



# S E R E N D I B

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

VOL. 2 NO. 10

Sept. 2004

## Message from the President

As I get ready to relinquish office in March 2004, the orderly transition of leadership responsibilities to SLAWDC President-elect, Lasantha Dahanaike, continues seamlessly. Lasantha has taken increasing responsibility and visibility in the Association's affairs during the current term with commendable results. I have all confidence that you will extend the same degree of support and encouragement that I have received from our members and the community to make his tenure in office both memorable and productive.

In the meantime, we have a full program of activities planned for the remainder of 2004. Far from being uneventful and the summer doldrums notwithstanding, cricket in all forms reached center stage in our community calendar during June to August. The stories in this issue capture the spirit of our fascination with the sport and the widespread appeal it holds for our members.

The Annual Gala of the Association on December 31 is once again the high point of the holiday season for our community. Our members will receive a membership discount on tickets purchased by December 15. We are making this offer to our members at a discounted price of \$55 per person for tickets priced at \$65. Please send your reservations and checks to the address given in the reservation form in this issue. You can be assured of the wonderful cuisine of Chef Jack Stubbs of Bethesda Hyatt and a memorable evening of elegance and dancing to close the year out in grand style. The Children's X'Mas Party of the Association will be held on December 18. Parents, please make your reservations early to help us plan this event with the care it deserves.

The success of our efforts on the charitable and humanitarian fronts in the past year needs replication. Our tax-exempt affiliate, SLAGW, raised \$37,182 and distributed \$27,856 in grants to charitable causes in Sri Lanka in FY 2004. SLAGW received national recognition for our assistance to humanitarian de-mining in the North and East of Sri Lanka. The Association's contribution of \$17,500 gave us prominence as a major donor to the Canine De-mining Program sponsored by the Marshall Legacy Institute. The impact made by the six dogs donated through MLI has spawned another campaign to raise \$120,000 for a second six-pack of mine sniffing dogs for Sri Lanka. SLAGW is proud to support this effort, setting ourselves a target of \$20,000 to provide one of the dogs for this second team by March 2005.

This is a fitting closure to my term in office, and a milestone for which your generosity is absolutely critical. I'll be leaving office with a great sense of fulfillment if our community and friends of Sri Lanka can help SLAGW reach this milestone in giving. I am confident that we will not fail in FY 2005 to surpass our Association's past generosity to needy causes in Sri Lanka. This is a good time as any to make a difference in the final quarter of the 2004 tax year by supporting SLAGW with a tax-deductible donation. A listing of designated charities supported by SLAGW is provided in this issue of Serendib, with a convenient gift transfer form.

Many have labored to bring our community together and provide a forum for fellowship over the past 30 years. SLAWDC celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2005. It is only fitting that we mark this anniversary with a testimonial event to honor the pioneers who showed us the way, while recognizing those who contributed significantly to the sense of community that is prevalent today. As a final gesture of my farewell to office, the Board of Directors joins me in organizing an event to mark this important anniversary in March 2005. Your suggestions and assistance will be welcome as we plan this event in the coming months.

I look forward to your presence at the New Year's Eve Gala to usher in another good year of fellowship and community.

**Nihal W. Goonewardene**

## New Treasurer of SLAGW



Meera Ganeshan, SLAWDC director since March 2004, was appointed by the Board of Directors on September 12 to the position of Treasurer of SLAGW. An accountant by profession, Meera works in a tax practice in Gaithersburg, MD. She replaces Rajeeva Serasinghe, a long servicing Treasurer of both SLAWDC and SLAGW. Mr. Serasinghe began MBA studies at University of Maryland in College Park this Fall. The additional professional responsibility at Deloitte Touche as a Senior Accountant and a rich personal life prompted Rajeeva to relinquish the post of Treasurer while remaining on the Board of Directors. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Rajeeva for his dedicated service.

## Sinhala/Tamil New Year Celebrations

An annual Sinhala-Tamil New-Year celebration was held on April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Sligo Creek Community Center in Sliver Spring, MD. The event was organized by the Sri Lanka Association of Washington DC with the collaboration of Ranga Kala Kavaya. The event was well attended by the community and numbered over 175. There were also a few out-of-state guests present.

