

AKMG Reporter



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AKMG REPORTER / Fall 2018

Official Newsletter of the Association of Kerala Medical Graduates and AKMG-HS

AKMG Ruby Convention in the Big Apple, July 25th–28th, 2019

by Alex Mathew, MD, Convention Chair

It took us 20 years from the previous one, to host an AKMG convention here in New York, but this one certainly is for the history books – The 40th (Ruby) Convention of AKMG. We are proud to host it and have every reason to be excited, to welcome you all to “The Greatest City of All” New York- more precisely to Manhattan, the most popular of the city’s 5 boroughs, bounded by the Hudson, East and Harlem rivers and truly considered to be the “heart of the Big Apple”. Summer brings the best out of this big city, the air is so refreshing, the scenes are stunning,

the streets packed with cosmopolitan crowds, with over 200 languages spoken and buzzing with activities everywhere, it is sure to bring out the best in you and for you.

For all of us who have been part of the AKMG, we know that Annual AKMG conventions are great opportunities to reminisce the past, experience and share the present and contemplate for the future. I am pretty confident that, the 40th Convention will more than fulfill your expectations on that front. The venue we have chosen, the enthusiasm shown by our members and friends nationally and internationally to register in the early bird period, the programs being planned, including the Night Cruise of New York City as the kickoff event are all positive indicators of the way this convention is likely to turn out and excel.

... Continued on page 3



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Getting Ready...

Congratulations to President Raji Menon, Convention Chair Nigil Haron and their team for successfully conducting the 39th Annual AKMG Convention in Ottawa, Canada.

I am humbled and indeed proud to carry on the torch, which was carried by 39 previous presidents and many more who were the Founding Fathers and so many silent and unsung Heroes of AKMG – A BIG salute to you all.

The 40th year in an organization would not have happened without the hard work of each one of you including your families. I would also like to remember those members who passed away in eternity during these years.

... Continued on page 4

2019 AKMG New York Convention

Sheraton New York Times Square
July 25th–28th, 2019



Visit www.akmg.org for the latest convention info.

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See Convention Committee on page 4

From Ottawa 2018 to New York 2019: the pilgrimage continues



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I personally believe that our AKMG is worth worshipping as an embodiment of the selfless dedication of all clinicians - medical and dental professionals- with any type of affiliation to Kerala. The organization has steadily flourished from the hard work of clinicians of all age groups over the past four decades. We can be equally proud of our women leaders in AKMG. In fact AKMG trumps several other organizations and even countries when it comes to women empowerment !!! Every AKMG Convention to me is like a devotional destination, worth a pilgrimage. All the attendees are defacto pilgrims, similar to what happens in Mecca, Rome/Velankanni and Sabarimala.

The 39th Annual AKMG Convention in Ottawa, the capital city of Canada, was a grand success and we all are in unison, congratulating the **Ottawa Team** members and leaders including **Drs. Raji Menon, Nigil Haroon, Nisha Nigil, PK Kutty**. Stalwarts like **Dr. Yusuf Salim** and **Dr. M.V. Pillai** set a new high by their graceful participation at the Ottawa Convention. The Ottawa Team stunned everyone with the brilliant exploitation of technology and social media, especially WhatsApp. The Team was an outstanding example of harmony, each member equally valued and respected. The Ottawa Team set lofty standards and a new tall order that future AKMG Conventions will have to meet or beat. The **Young AKMG** came out in force and we were able to witness the enthusiasm of the youngsters, in whose hands the future of AKMG is very secure. **Once again, my heartfelt CONGRATULATIONS to the Ottawa Team.**

The **AKMG Ruby Convention in New York, July 25-28, 2019** takes us pilgrims from Ottawa, the great capital city of Canada, to the greatest city on earth, New York, the Big Apple, where the one and only Statue of Liberty beckons all and sundry. We the AKMG members have been randomly blessed with two great destinations back to back. **Dr. Thomas Mathew, our President**, and **Dr. Alex Mathew, the Convention Chair** with the **NY Team** members, are already trail blazing with their inauguration of Convention registration during the Ottawa moot. A tall order has been set by the Ottawa team for the NY Team to meet or beat. I challenge the NY Team to beat it, 😊😊😊, as a healthy and collegial competition is going to make our AKMG stronger and our Annual Conventions better.

