

Vision 20/20 by 2020



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Distributed By:

SEF, USA
3175 Arcola Ct.
San Jose, CA 95148
1-866-SANKARA
www.giftofvision.org

Board Members:

K. Muralidharan
K. Sridharan
Ahmad Khushnood
Sundar Radhakrishnan
Divyogi Patel

Edited By:

Manjula Jonnalagadda
Naushik Desai
Sridhar Rajagopal
Anuradha Sumanth
Sankar T

Message from our Chairman - Murali Krishnamurthy

July 23, 2005

Murali Krishnamurthy

Dear friends,

Wish you all a very happy Indian Independence day.

On this auspicious day let us rededicate ourselves to providing freedom from curable blindness to our dear brothers and sisters back home – Vision 20/20 by 2020.

Community involvement and support has been responsible for the amazing progress at our first Sankara Eye Hospital in Coimbatore where the number of FREE Eye Surgeries grew from around 8,000 in 1998 to more than 43,000 in the year 2004. This progress led to a donation of an entire eye hospital to us in Krishnan Koil near Madurai in Tamil Nadu and our Sankara Eye Hospital in Guntur became a reality entirely due to your support.

Sankara Eye Hospital-Guntur has made such progress in its first year that we are already running out of capacity and recently our Guntur CEO Major General Dr. Mohan Chander launched the Phase II of the Focus-AP project at TANA-2005 in Detroit.

Our leaders Dr. Ramani and Dr. S.V. Balasubramaniam are visiting us in September this year to launch Focus-Bangalore, Focus-Gujarat and Focus-Karnataka (Shimoga). We are already counting on your enthusiastic participation and support for these projects and are planning the inauguration of all the above Sankara Eye Hospitals by the end of 2006.

Wherever you are in the USA, please call us now at 1-866-Sankara (1-866-726-5272) and either individually or as a group donate one thousand dollars and become a founding member of any of our new Sankara Eye Hospitals. We will have your name or the name of your beloved one on the 'Wall of Founders'. You can also EMail us at info@giftofvision.org.

Sincerely,
Murali Krishnamurthy



Focus Bangalore

The technical capital of India will have an eye hospital, which will also be a training center.

For details check page 7

Focus Gujarat

Land for this project is being acquired at Anand close to Baroda. This hospital will serve regions of Gujarat.

For details check page 7

Focus AP Phase-II

Last year we conducted 9,000 surgeries at Guntur hospital. Still a lot needs to be done. We intend to increase the hospital capacity to 200 beds.

For details check page 3.

Focus Karnataka

Land for this project had been acquired in the beautiful region of Shimoga. This hospital will serve major portions of Karnataka.

For details check page 4.

Upcoming Events

- "SEF-2nd Annual Dandia", October 8, 2005, Santa Clara Convention Center, 5001 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara, CA-95054
- "Banquet Dinner" November 15th 2005, San Francisco, CA

For more information on SEF events, please visit www.giftofvision.org
Contact Muckai Girish at (925) 875-9793 or muckai@yahoo.com for sponsorship details

SEF's 2nd Annual Dandia

Riding on last year's success, we are organizing our 2nd Annual Dandia at Santa Clara Convention Center near Paramount's Great America. This venue can hold up to 2,000 people. There will be a lot of space to dance. Renowned dandia singer Dimple Bhai Patel will be singing at this Event. Come and have a lot of fun.

October 8th 2005 at Santa Clara Convention Center, 5001 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara, CA-95054.

For details Contact 1-866-SANKARA.

SEF Banquet Dinner



SEF plans to organize a Benefit Dinner Banquet this November in the San Francisco Bay Area. This event will be similar to the one that was held on November 15, 2003 in San Jose where our patrons who donated \$1,000 or more gathered together for a special evening.

This banquet will feature an evening with presentations about SEF's projects and an entertainment program along with a gourmet dinner. It will be a fundraiser for the four capital projects underway in SEF: Focus Andhra Pradesh Phase II, Focus Bangalore, Focus Gujarat and Focus Karnataka. It will be an evening to remember and we look forward to your presence.



SEF Annual All Volunteer Meeting - Suhanya Ramakrishnan

Sankara Eye Foundation, known for meticulous execution of its events, has yet again categorically proven its proficiency in professionalism, in conducting its All Volunteer Meeting.

On the noon of Saturday, June 25th, the budding SEFites, the tireless veterans, and the newbies got together for another update on the progress of various groups and hospitals tied to sankara. The Volunteer Resource Management team immaculately executed the organization of this meeting and chartered out an agenda within the allocated time.

The meeting took off with authentic Indian lunch and chaas. Amongst the burps and belly patting, Murali drew attention to himself with a remarkably quick and concise review of 2004 accomplishments.