The day's proceedings commenced with religious observations. A delegation of monks from Washington Buddhist Vihara and Wheaton Buddhist Center conducted the Buddhist observations. Mrs. Kanaga Ranganathan and Mr. Greg Fernandopulle conducted the Hindu and Christian religious observations, respectively. Thereafter, the traditional oil lamp was lit. The guests for the event were welcomed by Mr. Nihal Goonewardene, President of SLAWDC. Mr. Dias Amarawardena, President of the Sri Lanka Ranga Kala Kavaya and Mr. Saman Udagedera, Minister - Commercial at the Embassy of Sri Lanka, who represented the Ambassador of Sri Lanka, also addressed the gathering.



Master of Ceremonies Rejeeva Serasinghe directs the formal program for the Sinhala -Tamil New Year Celebrations.

## Community News

Thiloshana & Rushani Nanayakkara were blessed with a daughter, **Shehara Delani**, on May 4, 2004. The proud parents and the three daughters moved back to Sri Lanka in late August, after 15 years of residence in the US. Thiloshana was a manager for financial products at Freddie Mac in Northern Virginia. His professional experience will be a welcome addition to the dynamic financial market environment in Sri Lanka.



The audience was entertained by the young dancers of Ranga Kala Kavaya. Mr. Don Beddaliyanage sang a few old Sinhala hits that got the audience singing along. Afterwards the children participated in the Avurudu Kumaraya and Kumari (New Year prince and princess) pageant. Thereafter, the guests were treated to traditional food that included Kavum, Kokis and Kiribath. After lunch, many of our guests participated in a host of traditional avurudu games, including, tug-o-war, sack race and the like. Separate events were organized for the young and the old.

The celebration gave an opportunity for the Sri Lankan expatriates and friends in the Washington area to get together and rejoice in one of the most important holiday traditions in the Sri Lankan calendar; a holiday that symbolizes national unity and hope for a prosperous future.

**Rajeeva Serasinghe**

\* \* \* \* \*

Ramona & Brian Wheeler became the proud parents of **Rowan Gabriel** on July 21st, 2004, and presented Marcellinus & Mangala Baddeliyanage with their 7th grandchild.

**Shehara Cherubim**, daughter of Prasanth and Chemi, graduated from Catholic University in Washington, DC with a B.A. in education. She is pursuing a Master's in education at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York.

## Ultimate Rendezvous – St. Peter’s College Dinner Dance

The Sri Lankans in Washington D.C. enjoy an active year round social calendar of events and this year’s fall season was kicked off by ”Ultimate Rendezvous” – a dinner dance organized by St. Peter’s College Old Boys Union of Washington D.C.

The dance at the ballroom of the Double Tree Hotel in Rockville, MD on September 4 was patronized by a large number of Sri Lankans who were treated to wonderful music by DJ Shawn. The organizers ensured that the delectable dinner had the right combination of food and spices to the enjoyment of all present. Many prizes were awarded at the dance including a return ticket to Sri Lanka compliments of Sri Lankan Airlines. Other prizes included a weekend stay for two, donated by Hilton Hotels, and dinners at leading restaurants in the Washington area.



The ever-present Baila competition was well contested by many. Then, whilst the Baila competitors dragged themselves back to their table to catch their breath, the rest were on the floor en masse until the wee hours of the morning.

The quantum of funds raised for the benefit of St. Peter’s College in Sri Lanka through this event was well within the goals set by the organizers. The Peterites in Washington are already making plans for this biannual event scheduled next for Fall 2006.

## 14<sup>th</sup> Annual 7-a-Side Cricket Tournament

Lake Fairfax Cricket grounds was buzzing with players, officials and supporters by 7:30 am on July 10<sup>th</sup> for the Washington, DC’s 14<sup>th</sup> Annual 7-a-side Cricket Tournament. The four playing grounds had already been set the night before by the dynamic leader of the Sri Lanka Cricket Society, Dakshi De Silva, and the rest of the volunteer crew.



Captain Sandra Ismail and the DC Chix with Ambassador Subasinghe

After Dakshi’s able deputy - Saliya Herath - had gone over the rules, the sixteen teams: Achcharuwa, Ahindas, Boeomonger, Calvin Cricket Club, Carolina Islander’s, DC Machangs, Dunnama Kannam, Free Agents, Lucky Seven, Munta Loose, New Jersey Cricks, Old Joes, Royal College, St.Peter’s College, St. Thomas College, and Trinity College were ready for a full day of cricket with their eyes on the precious trophy.

The draw was set by midweek before the tournament and the sixteen teams were divided into four groups. After playing three games each, the top two teams from each group advanced to the next round. Tournament officials: Don Baddeliyanage, Prasad Dharmasena, Iroshana Nanayakkara, Rashika Padmakumara, Dhanika Perera and Bandu Ranasinghe had their hands full ensuring that the matches were on schedule with the least amount of “glitches.”



