

SAMACHAR

SEPTEMBER 2008

KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

IAK Diwali 2008 on 1 November

Calendar

- Oct 2 - Gandhi Jayanti
- Oct 2— Idu'l Fitr
- Oct 9—Dussehra
- Oct 28— Diwali
- Nov 1— IAK Diwali
- Nov 13— Guru Nanak's Birthday



SAMACHAR is the quarterly newsletter of the India Association of Kalamazoo, Michigan. **FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY.** Edited and designed by **Gracie Kayany**, General Secretary, India Association of Kalamazoo. Please direct your comments and suggestions to Gracie Kayany at (269) 501-1254 or email her at gracie@indiakalamazoo.com

As announced in the August newsletter, we will celebrate Diwali 2008 on November 1, 2008. The venue of this year's celebrations is **Kasdorf Auditorium, Loy Norrix High School.** (see driving directions on the right). The doors will open at **6:30 PM** and the program is expected to begin at 7 pm. A variety of cultural and entertainment programs will be presented.

Tickets can be purchased at the door. If you want to reserve tickets, please mail payment to Vijay Mehta, 1622 Bellaire Ave, Portage, MI 49024. and pick up the tickets at the door.

Ticket Prices:

Members:	\$4.00
Guests:	\$8.00
Students w/ID:	\$4.00
Children under 12:	Free
Participants:	Free

Please note that food and drinks are not permitted in the auditorium. If you need to feed your children, please take them outside the auditorium.



Directions to Loy Norrix High School

FROM THE EAST (BATTLE CREEK):

EXIT 78 (KILGORE RD EXIT). GO WEST ON KILGORE. THE SCHOOL IS ON THE LEFT JUST BEFORE THE LOVERS LANE INTERSECTION.

FROM WEST (CHICAGO)

EXIT 76 ON I-94, GO NORTH ON SOUTH WESTNEDGE. TURN RIGHT ON KILGORE. THE SCHOOL IS IMMEDIATELY TO THE RIGHT AFTER LOVERS LANE INTERSECTION.

FROM NORTH OR SOUTH:

FROM WESTNEDGE— KILGORE INTERSECTION, GO EAST TILL THE LOVERS LANE INTERSECTION.

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From the Editor's Desk

August and September are months when India celebrates harvest festivals all over the country. In Punjab the harvest festival is Lohri or Baisakhi; in Kerala it is Onam; in Tamil Nadu it is Pongal; in Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra it is Makar Sankranti; in Assam it is Bhogali Bihu; and in Andhra it is Bhogi. Some people consider even Holi and Diwali to be harvest festivals.

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Not only do these festivals have different names but there are different religious rituals and social events associated with them in each region. However, according to historians, their underlying purpose is essentially the same. They are harvest festivals—an occasion to give thanks for the new harvest and celebrate the bountiful harvest with family, neighbors, and other clan members who worked with you in the hot sun, sowed the seed, watered the plants, and watched over the fields. It is a time to give thanks to God and to those who made the bountiful crop possible. That is why exchanging gifts is a normal practice during harvest festivals no matter where and under what name it is celebrated.

We may not have crops to be thankful for but you will all agree that we need occasions to give thanks to those who have generously given their time and energy to serve the community. At this Diwali, let me spotlight a few people who deserve our special thanks for what they have done for our association.

First of all, the spotlight has to fall on Vijay Mehta who has worked for the association perhaps as much as a mother would for her child. It is interesting to note that there are very few people in Kalamazoo who have any memory of the pre-Vijay Mehta days of the Association. As in previous years, we will see Vijay walking around the stage clutching a handbag at this Diwali celebrations; and we will know in our hearts that things will go well as long as he is in charge. This time, make sure to stop him and say a word of thanks even if he seems to be in awful hurry to go somewhere or get something done.

Our social secretary Anjum Choudhary who organized a variety of programs for the association this year deserves a special thanks. I have seen Priya Lokram and Pearl DeMello work behind the scenes for many hours before every program. Similarly, you may have seen others work for the community — unnoticed or without seeking recognition. Please make sure to thank them at this Diwali. Thank you.

Gracie Kayany

CALLING ALL IAK MEMBERS WITH A DESIRE TO SERVE!!! YOUR ASSOCIATION NEEDS YOU!!!

Please nominate candidates for the 2009 IAK Executive committee. Positions open are the President, Vice President, General Secretary, Social Secretary, Treasurer and the FIVE committee members. Only current IAK members can nominate and/or can be nominated. If there is more than one nomination for any post an election will be held for that post. If there is no nomination for any post, Executive Committee will form a nominating Committee to get that position filled. Existing Committee will continue to operate until new committee is formed.

Please send your nominations (or nominate yourself) to Virendra Sood (394 Tuscan Drive, Portage, MI 49024 Phone: 269-327-2846).

Last date for nominations is November 10, 2008.



India Association of Kalamazoo



www.indiakalamazoo.com

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536 Romence, Hillside Center
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