



Ontario Konkani Association

e-Samachar (Mar 2024)

www.ontariokonkanis.com

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President's Message

Namaskaru OKA Kutumb,

We hope you enjoyed your March break and now experiencing Winter in Spring!

In this month's e-Samachar, we have contribution from the community other than the leads. Niranjan Kamath has written about Gotra and it's scientific reasoning. A very interesting read. In the Senior's corner, Sadanand Mankikar has written about Seniors' Forum structure, activities, as well as provided great information on other useful events and relevant information for seniors. He with his beloved wife Suvarna Mankikar have also written about DEATH that happens to everyone. Some folks of our community are always helpful during such times and the information is relevant in the article. Priya Prabhu's travel section has an article about Canadian Rockies by Shruti PaiDhungat. At Kids' corner, Aditi has penned down about Ram-Sita-Lakshmana.

The upcoming event is Pooja Parab – where we have planned to combine Shree Satyanarayana Pooja and Ugadi celebrations with Keli Paan Jevan as a cherry on the cake. More information will follow.

This past month our community has lost some valuable people. We express our deepest condolences to the families of Smt. Kumudini Deshpande, Capt. Anand Acharya, Uday Dattatray Dhareshwar (father of our member Ms. Lalita Dhareshwar). We pray to Paramatma that the departed Aatmas would attain sadgati. Om Shanthi. The Obituary details are towards the end.

We do hope you enjoy this edition of e-Samachar. Please write to okapresidents@gmail.com with articles or suggestions.

Rachana Kamath and Vikram Prabhu!

GOTRA - A scientific reasoning

By Niranjan Kamath

In the last article on Gotra we read about what is a Gotra, what are the various Gotra's. In this write up let's analyze why these Gotra's were established and what is its scientific rationale. We all know that most Hindu families, marriage within the same gotra is prohibited since people with same gotra are siblings. Let's look at reasons why this has been the practice for thousands of years amongst Sanatana Dharma. Gotra is always passed on from father to children among most Hindus, just like last name(surname) is passed on worldwide. Additional rule in the Gotra system is that, even if the Bride and Bridegroom belong to different Gotras, they' still cannot get married even if just one of their Gotra Pravara matches.

It is generally a well accepted norm that women after marriage not only carry the last name of their spouse but also their Gotra. Why would they do this? Is there any scientific rationale for this practice which to many modern liberal thinker's reeks of Male dominance? Truth is that its anything but that. Let's analyze this further.

Genes & Chromosomes

Humans have 23 pairs of Chromosomes and in each pair one Chromosome comes from the father and the other comes from the mother. So, in all we have 46 Chromosomes in every cell, of which 23 come from the mother and 23 from the father.

Of these 23 pairs, there is one pair called the Sex Chromosomes which decide the gender of the person. During conception, if the resultant cell has XX sex chromosomes, then the child will be a girl and if it is XY then the child will be a boy. X chromosome decides the female attributes of a person and Y Chromosome decides the male attributes of a person.

When the initial embryonic cell has XY chromosome, the female attributes get suppressed by the genes in the Y Chromosome and the embryo develops into a male child. Since only men have Y Chromosomes, son always gets his Y Chromosome from his father and the X Chromosome from his mother. On the other hand, daughters always get their X Chromosomes, one each from both father and mother.

So, the Y Chromosome is always preserved throughout a male lineage (Father – Son – Grandson) because a son always gets it from his father, while the X Chromosome is not preserved in the female lineage (Mother, Daughter, Grand Daughter) because it comes from both father and mother. A mother will pass either her mother's X Chromosome to her Children or her father's X Chromosome to her children or a combination of both because of both her X Chromosomes getting mixed (called as Crossover). On the other hand, a son always gets his father's Y Chromosome and that too almost intact without any changes because there is no corresponding another Y chromosome in his cells to do any mixing as his combination is XY, while that of females is XX which hence allows for mixing as both are X Chromosomes.

Women never get this Y Chromosome in their body. And hence Y Chromosome plays a crucial role in modern genetics in identifying the Genealogy ie male ancestry of a person. And the Gotra system was designed to track down the root Y Chromosome of a person quite easily. If a person belongs to Kashyapa Gotra then it means that his Y Chromosome came all the way down over thousands of years of timespan from the Rishi Kashyap.

