

# BRAHMA BHARATI

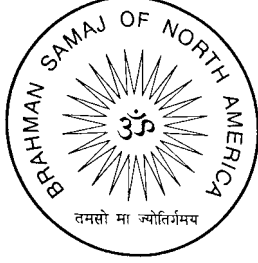
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Editor: Surendra Nath Pandey, Ph.D.



समानी व आकूतिस्समाना हृदयानि वः । समानमस्तु वो मनो यथा वस्सुसहासति ॥

*Samaanii va Aakootissamaana hridayani vah, Samaanamastu vo mano yathaa vassusahaasati*  
United be your desires, united be your hearts; United be your intentions, perfect be the union amongst you.

*Rig Veda*

*May we live together in unity and brotherhood!*

## President

Dr. Shyam Narayan Shukla

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*Vice President (Education)*

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*Vice President (Canada)*

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*Editor, Brahma Bharati*

Dr. Surendra N. Pandey

*Editor, Homepage*

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Dr. Janeshwar Upadhyay

## Nominations & Election Committee

Dr. Surendra N. Pandey,

*Chairman*

Dr. Satchidanand Mishra

Mr. Nitin Purohit

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Fellow Brahmans,

The term of the present Executive Committee comes to an end at the end of this year. The new Executive Committee takes over with effect from January 1, 2004. The terms of all the committees, editors of BB, B-V, Brahmakulum and Homepage, who were appointed by this EC also end on December 31, 2003. Even the terms of the Chapter Presidents (Coordinators) whose appointments were approved by this EC will end with this EC's term. Those Chapter Presidents who were recently elected for the next term will be approved by the new EC according to the present BSNA constitution. Only the BOT members will not be affected. They will complete their terms of three years, from the time they were elected

It has been my pleasure and privilege to serve you as your BSNA President for the last three years. In these past years I visited many places, contacted many people and talked with them about the objectives of BSNA. I am happy to say that I received tremendous support and cooperation of not only all the BSNA members but also of the members from other Brahman organizations throughout the world. Now I am ready again to serve you for the coming three years with a new vigor and with a new Executive Committee, made up of a very dedicated group of people.

We have realized and also from time to time many members have pointed out that some of the clauses of BSNA constitution are vague. Therefore, I think they need to be rewritten. To look into this matter we appointed a Constitution Review Committee (CRC) last year. The term of the CRC comes to an end on December 31, 2003. The new EC will have to reappoint the same CRC or appoint a new one to complete the work. The CRC's report and thereafter the comments by EC and BOT will be helpful in rewriting the clauses of the constitution. It is possible that the entire constitution will have to be rewritten for proper flow and connectivity. Then the revised constitution will be placed for voting by the General Body. This may take a year or so.

For the last few years we have been thinking about a permanent place for the BSNA We will call it 'Brahmapeeth' or 'Brahmasthanam'. I will propose to the

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*President's message, continued from page 1*

new EC that we raise funds to buy a land, which may be 5 to 10 acres in area, close to a metropolitan city, where the land is not so expensive. We will gradually start building an assembly room, some classrooms, a temple and some livingquarters. At this place we may hold conventions, classes for our children, marriages and yajnopaveet sanskaras. When we are not using the facility we may rent it out to others to generate revenue for its maintenance.

My observation has been that as the years are passing by our conventions are becoming regional rather than of the entire BSNA. Therefore, we need to think whether we should have only regional conventions at several places at a driving distance from the members, two years consecutively, and have an all BSNA convention once every three years. For the zonal conventions we may have to divide the entire USA and Canada into zones and will have to appoint coordinators to organize one-day conventions. Every three years we will have a central convention at different places until we have our permanent place. Please send your thoughts on this to me.

We have a brand new look of the BSNA Home-page. Credit for this goes to Dr. Surendra Pandey, Dr. Tej Pandey and Dr. Umesh Shukla. I would like to urge you to go through the home-page periodically and send your comments to Dr. Tej Pandey (E-mail: [Tpandey@aol.com](mailto:Tpandey@aol.com)). The URL of the BSNA Home-page is [www.bsna.org](http://www.bsna.org).

With warm regards,

Shyam Narayan Shukla,  
Ph.D.; P.E.; Fellow, ASCE  
President, Brahman Samaj of North America  
Phone: 510-770-1218, E-mail: [Shuklas@attbi.com](mailto:Shuklas@attbi.com)  
Address: 44949 Cougar Circle, Fremont, CA 94539

## **CHAPTER NEWS**

### **ARIZONA CHAPTER**

The Arizona chapter held its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> September at the residence of Rajni and Munnu Bajpai. Attendees included Anu Bakshi, Rajni and Munnu Bajpai, Anu and Ram Dwivedi, Mukta and Yashvant Kulkarni, Deepa and Kailash Pande, Santosh and Ashu Sharma, Snigdha Sharma, Sharda Sharma, Asha and Prahlad Thakur, and Dinesh Upadhyay. Two families attended the meeting first time --Deepa and Kailash Pande and Sharda Sharma.

The meeting started with the BSNA Vandana. This was followed by family introductions that included their "gotras". This part of introductions was very informative for every one as we learned about various gotras including their respective origins. In addition to the introductions with "gotra", it was the general consensus that a new topic relative to our religion be discussed at each future meeting. Members were asked to submit their choice of topics by email or a phone call to either Munnu Bajpai or the chapter president.