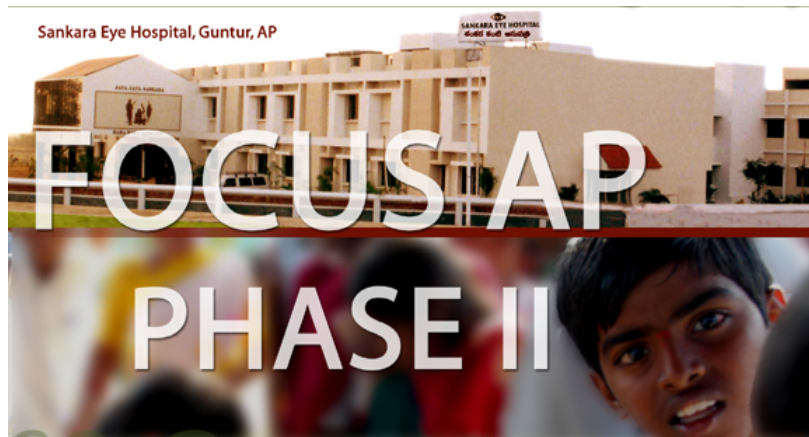
This was followed by brief presentations by other coordinators on Focus Gujarat, Karnataka, AP – Phase II and Bangalore. Besides conveying the message and status, the coordinators used the stage to garner up people for their groups. Events, booths, marketing, East Coast coordination, Foundations, Data entry, Finance, Emerging areas and VRM followed this. Phew! The presentations involved stating their objectives, profiling their roles and a roadmap.

Having said all this, it would be brutal to not mention the anchor and her relentless efforts to amuse the audience or more aptly to give them a break from the gravity of the presentations! :-)

The icing on the cake surfaced when the surprise item in the schedule was announced – veteran award for five years of service at SEF. Twenty-one people were honored with plaques for their priceless contributions to Sankara. The meeting also staged a representative from 'Zingaris' (dance troupe) who presented a part of the proceedings from their recent show to SEF. An ice-'scream' social and t-shirt give-away marked the sweet end of this gathering.



One year Progress Report of Sankara Eye Hospital, Guntur - Venkat Maddipati



As you know, the state-of-the-art Sankara Eye Hospital, Guntur was inaugurated on March 1st, 2004. Out patient care started on March 12th.

The CEO, Maj. Gen. Dr. Mohan Chander manages the hospital very smoothly and effectively with his dedicated team of doctors, nurses and other personnel. The hospital has already spread the magic of light to several thousand poor people and their families in Andhra Pradesh. Free Eye Camps have started since May 22nd, 2004 - presently covering Guntur, Prakasam and Krishna districts. The hospital performs about 200 free IOL eye surgeries per week and has done about 9,000 surgeries as of May 2005. The Sankara ORBIS Pediatric Ophthalmologic Department launched the Eye Screening program for school going children on the 11th October 2004.

Rural Outreach Eye Camps started on May 22nd, 2004.

Eye camps conducted	70
Population covered	251,300
Patients screened	26,821
Free surgeries performed	8,933

Rainbow – Preventive Eye Care for School Children

A free eye screening program for school children in association with ORBIS, started on October 11th, 2004.

Schools screened	65
Children screened	40,000
Medically treated for eye ailments	1,800
Glasses distributed	800
Surgically treated	42

Paid Patient Services started on March 12, 2004

Patients Screened	20,710
Surgeries performed (approx.)	600

Note: All the numbers are as of May 31st, 2005.



Launch of Focus-AP Phase II

Thank you very much for all your support in completing the first phase with 100 beds. With this capacity we have conducted 70 eye camps, covered a population of 251,300 and performed about 9,000 surgeries in one year.

To reach out to the other millions of needy sooner, across the length and breadth of Andhra Pradesh, we plan to add 100 beds at an estimated cost of \$500,000 in Phase II. This will enable us to perform about 20,000 free IOL eye surgeries every year.

Fund raising campaign for phase II was formally launched at the recently held 15th Telugu Association of North America (TANA) Convention in Detroit from July 1st to 3rd. We presented about the remarkable progress of the hospital since its inception and the need for doubling the existing capacity.

We need your continued support and generous donations to complete the expansion by 2006. There are several sponsorship opportunities in this phase II and we hope that you will continue to support us in this mission.

We would like to thank the organizers of TANA convention for giving us the opportunity to launch the phase II. We are thankful to all who visited our booth, lent their ear to hear about our mission, and donated generously. Thanks to Guntur Medical College (GMC) alumni and Rangaraya Medical College (RMC) alumni for giving us the opportunity to present our mission during their meetings at the convention..

