of individuals. While I thank each and every one of them for their contributions, I must make special mention of SLAGW Treasurer Suraj Navaratne,

who spent many hours during the month of April reconciling all of the SLAGW accounts, Secretary, Sandra Ismail for organizing the Avurudhu celebration and for making a firm booking with the Hilton, Gaithersburg for our annual New Year's Dinner Dance, Assistant Secretary, Rashika Padmakumara for her role as the Editor of Serendib, and Director Upul Abeywarna for his efforts as the Webmaster.

It was wonderful to see a record number of Sri Lankans and well wishes at our annual Sinhala and Tamil New Year celebration this past April. Our next event will be the Summer Barbeque/Local Art Show, on July 29<sup>th</sup> at Maplewood Alta Vista Local Park in Bethesda. On this day we will also select the DC Cricket team who will be representing the Association at the annual DC/NY game, which will be held in Denville, New Jersey on August 12, 2006. Please join us and support our team.

I would also like to mention that past President, Mr. Nihal Goonewardene, informed me, that the Sri Lanka Association of Greater Washington (SLAGW) our affiliate organization has been granted "Public Charity Status" by the United States Internal Revenue Service. As you know, 501(c)(3) tax exempt status for our Association was initiated by past presidents, Mrs. Anjalika Silva, and Mr. Nihal Goonewardene, and through diligence and hard work of past president Dr. Hilarian Codippily and members of his Board, SLAGW was born, and the 501(c)(3) status was granted subject to a 5-year Advance Ruling Period, by letter of March 5, 2002. On completion of the 5-year Advance Ruling Period, we were informed that SLAGW filed the necessary paperwork with IRS, and as stated above, SLAGW has been granted the status of a Public Charity. On behalf of the Board of Directors I would like to thank all those who were involved in this process since 1999.

This important status will allow us to keep on attracting donations for SLAGW and enable us to continue helping charitable organizations here in the US and in our homeland. I would like to extend an invitation to other Sri Lankan Associations in the US to work with us in partnership, to enhance the use of this status, to aid our fellow citizens through charitable giving, while building a solid network of Sri Lankan expatriates in the US.

It is now my pleasure to invite you all to read our newly designed quarterly newsletter "Serendib", which will bring you up to date with our findings regarding the tsunami accounts, current financial status, all of the planned events for the year, and much more.

I look forward to seeing you at many of the Association-sponsored events in the upcoming months.

Have a wonderful summer!

Lasantha Dahanaike

## Secretary's Report

I take this opportunity to welcome all members, with a very special welcome to our new members; many of whom have lived in the Washington Metropolitan area for many years, and have decided to join the Association just this year. Our records indicate that our Association has 238 members, as of date.

Over 150 SLAWDC members were present at this year's AGM held on March 25, 2006 at the Sligo Creek Community Center in Silver Spring, MD. This indeed was a record attendance, as compared to other AGMs we have had in the history of our Association.

Of the many discussions held, the primary concerns of the membership present were that the Association did not conduct any activities or programs for the members during the past year. As President Dahanaike has mentioned in his message, the new Board has already taken steps to adhere to the membership's requests and wishes. We hope that the planned calendar of activities for this year will undoubtedly be an enjoyable and fulfilling year for all of us.

The other concern that was raised was about transparency issues. President Dahanaike promised that the new board will keep the community updated on the activities taken upon by the Association, and also promised to cooperate and coordinate with the Board on all matters acknowledging the importance of the entire Board's support in his decision-making.



**Mrs. Ranjinee Rudran**

In conclusion, it is with great honor, on behalf of the new Board and the membership that I take this opportunity to thank and pledge our gratitude to the out-going Secretary, Mrs. Ranjinee Rudran for her invaluable service and support to the community. For the past 20+ years, Mrs. Rudran devoted much of her time as the Secretary to the Board, and has made our community stronger throughout those years. No doubt, the Board and the membership will miss a dedicated Director who served the community with much enthusiasm and generosity. I personally wish to thank Mrs. Rudran for her motherly advice and assistance in helping me prepare for this role. I know it will be a great task to fill her shoes!