Munnu Bajpai, who attended the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention held at Hyatt Hotel, San Jose, CA, from July 4-6, shared his experience with other members giving an overview of the convention. The convention included discussions, symposiums, cultural programs, and yoga Participants, called delegates, enjoyed the sumptuous food and comfortable accommodation at the Hyatt. The keynote speaker Pratibha Tripathi is well known to many Phoenix area residents. A series of breakout sessions were held on various topics, including health care for Asian Indians, education, social problems, marriages, etc. The meeting ended with an outdoor picnic in Kelley Park, San Jose. In Mr. Bajpai's opinion the meeting was successful.

A brief discussion took place on volunteerism. There were several new opportunities identified including volunteering at the Hindu Temple of Arizona. But a few attendees suggested that we should also consider volunteering outside our own community. This would provide us with some visibility, which would be quite positive. Mr. Bajpai identified a few such opportunities and promised to keep those interested informed.

Members enjoyed the delicious meal and the informal and hospitable environment of the Bajpai's home, and thanked them for their hospitality. Snigdha and Ravinder Sharma invited members to hold the next meeting at their residence on Friday, November 7, 2003. Chapter President: Dr. Ram Dwivedi ([ramdwivedi@msn.com](mailto:ramdwivedi@msn.com))

### **LOUISIANA CHAPTER**

The Louisiana Chapter held its meeting on May 31, 2003 at the residence of Drs. Madhurendu and Sharda Kumar in Baton Rouge. Following BSNA vandana, the Chapter President Dr. Surendra Dwivedi briefed members on the mission and purposes of the organization. After family introductions and greeting, Dr. Kumar introduced and welcomed the BSNA President Dr. Shyam Narayan Shukla, and expressed a grateful appreciation for his visit to the

*Continued on page 3, Col. 1*

Louisiana Chapter. Dr. Shukla presented an overview of the activities and initiatives of the BSNA and called upon the members to play active roles in the organization, and invited them to the upcoming 2003 BSNA Convention.

Dr. Kumar recognized Dr. Shukla as a distinguished scholar of Hindu scriptures and highly commended him for publishing a book titled "The Upanishads". As requested by Dr. Kumar, Dr. Shukla shed light on the importance of the Vedas and some aspects of the ten Upanishads on which Adi Shankaracharya had specially commented as part of his Vedant philosophy. Dr. Shukla also focused upon "Purusharthas (Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha)" as the real objectives of a householder's life. Subsequently, at Dr. Kumar's request, Dr. Subhash Kak, a well recognized Vedic scholar, gave a discourse on Vedas ( Karmakanda/ Purva Mimansa) and Vedanta (Jnanakanda/ Uttar Mimansa), emphasizing that the two are not contradictory but complimentary to each other. He also expounded on the relationship among the Upanishads, the Brahmasutra, and the Bhagavadgita.

Additional discussions led by Mr. D. K. Sharma touched on the issues of Brahman by Birth vs. Brahman by Karma, Eligibility Criteria for the Membership of the BSNA, and Christian Practices of Conversion vs. Hindu Practices.

The Chapter President Dr. Dwivedi conducted the election of the new officers for the Louisiana Chapter. The following officers were elected for the next term of the Chapter: Dr. Madhurendu Bhushan Kumar – President, Mr. Dhirendra Kumar Sharma – Vice President, Mrs. Naumi Kak – Secretary, and Dr. Spuma Rao – Treasurer.

The other part of program included singing of Bhajan, recitation of Mantras led by Dr. Shukla, sumptuous dinner and expression of appreciation for everyone's presence. Members expressed their appreciation to the hosts for their hospitality. Mr. and Mrs. Dhirendra Sharma offered to host the next meeting of the Chapter at their residence in Alexandria, Louisiana.

The following were in attendance: Dr. Shyam N. Shukla, Dr. & Mrs. Surendra N. Dwivedi, Drs. Madhurendu Bhushan and Sharda Kumar, Dr. Sudhir K. Trivedi, Dr. Subhash and Naumi Kak, Mr. & Mrs. Dhirendra K. Sharma, Mr. & Mrs. Suresh K. Sharma, Dr. & Mrs. Spuma Rao, Mr. & Mrs. Ghanashyam Joshi, and Mr. & Mrs. Kailash Jaisinghani.

Chapter President: Dr. Madhurendu Kumar ([mb\\_kumar@yahoo.com](mailto:mb_kumar@yahoo.com))

A meeting of the BSNA Mississippi Chapter was held in the afternoon on June 1, 2003 at the residence of Dr. Suresh Tiwari. The following were present at the meeting: Dr. Suresh and Dr. Shanti P. Tiwari, Mr. Santosha Nand and Mrs. Kusum Pandey, Dr. Venkat S. and Dr. Sharada Ganti, Dr. T.E. and Mrs. Kiran Samdarshi, Dr. Shrikant and Mrs. Parvati Vajpayee, Dr. Tapan Tiwari, Mrs. Chunmun Trivedi, Mr. Rabindra Dubey, Shri Rajni Kant Tiwari, Mr. Sanjay Kumar and Mrs. Swarnlata Dwivedi, Mr. Sanjay and Mrs. Bidula Tiwary, Dr. Chandra Prakash and Mrs. Manjula Pathak (Guest from Farmington Hills, MD), Dr. Salil and Mrs. Sharmila Tiwari, Dr. Chandra Mani and Mrs. Lalita Pathak, and Dr. Shyam Narayan Shukla, BSNA President (Chief Guest)

