



# USAP News

United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh

[www.usaofpittsburgh.org](http://www.usaofpittsburgh.org)

Volume 5 Issue 2

SPRING ISSUE

April 2023

From Winter to Spring issue of the USAP News, we all grew up by three months. Time is on an incessant march forward. In this short span of time, USAP membership grew to over 400 total members as of this writing. And the milestone 400<sup>th</sup> member deserves special mention and recognition in these columns.



Lakshmi Gundapuneedi is that 400<sup>th</sup> member who earned this special honor by chance of luck. She lives in Sewickley in Ohio Township and moved to Pittsburgh only a year ago. She is Masters in Computer Science and Mathematics, and worked as a director of IT in the Pharmaceutical industry. She likes to volunteer and help others and is interested in learning about different cultures. We extend her a warm welcome to USAP.

We are crossing 170 Charter (Life) Members. At the pace USAP membership is growing, we should be recognizing the 200<sup>th</sup> Charter Member in these columns soon. You need to be 50 to be eligible for USAP membership, and there are many eligible members. Sadly, we did have to deny membership to a few as they were under the age.

Group travels to foreign lands excites many seniors. By the time you get to read this newsletter, two groups would be on their way to Japan, the far end of the world. Another three groups are getting ready for travel to Egypt, Jordan, and Israel in October of 2023.

USAP News serves to connect with people and also to be their voice. USAP Members Chat Group provides an interactive forum to stay current; USAP News also has created a Readers Write page to get feedback on any featured article in the newsletter or any brief item of interest to the seniors. It is relatively a new feature and Seema Batra has offered to take a lead on that page.



Talking about new, dancing was a favorite past time when we all were young. It has been claimed convincingly, that to remain young, don't give up on what young do! We are talking about dancing, for if you start swinging, and it's never too late for that, your joints will limber up, you will get back your stamina and you will regain the zest of living. And to do just that, treat dancing as a form of medicine, Shakuntala Shinde will be teaching dancing classes, Bollywood style.

*There are shortcuts to Happiness and Dancing is one of them!*

There's much to learn about USAP inside.  
As always, we welcome your feedback!

## READERS WRITE

**Seema Batra is the Readers Write Column Editor and welcomes brief write ups on items of interest to the senior community. She can be reached at [simabatra@gmail.com](mailto:simabatra@gmail.com).**

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I thank the USAP members for their overwhelming welcome to us to Pittsburgh. I and my wife Neelima Parikh are both physicians, Anesthesiologists, and have lived in Harrisburg for almost 40 years. We recently moved to Pittsburgh and made Peters Township our new home. Neelima retired recently and I still work part time. We have been very active in Harrisburg community all our lives and would love to be involved with USAP and the Pittsburgh community.

***Mukul and Neelima Parikh***

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A joy to read a comprehensive summary of USAP's 2022. It's not an easy task. Articles are informative and useful. It takes many to run a large organization. All their work is much appreciated!

***Dolly and Juginder Luthra***

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Very well presented with good summarization of the entire year's educational/motivational as well as cultural activities. Love Mr. Mogri's article. Keep up the good work. Three cheers to the team!

***Shakuntala Shinde***

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The USAP News really serves its purpose. It summarizes the main events from the past and provides a glimpse of the future. Very well done.

***Suneel Maheshwari***

Great job ! Well compiled, Well written and informative newsletter. Bravo.

***Ved Kaushik***

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Our Newsletter is indeed professional quality with valuable content. Hats off to the committee.

***Bhavna Mehta***

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Thank you for the Newsletter. Once again very well done with lots of topics covered and the lovely photographs ! Kudos to the team.

***Veena Agarwal***

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USAP Newsletter was very informative and well written. Enjoyed thoroughly!

***Vasanti Majmudar***

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### ***Editor's note***

***We appreciate your comments and would like to hear more from you. Please comment on the articles that you liked or would like to know more about. We welcome articles from our readers on any topic that pertains to the senior citizens – health related, family, social, hobby, travel, or humorous. For any questions, please feel free to drop me a line.***

**Subash Ahuja**  
**[subash.ahuja@gmail.com](mailto:subash.ahuja@gmail.com)**

**USAP TOTAL MEMBERSHIP**  
(AS OF MARCH 31, 2023)

<b>TOTAL Members</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>403</b>
.....		
<b>Charter Members</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>170</b>
<b>4 Year Members</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>233</b>
<b>Annual Members</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>0</b>