Sandra Ismail

## Celebrated Avurudu in Style!



Over 250 Sri Lankan Washingtonians converged at the Meadowbrook Community Center at Chevy Chase for the lavish Aluth Avurudu celebration organized by the Sri Lanka

Association of Washington D.C. The event was attended by clergy from the DC and Wheaton Buddhist temples, Ambassador and his staff from the Sri Lanka Embassy and their families, the President and members of the Ranga Kala Kavaya and Ape Kattiya, and nine past Presidents of the Association.

The ceremonies commenced with the lighting of the traditional oil lamp and performing of the Buddhist, Hindu, Christian and Muslim rites. The Ambassador for Sri Lanka, His Excellency Bernard Goonetilleke in his address, noted the importance of this New Year celebration for people throughout most of South and South-East Asia.

The weather gods were especially kind, with sunshine and temperatures reminiscent of a day in Colombo, prompting President Lasantha Dahanaike to quip that he had promised the membership "sunny days" this year at the AGM during his acceptance speech.



Two exquisitely performed traditional dances enlivened the opening ceremony to the delight of the audience just before the repast of milk rice and traditional Sri Lankan sweet meats.



The selection of the little Avurudu kumaraya and kumari, were followed by numerous fun-filled traditional sporting events that took up most of the afternoon.

## Awards of Honor

### Visharada Amaradeva



An Award in recognition of his musical achievements was presented to Pundit Dr. W.D. Amaradeva by the SLAWDC, at the "Amara Piyasara" concert held in Kensington, Maryland in April.

He has won many awards and honors including the prestigious, RAMON MAGSAYSAY Award in 2001.

Dr. Amaradeva was conferred the title of "Pundit" by the Bhatkande University in India, where he studied in the early 1950s. University of Peradeniya conferred the honorary doctorate of literature on him in 1998 and the University of Kelaniya conferred a Doctor of Philosophy (Fine Arts) on him in 1991. He was honored with the 'Kala Keerthi' Award in 1986 and the 'Deshamanya' Award in 1998. Dr. Amaradeva is also the composer of the Maldivian National Anthem.

An article this concise wouldn't do justice to the creative abilities, or the amount of honors and awards won by Dr. Amaradeva. Nevertheless, I hope this gives the Sri Lankans in the Washington area, especially the younger generation a glimpse of Dr. Amaradeva's lifelong achievements.

### Past President Anjalika Silva

SLAWDC presented Ms. Anjalika Silva with an award in recognition of her dedicated service to the Sri Lankan Community in Washington DC.



Anjalika joined SLAWDC in 1985 and served as an Assistant Secretary, and a Vice-President, before becoming President in 1999/2000. Anjalika was a prominent social worker and a very talented musician. She played both the piano and the electric organ and had a trained soprano voice. Any function in the DC area was not complete without a song recital by Anjalika.

During her period as President of SLAWDC, the organization had many joint musical programs with Sri Lanka Ranga Kala Kavaya and she also initiated moves to make SLAWDC a tax exempt organization.

Anjalika and her husband, Sathi, recently retired to South Carolina and we would like to wish Anjalika and Sathi all the best in their new home.

## Advisory Board

As required by the new constitution that came into effect on March 25, 2006, the Board appointed Mr. Kamal Dorabawila, Dr. Guy Motha, Attorney Srilal Perera, Attorney Basil Rajakumaran, and Mr. Palitha Wijesinghe to serve as Advisors to the Board of Directors.

## Dinner with the Ambassador



Ambassador Goonetilleke with the Officers of SLAWDC

Ambassador of Sri Lanka to the United States Bernard Anton B. Goonetilleke and Mrs. Maria Goonetilleke hosted Officers of the SLAWDC, Ranga Kala Kavaya, Ape Kattiya and members of local music groups to Dinner on June 21, 2006.

