



USAP News

United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh

www.USAofpittsburgh.org

Volume 1 Issue 4

October 2019

Welcome to the fourth issue of the USAP News. The third quarter had been extremely busy at USAP and we have lots to report. A total of sixty-five members took advantage of the summer vacations, with two groups traveling to Southern Africa in July and September and one to China in September 2019. They all returned home safely and brought with them tons of photos to keep the memories alive for a long time. We received very positive reviews from many and high comments on the arrangements organized by USAP and the travel plans made by AirTours Travels. Each group has posted in this USAP News a brief review with highlights of their trips. Some have suggested we should have a follow-up to the vacations where we can **“SHOW & TELL”** our vacation pictures over dinner one evening. This will provide an opportunity for everyone to mix and mingle and reminisce and keep the memories alive till our next trip.

The Tours and Travels Committee is in fact busy planning for 2020. From popular demand, the next destination being investigated is **JAPAN**, at the other end of the globe. The dates, tentatively, end of March – early April, will be decided once the committee receives official confirmation of the 2020 Cherry Blossoms. You will be hearing much about this in coming months.



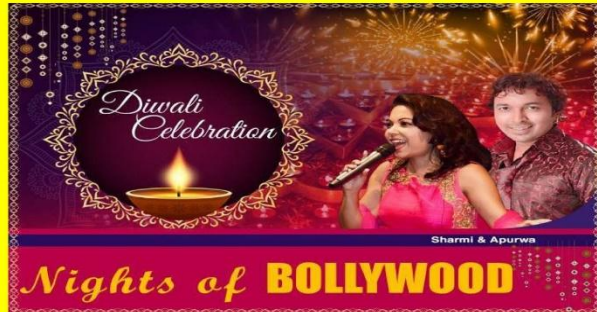
Safari stop at Chobezi National Park, Botswana, Africa; September 2019

Africa trip was memorable. Brought our friendship to a deeper level. Who we knew as acquaintances, became true friends! Thanks, USAP.

Ved Kaushik

United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh
Presents
Grand Gala Annual Gathering Dinner

With
Live in Musical Concert



(One of the Best Bollywood Musical Groups from India)
And

Delicious Appetizers and Sumptuous Dinner
(North Indian, South Indian, Gujarati, Chinese food dishes)
On Friday, October 18, 2019

5:30 pm to 7:30 pm : Social Hours

7:30 pm to Midnight : Musical Program

Venue: Indian Community Center (ICC), 205 Mary St., Carnegie, PA 15106

Tickets: \$55 for Adult \$30 for Kid (under the age 15 years)

For Tickets: Contact:

Chetan Patel	412-908-1711	Dilip Desai	412-916-2473
Gauttam Patel	412-980-0782	Subash Ahuja	412-216-8135
Chetan Ladani	412-221-4837	Devi Pandit	412-963-6047
Raj Popat	724-366-0867	Jamnadas	412-583-4013
Kiran Bakshi	412-841-2718	Ved Kaushik	724-816-9818
Sudhir Patel	412-580-5450	Jayant Mirani	412-487-4445
Juginder Luthra	304-794-6336	Khozem Mogri	724-494-6888

This GRAND GALA MUSICAL EVENING is becoming an annual event at USAP. The artists are one of the best Bollywood singers touring the country currently and we are fortunate to have them stop by in Pittsburgh on October 18, 2019.

Keeping up with the title Grand Gala, all arrangements are being made to make it truly a Grand Gala event at Indian Community Center (ICC).

Tickets are only \$55 per adult and can be easily obtained by calling anyone on the Contact list. Please call at your earliest as we may encounter space limitations to two hundred individuals. Table seating will be prearranged and will be based upon date of receipt of payment.

There will be plenty of Delicious Appetizers to relish in the lower level of the ICC beginning at 5:30 pm. Wine and beer will be available for purchase. Doors to the main hall will open promptly at 7 pm and you will be treated to a non-stop musical entertainment till midnight or later if you would so demand, with a

small break for a sumptuous dinner around 9 pm. There will be lots of raffle prizes to give away. All in all, this will be one evening you may not want to miss.

If you would consider supporting USAP as a sponsor, or contributing towards the raffle prizes, please contact Chetan Patel at 412-908-1711.