**WELCOME TO NEW  
CHARTER (LIFE) MEMBERS**

Zarin Balaporia  
Shailesh & Mananda Bhende  
Narsinhbhai & Savita Ghelani  
Ravi Kant & Bina Goel  
Sukhdev & Elisha Grover  
Karan & Shashi Gupta  
Ravindra Gupta  
Darshana Hathi  
Ashok & Santosh Jain  
Arun & Shobha Jatkar  
Naushad & Umera Khatri  
Suresh & Rani Kumar  
Suneel & Alka Maheshwari  
Rajesh & Meena Mehta  
Vijay & Bhavna Mehta  
Jayant Mirani  
Kishor & Pushpa Patel  
Manoj & Vasvi Patel  
Subbarao & Uma Rambhala  
Sandip & Smita Shah  
Shobhna Shah  
Brij & Usha Sharma  
Dilip & Shakuntala Shinde  
Raji Srinivas  
Saroj Wadhwa

**WELCOMETO NEW  
4-YEARS MEMBERS**

Sohini Advani  
Krishan & Madhu Aggarwal  
Vikram & Asha Asher  
Ambaram & Kiran Chauhan  
Prasad Dabbala  
Nilufer Daruwala  
Prabhjot & Sheena Deol  
Ravish & Nishi Gandhi  
Usha Gowda  
A.Lakshmi Gundapuneedi  
Rahul & Sunita Joshi  
Shailesh Kapadia  
Girish & Jyotsna Kothari  
Prem & Ravijohar Kumar  
Kanwal & Minnie Mahajan  
Arundhati Mandava  
Rohit & Yogini Mehta  
Vipin & Jayshree Mehta  
M.H.Vamadeva & Jayasheela Murthy  
Rashmikant & Meena Pandit  
Anilkumar & Aruna Parikh  
Garish & Hansa Patel  
Shashi & Madhavi Patel  
Vinod & Bharati Patel  
Padmanabha & Sasikala Prabhu  
Mahalingiah Prasad  
Verendra & Malini Rao  
Jethalal Rambhia  
Mukesh & Parin Shah  
Suresh & Meena Shah  
Surya Shroff  
Amar & Neeta Singh  
Pandur & Rama Tadikamalla  
Rakesh & Sangita Thapar

**PLEASE CONSIDER TO UPGRADE YOUR 4-YEARS MEMBERSHIP  
TO CHARTER (LIFE) MEMBERSHIP**

## ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING – 2022 (15 JANUARY 2023)



*Photo credit: Baliyah Prathap*

The 2022 Annual General Body meeting was held on January 15, 2023, at ICC. The group photo serves as a record of all those who attended. Besides serving the traditional masala tea before and delicious lunch following the meeting, the President, Chetan Patel reviewed the many programs conducted in 2022, the treasurer, Kiran Bakshi shared the finances of USAP, and the secretary, Subash Ahuja went over the secretary's responsibilities, the USAP Newsletter, and the Bylaws updates. Various Committee chairs also presented their respective reports and updated the general membership.

Of importance, two important changes that got approved by the General Body are worthy of sharing here.

### **1. MEMBERSHIP FEES**

This is the first time the membership fees were proposed to be increased due to the general rising costs. With the approval of the membership, the membership fees which went into effect beginning March 1, 2023 are as follows:

<b>ANNUAL MEMBER</b>	<b>\$50 per person</b>
<b>FOUR-YEAR MEMBER</b>	<b>\$150 per person</b>
<b>CHARTER (LIFE) MEMBER</b>	<b>\$600 per person</b>

### **2. AMENDMENT TO THE BYLAWS**

It was the recommendation of the Executive Board that since the organization has made tremendous progress under the present leadership, the current officers, if they should willingly seek re-election, and with the approval of the General Body, should be allowed to do so. This measure was also approved.



## United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh

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### USAP Executive Board 2023

**President : Chetan Patel Vice-President : Bhavna Mehta**  
**Secretary : Subash Ahuja Treasurer : Kiran Bakshi**

#### Executive Board Members:

Chetan Ladani	Sudhir Patel
Ved Kaushik	Vasanti Majmudar
Khozem Mogri	Sumedha Nagpal
Viharika Bakshi	Suhendar Ajmani
Shakuntala Shinde	Wimi Ganjoo



**Front Row:** Wimi Ganjoo, Vasanti Majmudar, Bhavna Mehta, Shakuntala Shinde, Sumedha Nagpal, Viharika Bakshi  
**Second Row:** Suhendar Ajmani, Ved Kaushik, Khozem Mogri, Chetan Ladani, Subash Ahuja, Chetan Patel, Kiran Bakshi



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### USAP Executive Board Committee Chairs 2023