Ambassador Goonetilleke previously served in Washington at the Sri Lanka Embassy from 1991 – 1992 and has visited the capital in various capacities, including that of Foreign Secretary. A career diplomat in the Sri Lanka Foreign Service, he previously served as the Acting Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sri Lanka's Ambassador to China, Sri Lanka's Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva and Vienna, and to the Conference on Disarmament as well as to the Holy See, Deputy Permanent Representative and Counsellor to the Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York on two occasions, as Counsellor in Thailand and as the Second Secretary in Malaysia. Ambassador Goonetilleke served as the Director-General/Secretariat for Coordinating the Peace Process (SCOPP) in Colombo from December 2001 to May 2004 and was closely associated with the negotiations with the LTTE towards restoring peace in Sri Lanka during that period.

Officers of SLAWDC would like to thank our patron, Ambassador H.E. Bernard Goonetilleke and Mrs. Goonetilleke for a wonderful evening.

## Winona – The Mine Detecting Dog



Winona with Lt. Cpl Amarasinghe

Winona is a Belgian Malinois and is the second mine detecting dog sponsored by SLAWDC. [The Marshall Legacy Institute](#) informed us that unfortunately due to the current security situation in Jaffna, both Winona and Blek-Hannah (also sponsored by SLAWDC) has been transferred to Vavuniya for safe keeping. She is currently keeping up on her skills by undergoing training daily. She has obtained her License One accreditation and is handled by Lieutenant Corporal Amarasinghe. Winona was funded among others by a generous donation from Nick C. Zeller in remembrance of his beloved wife Donna M. Zeller of Winona, Minnesota.

## Royal Wins the DC 7-A-side Rugby Tournament

The 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Memorial Day 7-a-Side DC Tag Rugby Tournament organized by the Old Boy's Associations of S. Thomas' College, Mount Lavinia and Trinity College, Kandy was held on May 28<sup>th</sup> at Gravelly Point. It was a scorching day of rugby with ten teams representing their old schools from Sri Lanka. Royal College won the championship trophy this year by defeating Maris Stella College in the final.



Royal Captain accepting the Textentric Trophy from Ambassador Goonetilleke

Ambassador Bernard Goonetilleke was the Chief Guest and Russell Kramer once again blew the whistle and played the pivotal role as Tournament Referee for the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive Year. The celebrations continued until the early hours of the morning when all of the players and fans got together at the Thymes Cafe in Bethesda for dinner and a night of dancing and comradeship.

## Yet another exciting finish at the DC 7-A-Side Cricket Tournament

The Sixteenth Annual 7-a-Side Cricket Tournament organized by the Sri Lanka Cricket Society of Washington, DC (SLCSWDC) was held on June 17<sup>th</sup> at Lake Fairfax Park, VA. Over two hundred fans, players, spectators, and supporters were at hand to enjoy a day of cricket. The anticipation along with the competitive atmosphere brought out the best of the players who played for the ten teams that participated.



**Ladies winners – DC Ladies**

the ladies showed that they too had cricket skills with a display of brilliant batting, bowling, and fielding. DC Ladies won the match however, it didn't matter who won as the players from both the teams – DC Ladies and Sweet & Spicy - all had fun playing the game.



**Men's winners – SriLak from New York**

all day to get to the finals. SRILAK-NY Captained by Vidura Perera, who fielded a strong team to get to the finals by beating most of the favorite teams, emerged victorious at the end to win the 7-A-Side Cricket Tournament. This goes into the books as their second win in this tournament and the Peterites had to settle for the second place for the second consecutive year. Third place was shared by Trinity College-YELLOW and K9.

Ruchira Perera of SRILAK-NY was MVP in the men's group. Romanie De Silva, captain of the DC Ladies won the MVP for the Ladies' group.