Mr. Prasad Dharmasena receives plaque of appreciation from SLAWDC and the Sri Lanka Cricket Society from Ambassador Subasinghe

Spectators had started rolling into the grounds by mid morning and the entire grounds had the look of a “sports meet.” The loud cheers of the supporters could be heard from all four corners, and it only grew louder as the day went by.

By early afternoon, everyone was impatiently waiting for the first ever women’s tournament to begin. Four teams: DC Chix, Lanka Lamissy, Liberty NY and MD Bits vied for the Ladies trophy. After a hard fought match, DC Chix defeated Liberty NY by 6 runs. Lanka Lamissys from Washington wound up in the third spot.

The semi final and the finals of the men's games were as exciting and entertaining as any game of cricket could be. Lucky Sevens from New York went on to win the tournament beating Trinity College by 6 Wickets. The final score with Trinity College batting first was 31 runs for 5 wickets in 6 overs. The Lucky Sevens scored 32 runs for 1 wicket in 5.1 overs to clutch the trophy. Ahindas were placed third.

Trophies were given away by Sri Lanka's Ambassador to the US, Devinda R. Subasinghe. The highlight this year was the recognition of four pioneers of Sri Lankan cricket in the Washington DC area for their efforts and services to the cricketing community. The Sri Lanka Cricket Society, together with the SLAWDC awarded appreciation plaques to: Mr. Prasad Dharmasena, Dr. Greg Fernandopulle, Mr. Terry Kuruppu and Mr. Cecil Perera for their lifetime contributions.

**Rashika Padmakumara**

**Rain ... No Game in New York**

The stage was set for this year's NY-DC cricket encounter. NY had won it the last three times and Washington was determined to bring the trophy back. The DC Women's team was also eager to hang on to the trophy that they won during last year's inaugural match.

Following the newly adopted guidelines for selecting the DC cricket team, an experienced Captain was named after the first practice session. Terry Kuruppu was appointed by the President of SLAWDC to lead the Washington side on the 24<sup>th</sup> encounter between NY and DC. Dakshi De Silva and Upul Abeywarna were appointed as Vice Captains. Assistant Secretary Sandra Ismail was appointed captain of the ladies' team.

The D.C. team had their eyes set on winning. Two vigorous practice sessions were held to select the 11 members of the team. For the first time, 2 practice games were also organized with the local cricket team 'Acharuwa'. Their participation in the games and challenging the DC cricket team was well appreciated. Team Manager Maxwell Amirthampillai, and Team Selector Sathy Gunawardhana were instrumental in organizing the practice sessions, games, and other related activities. President-elect Lasantha Dahanaike saw to it that everything went smoothly.

Unfortunately, on the day of the match the weather did not cooperate. It rained heavily the entire morning and major part of the early afternoon. Finally, around 3pm the two games were canceled due to poor field conditions.

The weather, however, did not affect the activities planned for the 'Sri Lanka Day' in Denville, NJ. Various food items, jewelry and other Sri Lankan souvenirs were sold under the tent that housed everybody who was there. It was a huge success, attended by many.

The evening function was well attended by the Washington crowd. Sri Lanka Association of New York had organized a wonderful event with a fine dinner, live band, and a dance floor with enough room to spare. The New Yorkers retained the trophy for another year. Gayanga Opatha gave the vote of thanks on behalf of SLAWDC.

SLAWDC Board of Directors held a dinner reception at the residence of Mr. & Mrs. Terry Kuruppu to show our appreciation for both the Men and Women's cricket teams, who had their hearts set on winning this year.

**Mahil Abeywarna**

----- Please detach and mail with payment -----

**For Members Only**

Members of SLAWDC will receive tickets at a discounted price of \$55 per person for the December 31 Dinner Dance at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Bethesda, MD. Supply is limited to 180 tickets at this price. Payment to SLAWDC must be received and/or postmarked no later than December 15 2004 to:

SLAWDC  
C/o, ISTI, Inc., 1820, North Fort Myer Drive, Suite 600, Arlington, VA 22209 Tel: (703) 807 2080

All other tickets are priced at \$65 per person and \$30/child for 12 years or under.

Adult 1 ..... Adult 2 ..... Child 1 ..... (DofB) Child 2 .....(DofB)

Individual members are entitled to one \$55 ticket only, and a family membership to two \$55 tickets plus additional tickets for children under 21 years of age.