The meeting started with prayer led by Mrs. Bidula Tiwary. After family introductions, Dr. Suresh Tiwari introduced and welcomed the chief guest, Dr. Shyam Shukla, the BSNA President. Chapter President, Dr. C.M. Pathak, informed that the Mississippi Chapter separated from the combined Mississippi-Louisiana about a year ago. He informed that he was elected as the President of the new chapter but no other officers were elected at that time. Dr. Shukla said that the election of Office Bearers of various Chapters be done in accordance with the election procedures adopted by the Central BSNA. He further informed that the term of Office of the present Office Bearers of BSNA will expire on December 31, 2003. He suggested that the Mississippi Chapter should also elect a President, Vice President, Secretary, and a Treasure with effect from January 1, 2004 for a term of three years. The following persons were elected unanimously: President - Dr. Chandra Mani Pathak, Vice President - Dr. Venkat S. Ganti, Secretary - Mrs. Parvati Vajpayee, and Treasurer - Mrs. Kusum Pandey. The term of the above elected officers starts from January 1, 2004 and ends on December 31, 2006.

Shri Santosha Panday spoke on the subject of "Ishwar Aur Vedanta." At the request of Dr. Pathak, BSNA President Shukla gave a brief history of the BSNA and informed the members how it is functioning. He also reminded members about the upcoming convention in San Jose. The members asked him some questions related to the Organization being called as the Brahman Samaj of North America which he answered satisfactorily convincing every one present that the BSNA is not meant to enroll members who are Brahmans by Birth only.

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## SOUTHERN ONTARIO CHAPTER

### *Mississippi Chapter, continued from page 3*

He also pointed out that BSNA is making efforts to see if all Brahman Samajs in USA may be merged together, and to help Brahmans residing elsewhere in the world.

Dr. Venkat S. and Dr. (Mrs.) Sharada Ganti invited members to hold the next chapter meeting at their residence in the first/second week of August. The meeting adjourned after a vote of thanks to the hosts. Chapter President: Dr. Chandra Mani Pathak.

E-mail: [cmpathak@canufly.net](mailto:cmpathak@canufly.net) )

## PENNSYLVANIA CHAPTER

The Pennsylvania Chapter held its meeting on 9/27/03 at the residence of Drs. Arvind and Nidhi Sharma. Seventeen adults and 12 children attended the meeting, they are: Drs. Arvind & Nidhi Sharma, and their sons Varun and Tushar; Dr. Ajay & Mrs. Nupur Joshi, and their daughter Neha; Dr. Om Sharma and his son Himanshu; Dr. Mahesh & Meena Sharma, and their son Prasun and daughter Priya; Mr. Divender & Mrs. Mamta Sharma, and their daughters Anisha & Neha; Dr. Anil & Mrs. Ritu Sharma; Mr. Mahendra & Mrs. Vimlesh Misra; Drs. Vivek and Mrs. Alka Sharma, and their daughter Smridhi; Mr. Hans & Mrs. Suman Sharma, his father father Shri Rattan Lal Sharma, and their Poonam & son Dev.

The meeting started with a prayer, followed by welcome and introductions by Nidhi Sharma. Members present then unanimously elected Mr. Hans R Sharma, Chapter President for the term.

After a brief discussion about the BSNA conventions, members were informed about a new educational program consisting of a series of lectures by Dr. Shyam Shukla, BSNA President. Topics for the educational program in the first lecture include Sanatan Dharma. Children took turn reading one paragraph at a time. Everyone participated in the discussion on each paragraph that followed the reading. Everyone thought that this was a very informative educational program for adults as well as children. After the meeting everybody enjoyed the Potluck dinner especially sweet dishes arranged by Mrs. Nidhi Sharma.

Two families will become new members of BSNA and one will convert into life member.

Next chapter meeting will be held on April 17<sup>th</sup> 2004 at the residence of Mr. Mahendra and Mrs. Vimlesh Misra, at 3008 Marna Court, Norristown, PA 19403.

Chapter President: Hans R. Sharma  
Phone: (610) 828-5155, Email:  
[hans@sharmah.net](mailto:hans@sharmah.net)

## ELECTION

During the Chapter picnic on Sunday, September 21, 2003, the following members were unanimously selected for the Chapter Executive Committee for the next three-year term 2004-06 starting from January 1, 2004.

President: Dr. Bhawani P. Pathak, Vice President: Mr. Ram Gaur, General Secretary: Mr. Anil Sharma, Joint Secretary: Mr. Hira Joshi, Treasurer: Mr. Sunil Bhardwaj, and Member-at-Large: Mrs. Uma Sharma.

## DIWALI CELEBRATION

The chapter has decided to have a traditional Diwali Milan on Sunday, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2003 starting at 6:00 P.M. at Indian Food Restaurant, 579 Kerr Street, Oakville (Tel: 905-338-0889). Please mark this date in your calendar and participate with your family members and other Brahman friends in this fun filled evening in the true spirit of Diwali. The charges will be the same as earlier, i.e. \$20 -adults, \$10 - seniors and children under 12, free- children under 6 yrs. of age. Please mail in your cheque to me latest by Friday, October the 24th. 2003 and confirm your seats well in advance, to avoid any last minute disappointments.