This is also the reason why females are said to belong to the Gotra of their husbands after marriage. That is because women do not carry Y Chromosome, and their Sons will carry the Y Chromosome of the Father and hence the Gotra of a woman is said to be that of her husband after marriage.

Shrinking size of Y Chromosome

Y is the only Chromosome which does not have a similar pair in the human body. The pair of the Y Chromosome in humans is X Chromosome which is significantly different from Y Chromosome. Even the size of the Y Chromosome is just about one third the size of the X Chromosome. In other words, throughout evolution the size of the Y Chromosome has been decreasing and it has lost most of its genes and has been reduced to its current size. Scientists are debating whether Y Chromosome will be able to survive for more than a few million years into the future or whether it will gradually vanish, and if it does so whether it will cause males to become extinct! Obviously because Y Chromosome is the one which makes a person male or a man.

A Y Chromosome must depend on itself to repair any of its injuries and for that it has created duplicate copies of its genes within itself. However, this does not

stop DNA damages in Y Chromosome which escape its local repair process from being propagated into the offspring males. This causes Y Chromosomes to accumulate more and more defects over a prolonged period of evolution and scientists believe that this is what is causing the Y Chromosome to keep losing its weight continuously.

Y Chromosome which is crucial for the creation and evolution of males has a fundamental weakness which is denying it participation in the normal process of evolution via Chromosomal mix and match to create better versions in every successive generation, and this weakness MAY lead to the extinction of Y Chromosome altogether over the next few million years, and if that happens scientists are not sure whether that would cause males to become extinct or not. And that is because Scientists are not sure whether any other Chromosome in the 23 pairs will be able to take over the role of the Y Chromosome or not.

Now let's look at a very contentious issue. Will humanity survive or it really does not matter if Males become extinct? The reality really may be that the females do not need the Y Chromosome to survive after all. Since all females have X Chromosomes, it may be possible to create a mechanism where X Chromosomes from different females are used to create offspring, say like injecting the nuclei from the egg of one female into the egg of another female to fertilize it and that would grow into a girl child.

Theoretically one may ask a few scientific hypothetical questions:

- a) Will the human body choose to go only a X Chromosome route?
- b) Will the human genome pick another chromosome from the group of 23 to conceptualize foetal union?
- c) Will that human be a more advanced version?

The bottom line is yes, there is a strong possibility that humanity may still exist with only Females and Males may go extinct after all. A grim reminder to all the males.

Gotra System helps to protect the Y Chromosome from becoming extinct

Its only now in the 20th Century that the modern-day scientists have concluded that children born to parents having blood relation (like cousins) can have birth defects. But keep in mind this was known to the Ancient Rishi's thousands of years before. For example, lets assume if there is a recessive defective gene in a

Male / Female. What this means is, this defective gene can be expressed in the child and may lead to serious birth defects. It is also possible this defective gene may not be expressed for many generations because the corresponding gene in the pairing Chromosome is stronger and hence is preventing this abnormality causing gene from activating.

Now there are fair chances that his offspring's will be carriers of these genes throughout successive generations. If they keep marrying outside this genetic imprint, there is a fair chance that the defective gene will remain inactive since others outside this person's lineage most probably do not have that defective gene.

Now if after 5-10 generations down the line say one of his descendants marries some other descendant carrying this defective gene, then there is a possibility that both are still carrying the defective gene. In that case their children will have the defective gene express itself and cause the genetic abnormality in them as both the Chromosomes in the pair have the defective genes. Hence, the marriages between cousins always have a chance of causing an otherwise recessive, defective genes to express themselves resulting in children with genetic abnormalities.

So, thank our Ancient Rishis for creating the Gotra system where they barred marriage between a boy and a girl belonging to the same Gotra no matter how deep the lineage tree was, in a bid to prevent inbreeding and eliminate all recessive defective genes from the human DNA.

All I can say is we have to be amazed at such insights coming from our Ancient Rishi's thousands of years before the Modern-Day scientists had figured it out.

Seniors Forum

By Sadanand Mankikar

UPCOMING EVENTS

SVBF/OKA SENIOR'S DAY: June being Seniors' Month, SVBF in collaboration with OKA is planning to organize Seniors' Day on Sunday, June 2, 2024. The program will include games, fun activities, music, dance, and food. Details will be shared shortly.

