

Bingo Binge By Seniors Of SCP At Aroma Delight

BY MAHADEV DESAI

Atlanta: Senior Citizens Program,(SCP) Inc. organized a highly engaging bingo luncheon at the Aroma Delight Restaurant in Duluth, on Sunday, March 24. To capture and express the real essence and excitement of my fellow seniors immersed in the game of Bingo was challenging. After some head-scratching, I thought the word "binge" would go well with the word "Bingo". Binge generally is used to

show insatiable appetite. For instance, it is used for 'binge eating' after an excruciating dieting spell to shed those extra pounds around our bodies! I felt that 'binge' would reflect the insatiable appetite of the seniors to win the chips by combining the knowledge of numerology together with lady luck's smile. So I settled on the word Bingo binge! to describe the ecstasy of the seniors who applauded and screamed in joy and excitement after being declared the winners and rewarded with gifts in the Bingo challenge sponsored by well known and respected philanthropists Jeevan & Arwan Singhal and Rakesh & Chandrika Garg.

Having attended Senior Citizens Program for well over ten years, I have noticed the seniors

blend work and play meaningfully. This time too, the focus was on a worthy humanitarian cause, when SCP. Volunteer Chinti Bali appealed for donations to help Atlanta's noted poet and Radio



The bingo winners.

Humdum's broadcaster Aslam Pervez towards his rehab expenses after a serious illness. It is commendable that despite short notice, SCP raised and generously contributed towards the Welfare Fund for Pervez. Chinti Bali took the opportunity to inform seniors who do not have medical insurance to contact Dr. Inder Pal Singh, who runs his clinic on Sunday afternoons from 3-00 to 4.30 p.m. on a voluntary basis to help the needy Elders.

The second important matter highlighted by SCP was the importance of being counted in the Census 2010. Executive Director Raj Razdan informed the attendees about the U S Census 2010 and exhorted everyone to fill in the simple questionnaire and mail it back to the Census. She fur-

ther informed them about the importance of being counted as the data helps the Federal Government in allocating financial and other aid to States and communities including funds for Senior Citizens Welfare. She also assured the audience about the safety and confidentiality of the responses.

The seniors were rewarded for their rapt attention and being good listeners as the Gujarati Community leader and social activist, Vinodbhai Patel, and Nath Singhaadia and other volunteers handed out black and white bags to male and female members respectively. Each bag had a T shirt and Census 2010 literature. Razdan thanked the US Census Senior Partnership Specialist for the entire Southeast USA and Team Leader Winnie Tang for arranging to send these goodies from Florida as compliments of the Census effort.

As the volunteers went round serving tasty appetizers to the seniors, Bingo cards were distributed. Isha Goyal commenced the game by announcing the numbers in English while Arunaben promptly translated this in Gujarati. Thanks to Rohitbhai Patel for setting up the audio system, everyone could hear the numbers distinctly.

Six winners emerged- Vinodbhai Vashi, Karishma Singhal, Sushilaben, Ushaben Karia, Jeevan Singhal and Mahadev Desai. The camaraderie was so obvious that even the losers cheered the winners.

Lunch has always been an integral part of monthly SCP celebrations. So, after bingo, the seniors settled down for 'binge' eating, accompanied with hilarious jokes by seniors, poetry recital by Atlanta's well known poet Kusum Sinha, melodious bhajan, 'Manav tu parivartan

se kaheko darta hai' by Malti Duggal who also sang a duet bhajan, "Mujhe Bhagwan woh dil de ke jisme pyaar tera ho' with Mrs. Bhandari.

After fun, food, and entertainment it was time for a test of culinary skills. For male mem-



The sponsors of the program.

bers this surely was an unusual challenge but they rose to the occasion. And slowly, seniors penned down his or her favorite recipe. The response proved not only overwhelming but also hilarious as some members came on stage and read out their recipes, raising laughs when describing why these were their favorites. Men folks invariably complimenting their spouses for their weight gain!

Razdan concluded the highly entertaining and fun-filled event by announcing the next SCP event on April 11, a movie show, (the name of the movie to be announced later) at the Galaxy Cinema.

AICCE Showcases Atlanta Musicians

BY JYOTHSNA HEGDE

Atlanta: Raaga Reflections floated music in the air this March 13 at the British Academy of Performing Arts. The event organized by CV Subramanian & Gayatri showcased talented local



Atlanta musicians who enthralled the audience with vocals accompanied by instruments.