Please register and book the hotel room ASAP for the 2019 AKMG Ruby Convention in NY – let us, the pilgrims, show our strength in numbers !!! In this regard, please peruse the articles in this newsletter by our President Dr. Thomas Mathew and the Convention Chair Dr. Alex Mathew.

The **2020 AKMG Convention Team** under our **President Elect Dr. Usha Mohandas** already have announced the 7-day Caribbean Cruise, registration being available at the NY 2019 Convention. I like the idea of planning ahead by a year, pioneered by the NY 2019 Team.

Our strength is in members. As the older leaves fade away, the new leaves have to strengthen the tree. **Dr. Tomy Kalapparambath, the AKMG Membership Committee Chair** is doing an outstanding job in recruiting new members. I request all our members to spread the word about AKMG among all the Kerala connected clinicians in your community and encourage them to join AKMG.

AKMG-HS under the stewardship of **Dr. Prem Menon** has collected and distributed charitable contributions from AKMG members for various humanitarian causes in North America and India/Kerala. A wonderful article penned by Dr. Prem Menon in this Reporter will enlighten everyone about the activities of AKMG-HS, including the recent tragic Kerala floods. Kindly contribute liberally to AKMG-HS.

Finally, please visit **akmg.org**, register yourself, and utilize our site often to keep updated on AKMG news and developments. The Ottawa Team impressed us all with the power of WhatsApp as a tool. I also request our leaders/AKMG Executive Committee to officially sanction the **WhatsApp AKMG group** and suggest that **Dr. Nigil Haroon and Dr. Nisha Haroon** or their nominee[s] be appointed as the WhatsApp AKMG group administrators, or the baton be passed on to the next AKMG Convention team.

Cruise Convention in 2020!



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I want to extend the heartiest of congratulations to Dr. Raji Menon and her convention team led by Drs. Nigil and Nisha Haroon and their team of so many dedicated members. It was inspiring to see the passion of the next generation of AKMG leaders and how they immersed themselves into our community to bring in a huge number of first time attendees. Their enthusiasm was contagious! The Ottawa team used social media like AKMG has never done before; they built a momentum that all of us have to continue to carry forward in the coming years.

As we are winding down from the excitement of Ottawa, things are gearing up in New York for our Ruby Convention. We wish Dr. Thomas P. Mathew and his Convention team all the best and look forward to an exciting time in the most vibrant city in the world. Besides being the birthplace of AKMG, it is also the place where a large number of AKMG members started their medical careers in USA.



In the meanwhile the Florida Chapter has started laying the groundwork for the 2020 AKMG Cruise Convention. We are in negotiations with Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines, for a 7-day Western Caribbean convention aboard the

Oasis line of ships. Dr. Pradip Baiju the 2020 AKMG Cruise Convention Chair and the entire team are excited to be planning for you, not only world-class CME and destinations, but also an adventure on board the world's largest cruiseship. Please stay tuned in the upcoming months for details.

We are looking forward to seeing each and every one of you for the 2019 New York Ruby Convention. We will be opening registration for the 2020 AKMG Cruise Convention at the Ruby Convention. For the new attendees at Ottawa, we look forward to seeing you again and carry on the renewed spirit of our community.

Last but not the least, I would like to recognize the AKMG Humanitarian Services. As our family and friends experienced the worst flooding in Kerala's history, the AKMG community worked together across North America to give back to our homeland. Thank you to everyone for his or her generous contributions to the Flood Relief Fund. Special thanks to those who traveled to Kerala to provide medical services and supply donations.

Wishing you all a wonderful holiday season and a great year ahead. Looking forward to seeing you all in New York.