PAST EVENTS

"HOUSING AND HOME SHARING OPTIONS FOR SENIORS AND STUDENTS" – On February 22, 2024, the Seniors' Working Action Group conducted this very informative webinar by Dr. Nikore and Jackie Tanner. Please use this zoom recording link to review the presentation. <https://youtu.be/KiSaAIN7LCU>

OKA Seniors' Forum

STRUCTURE:

Following a seminar "I am a senior now, what next?" at the Konkani Sammelan in Atlanta, Georgia in July 2016, a brainstorming session on October 22, 2016 and a Focus Group meeting on April 23, 2017 the following nine Teams consisting of over 25 volunteers were established:

1. OKA Aadhar Chat - Interactive forum for seniors and support
2. Resource page on OKA website:
3. Information sessions/workshops/seminars/webinars:
4. Social and Cultural Activities:

5. Technical Support

6. Carpool: Coordinator

7. Buddy System

8. Emergency Preparedness Program

- Eventuality/Survivor's Kits/End of Life Planning
- Emergency Preparedness:
 - East End Support
 - West End Support
- Medical and Non-medical Information Access
- Youth/Young Adult Communication/ Coordination

9. Retirement Community

ACTIVITIES:

Thus far, as listed in the following table, we have organized or participated in over 50 Focus Groups, Information Sessions, Workshops, Seminars, Webinars on various health, social and cultural issues. In addition, some of the members actively participated in various external initiatives/activities including Asti Visarjan Project, Ontario Seniors' Affairs Minister's initiative, Healthy Aging in Diverse Ontario, Ontario Seniors' Affairs Minister's initiative, Liberal Caucus Indian Friendship Group Meeting, Indus Community Services' South Asian Housing Needs discussion, GTA RetCom Project (a number of meetings and updates including initial feasibility studies and readiness discussions and Jeevan Niwas South Asian Retirement Village (Information Session and Ground breaking Ceremonies).

OKA Seniors' Forum has an account in the First Ontario Credit Union, Burlington Branch with Ashok Bhatt, Sadanand Mankikar and Muralidhar Nayak as signing authorities.

MODE OF COMMUNICATION

OKA members are kept informed of the Forum activities through OKA website, e-Samachar and OKA Seniors email group.

USEFUL INFORMATION

OKA EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM: Estate, Will and Power of Attorney and End of Life Planning are two major elements of this OKA Seniors Forum Program.

For **preparing Wills and Powers of Attorney** you may contact Marvin Talksby (905) 405-0199 ext. 257 or Mary Bojkovski (905) 405-0199 ext. 276 of Nanda & Associate Lawyers. For additional information or assistance, you may also contact Raghunath Kamath or Ashok Bhatt.

For **End of Life Planning** one may contact Harjinder Bilku of Chapel Ridge Funeral Home at (905) 305-8128 or (647) 966-0093.

For additional information about OKA Seniors' Forum please use the following link:

<https://ontariokonkanis.com/seniors-forum-epp2/>

OTHER USEFUL INFORMATION

INDUS COMMUNITY SERVICES: This organization provides very helpful service to South Asian seniors.

For the presentations and additional information, please visit <https://www.induscs.ca/seniorstownhall/>

If you want to stay connected with Indus, you may sign up for their newsletter.

C.A.R.P. Are you a member of C.A.R.P. – previously known as Canadian Association of Retired Persons? If you are over 45, you may want to consider becoming a member of C.A.R.P. It is a national organization with chapters all over the country. Its mission is to “Promote and protect the interests, rights and quality of life of Canadians as we age”

C.A.R.P. is an advocacy group and from time to time they arrange interesting and informative seminars and workshops. Their monthly magazine Zoomer consists of useful articles and provide information on topics related to insurance, travel, health, entertainment and lifestyle.

For additional information, you may contact them by email: support@carp.ca
Phone: 1-833-211-2277 Website: www.carp.ca

ONTARIO GUIDE TO PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR SENIORS: Please click on the following link for the latest upgraded guide. [A guide to programs and services for seniors.](#)

SENIORS HOUSING AND HOME CARE DIRECTORY: Help for Mom has developed this very helpful publication which is about 130 pages, softcover and Readers Digest size. To get a copy send an email to helpformom.com or call Mary (647) 967-9821.