This year, the Cricket Society again took a step in its mission to promote ladies cricket amongst Sri Lankans. A ladies match was played before the men's final. With the crowd cheering on,

The final men's match took place between Old Peterites and SriLak from New York. St. Peter's College, one of the dominant teams in the past captained by Dhanika Perera had gone unbeaten

Dakshi De Silva, President of the Cricket Society at the invitation of the tournament director Iroshana Nanayakkara, handed over the trophies to the winners.

This year's Tournament Marshalls were Prasad Dharmasena, Bandula Ranasingha and Saliya Herath and Terrie Kuruppu & Associates was the 2006 Tournament Sponsor.

## Tsunami Update

December 26, 2004 will live in the memory of Sri Lankans for generations to come on account of the unprecedented death and devastation it brought to many coastal regions of the island. Our Association saw its largest fund-raising effort during this period with a sum of \$892,994 raised between December 26, 2004 and March 24, 2006. During this same period, a total of \$834,019 was sent out to different organizations in Sri Lanka primarily for tsunami related projects.

Subsequent to the issue of the audited accounts for 2005/2006, our SLAGW Treasurer Suraj Navaratne, has done a verification of the contributions received with the bank statements and tied the bank withdrawals to the donations made by SLAWDC. Between December 26, 2004 and January 31, 2005 we received \$263,349 and we distributed \$15,948 for immediate tsunami relief work. For the 12 month period from February 1, 2005 to January 31, 2006, contributions received amounted to \$611,738 with a further \$9,427 as interest income. Donations and grants made by the Association during this period amounted to \$543,519. During February and March 2006, contributions received amounted to \$6,972 with \$1,508 as interest income. Disbursements of donations and grants during these two months prior to the Annual General Meeting amounted to \$274,552.

There were 37 projects funded by SLAGW from 2004 to 2006. 36 projects were completely funded and one is still in progress. The current Tsunami fund balance is \$36,202. However, SLAGW have pledged \$75,000 to complete this project. The SLAGW Board has decided to freeze the Tsunami fund account until all Tsunami projects have been reviewed and feedback is received from all of the beneficiaries.

Naturally, members would like to know the results of our charitable donations and currently we are in the process of obtaining feedback from the recipient organizations on their accomplishments. We will publish these along with our findings in our "Tsunami Report" after we visit these organizations.



## Upcoming Events of SLAWDC

### **DC Cricket Tryouts, BBQ, and Art show July 29**

Join the rest of the community for a day of cricket at Maplewood Alta Vista Local Park in Bethesda on Saturday July 29, 2006 starting at 9 am. Also enjoy an exhibition of paintings by local artists to be displayed in the community center. An invitation has also been extended to Dr. Darin Gunasekara, an Ashoka Fellow who is visiting from Sri Lanka to speak and meet with the Sri Lankan community on this day. Please bring in your favorite dish and food items to BBQ, and SLAWDC will provide beverages and a hot grill. If you are interested in exhibiting your artistic talents or need more information, please contact:

[gayanga@yahoo.com](mailto:gayanga@yahoo.com) or [upul212@yahoo.com](mailto:upul212@yahoo.com)

### **DC-NY Cricket Game August 12**

The annual DC-NY cricket match will be played in Denville, NJ on Saturday August 12, 2006 and we hope to see fellow Washingtonians there to cheer our team to victory and bring the trophy back to DC. Directions to the Denville grounds will be posted on [www.slawdc.com](http://www.slawdc.com).

### **Sports meet and Co-ed Soccer October**

More information will be available on [www.slawdc.com](http://www.slawdc.com) or contact:

[gayanga@yahoo.com](mailto:gayanga@yahoo.com) or [upul212@yahoo.com](mailto:upul212@yahoo.com)

### **Children's Christmas Party December 16**

Children's Christmas party will be held on December 16, 2006 from 3:00 pm until 7:00 pm at the Chevy Chase Meadowbrook Community Center. For more information, please visit [www.slawdc.com](http://www.slawdc.com) or contact [sandra\\_ismail@yahoo.com](mailto:sandra_ismail@yahoo.com).