If you need any information about sponsorships or the project, please contact Venkat Maddipati at 408-421-6372 or vmaddipati@gmail.com

Most of our board members and a few volunteers visited India for a week in March/April 2005, to participate in the strategy and planning sessions for our upcoming hospitals, and to review the performance of our existing ones.

The participants included Divyogi Patel, K.Sridharan, Murali Krishnamurthy, Sundar Radhakrishnan, Girish Muckai, Padma Parthasarathy and Jawahar Sundaram.



Friday, March 25 – Badravathi/Shimoga



The first on the list was the Apex Body meeting for Sankara Eye Hospital, Shimoga. After a scenic and hair raising ride in a van to Badravathi, the team was greeted by Dr. Vrinda, Dr.Narendra Bhat, Dr. Venkatesh Murti, Dr. Manjunath and others. They form the force behind SEH-Shimoga, and bootstrapped the project by raising the funds needed to purchase the land and by enlisting other prominent citizens as supporters and Apex Body members.

After a sumptuous lunch, the team visited Mathur village, where two brothers magnanimously donated 7 lakh rupees (Approximately \$16,118) to help towards buying the land. The team then went to see the land for SEH-Shimoga, located just 2 km from the city, on the Solapur-Mangalore highway. It was on the bank of the river Tunga, measuring 4.5 acres, and surrounded by lush green paddy fields.

This was followed by the Apex Body meeting, whose members have all donated at least 1 lakh rupees (approximately \$2,303) or more, and would be guiding the project locally. There was a presentation by Dr. Ramani, followed by Murali. It gave us confidence that there is a solid local group to ensure that the construction of the Hospital, and its functioning afterward would be smooth. It will be important to find such solid local support when we expand to other areas of the country.

Saturday, March 26 - Bangalore

In the morning, an eye camp had been organized at our Hospital site in Bangalore. This is 4 ½ acres of prime land near the airport in Marathahalli – worth Rs. 27 crores (around 6 million dollars), and leased to us for almost FREE for 30 years, by Navjeevan trust. At the camp, poor patients were identified to have eye surgeries, and would be later taken to Coimbatore by our own buses. In about two years, they can have their surgeries in Bangalore itself.



The evening saw the launch of the Focus-Karnataka project at the Oberoi International, with a dinner hosted by Bannari Amman Sugars (owned by Mr. S.V. Balasubramaniam). Dr. Ramani, Mr. SVB and others spoke briefly in this meeting attended by several prominent local people. A core group to manage the Bangalore project was formed, and included Mr. P.J.Bhagilthaya (Chairman of the Navjeevan trust that leased the land to us), Mr. Venkat Reddy (VP, Bannari Amman Sugars), and Mr. Murali from Bangalore.

Sunday, March 27 – Guntur

Murali Krishnamurthy flew to Vijayawada on Sunday afternoon. Major General Dr. Mohan Chander Garu received him at the Vijayawada airport. The Major General is in charge of our Guntur Hospital, and we couldn't have asked for a better CEO! The Hospital was an awesome sight, with a lot of greenery and a compound wall now, and everything was spic and span.



That evening, at dinner, Murali met with the doctors and staff, and also discussed the progress of the Guntur project with the Major General. The progress there is impressive. Almost every weekend of 2005 has been booked for eye camps.

The pediatric work at Guntur is sponsored through Orbis International. 972 students of the Yadava High School (catering to students below the poverty line) had been screened. During a ceremony at the hospital, Murali got to hand out eyeglasses to the students, and gave a motivational speech.

Continued on page 5



Mission ... (Continued from page 4)

Tuesday, March 29 – Coimbatore

Murali, who turned 50 on this day, was picked up at the railway station by a driver from SES Coimbatore. "How do you like working here?" asked Murali. He replied "Sir, if there is another life, I want to be born as a Chappal (flip flop) for SEH. Sir, I am being paid for doing social work. What better can I ask for?" One can see the same spirit in every staff member there. Kudos to Dr. Ramani and Dr. Radha Ramani for taking care of the staff like their own.

Murali spent some time with his family in Saibaba colony, and celebrated his birthday there. Later on, he met the others from the US team, and he and rest of the team took a tour of the hospital, and spent some time in the Pediatric ward. There, they met Basila, a beautiful 12 year old girl from Kerala, who had corneal transplants in both her eyes at the hospital. You can find her story in our last Newsletter.



Wednesday, March 30 – Coimbatore – all day strategy and planning:



The day was spent in discussing various aspects of the master plan. The discussions spilled over to Thursday and Friday afternoons as well.