The following organizations disseminate very useful information either through regular news release and/or seminars, webinars and workshops:

- Canada India Foundation www.canadaindiafoundation.com
- C.A.R.P. Canadian Association of Retired People) www.carp.ca
- Diabetes Canada www.diabetes.ca
- Indus Community Services www.induscs.ca
- UHNF (University Network Foundation) www.uhnfoudatiom.ca

ARTICLES BY AND/OR FOR SENIORS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.

DEATH – happens to everyone

By Suvarna & Sadanand Mankikar

DEATH – it happens to everyone and at times, it happens when one least expects it.

When death occurs, in addition to grieving and managing the loss and shock, one is faced with a whole lot of protocols that must be completed within a short period of time. Depending on where the death occurs, the protocols may be different and complex. The grieving period can be overwhelming. Everyone, especially those with seniors in their families and friends' circles, should become familiar with these protocols. Most of the funeral homes such as Chapel Ridge Funeral Home and Lotus Funeral Home cover this information on their websites.

In 2018, OKA Seniors Forum, under the umbrella of OKA, started the Emergency Preparedness Program (EPP). As a part of this program, we set up the following team of volunteers to assist grieving families, at the request of the grieving family:

GTA East - Shivdas and Sheetal Pai

Supported by Dinesh Shenoy, Gurunath Pai, Bina & Nagesh

Kamath, Ashok Goundalkar and Divakar Shenoy

GTA West – Sumana & Sudhir Nayak

Supported by Niranjana Kamath, Shashikant Nayak, Kashinath Nayak, Jayesh Nayak

East of GTA – Rashmi Bhandarkar-McPhee

West of GTA – Surekha Shenoy

Coordinators – Suvarna & Sadanand Mankikar

Over the period, this team has provided support when requested by the affected families. This support has included giving basic information as requested to aiding at every step of the entire process, such as identifying a funeral home, making all required arrangements, facilitating the process (MC), writing the obituary, etc.

For additional information about this Program, please use the following link:
<https://ontariokonkanis.com/seniors-forum-epp2/>

Exploring the Canadian Rockies

By Shruti PaiDhungat

Hello everyone. Welcome to my first article here. Like many other travelers, Banff and Jasper were on our bucket list for the past 3 years. We couldn't wait to walk along the jaw-dropping blue lakes. So, in the summer of 2023, my family and I decided to visit the Canadian Rockies for a vacation that we will never forget. When most people think of Banff, the iconic Lake Louise usually comes to mind. You all have probably seen this picturesque lake all over Instagram and travel websites. It is one thing to view these in pictures and another to see it with your own eyes. So, let me give you all a glimpse of my Trip to Alberta.

Day 1: Zesty Zoo Day

Finally, the day arrived, July 1 and flying into Calgary airport on a 5-hour flight from Toronto was our first step. After landing we checked into the Sandman Hotel near the Airport and then got our rental car. We had our breakfast and decided to visit the Calgary zoo. After replying to a million "Are we there yet" questions we were finally there. Before you enter the Zoo, you have to walk through a tunnel underneath Memorial Drive. The walls of tunnels are painted with murals of all the animals you are about to see at the zoo. It really makes for a very dramatic entry

The Calgary Zoo has surprisingly a park-like structure with its several waterfalls, ponds and huge trees making an oasis in the middle of the city. As one would expect, this artsy Zoo has lots of animals, divided by their native continents. We saw bears, goats, lions, tigers, giraffes, hippos, cute red pandas, many different birds, beautiful butterflies and monkeys but the highlight was the penguins. At the Penguin plunge area, we were treated to a few minutes of diving, swimming, and splashing penguins. Both the penguins and the visitors enjoyed the comfort of their refrigerated enclosure on this hot July day. Having seen almost half the zoo we had lunch at one of the many small restaurants in the zoo.

Being Canada day, we were fortunate to be able to participate in the various events they had in the zoo. My then 7-year-old daughter had a great time at the tattoo

station proudly displaying a maple leaf she got painted on her hand, then we took a photo with a larger-than-life beaver while enjoying some live music performances by Canadian artists. One of the parks had a masterfully crafted roaring tiger and the sky-high 21-foot-tall giraffe with its baby made using various plants and flowers. One won't want to miss taking photos with these amazing plant creatures as backdrops. There were also a few smaller sculptures of animals like polar bears, a snail and a peacock. Another unique feature of the Zoo is the Prehistoric Park that replicates what Alberta's landscape might have been like in prehistoric times when dinosaurs roamed the area. It takes you through an impressive trail of realistic rock formations and animatronic dinosaurs that move and make sounds.