2019 AKMG New York Convention

Continued from page 1

We, no doubt, are in the beginning stages of planning and will be able to give more specifics within the next couple of months. But one thing is for sure, the recent catastrophe that struck our home state, which hurt the very fabric of our state- will weigh heavily on our minds as we chart out our program for this convention. We are urged to think, how we as a fraternity of professionals from Kerala, can be part of the needs assessment for Kerala or contribute financially and professionally to the rebuilding process that would envisage a more permanent, long standing solution to the problems that our state currently faces. We are hoping that we would be able to have some experts enlightening us on this so that we can put our whole hearted efforts to rebuild Kerala – our home state, which in fact is the sole factor that binds us together as AKMG.

Apart from the convention itself, New York City is a destination worth visiting and revisiting, for people of all ages. If you are not mesmerized by the city's soaring skyscrapers like the Empire State, One Trade Centre, and the Statue of Liberty, (to name a few), you will be blown away by flourishing arts, food, fashion and nightlife of this great city. You can spend your morning browsing 5th Avenue designer racks, and your afternoon catching stunning city views from top of the Rock observation deck. If you are an art lover, you definitely can admire the striking works at display at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, or the Guggenheim where the halls are chock full of Pablo Picasso or Norman Rockwell's best works. Later in the day, you can feast on the ethnic fare in China Town or Little Italy. As the night draws, step in to an award winning Broadway show and late night will be the time to sneak into one of the low key roof top bars or jazz clubs. All in all, the city never sleeps and you have many options to choose from.



Once again, on behalf of the organizing committee, I welcome you to New York, for the AKMG Ruby Convention, to be part of this great celebration.

— Alex Mathew, MD
New York Convention Chair

**Donate
today to
AKMG-HS
Thank You!**

**Your contribution may be tax-deductible under IRS
AKMG-HS# 32-0051235.**

We need funds to continue our mission of helping those who need it in Kerala/India and North America.

Send your contributions to:
AKMG-HS, Att: Dr. Prem Menon
5217 Flanders Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808

2019 AKMG Ruby New York Convention

Convention Headquarters:
Sheraton New York Times Square
811 7th Avenue at 53rd Street
New York, NY, 10019
July 25th–28th, 2019

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From the President

Continued from page 1

New York as you all know hosted the 1998 Convention under the great leadership of Dr. Sovy Joseph and Dr.

John Benjamin. Since then New York has been relatively shy to take on the responsibility, partly due to the higher cost of conducting the convention.

During 2014 to 2018, New York Chapter has been the most active wing of AKMG with Quarterly CME meetings and entertainment, with the newest Young Physicians and the most active Spousal Community, and hence we decided to go ahead and host our Ruby Convention in 2019 in the heart of New York City at Sheraton Times Square on July 25th-28th, 2019.

Yes, it is the 40th Annual Convention and I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the birth of AKMG as many of you know, and for those of you who don't know: AKMG was the born-on December 22nd, 1979 when few of our founding leaders gathered in the house of Dr. P. S Venkit Iyer at New Hyde Park, Long Island with Dr. C. S. Pitchumoni, N. Vijay Shankar, Krishnan Nair and Ramachandran Nair. The first General Body Meeting was held at Bombay Palace in New York City on May 24th, 1980 and now we are hosting our Ruby Convention in the same city!

Convention update is provided by the Convention Chairs.

AKMG AGENDA

Humanitarian Services Headed by Dr. Prem Menon

We saw the wrath of rain water in Kerala which took all of us by surprise and devastated. So far, we collected almost \$100k with the help of generous donations from fellow physicians. We can collect more for flood relief. During the last meeting with Chief Minister we proposed to make things transparent for all organizations to pitch in. We were able to provide almost 2000 water purification systems in the most affected area through 'Jeevajalam project' coordinated by Dr. Nigil Haroon and AKMG Canada.

Lal S.S. (Governing Body member) was in Kerala soon after the flood situations and he was on the front line of Disaster Relief Efforts. AKMG greatly appreciates the effort and the time he took to be there and help in the Greatest Humanitarian Crisis in our home state. Throughout his stay Lal organized a Global Experts forum including Malayali personnel from WHO, UNICEF, IMA and was able to initiate



a Teleconference with all of them which provided great insights for going forward. The suggestions were greatly appreciated by Health Secretary and we hope Government of Kerala will follow through on them. Dr. Lal is proposing a permanent office in Kerala in association with other organizations going forward to help impact our community.