Chapter President: L.D. Mishra, 3164 Dovetail Mews, Mississauga, Ont. Phone: (905) 828-6475

E-mail: [mishral@ipoline.com](mailto:mishral@ipoline.com)

## VIRGINIA CHAPTER

The chapter held its annual picnic on Saturday, September 6, 2003 from 11 AM to 3 PM at Iron-Bridge Park in Richmond. It was VA-BSNA Picnic full of fun, food, social and cultural activities. Young and adults had fun playing tennis, volley ball, basketball, hiking, group discussion, and other activities. After about four hours of fun, a few families visited the residence of Dr. Upadhyay for tea. This gave a fine opportunity to talk on a variety of topics including Hindu traditions, BSNA Presidential Election, etc. Everyone enjoyed the picnic, and thanked to all who made special contribution to the success of the picnic: Upendra Pandey ji for arranging the park and coordinating the youth activities, Dubey Ji for leading the discussion, Mr. Sudhanshu Singha for leading the tennis and basket ball games, and Siddhi ji, Sudha Ji, Purnima Ji, Manju Ji, Punam Ji, Sunita Ji and

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## YOUR FINANCES

Hans Raj Sharma, MBA, CFP



Our patience to stay invested in the financial market is paying off. But lessons learned during the last three years from the tough times are very important:

- Chasing performance is a losing strategy.
- Portfolio diversification

and rebalancing is necessary.

- Emotions should not dictate the investment decisions.

As I had stated in my last quarterly reviews, I continue to believe the economy is recovering from a “normal cyclical recession”. As the economy strengthens, your investment portfolio is likely to benefit as well. This has been a gradual process, which I expect to continue. The key is not to be distracted by the daily market volatility, which I also expect to continue. In spite the obvious uncertainties of geopolitical instability we face, research points strongly to better times in the future because of the following factors:

1. Corporate America’s financial foundations have been refortified.
2. The US banking system has come through this down turn in great shape.
3. Financial condition of US consumer is much stronger than widely portrayed.
4. Two main drags on economic growth, declining foreign trade and low investment in plant and equipment are poised to turn up, which will increase employment numbers.

We tend to overweigh our most recent financial experience and project that forward into an infinite future. Most recent experience has taught us all that the markets do go down and yet if we go back to late 1990, our experience then was that market was going up 20% a year and we thought that it would just keep going up for ever. It is just human nature.

As old saying goes: There are two certain things in life, Death and Taxes. This is the last quarter of 2003, soon year 2003 will behind us. Assuming that you want to keep your 2003 income taxes as low as possible. This is the time to start reviewing your investment portfolio. The most valuable tax maneuvers have to be done by the end of the year, and some of them may take time to implement them. See that how much loss / gain you are carrying over from last year and how to take advantage of that.

Do you know where all your important financial papers are? Do you know the

consequences of not having this information together or your inaction in this area? Particularly, if you are not around to provide that information. It is a good idea for all of us to look into having a Comprehensive Financial Plan. Financial Plan is very much like a financial physical. Besides all other benefit of having a comprehensive financial plan, this forces us to organize and put all our financial information in one document. At the time of need all this important information is easily accessible and is just a phone call away, with your financial planner.

A Comprehensive Financial Plan will also provide you a road map to achieve your financial objectives. That means, financially speaking, where you are at the present time and what will be your financial situation at age 65, 75 or age 85 and beyond. What kind of changes you need to make on the way to get there, where you want to be. While looking for a financial planner, please make sure that the person you are dealing with is a qualified person has “Certified Financial Planner or CFP” designation.

Should you need more information, or have any question, please email or call Hans R. Sharma, MBA, CFP, [hans@sharmah.com](mailto:hans@sharmah.com) or 610-828-8253.

*Virginia Chapter, continued from page 4*

Sharon Ji, for the delicious food that included rice, bread, vegetables, Pakaura, salad, gulab jamun, chips, drinks.

It was decided to hold the Diwali meeting in November in Hampton, Virginia.

Virginia Chapter president: Dr. Janeshwar Upadhaya. E-mail: [drjupadhyay@yahoo.com](mailto:drjupadhyay@yahoo.com)

### MATRIMONIAL

Looking for a suitable bride for a computer engineer employed at a reputed company, green card holder, born in 1969. Belongs to a respectable, well educated Gaur Brahman (Bharadwaj) family. Please contact: [Hskharit@hotmail.com](mailto:Hskharit@hotmail.com) Phone: (022) 2754 0202

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Parents seeking match for their 26-year old daughter, height 5 feet 2 in. Please contact Rharati at 908-753-4494

## BSNA ELECTION NEWS

### REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS & ELECTION COMMITTEE

The term of the current Executive Committee (EC) expires on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2003, hence new EC members must be elected to take office from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2004. The Nominations & Election Committee (NEC) is a standing committee of BSNA with the purpose of seeking out the best candidates to fill vacant offices, establishing guidelines for accepting nominations, and conducting elections when necessary.

As per past practices, a candidate for the office of the President is expected to invite qualified members as his/her running mates to form a team making up the full EC. Following the precedence from the last two elections, the NEC tried to build a consensus behind one candidate but did not succeed. By the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2003 deadline, two candidates for the office of the president were in the field who had submitted their full EC list. However, under the guidelines, each EC candidate must give his/her consent to the NEC that would allow his/her name to be placed on the ballot. Only one candidate had completed this requirement. The other candidate requested an extension to complete additional requirements because of health reason. With the consent of the remaining candidate, the NEC granted two weeks extension to him to complete the additional requirements. However, he did not complete the additional requirements by the end of the extension period. Hence the remaining candidate, Dr. Shyam Shukla with his team, was declared elected. A few days after the extended deadline, the other candidate e-mailed to his EC candidates that he had decided to withdraw from the election process.