**Designated Charities sponsored by SLAGW**

**Canine De-Mining Fund**

SLAGW's efforts to eradicate the silent scourge of dormant landmines and unexploded ordnance from the former zones of conflict in North and East following the cessation of hostilities in Sri Lanka resulted in the establishment of the De-Mining Fund on December 30, 2002. We are proud to report that a grant of \$17,500 was made within a year to Marshall Legacy Institute, the premier mine action NGO tasked with the solution in Sri Lanka. We received widespread support and generosity from the diaspora in general, many of our members, friends and well wishers both in Sri Lanka and in other countries.

The pace of de-mining has been accelerated by the introduction of dogs to work alongside trained personnel to sniff out explosives and considerably reduce detection time. The displaced families from the mine-affected areas are slowly returning to their homesteads to resume normal lives.

Building on the success of the first 6-pack of dogs deployed by MLI to work with the Sri Lanka Army, a further request for another 6 dogs from the Government of Sri Lanka is now under solicitation by MLI. SLAGW plans to grant \$20,000 to MLI to defray one dog for the second team by March 2005.

**Computer Project Fund**

The Fund was launched on the initiative of President-elect Lasantha Dahanaike in February of 2004 to fund the Computer Project for schools and rural e-learning institutes in Sri Lanka. Contributions will be used to defray shipping and handling costs of computers donated to SLAGW, which will be designated for use by Board-approved recipient institutes in Sri Lanka. More than 150 computers from the UN have been sent to schools in Sri Lanka.

**Anura Karunaratne Memorial Fund**

This Fund was established in January 2004 in memory of a past president of the Sri Lanka Association of Washington, D.C. (1993 to 1995). Its objective is to continue the charitable activities undertaken by the late Mr. Anura Karunaratne to help the Cancer Hospital in Maharagama provide better facilities and care to cancer patients in Sri Lanka.

**Professor Cyril A. Ponnampereuma Memorial Scholarship Fund**

The Fund was launched in the Fall of 2002 as our very own contribution to scholarship and academic excellence for students from Sri Lanka. The fund originally envisioned offering aid to need-based students and scholars from Sri Lanka to pursue studies at the University of Maryland in College Park. The high cost of education for one scholar at University of Maryland is seen as too difficult a burden to sustain through SLAGW. A reassessment by the Board is underway to initiate a scholarship scheme in Sri Lanka to benefit many more aspiring scholars in institutions of higher learning. This is our tribute to the most prolific scientist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century from Sri Lanka, and a pillar of our community in the nation's capital until his untimely passing in 1994.

**General Fund**

Gifts not earmarked for a special purpose are deposited in the General Fund for the benefit of 6 to 8 other charities supported by SLAGW each year. They include, among others, Manrosa Home of Love in Dankotuwa, The Nest in Palliyawatte, Richmond Fellowship Lanka, Uswetikeiyawa, Sarvodaya Shramadana Movement in Moratuwa and So Others Might Eat in Washington, DC.

<b>Gift Transfer Form</b>	
Tax Deductible Donation for :	..... \$
	..... \$
	<b>Total:</b> \$ .....
Donor: .....	
Address: .....	
Telephone: .....	E-mail: .....
Please mail check and completed form for 2004 to:	
<b>Sri Lanka Association of Greater Washington, Inc.</b>	
C/o, ISTI, Inc.,	
1820, North Fort Myer Drive, Suite 600	
Arlington, VA 22209	Tel: 703 807 2080 Fax: 703 807 1126

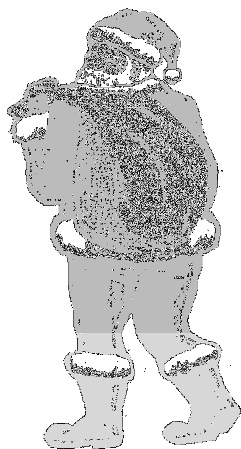
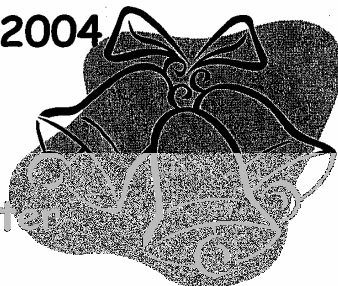
# Children's Christmas Party

*Organized by the Sri Lanka Association of Washington DC*

On Saturday, December 18, 2004

From 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm

At the Leland Community Center  
4301 Willow Lane  
Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815



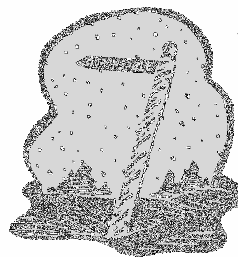
## Santa Claus Food, Fun and Games!