There were good discussions on the financials, and healthy arguments. Mrs. Seetha, our accountant, patiently explained the financials, including the project cost details for the hospitals in Bangalore and Shimoga, existing unit financials, budget for 2005-2006, and the road to self-sufficiency. Our auditor, Mr. Srivatsan proposed coming up with a master plan for building 20 SEHs across the country, collecting blindness data for the country to best determine the optimal locations of the Hospitals, so that the entire country would be covered by our eye camps. It was also decided to enhance the SEH-Bangalore architectural and financial plans to include training facilities.

Mr. Ramanishankar, one of the top architects in India, and his son Siddharth worked with Dr. Ramani and others, analyzed various factors including our Guntur experience and workflow to come up with a good architectural plan. This was presented in the meeting, and discussed and debated. This plan can be used as a prototype for all of our hospitals.

It was also agreed to come up with a project plan for Phase II of SEH-Guntur, and launch it at the TANA-2005 in Detroit. In the evening, they had Long Service Awards ceremony at the Hospital, where several staff members were honored.

Rest of the stay

The discussions continued to Thursday, and Friday as well. In the meantime, everyone enjoyed the hospitality of the people there.

Mr. S. V. Balasubramaniam is already trying to form a core team in Uttar Pradesh, for SEH-UP, which we will initiate after completing Karnataka and Gujarat. Divyogi Patel went on to Anand and Baroda in Gujarat, to look at various lands for SEH-Gujarat.

Overall, it was a fantastic, memorable and useful trip for everyone. Our work is cut out for us. We are ready to start construction of the Bangalore Hospital in September 2005. We are close to acquiring land in Gujarat, and need to complete all three SEH's in the next two or three years. We need each and every one of you to become active. Let us all work together on the quest for Vision 20/20 by 2020!

You can find a fascinating journal of the trip by Murali Krishnamurthy, at the Sankara website. This summary is based on his gripping account.

EyeQ

1. In which eye disorder does too much intraocular pressure damage optic nerve fibers?
a. blind spot b. optic neuritis c. papilledema d. glaucoma
2. Which eye structure is comparable to the film of a camera because it senses light focused on it?
a. pupil b. vitreous humor c. retina d. optic nerve head
3. "Pink eye" is an inflammation of which eye tissue?
a. cornea b. conjunctiva c. iris d. crystalline lens
4. What is the point of sharpest, most acute visual acuity within the eye?
a. fovea centralis b. macula c. retina d. optic disk
5. The _____ is the most sensitive part of the retina.
a. sclera b. vitreous c. macula d. cornea

Answers: 1d, 2c, 3b, 4a, 5c

Annual Tri-State Dinner raises \$35K for SEF - Anagha Vaidyanathan

A group of 80 people gathered together at the Royal Palace Indian Restaurant in White Plains, NY on November 21st, 2004 for an evening of fun and giving. Organized by Dr. Ram Kancherla and Gautam Gurijala, the dinner also featured an address by noted philanthropist, Dr. Chittimoorthy, Chairman, Radiation Oncology, Westchester Medical Center and New York Medical College.

Guests were treated to an informative presentation by Our Chairman Murali Krishnamurthy on new projects, progress, and current needs of Sankara Eye Foundation. The fundraising was led by generous contributions by Dr. Kancherla (\$10K), Dr. Purna Atluri (\$10K), and an anonymous donor (\$5K). Our New Jersey volunteer Sejal Dave was the MC of the event.

Encouraged by the overwhelming response of the first event, Dr. Kancherla, with the help of Dr. Nageshwara Mandava and Lakshmi Mandava, is planning another Tri-State dinner in Long Island, NY on September 9th, 2005. Dr. Ramani will be the featured main speaker at the event. Over 100 guests are expected to attend the dinner and help to raise money for our projects.



Sejal Dave

Tennis Gathering Nets over \$7K for Focus AP and Focus Gujarat-Anagha Vaidyanathan



Event attracts players of all ages

Over 70 tennis lovers of all ages gathered at the Cross Courts Tennis Club in Poughkeepsie, NY on May 29th, 2005. For a fee of \$40 per person, the athletes were treated to five hours of playing time on the courts followed by a dinner. Over \$30 of the admission fee went directly as a tax-deductible donation to Sankara Eye Foundation and helped to "Open an Eye."

The event was organized by Dr. Simon and Geeta Gorwara and Sharad and Kiran Jain. Dr. Kancherla gave an encouraging speech about SEF and showed the classic Sankara Eye Foundation video. Guests were also given the opportunity to bid for various items in a Silent Auction. The enthusiastic bidding was quite a success. The event raised over \$7K in net proceeds and provided a great workout!