### **New Year's Eve Dinner Dance December 31**

The New Year's Eve Dinner Dance is back!! Please save the date for the most popular event of the year to be held at the Hilton in Gaithersburg. Tickets are priced at \$65.00 for members if purchased by November 30<sup>th</sup> and \$75.00 for non-members. Details will be posted on [www.slawdc.com](http://www.slawdc.com) in the coming months or contact [sandra\\_ismail@yahoo.com](mailto:sandra_ismail@yahoo.com) for more information.

## Logo Competition

We would like to update our logo which will be used in our newsletter, web site, letter heads, and any other official products. The logo will need to contain "SLAWDC" or "Sri Lanka Association of Washington DC" in its design. Entries must be postmarked by September 1, 2006 and mailed to *The Sri Lanka Association of Washington, D.C.*, P. O. Box 30295, Bethesda, MD 20824-0295. For more information, please visit [www.slawdc.com](http://www.slawdc.com) or contact [sandra\\_ismail@yahoo.com](mailto:sandra_ismail@yahoo.com) or [rpadmakumara@yahoo.com](mailto:rpadmakumara@yahoo.com).

## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### Embassy "Reaching Out program"

A letter addressed to Sri Lankans and Sri Lankan Organizations in the U.S., by Ambassador Bernard Goonetilleke is attached as part of this newsletter. The letter has an update on the "Reaching Out Program" including the types of events/activities the members will be kept abreast of. The Embassy also seeks to gain an understanding of, how it can serve the expatriate Sri Lankan community in the U.S. better. The letter notes that such a direct linkage between the Embassy and the expatriates is a new experience and believes it is both long overdue and a necessary extension of the Embassy activities. We encourage all Sri Lanka Association members to read the letter and consider joining this network.

### Opening of the Minnesota Buddhist Vihara



Bhante Uparatana, and Ambassador Goonetilleke at the opening

Ven Katugastota Uparatana Nayaka Thero from the Wheaton Temple, Ambassador Bernard Goonetilleke and SLAWDC President Lasantha Dahanaike attended the opening ceremony of the Minnesota Buddhist Vihara in Minneapolis on June 24, 2006. We wish Ven Witiyala Seewalie, President and Abbot of the Minnesota Buddhist Vihara and his devotees much success.

### Washington Vihara Expansion Project



The Washington Vihara expansion project to add approximately 815 square feet of space to the existing building is well underway.

The kitchen will be moved to the basement, thereby opening up more space for the shrine

room area. The second floor will have 2 additional rooms for the monks. The building will also have electrical and plumbing work done. Any donations for this project are greatly appreciated.

### **A Fiesta for Washington Drama Fans with "Maname" on September 24, 2006**

As Sri Lanka's much-loved stage drama *Maname* celebrates its Golden Anniversary this year, Sri Lankans in the US too get the opportunity to share in the festivities, by courtesy of "Ape Kattiya".

Following the resounding success of Dr. W.D. Amaradeva's recent Tour of the US *Amara Piya Sara*, Ape Kattiya is currently organizing the first ever tour of the US for Prof. Ediriweera Sarathchandra's path-breaking drama *Maname* that has endeared itself to generations of drama fans in Sri Lanka since 1956.

*Maname*, which liberally uses the almost extinct *nadagam* dramatic form, will be staged at the Rockville Civic Center in Rockville, Maryland, at 3 p.m. on Sunday September 24, 2006. Please visit

[http://apekattiya.com/pages/maname/web\\_flyer.pdf](http://apekattiya.com/pages/maname/web_flyer.pdf) for details.

This is a rare treat for Sri Lankans living overseas, to have this "gem of eastern theater" perform almost at their doorstep. To those of us who are nostalgic for Sri Lankan experiences and to those of us who are keen that our children experience some of the wonders of our culture, *Maname* provides a unique opportunity to enjoy and to re-live the memories of yester-year.