A BSNA member circulated e-mail messages charging the NEC of violating the BSNA constitution. Dr. Pandey, the NEC Chair, refuted all charges but the e-mail messages continued to be circulated. Dr. Shri Kant Mishra, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees (BOT) appointed a BOT committee to investigate the matter and submit a report to the full BOT. The committee consisted of two BOT members, Dr. Suresh Tiwari and Dr. Lakshmi Shanker Dubey. Dr. Tiwari is among the founding members of the BSNA, and has served as the first chairman of the Board of Trustees. He was also the chairman of the NEC during last election. After thorough investigation, the committee submitted its findings to the full BOT in a 65-page report. Dr. Shri Kant Mishra called the meeting of the BOT via a conference call, which lasted about 90 minutes. Dr. Shri Mishra prepared minutes and

the final report that included full details of the investigation and the finding of the BOT. The report, which was circulated via E-mail to all BOT and EC members and chapter Presidents, clearly **states that there was no violation of the BSNA constitution, that the NEC acted in a fair and just manner, and that there was no merit in the alleged charges against the NEC.**

The action by the Board of Trustees makes the election official. Since there was only one eligible candidate remaining, ballots were not mailed out following the precedence from two past elections. The NEC followed the precedence whenever the constitution guidelines were not spelled out for detailed actions. The NEC, therefore, declared that the following would serve as EC members for the term that starts January 1, 2004 and ends on December 31, 2006:

**President** - Dr. Shyam Narayan Shukla of Fremont, CA

**Executive Vice President** - Mr. Purushottam Sharma of Bloomfield Hills, MI

**Vice President** – Mrs. Renu Sharma of Somerst, NJ

**Vice President** – Mr. Lila Dhar Mishra of Missisauga, ONT, Canada

**General Secretary** - Dr. Umesh Shukla of Belle Mead, NJ

**Treasurer** - Dr. Shrigopal Sharma of Milpitas, CA

**Assistant Treasurer** – Dr. Arvind Sharma of Bala Cynwyd, PA

President-elect, Dr. Shukla's vision and plans for BSNA during the new term, and brief biographies of EC members follow this report.

Please join NEC in congratulating and extending our support to the newly elected EC.

Nominations and Election Committee:  
Dr. Surendra N. Pandey, Chair  
Dr. Satchidanand Mishra  
Mr. Nitin Purohit

#### Introduction of The President of BSNA

##### **Dr. Shyam Narayan Shukla**

B.E. (Hon's), M.Sc. (Eng'g), Ph.D., P.E.,  
Fellow ASCE

Dr. Shyam N. Shukla is a Civil/Structural Engineer by training. He has B.E. (Hon's) degree in Civil Engineering from University of Jabalpur (India), M.Sc. (Eng'g) in Civil/Structural Engineering from University of New Brunswick (Canada) and Ph.D. from Ohio State University.  
*Dr. Shukla, continued from page 6*

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He retired in 2001 from Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory after working there for more than 21 years. In addition to more than 100 papers and technical reports, he has written a technical book in his field, 'Design of Reinforced Concrete Slabs', two books in Hindi, 'Ganga Se Mississippi Tak' and 'Mississippi Ke Paar', and two books in English, 'From the Ganges to the Mississippi and Beyond' and 'The Upanishads'. He has published more than 100 articles in many Hindi journals. He co-edited an internationally known Hindi magazine called 'Vishva-Vivek'. He was Secretary of World Association of Vedic Studies. Currently Dr. Shukla is writing a book entitled, "Introduction to Hindu Religion", which will be based on his lectures at Fremont Hindu Temple, which were well appreciated.

Dr. Shukla is a founding member of BSNA. In the past he has held the positions of General Secretary, Chapter President, Constitution Committee Chair, BSNA Directory Editor and BOT member. Currently Dr. Shukla is President of Brahman Samaj of North America, which has more than 700 member families in the USA and Canada. After taking charge as President of BSNA in 2001 Dr. Shukla visited Toronto and revived the Southern Ontario chapter, which had been suspended by the previous BSNA President. Thereafter the membership of that chapter grew from 5 to 55 and in July 2002 the chapter hosted the 8<sup>th</sup> BSNA Convention. Dr. Shukla also helped revive Washington DC chapter, which had been inactive due to some action of the previous President. Dr. Shukla has visited 12 chapters of the BSNA so far. His aim is to visit all the BSNA chapters in the coming years.

Dr. Shukla's family members have been quite actively involved in BSNA. His wife, Mrs. Nirmala Shukla was Editor of Brahma Bharati for a couple of years. Their son, Vivek designed the BSNA logo and the cover page of Brahma-Vani in 1997. Vivek also participated as Master of Ceremony at Sacramento convention (1999) and San Jose convention (2003)

Dr. Shukla is a founding and current member of the Board of Directors of Fremont Hindu Temple. He is a member of the Board of Directors of World Hindi Foundation, an international organization of Hindi.

Dr. Shukla was born at Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh), India. His wife Nirmala is a software engineer; she retired from Cisco Systems in April 2003. They have four children and four grandchildren. They live in Fremont, a suburb of San Francisco, California.

Dr. Shyam Narayan Shukla

***I have a vision to transform this august body of expatriate Brahmans into a vibrant homogeneous and united organization deeply committed to practice and foster the Vedic ideals and values that Brahmans have believed in and practiced.***

I plan to visit all the BSNA chapters in the coming years. My objective will be to increase the membership to 1000 families by year 2006. I plan to establish harmony and brotherhood in the organization and make all the past members active participant of BSNA activities.