SEF TriState spreads awareness on Focus Karnataka - Anagha Vaidyanathan

In addition to enjoying the fireworks on the July 4th weekend, attendees of the North American Sankethi Association Convention in Washington D.C. had an opportunity to visit the Sankara Eye Foundation booth organized by Mr. T.T. Bhat. The booth spread awareness about the newest hospital project: Focus Karnataka and gave interested visitors a chance to learn more about the organization, its success, and goals.

The Indo-American Festival, held at the Bridgewater Balaji Mandir in New Jersey earlier this year, proved to be a great success for Sankara Eye Foundation's Tri-City Team of the East-coast as well. Many generous donors and eager volunteers visited the SEF booths, organized by Mr. Ram Balusu, at the event with numerous questions and encouraging comments

KKNC and Katte's "Nigooda" Removes Any Mystery Regarding Focus Karnataka - Mangala Kumar and Muckai Girish

For Bay Area Kannadigas, May 20th and 21st were quite special as they were treated to a terrific play by Katte (katte.niketana.com) called "Nigooda," a highly anticipated suspense thriller, at the Anthony Soto (CET) theatre in San Jose. KATTE's efforts were supported by Kannada Koota of Northern California (www.kknc.org), a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting Kannada culture. These two shows generated a tremendous amount of money and all the proceeds were donated to Sankara Eye Foundation (www.giftofvision.org), towards the Focus Karnataka project of building a state-of-the-art eye hospital in Shimoga, Karnataka. Sri. B.V. Jagdeesh matched up to \$15,000 of donations on those two days and this was a catalyst for the entire community to join together in this project and generously donate to this cause.



Sri B.V. Jagdeesh's initiative, leadership and generosity have been instrumental in providing a positive momentum for this project. An anonymous donor donated \$5,000 on the first day of the show. The KKNC committee led by Sri Ravi Reddy has been the pillar of strength for this hospital initiative by communicating to and motivating the Kannada Community to participate actively in this project. SEF is honored and fortunate to have this partnership with KKNC and is confident this will lead to the timely and successful completion of this project.

A suitable land has been acquired to build a 200 bed hospital and the ability to perform 20,000 free surgeries per year. SEF's goal is to raise \$1.5M for this project by the end of 2006. KATTE (endearingly referred to as Kannada Amateur Troupe for Theater Excellence), chose for their third production, this play originally named "Namma Nimmolagobba" (One Amongst Us) by well known author and playwright Rajendra Karanth. His mastery over the construction of the plot, the mix of characters and the measured delivery of dialogs deserve a lot of respect and admiration. KATTE showed off Nigooda, a murder-mystery a la Christie, to audience who came expecting nothing short of a spectacular show.

When the play ended to a standing ovation by the audience, it was very evident that Director Ashok Kumar had earned yet another feather in his cap. With Nigooda, Ashok once again demonstrated his ability as a director by successfully harvesting some of the best local talents. In addition to Ashok Kumar, the cast includes Alamelu Iyengar, Shesha Prasad Krishnapura, Ashok Handigol, Sukesh Belanje, Anjan Srinivas, Prashant Padubidri, Sharmila Vidyadhara and Srivatsa Duglapura.

SEF thanks the huge group of volunteers from Katte, KKNC and SEF led by Tejaswi, Naren, Ravi Reddy, Rekha Thakur, Sudarshan Tekkate and Muckai Girish who tirelessly worked to make this show happen. Katte now moves on to Chicago for a show on July 30-th.

Focus Gujarat – eliminating curable blindness in “Garvi Gujarat” - Naushik Desai

Around mid-May the catalyst was finally in place to trigger the launch of Focus Gujarat. Thanks to ongoing efforts of Divyogibhai, land for the new hospital was identified, just outside the city of Anand, and is in final stages of acquisition. It is a prime location close to the old Ahmedabad-Mumbai Highway, about equidistant from the cities of Baroda (Vadodara to the Gujarati community) and Ahmedabad. So a few of us SEFers met at his house and decided to “just do it.”

That was the beginning of Focus Gujarat. A core team consisting of Amit, Ritesh, Snehal, Bina, Yogini, Sangita, Smita and Naushik quickly came together, and tasked ourselves to drive this effort with a goal of raising \$1.2M, so we could begin the construction of a 200-bed hospital (total cost of the hospital will be \$1.8M). We also need to raise \$250K to pay for the land.

Soon the word spread and the team expanded with the addition of Shruti, Anju, Swati, Neha and Rajesh (all newcomers to the SEF team). With this expanded firepower the team has already mapped out activities for the rest of the year for the fundraising.

We participated in the Jaina convention during the Fourth of July weekend. Over 3,500 Jains from all over the world attended and we had a fair share of interest in our efforts.