### **Update from Ranga Kala Kavaya**

Ranga Kala Kavaya started the year by participating in the cultural program to celebrate the 58<sup>th</sup> Independence Day organized by the Embassy of Sri Lanka. The Kala Kavaya was able to gather various musical groups in the DC metropolitan area to perform "This Land Belongs to All of Us" in unison. The Sri Lankan Embassy appreciated Ranga Kala Kavaya's leadership, dedication, and efforts in uniting these musical groups.

The next event organized was the Sinhala/Tamil New Year on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2006. This was celebrated by having a successful evening with cultural programs, where the RKK was able to entertain the Sri Lankan community in the DC metro area with live dancers and musicians. Our special appreciation goes to all the western and eastern music groups and all the dance troupes. Special thanks go to the "Esraj" performer who came all the way from Canada.

Ranga Kala Kavaya is also pleased to inform you that the construction of the library (with a staff room including two toilets) for Paanama Maha Vidyalaya, a public school in the tsunami affected village of

Lahugala in the Ampara District in Sri Lanka has been completed. Second project for building a library for Sri Vimalasara Maha Vidyalaya in Kahawa, Balapitiya is almost completed. Sri Lanka Ranga Kala Kavaya extends its sincere gratitude to all those who contributed to this noble cause. For more information visit <http://kalakavaya.nicewebs.com>

### **SOUTH ASIAN FOOD BAZAAR AND CRAFTS SALE**

The organizers of "Schools for Sri Lanka" are having a South Asian food bazaar and craft sale to raise funds to complete a tsunami relief project at Bournavista Maha Vidyalaya (one of the oldest Sri Lankan schools) in Galle. Funds collected will be used to complete a **Multi-Purpose Room cum Sports Pavilion** that has already commenced construction and will be named "**American Mithuru Parithyagaya**".

The event will be held on Saturday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 11:30 A.M to 4:30 P.M at the Church of the Redeemer, 6201 DunRobbin Drive (off Macarthur Blvd. opposite Glen Echo Park) in Bethesda, MD 20817.

#### **The food items for sale include:**

- String Hoppers & Egg Hoppers with side dishes
- Chicken Buriyani, • Pastries • Rice, Curry Papadam
- A miscellany of other food • Kids Meals

#### **Also on Sale will be:**

- Batiks • Handicrafts • Shell and Bead necklaces
- Hardly Used Bicycles • New and Nearly New Clothing.

Contributions of cash / food for sale / articles for garage sale such as clothing (in excellent condition), handicrafts and household items will be gratefully accepted. Please contact Surangani Salgado @ 301-229-8729 for more information.

### **Upcoming Events of Educate Lanka (Wave of Hope) – A Student Non-Profit Organization**

Founded in April 2005, "Wave of Hope" is an independent, non-profit student fundraising campaign established for the solitary purpose of rebuilding schools and houses that were affected by the devastating Tsunami in Sri Lanka. After completing numerous successful fundraising campaigns, Wave of Hope raised approximately \$15,000 in the course of three months. Approximately \$10,000 was donated to Trinity Task Force of the Old Trinitians Sports Club, to build 10 government-approved houses in Kutchuveli, Trincomalee. ([www.waveofhopes.com](http://www.waveofhopes.com))

After realizing the impressive success of the Wave of Hope campaign, the same students decided to form "Educate Lanka" to take the rebuilding process of Sri Lanka a few steps forward. Their mission is to be a helping hand to the Sri Lankan children that are denied

education because of financial destitution. Educate Lanka intends to act as an independent entity to bring together a group of Sponsors/Donors from all over the world to support those children who desperately seek financial support to continue/start their education.