USAP is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt charitable organization and all donations made to USAP are tax deductible to the extent permitted under law.



We deeply regret to inform that the Variety Entertainment Show planned for December 7, 2019, has been postponed for reasons beyond the control of the organizers. Many participants in their drama and play-acting roles have travel plans and will be out of town/country during that time. We shall keep you posted on the new date when it becomes feasible again.

But, save the date for a memorable evening of SHOW & TELL YOUR VACATION PICTURES.

HIGHLIGHTS OF AFRICA TRIP – SEPTEMBER GROUP

Subash Ahuja



Our group had a fabulous time travelling from Kenya to South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe (September 2019). We fell in love with the animal kingdom on our safari tour we took in Masai Mara National Park in Southern Kenya. We spent four nights in the two lodges located right in the Park. We were told not to get out of our rooms at night because of the roaming hippos and the zebras and other wildlife. We all developed a different perspective on life after seeing the animal world in their natural habitat, and living alongside the human world!

Other highlights included visiting Capetown in South Africa. The group picture shown here is a sample of the wonderful cool weather we had on top of the Table Mountain, claimed to be one of seven natural wonders of the world. Not shown are the remarkable pictures we took of many, standing with their arms stretched high in the crystal blue sky and exuding happiness and depicting a feeling of being on top of the world, even though, ironically we were at the southern tip of Africa on the opposite side of the hemisphere.

We then took a day long drive in the comfort of an airconditioned bus to Johannesburg, now officially known as Jo'burg, with lots of *antakshari* and singing,



along the way. We visited the Constitution Hill where we saw the prison where Mahatma Gandhi in 1906 and later Nelson Mandela were imprisoned. We got to see firsthand the harsh cruelties of modern history and the sufferings these freedom fighters had endured.

We were not as impressed with the Victoria Falls

that fall off the Zambezi River in Zimbabwe. Especially because of the dry season, the waters had dried up to some extent. In fact, the falls from the Zambia side were completely dry. Their rainy season starts in November.

All in all, we got a verbal rating as high as 9.5 (10 being the best) from many. Here's what some had to say.



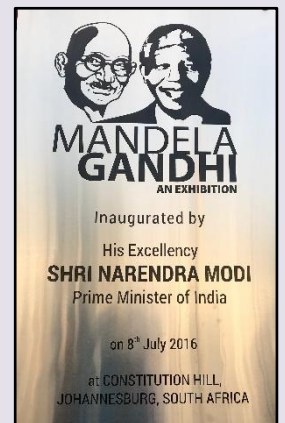
The whole trip was well planned and executed. Looking forward to the next trip. *Som Gupta*

Made many new friends. Our outlook of Africa has changed. *Ranjan Bhandari*

An amazing adventurous trip of a lifetime. Unforgettable. *Nina Ahuja*

My second trip with USAP. Wonderful experience. Made many new friends.

Navin Kadakia



OUR CHINA TRIP – SEPTEMBER 2019

Arun Jatkar

If asked to describe in one word, it was “**FABULOUS!**”
If asked to describe it by a phrase, “**IT WAS THE BIGGEST BANG FOR THE BUCK!**”



All 26 of us became very good friends during this tour. An Indian couple from Charlotte, NC was so impressed that they said they would like to join in future USAP tours.

Our tour guide, Mr. Varun Katoch, stayed with us all the time till the end. The local guides in each city were all English-speaking Chinese nationals. Some of the highlights of our trip included a show near Olympics stadium that stunned us when 800 tons of water came cascading during the performance. Tiananmen Square, unfortunately, was closed to visitors due to the upcoming celebrations of the 70th anniversary of People's Republic of

China. The Forbidden City was impressive with the sheer spaciousness of the imperial residence.

Visit to the Great Wall of China was simply marvelous. Help was available for some seniors with joint problems to cover part of the distance. Our team leader Chetan Patel led us to perform **Garba** dance and to sing **Jana-Gana-Mana** on the Great Wall of China to the entertainment of all other tourists. We all wished we had more time on hand for the visit to the Imperial Summer Palace that afternoon. The excitement of travelling on a 200-mph high speed train journey from Beijing to Xi'an was unparalleled.

The Terra Cotta Warriors museum in Xi'an is famous world over. It was being mobbed when we visited it. So, moving fast was imperative.