Mentorship Program

Presidential Committee (Drs. Majeed Paduvana, Sunil Kumar, Raji Menon and I) is already working hard to make this a reality and we hope all of you who can be a part of it should be able to join hands and support the second generation to become great physicians and dentists.

Bridging-the-Gap Initiative

Presidential Committee is diligently proposing new ideas to bring in the second generation and Young Physicians to be part of AKMG leadership and create their own identity through AKMG.

Website and Communication

We are discussing and trying to create a better mode of communication between ourselves which can project ourselves in a more authentic way by having our own email communication systems. Website will also need more upgrades as we go forward.

Regional Chapters

AKMG Canada is in very good hands under the leadership of Drs. Raji Menon, Nigil Haroon and Nisha Nigil. We appreciate their continued efforts to strengthen the Chapter. Likewise, our Regional Chapters are urged to take initiative, communicate and have chapter meetings at least twice a year. These meetings will encourage more of physicians to join and increase the activities and make us more committed to our Community. We have great presence in almost all states in this country and if we can at least have four regional chapters taking the lead and coordinating these meetings, it would be helpful to identify and bring in new generation in leadership which would lead to more enthusiasm and participation.

Likewise, we must engage more with our fellow members in the Middle East and United Kingdom. These areas have a huge presence of physicians who have their own organizations and I think when we start communicating with these groups, we will be more effective as non-resident physicians and possibly can offer more to our home state.

Finally, AKMG should not only be a convention every year, it should be a more effective platform for us to engage in main stream activities including community enrichment and politics.

I hope we enjoy the fruits of all those who worked hard for us throughout these years and come forward to carry on the torch of pride and enthusiasm and make our forum effective for the betterment of the communities we live in.

Kerala Flood Relief

“You have not lived today until you have done something for someone who can never repay you.”

— John Bunyan



Nigil Haroon, MD
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Our beautiful Kerala met with an unprecedented disaster recently. By early August, Kerala received close to 3 times the usual amount of rainfall resulting in over 30 dams across the state brimming with water at dangerous levels. What ensued were the worst floods of the century resulting in over 500 deaths and a million people displaced. The entire state felt the impact of this tragedy with significant damages to the infrastructure including public and private property.

The government machinery was quick to spring into action and following exemplary efforts of the people and government services we were able to contain the damage. However, despite the work of the incredible fishermen, police, army, young bureaucrats and ordinary citizens of Kerala, significant losses had already occurred. Such was the extraordinary encounter with the unstoppable power of nature.

It was clear that NGOs need to step up to bring Kerala back on her feet. AKMG was one of the leading organizations that came to the table as a partner with the Government of Kerala. We expressed our willingness to help and were provided access to the highest levels of government. AKMG teamed up with experts from around the world including representatives of WHO, UN, disaster relief experts such as GlobalMedic, IMA and many others.

Dr. Lal, TB Technical Director, PATH (Washington), flew to Kerala immediately after the flood and worked from ground zero representing AKMG for a period of 2 weeks. Through Dr. Lal we were able to connect with the Additional Chief Secretary, Mr. Rajeev Sadanandan; and this immensely helped us understand the most urgent needs as well as where we could make an impact.

AKMG started a fund raising campaign on two fronts. AKMG-HS collected funds from USA following an initial communication sent out to the members on social media and by email. We were informed by our contacts in Kerala that in the immediate aftermath of the floods,



the most important need was to provide clean water to the people who are in Kuttanadu. AKMG-Canada was charged to head this project that was named 'Jeevajalam' or water for life project. AKMG teamed up with GlobalMedic, an international disaster relief agency that has worked in over 67 countries including India, to provide clean water filters and pumps in Kerala. GlobalMedic started its operations in Wayanadu and Idukki by providing the local villages with community point of source water pumps that can service 1000 individuals each. Over 15 such pumps were installed.