**Membership** : Chetan Patel      **Tours & Travel** : Kiran Bakshi  
**Newsletters** : Subash Ahuja      **Humanitarian** : Vasanti Majmudar  
**By-Laws** : Suhendar Ajmani      **Event Admin** : Khozem Mogri

**Health & Fitness:**      **Hobby & Sports :**  
    **Yoga** : Bhavna Mehta      **Outdoor** : Sudhir Patel  
    **Health & Nutrition** : Ved Kaushik      **Indoor** : Chetan Ladani

**Weekend Retreat** : Viharika Bakshi      **Picnic** : Wimi Ganjoo  
**Hobby & Interest** : Sumedha Nagpal      **Dancing** : Shakuntala Shinde

**Long Term Planning** : Chetan Ladani      **Finance** : Subash Ahuja  
**Social Media, Email, Event Flyer** : Chetan Patel  
**Karaoke & Entertainment** : Bhavna Mehta

### THE CARD PARTY

The Indoor Committee Chair Chetan Ladani organized the first **Card Party of 2023** on March 24 at ICC. Over thirty people attended, made new friends, got animated and noisy at times, there was plenty of snacks, delicious food, and unlimited drinks. Words may describe only to an extent, but the pictures speaketh it all. And there was card magic too, by Tom Sharma and carrom board which many missed as they were so busy with their games.



## HAPPY BIRTHDAYS TO SPECIAL USAP MEMBERS

**April:** Saroj Patel, Bharati Gandhi, Zarin Balaporia, Krishna Sharma, Sonali Ghosh, Alka Patel, Nainesh Desai, Pravin Monpara, Girish Kothari, Pushpa Patel, Santosh Jain, Devender Batra

**May:** Jayanti Shah, Bharati Patel, Bhupendra Kamdar, Neelam Patel, Lakshmi Mirani, Alka Shah, Shakuntala Shinde, Alka Maheshwari, Elisha Grover

**June:** Bharat Monpara, Dayal Sutaria, Kirtida Desai, Gauttam Patel, Shashi Batish, Ranjan Bhandari, Subash Ahuja, Yogendra Gupta, Khozem Mogri, Tripta Goyal, Umera Khatri, Madhu Doshi, Alka Jhaveri, Asha Asher, Uma Rambhala, Madhu Duggal, Ashok Jain, Veena Aneja



## WARM WELCOME MUKUL & NEELIMA TO USAP FAMILY



I found out they have been very actively involved in community activities. Neelima served as the first Female president at HARI Temple and is interested in Vedic Astrology, cooking, painting, and Vedanta.

Mukul served as HARI Board chair, President of India Association and Chair of Anesthesia at UPMC Pinnacle campus. He received Distinguished Community service award in 2011; International Voluntary Service award from PA Medical Society in 2014; and along with Neelima they received Humanitarian Award of the year from United Way. Mukul is interested in Golf and Vedanta.

They are founding members of Operation Medical, a voluntary group of health care professionals doing

surgical mission work in many countries and have participated in over 22 missions since 2002.

They have two sons - Ankur (Urologist in Worcester, MA) and Anuj (General/ Colorectal surgery) at Jefferson Hospital in Pittsburgh, PA). Anuj's wife Lindsey Haga is a vascular surgeon at UPMC. They have 4 grandkids.

- **Sima Batra**

**United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh** is a tax-exempt charitable organization.

Your support goes a long way in supporting free lunches and expanding our services to the senior citizens.

**USAP TAX ID # 82-3787994**

**USAP News** is published quarterly by United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh to keep its members and subscribers informed and connected. Your comments and suggestions are welcome to improve the dialogue.

**Editors:**

**Subash Ahuja, Chetan Patel**



My name is Raj Dayalan and I am the proud owner of PureAir HVAC, LLC. I am a first generation Indian American. I come from a family of doctors and I was encouraged to forge my own path and to pursue my own dreams.

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## HEALTH RELATED TRAVEL TIPS

By Ved Kaushik, MD, FACS, FACRS



Nothing ruins a vacation more than getting sick on your trip. Many common travel related illnesses can be easily prevented or taken care of if you are well prepared.

Here are a few tips and recommendations that I have compiled for our fellow travelers to Japan but can be useful for any trip in future.

Some countries, like Japan, are strict about certain medicines. We should know them and try to observe and respect their rules.