No wonder The Calgary zoo is so famous and definitely a "must visit". We also visited the Calgary Downtown area. After a tiring yet thrilling day we headed back to the hotel room, dined and dozed off.

Day 2 & 3: Scenic Canmore and more

I know. When you're on vacation, you probably want to sleep a bit more, but my Canadian Rockies fever got me up before the alarm rang and in no time, we were all set to leave for Canmore which would be our home for the next 4 days. The 3 hrs scenic drive had got me jumping in my seat already. On the way we stopped at the beautiful Bow lake. Time just flew by watching the snow capped giants and mesmerizing surroundings as we reached the beautiful downtown of Canmore. Canmore is the first town in the Rockies and although not as well known as Banff and Jasper, the mountain views are spectacular from all directions. What an amazing feeling it was of having lunch on a patio amidst the mountains. After having our stomachs filled we checked into our hotel Rocky Mountain Ski Lodge. Later that evening I went for a hike to admire the Three Sisters a bit up close, they are the most recognizable peaks in this mountain town.

The next morning my excitement was at its peak as we headed to Banff National Park. The breathtakingly beautiful protected wilderness mecca located in the heart of the Canadian Rockies. After getting our park pass we drove straight to Johnston Canyon which is one of the famous and popular spots amongst tourists. One

definitely needs to pre-book a parking spot here. We began our hike towards the Lower Falls, taking in the captivating sights on the way and continued along the dramatically carved canyon to the Upper Falls. It took us almost 4 hrs to finish the hike with enough stops for taking photos and admiring the multiple stunning waterfalls, turquoise pools, and towering limestone cliffs. One can't miss the view from a small tunnel on the way. The falls are so close to the tunnel's opening that we got sprayed with the mist from the falls. We finished our long hike at the canyon and headed to our next stops the Two Jack lakes and Lake Minnewanka which is one of the popular lakes in Banff offering a lot of water activities. This picturesque lake is surrounded by snow-capped peaks. After a relaxed time at the lake we were on our way back to the Hotel. On the way one can find many more beautiful lookout spots. We took a stop at the Bow river lookout point. The sight of blue lake surrounded by these ranges had me Insta ready. We reached our hotel, had dinner and called it a night.

Day 4: Another Adventure

Early morning while sipping on the hot tea I watched the beautiful golden rays as they softly lit up the white tops of the snow-clad mountains making them shine. We started our journey towards the town of Banff. We had a quick stop at the Caves and Basin which is a Parks Canada National Historic site and also home

to the endangered Banff snails. Up next we took the Banff Gondola scenic ride up to Sulphur Mountain summit ridge while enjoying stunning views of the surrounding mountains and valleys. At this summit ridge you will find restaurants, hiking trails, a boardwalk, gift shop, an information center and observation decks which gives you a 360-degree mountain view. We began our adventure by strolling the boardwalk to the Cosmic Ray Station and Sanson's Peak. It took us over 2 hrs to finish the trail but the boardwalk made it easier for my dad and my daughter to reach the mountain top. On our way we crossed paths with cute mountain goats and wild squirrels. The Sulphur Mountain hike provides a surreal view of the towering Cascade Mountain, the staggering peaks of the Sundance Range, Bow Valley and the charming town of Banff. What could be a more perfect way to relax, recharge, and rejuvenate after an exhilarating day exploring the Canadian Rockies than soaking yourself into the

natural hot springs. Luckily, we were close to the Upper Hot Springs located in a beautiful setting, surrounded by the Rocky Mountains. Hot springs themselves are fed by natural mineral water trickling down from elevations high atop Sulphur Mountain. After a couple of hours of watching these beautiful views we continued with our journey back to the hotel. One the way we took a little halt at downtown Banff to try some lip-smacking Korean food at Hankki and shop for some souvenirs in the touristy shops around. A busy day made us turn in early that night.