We also were well represented at both AAPI and AAHOA (see more in other section of this newsletter). You will see most of the team in action this August during the Indian Independence Day celebrations across all over US and we are gearing up for our gala Dandia Event here in the Bay Area in October (and also in the East Coast). AND WE ARE NOT DONE YET. Every Tuesday the team dedicatedly meets to keep the momentum building.

Why Gujarat?

- A staggering 500,000 people are visually handicapped in Gujarat (as of 2001).
 - Majority of them are illiterate and from rural areas.
 - About 50% of them are women.
 - Let us help them lead a normal life that we take so much for granted.
- The hospital will also support the neighboring states of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

How can you help?

- Donate for this worthy cause (Be a “Founding Family”)
- Volunteer to spread the word and help raise funds

With generous support from people like you, we will make a DIFFERENCE.

Please visit our website at www.focusgujarat.org for the latest gupshup (happenings!!!).



Focus Bangalore-Hospital with a Vision - Nat Narayanaswami

Focus Bangalore is a dynamic project. We are raising funds to build a unique hospital cum training center in Bangalore city. The hospital will serve the rural population around Bangalore, where cataract blindness currently affects over 4.3% of the 50+ age-group.

The new hospital will stop the situation from getting any worse by performing 25,000 free surgeries each year and gradually eradicating this menace. The training center, integrated with the hospital, will train future Sankara doctors and specialists for service nationwide. The facility should begin operations by the end of 2006.



The setting for this modern facility is ideal. We have already acquired 4.5 acres of prime land at Marathahalli, near the airport, with high visibility and easy physical access. In addition, it provides reach into the city's large and sophisticated labor pool.

Fundraising has begun. Our core team of highly enthusiastic volunteers has already initiated the campaign and hope to raise \$1M in 2005 and a total of \$2.5M by the end of 2006. For this to happen, we need contributions from you, our well wishers. We request individuals, families and corporations to give generously; various sponsorship packages are available to enable everyone to give and to make this project a resounding success.



Also, new volunteers are encouraged to join us anytime. A major kickoff event is planned for September in the Bay Area, and a Banquet is planned for the New York region and help is needed in making these and other future events hugely successful. We are also working with teams in India planning to hold fundraising events there.

Please visit our Focus Bangalore web page at www.giftofvision.org to learn more and to donate. Call us at 408-838-4852 or write to focusbangalore@yahoo.com and let us know how you can help. We want to hear from you.

We Are Very Thankful But... - Manjula Jonnalagadda

"Are you waiting to be operated?" I asked Poornachandra Rao.

"Yes!" He said "I came here day before yesterday. Everyone else who came with me has already left." He was slightly disappointed.

I asked him "Why the delay?"

"I have sugar(Diabetis). They say."

He came to hospital on Monday. I asked him how he liked the hospital. "I'm being looked after very well. I appreciate what they are doing for me."

He was the patient I talked to in Guntur Eye hospital. He was in the lab where he was getting tested for the level of blood Sugar.

The SEH hospital is located at Pedakakani village, which is 10 miles away from Guntur. I happened to visit that hospital during my last trip to India. I reached the hospital at around noon on June 22nd accompanied by my parents. I was wondering about getting lost, but the hospital was right off the highway and could not be missed. Mrs Hema received us. A room was arranged for us to freshen up.

We met Mr Rajagopalan, he took us to have lunch at the cafeteria before we started our tour of the hospital. While having lunch, Mr. Rajagopalan explained about the hospital procedures and how they select free patients and the kind of care they get. He also explained me about the rainbow program. In the program school children are screened for eye health. Last year 80,000 children were screened and 500 were given eyeglasses.

I was impressed by the state-of-the-art technology in the hospital. There were around 50 outpatients that day. Paying patients rooms were two types one shared and the other individual. 20 paying patients can be accommodated for surgery at a time. The hospital was very cleanly maintained. I went to the waiting room and talked to patients who were awaiting their turn for the surgeries.



Next, I proceeded to the pediatric ward, which had 12 beds and a play area with nice toys where in children can play. There was only one child present that day. He was 10 year old and had a corneal damage which was irreparable. He was sent here from Government Hospital, Guntur. I talked to his mother who was in somber mood.

Then I went to free patient ward. It had two wings. One was wing for patients awaiting the surgery and the other for patients who already underwent surgery. I asked patients about the service. They told me that they are being looked after very well and staff had been very considerate.

After finishing the tour we had a cup of tea in the hospital and then we headed towards Visakhapatnam. On my way back I asked my parents how they felt. "You people are indeed doing a good job" said my father. My mother told me what a patient said to her "Chethuletti dannam pettacchamma vullu chestunna paniki. Kaani bhojaname chappa gaa untondi." Which translates to We can pray to them for the work they are doing, but the food is just not spicy enough.