The Reed Flute Caverns in Guilin were a special treat. We enjoyed the day-time river cruise on Half-Lee river, and a nighttime river cruise on Ronghu river. We saw how the fishermen here skillfully (or cruelly??) use the cormorant birds for catching fish. The West street in Guilin is like the 6th Ave. in New York city and offers a welcome change of scenery. We had a great time at the Elephant Trunk Hill.



Shanghai was a great experience in itself. Cruise on the Huang Pu river was dazzling, to say the least. It offers a vista of a modern and commercial China that totally dispels the notion of China as a third world country. And Shanghai is one of the only three cities in the entire world to boast of a Maglev train, which we got to ride to the Shanghai airport – travelling 30 km in just 8 minutes!

I must say this tour was the best trip I ever had, despite the mishap I suffered in Beijing, that caused a contusion on my lower back. Kudos to Chetan Patel, Kiran Bakshi and our tour guide Varun Katoch for turning this tour into a most memorable journey.





AFRICA – A Memorable journey

~ Dilip Desai

The excitement of going to Africa had begun many months before the tour. Finally the day arrived. To catch a very early flight, people started arriving at Pittsburgh airport by 3:00 am. At the other end in Nairobi, our Tour Manager Aman Banon with Four 4x4 Jeeps was waiting for us at the Kenyatta International Airport. Nairobi was once the capital of British East Africa. We all were looking forward to the exciting days ahead to Masai Mara Game Reserve. The Masai Mara National Park is a large game park in Kenya, 580 Sq. Miles contiguous with the Serengeti National Park, Tanzania. The Masai Mara lies in the Great Rift Valley, approximately 5,600 kilometers long from Ethiopia's Red Sea through Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi and into Mozambique.

All members of the Big Five (lion, leopard, elephant, rhino and buffalo) are found in the Masai Mara. The park is famous for the Great Migration, when thousands of wildebeest, zebra, and gazelle travel to and from the Serengeti, from July through October. During our three ½ day outings in Masai Mara Park, we had captivating game-viewing experience. Spotted a heard of over a dozen lions called "prides" – A Lion family that may include up to three males, a dozen or so females, and their young. In addition to lions, we also saw Cheetah and abundant of various animals such as Giraffes, Antelopes, Gazelles, Impalas, Warthogs, Zebras, Elephants, Mongooses, Hyenas, Baboons, Ostriches and wide variety of birds. Next two days we spent at Lake Naivasha and Lake Nakuru. Lake Naivasha is a haven for birders, lies at the highest point of the Great Rift Valley. It offers black and white rhinoceros but mainly known for thousands of Flamingos which ring the lake.



Next destination was Cape Town, South Africa. We visited Signal Hill, one of the most famous spots in Cape Town. Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens was next where a Treetop Canopy Walkway gave visitors the opportunity to experience the forest from high above the ground. Next day we departed for the Cape of Good Hope Nature Reserve along one of South Africa's most scenic routes, passing Hout Bay where we enjoyed a cruise to Seal Island, to view thousands of seals swimming, playing and lounging on the rocky island. Next stop was the penguin colony at Boulders Beach. Cape Point marks the south western tip of the African continent. This is where two oceans meet – the cold waters of the Atlantic Ocean on the west and the warmer Indian Ocean waters on the east. The new lighthouse at the Cape Point is the most powerful in the world, beams an electric light of 19 million candle power across the ocean.



Overland tour of the Garden Route offered beautiful scenery. We explored the charming town of Knysna built on the banks of a Lagoon and had a very pleasant boat ride. Town of Oudtshoorn is the ostrich capital of the world. Visiting working ostrich farm gave a chance to come face to face with the biggest bird in the world. Next was the Cango Caves offering fascinating limestone formations. It reminded us of US caves like Luray Caverns. Next stop was Johannesburg; key place we visited was the Constitution Hill. It is a former prison most famous for housing many prominent political activists such as Nelson and Winnie Mandela, Mahatma Gandhi and many others.

Final leg of our vacation included a flight to Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. A sundowner cruise on the Zambezi River offered the view of a host of animals and birds. Next day, we went on a full day trip to Chobe National Park, Botswana. A full day Safari package included a Cruise on the Chobe River and a Game Drive in the world famous Chobe National Park, home to one of the largest game concentrations including hundreds if not thousands of elephants we saw in one day. We spotted crocodiles buffalos, antelopes, impalas, and several hippos. On the last day, we had a tour of the Victoria Falls, the largest and very majestic looking waterfall anywhere in the world. Overall the tour was very memorable one, with so many sweet memories including singing, dancing and playing Antakshari in the bus - will be cherished for a lifetime.