Day 5: Jewels of The Canadian Rockies

Day 5 was my most favorite part of the trip. We were all set to explore the endless wonders, the most famous Lake Louise and Lake Moraine. One can either drive to this beautiful paradise or take the Parks Canada shuttle which you need to book much in advance. We opted for the shuttle as it could be difficult to find a parking spot there. The first sight of Lake Louise was so captivating. This alpine lake with turquoise blue color fed by glacier waters melting, set by a backdrop of Mt. Victoria and a hanging glacier is a real treat for the eyes. We took some photos at the beautiful boardwalk by The Fairmont Chateau which is the most iconic hotel in Banff. There was a big lineup of eager tourists to kayak and canoe in the lake. We decided to skip these and take up a fun but challenging hike on the trail to Lake Agnes Tea House. The distance from the lake to the tea house is 3.6 km (2.2 miles). The final elevation where the tea house is located is over 7,000 feet. As you get higher on the trail, there are many opportunities to see glimpses of Lake Louise. You will also pass by Mirror Lake towards the end of the uphill portion right before you arrive at the tea house. Due to its location at the top of a mountain, the tea house has no electricity or running water. The staff brings fresh food up the trail during the summer and fall months. Sitting on the shore of Lake Agnes we snacked on some sandwiches and hot chocolate from the Tea House. As we descended back to the lake, the shoreline was packed with people. We were glad that we decided to visit lake Louise first thing in the morning. I must say It would be difficult to find a more majestic and awe-inspiring place in Canada than Lake Louise.

Next, we took the bus and headed to Lake Moraine. This stunning lake is located just 25 minutes from Lake Louise. The brilliant, blue-green turquoise color of

Moraine.

Lake is caused by glacial erosion. The snow-capped valley of the Ten Peaks surrounding the lake makes up for a lovely view. The sunrise and still reflecting water looked absolutely stunning and gave it a mirror like effect. Since it was less crowded we decided to give canoeing a shot at this peaceful, mesmerising place and avoided hiking around the lake. After taking lots of photos and having some snacks at the small restaurant nearby we continued our journey to Jasper. It took us 5 hours to reach Jasper.

The drive from Banff to Jasper, along the scenic Icefields parkway is ranked among the top road trips in the world when you will not only see the mountains and glaciers rise dramatically overhead but also see the wildlife roaming freely around. On the way we took a quick stop at the stunning Sunwapta Falls which is a hidden gem followed by small halts to lake Patricia. We found a perfect spot to watch the majestic sunset at lake Pyramid. The road to Jasper is filled with jaw dropping scenic views and these lakes are definitely worth a halt. After a long day we reached our hotel Holiday Inn at Hinton, a small town near Jasper and dozed off after dinner.

Day 6 & 7: Fascinating Jasper

Our morning at Jasper began as we left for Maligne lake which is famous for the colors of its azure water, surrounding peaks, three glaciers visible from the lake and Spirit Island. One can visit Spirit Island by boat from Maligne Lake. On our way back, we saw a majestic rocky mountain Elk happily grazing along the sides of the road. Our next halt was the beautiful Medicine lake. From there we headed to the Columbia Icefield Glacier which was a 90 mins drive. On the way we saw many bears black, brown, grizzlies as well as Bighorn sheep, some more elk, deers and mountain goats. Our experience started at the Columbia Icefield Glacier Discovery Centre. After check-in, we ate at one of the restaurants there. The bus ride was a short one from Discovery Centre. It takes you across the street to the glacier's base, where we were transferred to an Ice Explorer and were on our way to the Athabasca glacier. The ice explorers are massive 6-wheel all terrain vehicles. Each wheel of the vehicle

is over 5 feet high. The road to the glacier is filled with high climbs and steep slopes -"Welcome to the world's slowest roller coaster ride".- I recollect our guide saying this as the explorer went down the gravel road. Before long, we were on the Athabasca glacier and could see the Columbia icefield up ahead of us. Wearing your sunglasses is a good idea here. The icefield is like a large, overflowing lake filled with snow and ice instead of water sitting on top of the mountains. There were a couple of streams with fresh clean glacier water, straight from the source. As soon as I dipped my bottle into the stream to collect the melting glacial water, my fingers went numb. It was really cold. After about 30 mins on the glacier, we were dropped to our next spot, the Columbia Icefield Skywalk. The bridge's semi-circle shaped clear glass platform was the only barrier between us and the terrain of the Sunwapta Valley 280 meters below our feet. This one kilometer walkway offers views of fossils, waterfalls and the stunning mountains(snow capped peaks repeated too much earlier).The super thick glass is bulletproof. Initially I was a bit worried about the height but the incredible panoramic views of Mount Athabasca and the Columbia Icefield in the distance were enough to put me at ease! Mt Athabasca range is truly impressive. The adrenaline rush of being suspended high up in the air via a clear glass bridge was pretty cool. This skywalk was indeed a memorable experience and I would absolutely recommend it. Later that evening we walked around the town of Jasper. It is quaint, lined with little bistros and boutiques. We dined at Andaaaz, a popular Indian restaurant in downtown Jasper.