AKMG-Canada sought community help and engaged the local Mississauga Kerala Association to participate in the Jeevajalam project. This increased the awareness of AKMG's activities among other Malayali associations and furthered the reach of our fund raising efforts. With the help of grants raised by GlobalMedic and the incredible donations made by our members, the Jeevajalam Project grew to \$120,000. This helped us send a total of 850 RainFresh water filtration units from Toronto and an additional 1700 ImerPure filters from a French company based in India to Kuttanadu. Thus over 2500 households were provided these filters in



Kuttanadu and 15000 people per day received water in Wayanadu and Idukki through our point of source pumps.

A word on these filters. These are high quality filters designed to be used at times of disaster and provides water at 99.99% purity (parasite and bacteria). They last for 6-12 months. We were assured that these filters will be given to the most needy and all recipients were selected based on their BPL status and location in Kainakiri panchayat, that remained cut off due to water.

Our work is not done yet. Rebuilding our beloved Kerala will take a significant amount of time and effort. AKMG-HS raised in total US\$100,000 out of which only US\$20,000 was transferred to the Jeevajalam Project. The rest of the Jeevajalam project funds came from AKMG-Canada donations and grants received by GlobalMedic. Thus AKMG has got significant mileage for the dollars. With the remaining \$80,000USD we are hoping to get matching dollars and engage in an ambitious project in Kerala.

Bravo AKMG! We must all be proud of what we achieved and thank you all for opening your hearts and purses at this needy hour.



Sincere Thanks...



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I want to thank everyone for their support during the past year, both for me as your President, and for our convention team as a whole. I am humbled, indeed.

The Ottawa convention was a huge success. This was one of the best attended conventions. The CME program, headed by Dr. Vimoj Nair and Dr. Asha Shenoy, was exceptional, and also perhaps the best attended in years. We are immensely grateful to all who attended, and helped make it a grand success. We are also grateful to all who could not attend, but sent us your good wishes. The convention team worked really hard to put together this event. All the members of the team are busy professionals, who donated their time willingly. I thank every member of the convention team for this. As with any big event this size, there were a few mistakes. We have gracefully accepted and noted all the feedback that we received, and thank all who graciously offered it.

Having passed on the baton, I feel relieved, but at the same time, I wish to express my thoughts about AKMG, going forward.

We have made a sincere effort to attract young members to this organization. I hope these efforts will continue. It is also important to have these young member involved in the workings of AKMG, and in recruiting new members.

Our new president, Dr. Thomas Mathew has taken on the task of setting up and streamlining the mentorship program, work for which started almost 3 years ago. I hope senior members will come forward, and

offer their services as mentors.

Once again, I want to draw your attention to the fact that the cost of printing the newsletter has skyrocketed, and keeps going up. I do not think these costs are justified or sustainable in the long run. Once again, I appeal to the entire membership, to demand that the newsletter be sent out electronically. I would suggest that we have an opt-in method, where at least all those who are willing to do this, receive it electronically. I would also recommend that anyone who absolutely insists on a paper copy, pays for it.

This year, we saw an overwhelming response to the disaster in Kerala. AKMG-HS, and AKMG Canada continue to play a leadership in the relief efforts, in conjunction with the Kerala State Government and the IMA. We are especially grateful to Dr. S. S. Lal, who has been coordinating these efforts, and to Dr. Prem Menon, who has managed the AKMG-HS fund for years.

A special Thanks to Dr. Krishna Prasad, for bringing you the newsletter regularly.

I wish you all the very best, and hope to see and connect with you all at future conventions.

Entertainment at the Ottawa Convention



Nisha Nigil Haroon, MD
Chair, Entertainment Committee
2018 Ottawa Convention

The AKMG meeting in Ottawa turned out to be a real cultural feast reflecting the glorious artistic traditions of Kerala! The main cultural highlight on Thursday during the inaugural function was a mesmerizing violin performance rendered by the music band Ameya led by violinist Jayadevan, grandson of famous Malayalam lyricist and poet Abhayadev. Team Ameya enthralled our guests by weaving magic on violin. A new form of interactive comedy experience delivered by the Improv embassy followed this. Haima Saibish, an emerging Bharatnatyam dancer from Vancouver performed Ganesha vandanam.