I plan to make the working of the BSNA as much democratic as possible, while not allowing the election process to be divisive. I would like to see the chapter Presidents elected by the chapter members rather than nominated by the BSNA President. I would also like to see the BOT Chair elected by the BOT members and not nominated by the BSNA President.

My goal is to make the operation of BSNA smooth and cordial. I shall appoint Constitution Review Committee to address any discordant issues or shortcomings in the BSNA Constitution, and make amendments accordingly.

I want to see improved image of BSNA and its visibility among the non-Brahmans, here in the USA as well as in India. I will to promote plans to project the BSNA as a benevolent organization for all.

I would like to join hands with the sister Brahman organization to influence Indian Government to address the issue of reverse discrimination against poor Brahmans and fight against this indiscriminate practice.

I want the BSNA to establish scholarships for poor and deserving Brahman students who are engaged in studies and propagation of Sanskrit and Hindu Dharma.

I want to develop a good relationship with all the Brahman organizations throughout the world, by keeping a respectful dialogue with them and sometimes visiting them and inviting them to our conventions.

The benefits of yearly convention have been questioned in the past by several of distinguished members of BSNA. The annual conventions are becoming more regional than all American as the years go by. I would like this team of EC to address this issue of all American convention every second year and either regional

*Continued to page 8. col. 1*

*President's vision, continued from page 7*

### **My Vision & Plans For BSNA**

conventions or convention of younger generation in the alternate years.

I want to see that the BSNA has its own home base, which we may call Brahmapeeth or Brahmasthan in the Sunbelt area of the USA in an area of about 10 acres. This place will have an ashram-like surrounding with library, temple, assembly hall, residential quarters, classrooms, and facilities for marriages and Yajnopavita sanskaaras.

## INTRODUCING THE NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (2004-2006)

### **Mr. Purushottam Sharma** **Executive Vice President**

Mr. Sharma is originally from Bulandshahar, U. P. and grew up in New Delhi. After getting his B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in nuclear physics from Agra University, he worked at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Bombay, as a scientific officer for 9 years. He moved to Canada in 1970 where he completed his M.Sc. degree in Medical Physics at the University of Alberta, Edmonton. He served as the Director of Medical Physics at the Thunder Bay Regional Cancer Center for 15 years. While in Thunder Bay, Canada, he was the president of the India Canada Association.

In 1988, he joined the Department of Radiation Oncology of William Beaumont Hospital, Royal Oak, Michigan as Clinical Director of Medical Physics, from where he retired recently.

He has been quite active in BSNA for many years. He is a member of the current BSNA Executive Committee, and the Regional Coordinator of the Midwest USA (R3), and a member of the committee that organized BSNA convention in Detroit, MI.

His wife of 40 years, Kusum, is an Accountant by training and currently a homemaker. They have two sons. The elder son, Vikas, LLB, MBA, is the Director with the Mergers and Acquisitions Group of the investment bank, Scotia Capitals, Toronto, Canada. The younger son, Vinay, MD, FRCP(C), is a Radiation Oncologist at Hollywood Memorial Hospital in Hollywood, Florida. Mr. Purushottam and Mrs. Kusum Sharma are now proud grand parents.

### **Mrs. Renu Sharma** **Vice President**

Mrs. Renu Sharma received her B.A. (Hons.) degree from Bombay University and Sangeet Visharad degree in classical and vocal music from Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, Delhi. She also has a diploma in Yoga and Naturopathy from Delhi. She is a teacher in a public school in the State of New Jersey. She also teaches Yoga in the state school system and in voluntary organizations. Her family originally comes from Bihar in India, but she grew up in Bombay. After her marriage she moved to Delhi. Now she lives at Somerset, NJ with her husband, Kamal J. Sharma, a life member and an ex- Chapter President of New Jersey chapter. He is a management consultant. They have two daughters, one of whom is married.

### **Highlights of President Shukla's first term**

- Brought back the Southern Ontario chapter and other Canadian fellow Brahmans who were disbanded by the previous administration. Not only they came back to BSNA, they organized one of the best conventions in Toronto in July 2002.
- Reactivated the Washington area chapter who had discontinued their participation in BSNA sponsored activities during the last administration.
- Created two new chapters: Arizona and Minnesota.
- The growth of the combined Louisiana-Mississippi chapter resulted in the creation of two independent chapters.
- Reinstated the quarterly publication of Brahma Bharati, which was suspended during the last administration.
- Visited several chapters that added enthusiasm and motivation for the chapters' growth.
- Promoted overall harmony and brotherhood among BSNA members, which helped in bringing back many members to the 'active' status.
- Recruited members with expertise who redesigned the BSNA homepage making it attractive, user friendly and informative.

**Mr. Lila Dhar Mishra**  
**Vice President**

Mr. Lila Dhar Mishra, P.Eng. received his B.Tech (Hons) in Aeronautical Engineering from IIT, Kharagpur in 1967. Presently he is working as an environmental consultant in Ontario, Canada. His professional experiences include research and development and project management in petroleum refineries in Kuwait and India.

Mr. Mishra, a life member of BSNA, is currently the President of Southern Ontario Chapter (Toronto). Under his leadership, his chapter made remarkable progress in a very short time. He, not only revived this dormant Chapter by bringing back the old BSNA stalwarts but also was able to add several new members, eventually hosting one of the most successful BSNA conventions in July 2002, in his riding of Toronto.