The musicians presented variation of raagas or tunes ranging from Classical to Orchestral. The program began with the classical rendition of raaga in Carnatic style. The Carnatic vocal was rendered by Deepa Sriram, Gayatri Krishnan, Gayatri Vasant, Hema Nagendra, Raman Poyapakkam and Srinithya Krishnan. A few variety songs were next by Gayatri Subramanian on vocal, Kannan Rajappa on vocal, Apama Bellur on Guitar and Ram Mallappa on Flute. Other artists that accompanied the singers included Sri Guruswami and Santosh Chandru on mridangam.

A new group AICCE (Atlanta Indian Community Choir & Ensemble) made its debut in Atlanta with an orchestral depiction of Raagas. The musical score was written, arranged and recorded

by C.V.Subramanian, proficient in Violin and vocal. Gayatri, who is also the Director of Soundarya Natyalaya tells us that AICCE, conceived and directed by C.V.Subramanian, her husband is a group of music teachers and enthusiasts that aims to explore the power of Indian Raagas in a contemporary form, cutting across various genres, ranging from Carnatic/Hindustani to Western. The distinctive feature she adds is that the musical pieces presented by AICCE are original and created from scratch.

Raaga Reflections, the maiden performance of AICCE featured 'Swagatham Shubha Swagatham' which was a revival of the popular song from the 1982 AISAD games with vocals, complex harmonies, swaras, percussions and instruments, 'Melody in Raag Nagaswaravali', a original musical score exploring the intricacies of this raaga through vocals, violin, flute, guitar and tabla, 'Reflections in Aberi' an original score exploring the intricacies of raag ABERI, through choral harmonies, complex note patterns, supported and orchestrated through a wide range of instruments, 'Alaipayuthe' an improvisation of the famous song Alaipayuthe in Raag Kaanada, and 'Rhythms' an score and lyrics depicting a foot tapping South Indian folk with a progressions of two raagas - Ananda Bhairavi & Kaapi. Food was arranged for the audience in between the performance.

The delightful evening transported the audience to a world of music and ended on a high note. Here's wishing AICCE much success in its goals.

BAPS Hosts Women's Conference

Atlanta: Over 400 women from across the Southeast came together for the BAPS Women's Conference 2010. The three-hour conference was

Ms. Susan Richardson, a partner with the Atlanta-based law firm Kilpatrick Stockton, spoke on the importance of protecting the environment, citing examples from her experiences as an attorney.

Speaking on the necessity of maintaining a healthy lifestyle was Dr. Gulshan Harjee.

"We should be involved parents," she said. "I'm always



Speaker Panel (L to R): Mrs. Soniya Patel, Ms. Susan Richardson, Dr. Geeta Verma, & Dr. Gulshan Harjee

held in celebration of International Women's Day (IWD) and was hosted by the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha held at the BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir in Lilburn. IWD is a global event commemorated by the United Nations to recognize women and the important contributions they have made in the world. BAPS is a current member of the UN's Economic and Social Council.

The theme of the conference, "Nurturing Families, Shaping Communities," provided a forum for attendees to discuss the educational and environmental impact created by the global community of women through their roles in family and society. The theme draws inspiration from BAPS' core values of nurturing individuals and creating stronger families. The various keynote speakers each stressed one of these topics.

Dr. Geeta Verma of Georgia State University addressed the topic of education.

"It is important to understand that in families, if girls don't receive advocacy, the door to education is never opened," Dr. Verma said.

amazed at the women of the BAPS mandir and their ability to do things independently. You all have a really strong value system."

The final speech of the evening was by Mrs. Soniya Patel on the impact women have via their role in the family unit. Ms. Patel, the first blind teacher hired in the state of Tennessee, has been teaching music for over 12 years.

"We live in a free society and in a country where the sky is the limit," Mrs. Patel said. "We have the power to change our community, our family, and ourselves both socially and spiritually."

Anisha Desai of Atlanta was particularly impressed by this speech.

"I really enjoyed Soniya Patel's presentation," she stated. "I consider her a hero, not because she is blind, but also shows that anything is possible."

Dr. Hetal Patel concluded with remarks on the growth of BAPS in the past 100 years. Attendees left inspired and empowered, ready to implement the message of the conference in their own lives.