Booths - 'The Face of SEF' - Visala Madipatti

Booths play a major role in increasing community awareness about SEF's vision. Booths provide us an opportunity to communicate face to face with the donors. Past few months, SEF has seen revolutionary developments in booths management. We started a separate booths team for Focus-Gujarat which is doing an extra-ordinary job. We are organizing booths outside Bay Area and all over USA.

AAPI - June 15th-19th 2005 Houston - Priya Shastri

SEF Houston set up a booth at the recent AAPI (American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin) convention at Hilton Americas Convention Center in Houston. Deepa Dadlani came all the way from New York and Mr. Murali and Kamal Patel had come all the way from California to jump start the booth and provide us with the enthusiasm and drive to hold more of the same in the future. Mr. Murali's energy and commitment for the SEF cause is quite contagious. It has been a learning experience for all of us in Houston to watch him in action at the booth and to learn from his experience with SEF. My fellow volunteers - Kamal Patel, Shankar Perumulla, Gowri Pachigowla - all provided their valuable time and expertise to the cause. We were on the lookout for more volunteers to help with the booths and have been lucky enough to find some really bright, enthusiastic, volunteers from varied backgrounds. There were also students who came to the convention who wanted to volunteer at our hospital in Coimbatore. My general impression was SEF was already known to the visitors who stopped by. Everyone had an appreciative word or two for SEF. Everyone who stopped by was very much interested in learning of SEF and the new hospitals we are planning to open at Shimoga, Bangalore and Anand. My enthusiasm and faith grows stronger each day I am with the SEF family.



Continued on Page 9...

Booths – Continued from Page 8

AAHOA Booth - March 24th – 26th 2005 Ft. Lauderdale, FL - Yogini Patel

What can I say about AAHOA! (Asian American Hotel Owners Association). What a fantastic group of people making history in USA. Over 3,000 Gujarati PATELS attended the 2005 AAHOA convention in Ft. Lauderdale.

The objective of us attending this event was to make the AAHOA community (majority Gujarati PATELS) aware of Sankara Eye Foundation's (SEF's) goal of vision 20/20 by year 2020, and introduce to them our next hospital in Gujarat. At the time of convention the location of the hospital was unknown. We do have land for the hospital now in the greater metropolitan city of Anand.

We did achieve our goal of spreading SEF awareness. We must have distributed over 1,800 flyers. We talked with many Hoteliers, their families and the elderly who became interested in donating, volunteering for the cause or even advising us.

We established great connection with the AAHOA committee members, made them aware of us and have requested if we can become the charity of the year for their next event. Most of all, we came back with nearly \$100,000 in pledges towards SEF's cause. We have received confirmation from Sri. Jawahar Dodani, Arizona for \$25,000 for the Operation Theatre and received a check of \$10,000 for a Temple in Gujarat hospital from Sri. Ashokbhai and Sri Amrishbhai Patel of Florida.

SEF's booth was represented by Ritesh Tandon, Kamal Patel and I. Each one of us had different level of booth experiences; together we made this event a great success.

Over all we came back with a feeling that Indians are Philanthropists at heart, when given the right cause they will DONATE.

JAINA 2005, Santa Clara, CA - July 1st – 4th 2005 San Jose, CA - Amit Patel

With over 3,500 attendees at the 13th Biennial JAINA Convention, including 1,000 youth, it was a great opportunity for SEF to showcase its achievements and highlight the focus Gujarat initiative to a broad audience.

As the attendees, including a few from India, went through the expo floor, they stopped at the SEF booth to look at our video presentation and to talk to the ever-enthusiastic SEF volunteers. Approximately 100 people signed up at the booth showing interest and about 17 expressed interest in joining the SEF Volunteer team.

At a special session titled "Day of Charity/Service", SEF volunteers talked to the youth group about SEF's achievements, goals and how they can help. This was yet another well received talk reaching the ever so important youth group.

Vokkalingara Parishat of America July 1st to July 3rd Detroit, MI - Visala Maddipati

Vokkalingara Parishat of America (VPA) had their 9th Annual convention in Detroit from July 1st to 3rd. Murali Krishnamurthy, Dr. Ram Mohan Kancherla and Venkat Maddipati manned the SEF booth in this convention and interacted with hundreds of conference attendees and requested their support for Focus-Karnataka and Focus-Bangalore projects. It was an excellent opportunity to reach out to the Kannada community. We thank VPA organizers for giving us this opportunity.