Upcoming fundraising events by Educate Lanka:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Wave of Hope "7-A-Side Cricket Encounter" – July 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2006 at Strawberry Knoll Grounds, Gaithersburg, MD, 20879
- Inaugural "Sri Lanka Talent Competition"  
Date & Location TBA

For more information and to see how you can help, please visit [www.educatelanka.org](http://www.educatelanka.org)

### **Sri Lankan Catholics Join the First National Asian and Pacific Catholic Convocation**

The Sri Lankan American Catholic Association of Metropolitan Washington (SLACAMW), led by its current President, Dr. Hilarian Codippily, participated in the first ever National Asian and Pacific Convocation (NAPCC) held during the weekend of June 30-July 3, 2006, at the Hyatt Regency Crystal City, Virginia. The NAPCC was attended by nearly a thousand participants including bishops, Monsignors, priests, nuns and laity from many states in the US, and overseas.

This historic gathering was the first milestone in a journey that received a great impetus from the Pastoral Statement of November 2001 on the *Asian and Pacific Presence: Harmony in Faith*. It underlined the importance of celebrating the gifts and contributions of the Asian and Pacific Catholics to the Church and of suggesting responses to address their pastoral needs and concerns. In essence, the main purpose of the gathering was to take part in a celebration of gifts, and to chart a future together, opening up new pathways to ministry in the coming years.

In addition to the plenary sessions, the NAPCC included 34 workshops, Holy Mass according to various Christian rites, a multicultural Rosary and Holy Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, and cultural performances. The workshops, in particular, benefited from inspiring and thought provoking presentations by highly qualified theologians, professionals in pastoral care, and experts in intercultural issues. Dr. Hilarian Codippily gave the Welcome Address at the Reception held on the first day. Ambassador Bernard and Mrs. Maria Goonetilleke, Mr. Lasantha Dahanaike, President SLAWDC/SLAGW, and others represented Sri Lanka.

The Sri Lanka Youth Dance Group gave a magnificent performance at the cultural show during the Reception, which included performances from the Korean, Indian, and Tongan groups. The cultural program continued at

the Banquet held on Sunday July 2, with performances from various countries. The cultural program was designed to enhance the Asian and Pacific presence in the USA, and was put together by the Special Events Committee comprising Dr. Hilarian and Mrs. Sheila Codippily, and Dr. Joseph and Mrs. Sumathi Croos. Mrs. Sheila Codippily and Mrs. Sumathi Croos gave the Welcome Address at the Banquet, while Dr. Croos introduced the keynote speaker, Most Rev. Bishop Gerald Barnes DD. The Banquet/Cultural Show was followed by general dancing, which concluded at midnight.

The collective efforts of a number of theologians, speakers, presenters, supporters, and contributors, made the event a great success. The consensus was that similar convocations in other States should follow this historic gathering of Asian and Pacific Catholics in the USA, in the coming years.

### **Brown bag lunches with Dr. Darin Gunasekera**

Dr. Darin Gunasekera, an Ashoka Fellow from Colombo, Sri Lanka, will be visiting Washington, DC from July 17-31, 2005. Dr. Gunasekera started a stock exchange market which offers slum dwellers the opportunity to trade in the land they occupy and then choose from new apartments available, making them proud and responsible homeowners. The stock exchange market program has been a great success for communities that have been offered the program by the government. Ashoka ([www.ashoka.org](http://www.ashoka.org)) identifies and invests in leading social entrepreneurs like Dr. Gunasekera - extraordinary individuals with unprecedented ideas for change in their communities – and supports them and their institutions through all phases of their careers. If you would like to learn about brown bag lunches or other events with Dr. Gunasekera during his visit, please call Maryanna Abdo at (703) 527-8300 or e-mail [Mabdo@ashoka.org](mailto:Mabdo@ashoka.org).

### **We like to hear from you**

We hope you find this new format of the SLAWDC newsletter appealing and informative, and the Board would appreciate any feedback you would like to provide.

We like to know about any comments you may have, whether it is on how to improve this newsletter, what events you'd like for us to organize in the future, to place an advertisement in the newsletter, a pat in the back for a job well done, or a plain old complain about what we are not doing right.

Please share your thoughts and comments with us, by writing to the editor at [editor@slawdc.com](mailto:editor@slawdc.com). Please let us know if you like to save a few trees and prefer to receive future newsletters via e-mail.