

ANNUAL REPORT AT THE GENERAL BODY MEETING
Bharatiya Temple of Lansing
December 5, 2010

Manohar D. Naga, Chair, Board of Trustees

My Dear Friends,

2010 has been a much better year than 2009. It started off as a very tough year. With some cost reductions and the generosity of our Devotees, we have been able to pay off contractor debts of \$21,500 from construction and pay down the mortgage by \$25,000. Our current financial position is much more comfortable than last year.

All the four Sunday Programs are going very well, under the leadership of Meena Sharma, Rajat Shah, Ajay Bhargava, Gian Taneja, Jai Jaglan, Manoj Shah, and Seetha Gopal.

This year's main event – MAHA KUMBHABHISHEKAM –June 11-13 - Celebration of Twelve years since Pratishtapana was a great success. Shri Venkatachari from Pittsburg was the pradhana acharya – he was the pradhana acharya for the Pratishtapana. People who attended enjoyed the yagnas, homas, cultural events, and above all the actual Kumbhabhishek of the shikars going up on the lift. The event generated a net of \$25,000.

The Walkathon was conducted on August 7th and was a success, although not as big a success as last year.

Our festivals, every one of them, have been a great success. These festivals have been run as a focus group managed in a very successful fashion. Each focus group raises a lot of money and also done in a very organized fashion and this again goes as a tribute to our great community. Shivarathri, Gokulashtami, Ganesh festival, Srinivas kalyanam and Dusserrah and others run by community representatives are done with great enthusiasm and financial contribution. We immensely thank the volunteers, donors, participants.

Our Balvihar program is also run steadily and consistently by Mrs. Shashi Karve. Our youth program is being run by Syal family; Geeta classes are managed beautifully by Dr. C. A. Reddy.

This fall Chinmaya Mission has started conducting Hinduism classes for children. This has started at a good pace and has become a source of revenue and is liked by the participants.

Twelve families in our community led by Dr. Sundari Rajan have supported the soup kitchen.

This year Diwali program was celebrated in a home style. All the Dinner prasad was cooked in our kitchen and the cultural program by our own community. Everyone enjoyed and the program was done at the lowest cost. The event raised \$35,000 net of expenses.

We are very thankful to Mrs. Parul Shah for taking charge of the Kitchen. She and her team did a beautiful job in providing a very tasty Diwali dinner.

As discussed in the last General Body meeting, we implemented Lunch prasad program for a sponsorship of \$300. Devotees would have prasad for a small donation of \$5 per person (\$3/child). If 50 people donate \$250 plus \$300 less \$200 expenses = the net revenue for the Temple is \$350. If these programs can catch on and we can get sponsors for 45 Sundays this would amount to over \$15,000. In many Temples, kitchen revenue is their highest.

First eight months of this year our priest Shastriji carried the responsibility all alone. We had to curtail temple hours and seek help from volunteers. We thank him for all the support he provided the Temple. In August Mr. Chakrapani joined us from Kumbhakonam, Tamil Nadu. His addition has helped us bring back some devotees that were going to other Temples like Flint etc.

During this transition, we renovated the main priest house on the premises to house both the priests. Due to the current economy, Shastriji's house has been rented and will generate \$12,000 of rental income this coming year.

We reported last year at the GB meeting the difficulty involved in implementing the policy of reporting Dakshinas. This difficulty although improved still exists in spite of including in the contract. The Board as part of the selection of the new priest and interviewing several candidates came across a policy adopted by several temples – Baltimore, Flint, Ohio, and Pittsburgh, of limiting the term of their priests. After extensive discussion, our Board has adopted a policy of limiting the term of our priests to a maximum period of five years effective immediately. The contracts we have with our priests are “at will” contract with mutually 30 day notice renewable annually. In an effort to adopt this policy, Shastriji has been advised that he could plan on being here for six months in 2011 and the Board will work with him in providing recommendations etc.

This was the report for 2010. Now where do we go from here in 2011?

Our key goals for us are to increase membership and make our Temple financially strong. To make this happen there are two issues we request GB to consider.

1. Pass a resolution that will be sent to members at large for approval to eliminate \$250.00 initiation fee for 2011 and beyond. This would help attract new members. Board has adopted into the bylaws a change in membership fee for 2011 - \$200 for family and \$100 for single.
2. To enhance stability, fund raising, request GB to consider formation of an Executive Board and the current Board will become an Operational Board. The write up on this will be a separate agenda item.

I believe implementing these and promoting more programs 2011 shall be a great year.

Last few years we at the Board have worked shorthanded. This year we lost Jai Tripathi and Kishor Mokashi. I thank them for their great service. I am also very pleased that Satheesh has joined the Board and has been a contributor. I am very pleased that there are four excellent candidates to the Board going forward.

I thank Smruti Shah our esteemed Treasurer for doing a marvelous job. She has made my job as the chair easier. The audit reports she will share with you have come across with excellent colors. As usual Ashim and Rajiv have led the various activities superbly. Dr. Kulkarni has been the pillar for our Temple. Srinu, in his own way, has done a great job running projects, maintaining the facility etc. Chandubhai has joined us as our manager and has been a great asset.

Loki and I are very happy to be involved with our Temple for almost 19 years. Four years ago we moved to Brighton and are spending a few months in India each year. Currently we are building a college in the village and plan to build an orphanage in the village. We are working on building a retirement home on top of a hill in Tennessee next year.

I thank all my associate Trustees for a great job working with me these past two years to serve our community. I thank all of you and the Lord to have given this opportunity to serve.

Naga Manohar