TANA Parishat of America July 1st to July 3rd Detroit, MI - Visala Maddipati

Telugu Association of North America (TANA) organized its 15th Convention in Detroit from July 1st to 3rd. This SEF booth was kind of special with the gracious presence of Maj. Gen. Dr. Mohan Chander, CEO of the Guntur hospital, along with Visala Maddipati, Venkat Maddipati and Murali Krishnamurthy. Several thousand people from USA, Canada, India and Mexico attended this conference and many of them visited the booth. SEF formally launched the fund raising campaign for Focus AP- Phase II. Several visitors to the booth pledged their support. Few major donors were: Dr. Ram Mohan & Smt. Krishna Kancherla who sponsored the Eye Bank (\$16,000) and Dr. Sarat Babu & Smt. Sitamahalakshmi Kondapaneni who sponsored the Dining Hall (\$20,000).

The speaker of AP assembly Hon. Suresh Reddy visited our booth and promised full cooperation and support from the state government for the hospital. He praised SEF's commitment to the cause.

Thanks to the organizers of TANA 2005 for giving us the opportunity and to all the generous donors and supporters.

If you are interested in participating in booths or if you need any further information, please contact me at 408-246-8114 or visala_m@yahoo.com



Central Services

Contact Information

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
 Spouse Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
 Phone Number: _____ Email address: _____

Donate in several ways:

Cash: Check: Credit Card: Amount Enclosed: _____

If check, make it payable to: **Sankara Eye Foundation, USA**

If Credit Card, enter Credit Card #: (Only Visa and Master Card)

_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|_____|

Expiry Date: _____

A One time donation: Monthly Donation (Open an Eye a month):

Company Name: _____

(Helps us find if they match your contribution.)

For used car donations, contact SEF at cargiving@giftofvision.org

Visit www.giftofvision.org for stocks, payroll, bank transactions or online donations.

Central Services

Surgeries	Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Cataract Surgery (\$30 each)	<input type="checkbox"/> Food for patients (\$200 a day)
<input type="checkbox"/> Corneal Transplant (\$100 each)	<input type="checkbox"/> Medical Staff Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Cataract Endowment (\$300 each)*	<input type="checkbox"/> Entire Service activities of the hospital (\$400 a day)
<input type="checkbox"/> Corneal Endowment (\$1000 each)*	

*Endowment: 1 surgery every year for 10 years

Special requests: _____

(E.g. Donate "In the name(s) of" / "In memory of" a dear one and/or preferred date of surgery/food for patients.)

If first time donor, how did you hear about us? _____

Mail it to:
Sankara Eye Foundation, USA
3175 Arcola Ct
San Jose, CA 95148

For more information, or to **volunteer your time** for this noble cause, please call us at 1-866-SANKARA (1-866-726-5272) or (408) 274-1443 or write to us at info@giftofvision.org.

If you have any other comments, please write to us. We really appreciate and value them.

Sankara Eye Foundation, USA

3175 Arcola Ct
San Jose, CA 95148



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Thank you for your support.

V. Koteswara Rao – A New Hope

From birth, fate was against this 11 year old boy, with cataracts in both his eyes. With parents focused on surviving (working as coolies or laborers), he was slow in picking up the rudimentary activities in life and developed a degree of mental retardation.

The parents reportedly did not bother to take any steps to alleviate his suffering, as they were scared to go to a doctor, due to their lack of finances and had more important priorities "like survival". They did not have any faith or hope that the child could be treated.

That was the mental state of DESPAIR when the Sankara team met all of them.

We chose to conduct a rural outreach camp at Gudavalli. A month before, we meticulously prepared for the camp, taking care of logistics, surveying the area and deciding the area of coverage. That is how one of our survey teams ran into Koteswara Rao, during one of the visits to his village. His parents' fellow coolies brought to our attention his plight.

At first his parents refused to own up that they had a son with visual defects. The parents were scared and reluctant to bring him to the screening camp. They did not believe anything fruitful would come out of the exercise and they were worried that further disability might befall the child. Also they were not sure that we would provide free care.

After two visits, and much convincing through the parent's friends and an active NGO, Koteswara Rao finally came to the camp. He was examined and found to have sight that just followed light. He was brought to the Guntur Hospital and after a thorough reexamination and much coaxing, underwent surgery, the left eye was operated upon by our Pediatric Surgeon Dr. Kavitha.

The surgery was a success. Koteswara Rao had an improved vision of 6/24. He could discern things in a far better way. One month after the surgery he started to become more active and became sprightly. He seemed to be enjoying life.

A while later he walked in to the room of Dr. Kavitha for an examination and possible surgery for the other eye. He just barged into the room, jumped onto the chair, gesticulating to her, pointing out his right eye and pleading to get that eye operated.

We were overwhelmed with the feeling that we could bring so much joy to anyone. The other eye was also successfully operated and there is now much of improvement in his life. At the review examination, the parents out of their gratefulness, brought half a kilogram of sweets for the doctors. They now proudly say that SANKARA has given them a new life.