Parents: Please bring a Gift wrapped and labeled with your child's name for distribution by Santa.

Please RSVP with your child's name to,  
Ranji Rudran 301-871-2723  
Sandra Ismail 301-929-6353  
Mangala Baddeliyanage 703-406-8594  
By November 25<sup>th</sup>

Donations of \$\$\$, food and drink will be much appreciated. Please indicate contribution when you make reservation/s.

Directions  
Take 495 to Rte 355/Wisconsin Avenue South  
Make left onto Willow Lane (after passing Bethesda Hyatt)  
and the Leland Community Center will be on your left  
Center Phone Number (301) 652 2249  
Visit [www.slawdc.com](http://www.slawdc.com) for more information



# New Year's Eve Gala



Hosted by  
Sri Lanka Association of Washington DC  
Friday, December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2004

*Venue:* Bethesda Hyatt Regency Hotel Crystal Ball Room  
One Bethesda Metro Center, Bethesda, MD 20814

*Time:* 7:00 pm - 2:30 am : Dinner Served at 9:00 pm

*Tickets:* \$65 per person (Children 12 and under @ \$30 each)

\*Limited number of tickets reserved only for SLAWDC members at a discounted price of \$55 per person. Payment must be received by and/or postmarked on or before Dec. 15.

Send cheques to SLAWDC c/o ESTE, Inc.  
1820 North Fort Myer Drive, Suite 600,  
Arlington, VA 22209  
Tel: 703-807-2080 (att. Jasmine)

*Dress:* Formal Attire

*Music by DJ Shawn*  
*Dancing Competitions and Door Prizes!!*

*For reservations:*

*Sandra Ismael (301) 929-6353*

*Ranji Rudran (301) 460-3257*

*Geyanga (240) 353-3920*

*Visit [www.slawdc.com](http://www.slawdc.com) for more information*

*Special Hotel Rate: \$79 per room + 12% tax (Add for SLAWDC rate) for up to two people in a room. Please contact reservations directly at 1-800-233-1234 or 301-657-1234.*

## Sri Lanka Association of Washington DC 2004/2005

### Honorary/Patron

The Ambassador to the United States, His Excellency Devinda R. Subasinghe

### Honorary Members

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Ms. Pathma Liyanapathirana  
Mr. Donald Y. McCoy

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Mr. Robert R. Noble, Jr., Vermont 2004-2006  
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\* Honorary SLAWDC membership granted by Board resolution to honor non-resident Donors of Distinction for Benefactor or higher level of giving to charities supported by the Sri Lanka Association of Greater Washington, Inc., for durations specified.

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91. Mr. Utthama Wijeyasinghe \*\*
92. Mr. P. K. William
93. Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Willis
94. Mrs. Soma Wijeratne

\*\* Donors of Distinction to SLAGW (\$250 or more)

**October 16, 2004**



**FOR BOARD USE ONLY -**  
*Please note for future*  
*Membership card issue*

**Year:**  
**Category:**  
**Unit #:**  
**Member # :**  
**No. of Cards #:**  
**Date Paid:**  
**Check #:**

**APPLICATION FOR SLAWDC MEMBERSHIP - 2004**

I/We wish to enroll as a member(s) of the Sri Lanka Association of Washington, D.C., subject to the approval of the Board of Directors and agree to abide by the constitution and by-laws of the Association.

**Membership Information:** New Membership       Renewal       Other

**Mailing Preference:** Postal Service       E-Mail       Fax

**First Name of Member:** .....

**First Name of Spouse:**.....

**Last Name :**.....

**Address:** .....

.....

**Home Phone :**..... **Home Fax:**.....

**E-mail Address:**.....

**Children under 18 years**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ *M*  *F*       *Date of Birth: Year* \_\_\_\_ *MO* \_\_\_\_ *Day* \_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ *M*  *F*       *Date of Birth: Year* \_\_\_\_ *MO* \_\_\_\_ *Day* \_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ *M*  *F*       *Date of Birth: Year* \_\_\_\_ *MO* \_\_\_\_ *Day* \_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_ *M*  *F*       *Date of Birth: Year* \_\_\_\_ *MO* \_\_\_\_ *Day* \_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE OF MEMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