Day 7: Back to the 6ix

Our last day! Sadly, it was time for us to wind up our trip and head back to the 6ix. The Canadian Rockies are vast. Every view is like a postcard and every stop makes you feel you should have stayed back for more time. No matter how many days you have here, it still won't be enough to uncover the beauty of this place. Some places leave you speechless - this was one such place.

Some travel tips: -

Wear comfy clothes, put on your walking shoes. Stay hydrated. Sunglasses and a very good camera are very essential to treasure these memories. Banff and Jasper

being Bear towns, seeing one in the wild is a rare and treasured experience. But be aware of all the safety precautions and exercise caution. Always hike with bear spray, stay on the marked trails and do not wander alone.



Majestic Lake Louise view while hiking up to the Tea house



The gigantic Ice explorer at Columbia Icefield Parkway



Canadian Rockies from Glass Bridge at Columbia Icefield Skywalk



In a land of tales from days of yore,
Lived three heroes we adore.
Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana bold,
Their story, timeless, never old.

Rama, with his bow so true,
Sita, with eyes like morning dew,
Lakshmana, loyal and brave,
Together, their bond could save.

Rama, the prince with heart so kind,
His love for Sita, a treasure to find.
In forests deep, they wandered free,
Facing challenges, yet filled with glee.

Sita, gentle, with grace untold,
Her love for Rama, a story to unfold.
In trials tough, her spirit shone bright,
Guiding them through the darkest night.

Lakshmana, brother steadfast and true,
His devotion, a guiding light anew.
With bow in hand, he stood by their side,
In joy or sorrow, he never shied.

Through forests deep and mountains high,
They faced the tests beneath the sky.
With courage, love, and faith so strong,
They triumphed over every wrong.

So let us sing of Rama's might,
Of Sita's love, shining bright.
And Lakshmana, with heart so pure,
Their story, forever will endure.

In tales of old, their names will ring,
A timeless song, let's joyfully sing.
For Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana dear,
In our hearts, they're always near.

OBITUARY – Kumudini Deshpande



Kumudini Arun Deshpande passed away peacefully at the age of 89, surrounded by her close family, on Sunday, February 25th, 2024 at the Dorothy Ley Hospice Centre in Etobicoke.

She was born Kumudini Laxman Deshpande in July, 1934 in Haliyal, a small town in Karnataka State, India. She was 7th among 10 siblings (two brothers and eight sisters). She received her primary school education in Haliyal, followed by secondary school education in Dharwad. She also attended Karnataka University in Dharwad for the first three years. Her medical education was in Poona Medical College where she received her M.B.B.S degree. She continued her postgraduate education at K.E.M. medical college in Mumbai and received M.D. degree in Gynaecology and Obstetrics. After her marriage to Arun Deshpande in February 1966, she came to Canada and completed her Fellowship in Anaesthesia in Toronto, Ontario. She practiced medicine in St. John's, Nfld., Hawkesbury, ON. , Sudbury, ON. and at Toronto's Humber (River) Hospital. She also practiced Family Medicine in Toronto for about 40 years.

She was very active in OKA seniors' group and attended many meetings and group functions. She hosted OKA Seniors Forum's first Focus Group meeting in her

building's party room. She worked as a volunteer for 10 years at the Dorothy Ley Hospice Centre and she was a Board member at the Islington Senior Centre and took part in many activities including dancing, painting, knitting and social events etc. She was a multi-talented person with a flare for painting, knitting, languages, etc.

She leaves behind her husband Arun, son Amol, two grandchildren Rajan and Chetan, brothers and sisters, nephews, and nieces. A private funeral service and cremation were held on February 29, 2024 at the Lotus Funeral and Cremation Centre, Etobicoke. May her soul attain Sadgati.