### How many medicines should I carry?

Know your medications and the length of time you'll be away on vacation. Generally, for prescription medicines, one month supply should be adequate to consider some unexpected delays or illnesses. Make sure you carry with you your doctor's prescriptions, not only to prove what you are carrying but also to be able to purchase them there if need be. For non-prescription medicines and vitamins, again a month's supply should be adequate depending upon your needs. It is important to carry all medicines in their original containers. Regarding medical devices, such as asthma inhalers, know your needs and carry one or two extra.

### Over-the-counter medicines for common ailments

For Diarrhea (Antidiarrheals, Pepto-Bismol, Flagyl, Lomotil); Pain (Motrin, Advil, non-narcotics); Fever (Tylenol); Motion Sickness (Dramamine); Cough (Mucinex, Robitussin, Benadryl). Anyone having joint replacement or other prosthetics may want to carry an antibiotic. Your doctor would be the right person to prescribe for you what to carry.

### Travel Kit

Prepare for yourself a travel health kit with basic supplies such as bandages, ace bandage, antiseptic wipes, thermometer, a one-foot ruler to use as a splint etc. These have been found to be very helpful from experience. Also, you may want to add Covid test kits, facial masks, and hand sanitizers.

### CPAP machine

It's a device that helps people with sleep apnea breathe better at night. You can bring your CPAP machine to Japan, but you may need to take some steps before you travel. Apply for a "**Yakkan Shoumei**", which is a certificate that allows you to bring medical devices into Japan. You can find more information on how to apply at:

**<https://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/policy/health-medical/pharmaceuticals/01.html>**.

It is important that you carry your CPAP machine and all medicines in your hand luggage and not in your checked baggage.

Opium, cannabis, and stimulant drugs (amphetamines, methamphetamines), including certain medicines for the treatment of ADD/ADHD (such as Adderall and Dexedrine) are strictly prohibited and illegal to bring into Japan.



## DANCING FOR SENIORS – THE NEW MEDICINE

By Shakuntala Shinde



USAP is proud to introduce Dance Classes as a new activity in 2023. Many of you may know me. I am Shakuntala Shinde and joined as a new member on the Executive Board. I am a trained dancer in Bharatnatyam from my earlier years. I have special interest in introducing dancing to the seniors as a form of therapeutic as well as fun-filled physical activity this year.

While our joints are made to be flexible and moving all the time with some form of activity, we become prone to physical inactivity in our senior years.

Dancing has the potential to be an attractive & enjoyable physical activity that can be adjusted to suit the needs of our physical bodies, our stamina and tolerance. And with the stimulus of one another's company and encouragement, we will soon be able to increase our individual abilities and dancing will become our second nature.

Dance, regardless of its style, can significantly improve muscular strength, endurance, balance & other aspects of functional fitness in older adults. It also improves the mental health since it involves group participation & social interaction.

I would be teaching Bollywood dancing with simple steps to begin with. This will take away the stress & apprehension of learning dancing in general & enhance the enjoyment. The idea is to learn some hand gestures, simple foot work, flexible body movements together with the rhythm & beat of the song.

I am positive that all of you will enjoy this new venture & make it a popular activity. If possible, we could finish one choreographed dance by October & perform on stage on the Diwali Dinner night before the professional program.

Hoping to see you all on the dance floor soon and let's **ROCK!**



# USAP HUMANITARIAN COMMITTEE

By Vasanti Majmudar

I went to visit a friend at her house one evening. She was recovering from surgery, and in the middle of our conversation, I saw tears in her eyes. She pointed towards a get-well card she had received from a friend, and she was touched by the wishes for her speedy recovery. She appreciated this simple humanitarian gesture from her friend. This had more healing power over her than the doctor's narcotic prescription!



USAP was formed with this need of humanitarian services to its members. The hands and the people and the green leaf in the USAP logo refer to the helping hands and good health and longevity of our members. To this extent, USAP through its many activities has done its job well. The many educational programs (fall

prevention, brain health, heart disease, diabetes), social activities (group travels, karaoke programs, musical concerts, card parties), yoga and meditation classes, etc. all served towards this humanitarian goal.



Yet, there is much more our organization can do. The membership has grown to over 400 in such a short

time. The members trust and hope they can count on USAP regarding all aging related needs that arise, at a different pace for different member. Members have asked for car pooling services, more day-time activities, as night driving is becoming more difficult for some, home help, home care and other health related concerns, etc.

We have dedicated members on the Humanitarian Committee. We are also encouraged to report we received overwhelming response from many members who readily volunteered to help in the Committee. We are in the process of organizing all available help to provide such services. If you have special needs or have friends you know who do, let us know how such help can be delivered.

There are many global organizations such as Red Cross, UNICEF, Doctors Without Borders, etc. that are involved with food and shelter relief for victims of natural disasters. USAP at this stage is focused on providing services that are member based.