Mr. Mishra is a staunch Hindu and a proud Brahmin. He is very active in the community and well known and respected for his ongoing service towards his passion i.e. Hinduism, Karma Kaand and related social and religious activities. He has been involved in performing pastoral duties since many years, first in Kuwait and presently at Vaishno Devi Temple in Oakville suburb of Toronto.

Mr. Mishra was born in 1946 in Ghazipur (UP), India. His family includes his wife, Pushpa, a Program Director with PLASP and two daughters, Shilpa and Shraddha.

**Dr. Umesh Shukla**  
**General Secretary**

Dr. Umesh Shukla was born in U.P. (near Kanpur). His father was a principal of a school in Bombay. He was brought up and received early education in Bombay. He completed Bachelors and Masters in Pharmacy from the University of Bombay, where he was a national scholar. He completed Ph.D. in Clinical Pharmacology from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor in 1985 and received fellowship during the Ph.D. program.

Dr. Shukla is married to Prabha (Chanda) of Kanpur, who has a Masters degree in psychology and has been working part time at First Union Bank. They have two sons Devesh (freshman in college) and Hirsh (sophomore in High school). Dr. Shukla's family has been living in Princeton area in New Jersey since 1992.

Dr. Shukla is a Senior Director in Clinical Research at Aventis Pharmaceuticals (formerly Hoechst Marion Roussel and Rhone Polunce Rorer) in Bridgewater, NJ. He has made

significant contributions to the development of many very important new drugs for several therapeutic areas for the treatment of infections, depression, cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. He has received President's achievement awards and recognition for his contribution to the development of new drugs.

Dr. Shukla has been a life member of BSNA and helped organize BSNA activities in New Jersey in the early years of BSNA. Over the last one year he has been helping organize BSNA activities in New Jersey.

**Dr. Shrigopal Sharma**  
**Treasurer**

Dr. Shrigopal Sharma is originally from Indore, India. He graduated with MBBS degree from Medical College, Nagpur and MD degree from Medical College, Indore. He worked during his entire career as a Physician in the Govt. of Madhya Pradesh. He retired as District Medical Officer. Eventually he moved to the US, where all his children live.

**Dr. Arvind Sharma**  
**Assistant Treasurer**

*Bio -to be published in the future edition of BB*

**MR. MADAN LAL SHARMA:**  
**THE NEWEST MEMBER OF THE BOARD**  
**OF TRUSTEES**

On behalf of the BSNA Executive Committee, President Shukla is pleased to announce the election of **Mr. Madan Lal Sharma** of Stockton, CA to the Board of Trustees of BSNA for a three-year term effective immediately.

Mr. Madan Sharma is a well-known community leader and businessman in Sacramento-Stockton area. He is President of Indo-American Chamber of Commerce and a Trustee of Sacramento Temple. He is a leading builder and developer in Sacramento area. He received awards from the Governor of California for his valuable community service and leadership. Mr. Sharma has raised funds for the BSNA conventions every year. He hails from Rurki in Ludhiana district of Punjab. Mr. Madan Sharma is married to Mrs. Aruna Sharma. They have two sons and two daughters who have been very active in BSNA.

Mr. Sharma is on a two-week visit to India where he will coordinate a construction project of a seven-story market plaza at Ludhiana, Punjab.

*From the Editor's Desk*

We are about a month behind in mailing this issue of Brahma Bharati. Please accept my apology and explanation for this delay. As all of you are aware, this has been the year for electing new Executive Committee, which serves a three-year term from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2004 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006. I could not complete this issue for two reasons: first of all I was hoping to include a status report on the election, and secondly, as the chairman of the Nominations & Election Committee (NEC), I have been quite occupied with the election process, and the controversy that followed. Elsewhere in the issue you must have read the results of the election, the brief biodata of all EC members, and relevant details of the election process.

As many of you are aware, one member disputed the election process and accused the NEC of violating the BSNA constitution and not conducting the process in a fair manner. Dr. Shri Kant Mishra, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees acted very wisely and in a timely manner by appointing a fact-finding committee, with a charge to investigate the matter and report to the BOT. I had to hold on to mailing BB further while we awaited the BOT report. Now that the Board of Trustees have affirmed that the election process was not in violation of the BSNA constitution and that NEC acted fairly, I started putting this edition together.

The BOT report did not satisfy the accuser, and he started accusing the BOT of not acting fairly. He has pursued a relentless attack on BOT, NEC and EC via e-mail making all kind of charges without any foundation, and repeating the same ones over and over. I am quite shocked at the behavior of a few individuals who have placed their own ego ahead of the best interest of the organization, and have crossed the boundaries of basic decency and fairness. During this ongoing barrage of e-mails, one BSNA member reminded us of the teaching of *Rigveda*, which I have quoted on the front page, and don't mind repeating that let's all unite for the sake of BSNA putting our personal differences and egos aside for the betterment of the organization that we all love.

With warm regards.

*Surendra Nath Pandey*

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**A Historic Moment for the Hindus in USA:  
Diwali Celebration at The White House**

Washington D.C., October 23, 2003. Today marked a historic time for Hindus in the United States as The White House celebrated its first ever Diwali event. Among the 100 honored guests were representatives of various civic organizations and prominent government officials. In a ceremony rich with tradition, Mr. Karl Rove, Special Advisor to President George W. Bush a lighted a *deepak* (lamp) in front of the statues of Lord Ganesha and Goddess Laxmi to invoke their blessings during this age-old Festival of Lights celebration.