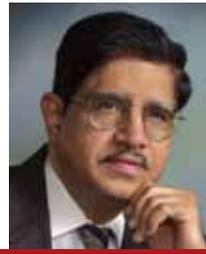
Campus night on Friday was kick started by Onam celebrations featuring a medley sung by Suresh Dutt, Sheela Thomas, Sindhu Pillai, Geetha Nair and Majeed Paduvana and a Thiruvathira performed by Linu Joseph, Reshmi Saibish, Radhika Nair, Usha Harikumar, Shereen Brajrit, Radha Menon, Geetha Nair, Sindhu Pillai, Nisha Nigil, Jisha Vimoj and Smitha Menon. AKMG members then presented a mega stage production named 'Parasuram Express', a train journey through different regions of Kerala and featuring fifteen actors, eleven singers, four danc-



ers (Neha Shabbir and Bollywood for Fun) and three Kathakali artists! The show was led by P.K. Kutty along with Krishnakumar, Hari, Nigil, Tony, Joseph, Firoz, Vimoj, Lekha, Iqbal Vadakkayil, Fazeena, Santosh and Raji. AKMG singers Bhavani Dutt, Sheela, Sindhu, Suresh, Geetha

... Continued on page 8

Kerala and the Monster Monsoon Marathon of 2018



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It was unbelievable. God did a number on the God's Own Country and its people. The Monsoon unloaded epic amounts of rainfall, measured in feet rather than in inches resulting in catastrophic flooding. The slow moving or standstill rains washed away roads, bridges, farmlands, pets, livestock and automobiles. People were trapped in their own homes, requiring massive evacuations and rescue operations.

State and Central governments, the military, Indian Navy and the experienced fishermen, the Kerala equivalent of "Cajun Navy" were involved in the rescue operations. Yes, there were good samaritans and as everywhere, there were looters, scalpers and self-serving partisan politicians.

Thank you for your thoughts, prayers and contributions for the flood victims. As days go by, I am afraid they may be forgotten. Hence I urge everyone to consider a second wave of generous donations to help us not lose the momentum.

I have been the leader and foot soldier of the AKMG-HS. I am uniquely qualified to write this report, since I am a veteran of many Atlantic hurricanes and myself a victim of the August 2016 floods and sustained massive economic losses.

I am very proud of the current AKMG leadership, who swiftly sprang into action to help us raise about \$100,000. There was genuine outpouring and donations from our members and families of deceased AKMG members via credit card payments and checks in amounts of \$100 to \$3,000.

Our target was \$150,000. We need to raise at least another \$50,000. I request not to forget the flood victims and do fund-raising through the New York City AKMG convention. This is my request, not the position of the convention committee.

The receipts for this cause will be distributed to the affected through thoroughly vetted and trusted operatives, such as NGOs, IMA or the Chief Minister's Relief Fund. We shall do that after the AKMG Governing Board and the AKMG-HS Board deliberations.

Already \$20,000 was sent to Alleppey for drinking water purification project. It is proposed that we seek matching funds to double the impact through a US-based international charitable organization. That collaboration will also help us to work through the India Chapter of the Habitat for Humanity. At any rate your contributions will be distributed appropriately and responsibly. Most importantly there will be ZERO percent OVERHEAD.



Dr. Narendra Kumar, our liaison between AKMG-HS and AAPI informs me that the AAPI had sent \$20,000 to the IMA, Trivandrum, two weeks ago and additional \$20,000 will be sent to them soon.

I am very proud of the Government of India position on not accepting any foreign aids for India's natural disasters. It is time for Indian citizens, NGOs and religious charities to step up, volunteer, contribute and show our pride, passion and compassion for our own people in Kerala. Thank you for your support.

AKMG-HS, celebrating eighteen years of philanthropy. AKMG-HS (Humanitarian Services), our charitable foundation, has supported various causes in the U.S., Canada and Kerala. AKMG continues to initiate and maintain multiple educational and other supportive activities in the various medical colleges in Kerala. This has been an important part of our obligation to give back to the communities in North America and India/Kerala that have supported our clinical education as well as ongoing professional activities.



Year-end Gift Giving: Please remember AKMG-HS in your year-end gifting. Remember that one hundred percent of the donations will reach the charity you choose.