Farewell to our Beloved Son Anand

20th March 1968 >> 3rd March 2024

Vernal Equinox, March 20th, 1968, my dear wife Padma delivered a cute baby boy at West Middlesex Hospital in Osterley, Greater London, England. We named him Anand, a name that is synonymous to joy, blissful happiness, and so forth, recurring in Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Sikh religious scriptures. Padma and I were ecstatic with our baby boy. Two months later, having completed the Canadian Immigration Visa and required vaccinations, baby Anand and Padma boarded an Air Canada flight (which I navigated!) to Montreal, Quebec. Thus, began our story and Anand's life journey in Canada.

The following year we drove our *Pontiac Parisienne* across the country to Vancouver. A year-old Anand sat between us in a car-seat hooked on to driver's bench seat! Next, we rented a home in Kerrisdale; two months later bought a house in Burnaby. In 1974, we settled at our *homestead* in Fernridge, Langley.

Anand attended Glenwood elementary school before moving on to Brookwood Secondary. He was an excellent student and excelled at his many extracurricular activities. At age nine, he joined the 4H club where he showed cattle at PNE, garnered top row in Showmanship and won the Woodward's Champion trophy. At school, he played the saxophone in the stage and concert band, was part of the handbell choir and played ukulele on the side! His favorite activity was perhaps basketball and he became captain of the Brookwood Bobcats in his Grade 12 year. Well-liked by his classmates and teachers alike, he earned the title "Grad of the Year" in 1986.

Following high school, he was selected to Canadian Armed Forces. He studied for a BA in Economics at Royal Military College. This was followed by pilot training in Moose Jaw and eventually becoming a Captain of the Hercules C130. During his time in the Canadian Air Force, he served UN missions in Somalia and the Balkans, delivered essential supplies to High Arctic remote bases Alert- Nunavut, Thule in Greenland, and completed mid air fueling exercises, Miramar USAF, and much more. Come 1995, he joined Air BC and Air Canada soon after.

There is so much more to share and celebrate. For example, Anand completed his PhD in Economics while being a full-time First Officer at Air Canada! This is to say nothing of his wonderful family life in Ottawa with his loving wife Kusum and adoring daughters Nina and Jasmine.

Tragically, Anand was diagnosed with glioblastoma in April 2022. Though this disease has no cure, he continued to live for almost two years with a positive mindset and compassion for all those around him. However short his life was, my hope is that people can take inspiration from all he accomplished and his tremendous character. He passed away at home on 3rd March surrounded by his loving family.

“Death leaves a heart-ache no one can heal

Love leaves memories no one can steal”

Farewell our son Anand, “A life well lived!” “OM Shanthi”

Jana and Padma Acharya, sister Anjali (Aappa and Aamma)

March 23rd 2024, Langley BC



Attached is a photo of him taken shortly after his initial pilot training. Capt. Anand Acharya had flown into Vancouver from Moosejaw on his solo cross-country flight. It was early summer 1991.

Obituary

Uday Dattatray Dhareshwar

07.12.1953 – 01.02.2024



Uday; a remarkable soul, devoted son, affectionate brother, and devoted parent; attained Sadgati on **February 1, 2024** after a fruitful life with resilience, courage, and unwavering spirit.

A life with purpose, **Uday**, true to his name, was a beacon of wisdom and knowledge, a pillar of strength not just to his family but also a great support to multiple extended family members and doted on all of them. Born in Mumbai, to pious parents Suman and Dattatray Dhareshwar, **Uday** grew up in Goregaon, embraced life with love for nature and groomed himself to face life. An avid traveller, with a love for the countryside, he liked spending time in pristine Bankikodla, ancestral home in Kumta and cherished wonderful childhood memories of his Dr. Ajja's Karma-Bhoomi Byadagi. It was very inspiring how **Uday** cared for his ancestral home in Kumta and took great pride in its upkeep through multiple hardships.

Uday, as a multifaceted personality, was a voracious reader, a soulful poet and writer with a flair for history, passion for literature and an authority in Personnel/HR laws. **Uday** enthralled his near and dear ones, children, and grandchildren, with his colourful stories and anecdotes. Childhood friends remember his love for wild-west novels, mystery stories and sharing haunting tales which still gives them the chills!

Uday was a Shiva bhakta, an ardent devotee of Ganapati and of the Guruparampara of Shri Chitrapur Math.

As we bid farewell to this extraordinary soul, let us celebrate the life he lived and pray for his Atman to attain Sadgati. **Uday**, you will forever live in our hearts!

With lots of Love, Respect & Deepest Regards,

All family members and friends

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