Addressing the guests in the Indian Treaty room where the original U.N. Charter was signed, Rove said, "I just spoke with the President who called from Pearl Harbor; he sends his Diwali greetings to you and to the Hindu community worldwide." He added, "The President would have been here today, had it not been for his trip to Asia and Australia."

Leading the invocation was Dr. Anant Rambachan, professor of Religion at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minnesota who also conducts congregational worship services at the Hindu society of Minnesota. An active participant in inter-faith dialogue, Mr. Rambachan highlighted the significance of Diwali and its relevance in today's environment. He said, "The establishment of a utopian rule, referred to as *Ramrajya*, followed Rama's victory over Ravana and his return to his home. It was the inspiration for Gandhi's vision of an ideal community. In the kingdom of Rama, the state was no longer violent and oppressive towards its citizens. Nations lived in peace with other nations and all suffering was overcome. Human beings were generous and charitable towards each other. The kingdom of Rama as presented to us in the *Ramayana*, is an alternative political, economic, social and religious order. It is a vision what a human community should look like when we recognize God as supreme and ultimate."

Mr. Neil Patel, a political appointee in the Office of Vice President Dick Cheney was the Master of Ceremony. Underscoring the historic importance of the event, Mr. Gopal Khanna, Chief Financial Officer at The Peace Corps, spoke to the attendees, "This celebration symbolizes the Bush Administration's recognition of America's rich religious and ethnic diversity. Today's event establishes a tradition that will, for generations to come, strengthen America as a nation that remains committed to, secularism and inclusion in its mainstream, people of all faiths. Mr. Khanna continued, "This historic White House

*Continued to page 11, col. 2*

**PEOPLE IN THE NEWS**

**Mr. Venkatesh Shukla** of Cupertino, CA, a life member of BSNA, is one of 25 technocrats from all over the world, who have been invited by His Excellency Abdul Kalam, President of India, to advise him on how to make India a developed country by 2020. There will be brainstorming meetings for two days this week at Cochin. Venkatesh is Senior Vice President of Marketing & Business Development at Magma Corporation, a computer software company located in Santa Clara, CA. Earlier he was CEO of another software company called Everypath. Last year he was appointed Adviser to the Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, which is an honorary position equal to a cabinet minister's rank.

**Mr. Ashok (Ash) Bhatt** has announced his candidacy for the California's 20<sup>th</sup> Assembly District (the East Bay district) seat. Mr. Bhatt, who has built a successful real estate and hotel management business, was born in India and studied business and commerce at the University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, earning a Bachelor's Degree in 1976. He has served as a personal advisor to a member of the Indian Parliament. He is the father of a 19-year old daughter and a 14-year old son.

Since moving to California, he has been appointed to several commissions and boards, including the CA Commission for the Prevention of Hate Crimes in 1992, the Delinquency Prevention Commission of San Francisco in 1996, and the Welfare/Workfare Employment Commission in 1997. Mr. Bhatt has been a statewide leader in efforts to expanding the involvement of diverse communities in Democratic politics. He was included in America's official delegation to India to attend Mother Theresa's funeral in 1997, headed by First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton. He cites quality public education, good-paying jobs, alleviating traffic congestion, protecting the environment and affordable housing among his top legislative priorities. He is a member of several local and state level organizations.

To the best of knowledge, this is the first time a fellow Brahman is seeking a statewide elected office in the United States.

Visit BSNA home page for contact information, latest news, membership form, etc. <a href="http://www.bsna.org">http://www.bsna.org</a>
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celebration happened because of a conversation Dr. Piyush C. Agrawal, National President of the Association of Indians in America, had with President Bush about six weeks ago at which Dr. Agrawal urged the President to celebrate the Hindu festival of Diwali at The White House." The President promised Dr. Agrawal that he would look into the matter and, to the delight of the growing Indian American community, it turned into reality so quickly. One significant observation is that representatives from all major Indian organizations were present at the event including Muslims, Sikhs, Jains and Christians. It was truly an elegant affair. Mr. Agrawal stated that, "President Bush deserves our sincere 'gratitude' for creating history by opening the door of The White House for a Hindu ceremony. We are sure that the tradition will continue and this is the beauty of America."

The Association of Indians in America (AIA) commissioned a Commemorative Silver Coin struck in honor of the occasion. All those in attendance at the ceremony received the coin as a Diwali Gift. The coin depicts the deities Lord Ganesha and Mahadevi Laxmi on one side with the reverse side bearing the inscription "First Diwali At The White House 2003".

### BSNA EUROPEAN TOUR

Thirty-six adults participated in a BSNA sponsored European tour (July 18 - August 2, 2003), a first in the history of BSNA. Travel Network of Troy, Michigan arranged the tour. All the delegates, majority of whom were BSNA members, had a wonderful time. Living together for 15 days, they built a close bond like an extended family, as they toured four countries France, Switzerland, Austria and Italy. They were given guided tours of cities, palaces, museums and Vatican. The city of Paris, The magnificent and breathtaking views from Mount Titus and Mt. Pilatus, City of Venice and the Gondola rides, City of Florence, the Art capital of Italy and the Island of Capri were the highlights of the trip. The arrangements by the Travel Network were superb. The whole Tour was very leisurely with enough time to stroll through the cities and for shopping etc. The tour was such a success that the participants are already talking about the future tours under the BSNA banner, to include: Alaska cruise, China, Australia, Mediterranean, etc.

*Diwali at the White House, Continued from page 10*

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**TO:**

BSNA European Tour (July 18 – August 2, 2003)