Planned Giving: Members should consider establishing Donor-Advised Funds through the AKMG-HS, which is a 501(c)3 IRS Tax Exempt Charity, EIN 32-0051235.

Tax-Deductible: Since there is no administrative fee involved, 100% of your donations will go to the charity of your choice.

Please donate to AKMG-HS. We need funds to continue our mission of helping those who need it. AKMG-HS, Att: Dr. Prem Menon, 5217 Flanders Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808.

Entertainment at the Ottawa Convention

Continued from page 6

and Rama Bhat showed off their musical talents by rendering soulful melodies. Team Canada's own music band Tarang delivered a wonderful medley performance by Firoz, Nigil, Iqbal, Archana and Radhika. Also for the first time, the AKMG audience was treated to a live Kathakali recital depicting Keechaka vatham, the killing of Keechaka by Bhima in Mahabharatham. The evening ended with a beautiful qawwali piece by Drs. Shah Nawaz, Najeeb Osman and team.



On Saturday, just before the gala night, AKMG guests had the opportunity to watch the world premiere of *The Sound Story*, a docufiction created by the Academy Award winner Dr. Resul Pookutty and Palmstone Multimedia headed by Mr. Rajeev Panakal. Kerala's famous pooram festival is the main backdrop of the movie in which Resul also makes a promising acting debut. Resul's presence at the event was definitely a highlight. The sound maestro on addressing the audience narrated some soulful moments that he enjoyed while capturing the dynamic sights and sounds of the majestic Trissur Pooram. The movie was recorded in A. R. Rahman's studio and is going to be released in Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu and Hindi. Thrissur Pooram branded by Resul as the eighth wonder of the world is held over seven days and is presented by more than five hundred musicians, about hundred elephants, and over ten lakhs of people as yet another testimony to Kerala's secular existence. Although Sakthan Thampuran conceived the festival in the current form in 1798, its origin dates back to 1000 A.D.

The gala evening entertainment started with 'Kavyanjali' directed by Bhavani Nair, showcasing the poetic tradition of Kerala through the form of dance, performed by Suma Nair and team. The main entertainment event of the gala night included renowned artists Kottayam Naseer, Afsal and Akhila Anand. Kottayam Naseer, a renowned movie star and stand up comedian from Kerala, could easily connect with the audience thanks to his quick wit and harsh insights about contemporary events in Kerala politics. The live musical performance by leading playback singers Afsal and Akhila Anand transformed the venue into a concert hall. Afsal with his charming nature, incredible energy and stunning voice got the guests dance until the wee hours of the morning.

To add to the experience of our guests, we arranged a 1000 Islands cruise as well as an Ottawa City Tour that were enjoyed by all.



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AKMG Membership Update

Congratulations to the AKMG Canada team for a very successful Annual Convention in Ottawa. We all had a wonderful time and it was nice to see a large number of young AKMG member attendees at the convention. Social media communications through WhatsApp were effectively utilized. Hopefully we can effectively moderate these communication methods and use them wisely.

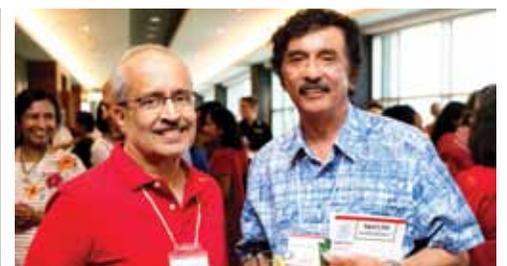
Our membership drive before and during the Ottawa convention went well. A record number of new members joined, including young members. Online membership registration and renewal process is working well.

I am looking forward to the Ruby Convention in New York next year. The AKMG New York team is working hard and convention registration has already started.

Please encourage new members to join AKMG. Visit our website akmg.org. On the "membership" section: you can join, renew or update your member profile. Please update your contact information, including email and cell phone numbers, so that you will receive AKMG related up to date communications.









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40th Annual AKMG Convention
Sheraton New York Times Square
July 25th–28th, 2019



AKMG Ruby Convention 2019

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