Please contact any of the committee members for more information and for your help and volunteer support.

Vasanti Majmudar 412-855-5072

(Chairperson)

Chetan Patel 412-908-1711

Subash Ahuja 412-216-8135

Devayani Pandit 412-443-6660

Chetan Ladani 412-519-9024

Navin Kadakia 412-302-5495

Dilip Desai 412-916-2473

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**Scott partners with Nayan Shah to help USAP members**

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## GETTING YOUR GARDEN READY FOR SPRING

By Veena Agarwal

Happy spring to you all! It's that time of the year again when the sun starts warming the earth and we begin thinking about our gardens. Here are five easy perennials that you can enjoy for years to come with their colorful display of blossoms. All you need is sunlight and occasional water.



**Common Yarrow** (*Achillea mille-folium*) bloom from early to late summer and can stand dry weather. Along with the rich red yarrow blooms come in orange-red ("Paprika"), magenta pink (Cerise Queen), rusty orange (Terracotta) and more. They like full sun and well-drained soil, zones 3 to 9.



**Helen's Flower** (*Helenium autumnale*) delivers vibrant-colored flowers, ranging from orange to yellow to rusty red to brown. They bloom mid-summer to late summer. Trimming off the faded blooms will stimulate more flower growth as well as staking the taller plants. They like well-drained soil, zones 3 to 8.



**Purple Coneflower** (*Echinacea purpurea*) is noticeable by its trademark rusty-orange center cone surrounded by bright petals. Besides purple, they come in white, yellow, orange, or tomato-red varieties. They prefer sun but they can take a fair amount of shade, zones 3 to 8.



**Russian Sage** (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*) flowers are tiny and blue in color but plentiful. Massed on long stems, they top off lacy green-gray foliage in mid-to-late summer. They tolerate heat, wind, drought, and even poor soil but well-drained. They grow best with lots of sun, zones 3 to 9.



**Threadleaf Coreopsis** (*Coreopsis verticillata*) is a drought-tolerant perennial that produces an abundance of lacy foliage and topped by small but plentiful golden-yellow flowers. Peak blooming period is in early summer, but they will continue to bloom until autumn if deadheaded. They grow best in well-drained soil, zones 3 to 8.

# TALKING WITH SENIORS CAN MAKE THEM LIVE LONGER

By Khozem Mogri



Young people may consider seniors as those above 60, generally retired, widely travelled and experienced people, and daunting to talk with. It's true that they have lots to offer from their life's experiences, but they may go quiet if the interaction between the young and the old is not right. That's the irony of life, for the young who could benefit most from the seniors, yet end up in misunderstanding and excluding them. People often feel that seniors are difficult to communicate with, but they do not realize that they themselves could be contributing to this behavior by not

knowing how to engage them in a lively conversation. If the young only knew how to talk and what to say to their elders, they could play a major role in their mental health, and longevity.

A good conversation keeps the brain kicking since multiple cognitive functions, including working memory executive functions, attention, social cognition, linguistic abilities, etc., are brought into play. Thus, you can provide this support by engaging them in discussions that keep their minds active and stimulated. One good way is to encourage group discussions.

## Some dos and don'ts to keep in mind:

- These Seniors have seen life a lot closely and for a lot longer than most of us have. They are "adults". Do not patronize them or provide unsolicited advice.
- Do not talk extra slowly or loudly, it is condescending. Also, do not use cutesy nicknames such as sweetie, honey, etc.
- Every group has talkers as well as recluses. They all need to be respected as they are.

## Topics that interest seniors:

- Talking about the present and how things have changed over time, is a good conversation starter. Ensure a neutral ground by avoiding politics and religion.
- Relating to past happy times, stimulates long term memory and recall.
- Reminiscing about their favorite movies and songs triggers memory and activates a brain workout.
- Talk about our city or state, its restaurants, and parks, how it has changed and what are their hopes and expectations for future; such discussions increase awareness.
- Creating a "Bucket List" of things to do provides a purpose in life. Such discussion help boost many happy brain chemicals.
- Narration of "First Time" events allows living the happy episode all over again, it involves use of memory recall, imagination, and creativity; but ensure that you do not bring up painful memories.
- Discussion on Travel and memorable experiences, allows seniors to share their passion for adventure.
- Seeking advice from seniors on how to and how not to live life, you acquire the wisdom without experiencing the inevitable beating and falling that comes before the experience. The mere idea that a younger person wants to listen to them and is seeking advice from them creates the feeling of being important and wanted.