USAP HAS A NEW WEBSITE

Dilip Desai



USAP is excited to introduce our redesigned website www.USAofPittsburgh.org

It is in its final stages of completion and being fine-tuned as this newsletter is getting ready. The primary objectives of our redesigned website efforts were focused on developing the new site from the ground up, improving the aesthetics by refreshing the look and feel of the site, simplifying the content, providing our visitors an easier way to learn about USAP's services, offering updates on upcoming, past and ongoing events, and adding new resources for you to use!

We started the redesign project with some ambitious goals, from offering details on Ongoing, Past and Upcoming Events to improving the site's responsiveness. The new website provides a clear message about who we are and has a clear,

consistent navigation system to make it easier to find the information you're looking for.

We encourage you to explore the new site and tell us how we're doing - your feedback is very important to us as we are constantly striving to add more value to your USAP membership.

GOLFERS HAD FUN THIS SUMMER

Sudhir Patel



USAP golfers had a golf outing on August 17th, 2019 at Scenic Valley Golf Club. We had good turnout of eighteen golfers, including three ladies. Everyone had a great time and the weather was perfect.

We enjoyed a Subway lunch before the game and a delicious dinner provided by Delhi Cafe.

Few ladies who were not golfers showed up early and played card games and helped serve the dinner.

BIRTHDAY AND WEDDING-ANNIVERSARY CELEBRANTS JULY-AUGUST 2019



SHOW & TELL OF VACATION PICTURES DINNER NIGHT Saturday, December 7, 2019

It's not only the interesting pictures but the narrator and the narrative that accompanies them, that would make this a truly memorable evening. There'll be lots to learn as well. Everyone, including the non-vacationers are welcome. It will follow the Annual General Body Meeting on December 7, 2019 at 5 pm. You can make it into a BYOB dinner night out. Please mark your calendar for this fun filled evening.

NEW MEMBERS

July–September 2019



Charter members:

- Ranjan & Meena Bhandari
- Khozem Mogri

Annual members:

- Manu & Nilima Badlani
- Dharam & Shashi Batish
- Mohan & Sudershan Chabra
- Nikhil & Mala Dave
- Satish & Varsha Dhagat
- Amit & Sonali Ghosh
- Gaurang & Savitri Gosai
- Mohinder & Anita Gupta
- Som & Sadhna Gupta
- Sumedha Nagpal
- Chandrakant & Kumud Patel
- Dinesh Patel
- Pravin & Hansa Patel
- Kiran Patil
- Arun Potdar
- Gurdev & Surinderjeet Purewal
- Pramila Ragoowansi
- Virendra & Monika Soi
- Praful & Madhuri Vora
- Saroj Wadhwa

2019 MEMBERSHIP

Currently, USAP paid membership stands at 201 and is growing.

Few of the past members have yet to renew their membership. We have recognized the issue is complacency and the hassle to renew the membership every year.

To help resolve the problem, the Executive Board at its recent meeting voted for following plan of action.

1. To keep the annual dues at \$30 per person.
2. Offer a four-year membership for \$100 per person, applicable on a calendar year basis (January to December).
3. Charter Member (Lifetime Membership) at \$500 per person.

The membership for all new members who will join in the fourth quarter of the calendar year will be extended to the following year.

USAP needs your support and thus, your membership is extremely important.

YEAR END CHARITABLE DONATIONS



If you are considering a year-end charity, please consider donating towards United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh, 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, Dilip Desai,
Khozem Mogri

GENERAL ELECTIONS

The current Executive Board has served for two years. As per the Bylaws, there will an election of officers, President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer at the time of the Annual General Body Meeting.

A Nomination Committee with Jamnadas Thakkar, Chairman, and Kiran Bakshi and Ved Kaushik serving as committee members, was appointed by the President at the Executive Board Meeting held on October 2, 2019. Chetan Ladani was appointed as an Election Officer.

The Nomination Committee will seek nominations from the membership and submit a slate of nominees for approval and election by the members at the Annual General Body Meeting. The Board shall appoint the new committee chairs at the Executive Board Meeting to be held in January 2020.

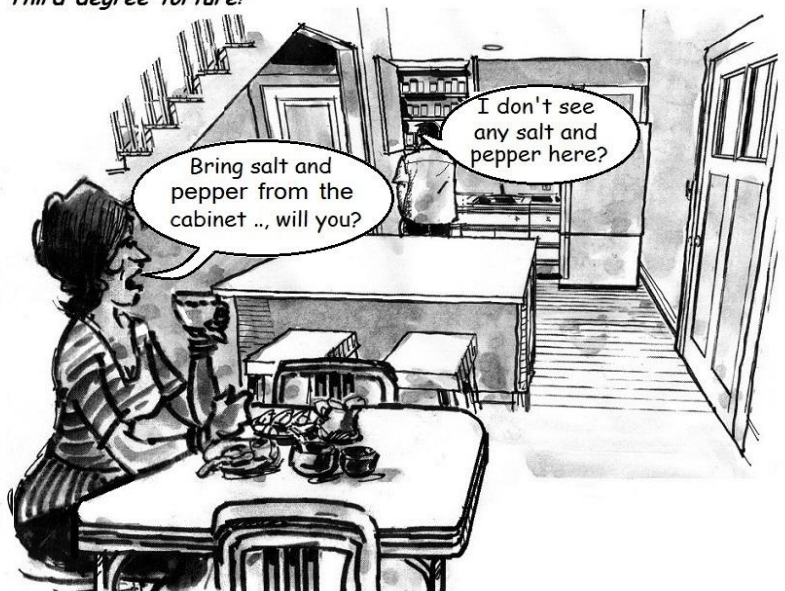
The Annual General Body Meeting & Elections will be held on:

Saturday, December 7, 2019, 5 pm at India Community Center

The meeting will be followed by a dinner and a **SHOW & TELL OF VACATION PICTURES** by members who have recently returned from their trips to Africa and China.

SENIOR HUMOR

Third degree torture!



How come you can't find it? Have you done anything right in your life? What a waste! I knew you won't find it... so I brought it with me!



Mahendra Shah is a professional cartoonist of international fame. He is a keen observer of human nature, especially the behavior of the Indian diaspora. His insight and sharp wit are evident in his many cartoons. He has over 2,000 cartoons to his credit, has published books on cartoons, and his cartoons have been featured in many publications both in the US and abroad. He has offered to humor the seniors with his cartoons in the Senior Humor column on a regular basis.

AYURVEDIC APPROACH TO HEALTHY AGING

TADKA SPICES AND THEIR HEALING EFFECTS – PART 2

Dr. Lina Thakar, Ayurveda Doctor
www.AyurvedInstituteUSA.com

In the July 2019 issue of USAP News, we discussed the 3 Tadka spices (Mustard Seeds - *Rai*, Cumin Seeds – *Jeera* and Asafetida – *Hing*) that are not only flavorful, but also very helpful for digestive health. In this article, we shall discuss three more spices commonly used in Indian cooking – Turmeric – *Haldi*, Cayenne Powder – *Lal Mirch powder* and Coriander Powder – *Dhania Powder*.

TURMERIC (*HALDI*)

Haldi is one of the most important healing medicines in Ayurvedic pharmacopeia. It exerts a protective effect on the intestinal walls as it heals intestinal inflammation. New research has shown that it prevents atherosclerosis (hardening of arteries) and thus aids in brain circulation and helpful in preventing dementia. It heals wounds and promotes good skin complexion. Haldi in form of capsules or tablets is the most incorrect way to consume haldi. Even the turmeric extract curcumin is not recommended. Haldi is beneficial only when it is used in its WHOLE form.

There are only two ways of using haldi to be beneficial.

1. Sauteing turmeric root powder in heated ghee or oil, the way it is used in tadka seasoning.
2. Adding turmeric root powder to mild as turmeric milk (haldi dudh)

CAYENNE POWDER (*MIRCHI*)

It is one of the most important spices to bring flavors to foods. Mirchi in the right amount in our daals, vegetables and curries is what is so tasteful and stimulating to our taste buds. Mirchi is very healing in two ways. One, it removes the sticky mucus from our guts, hence it's a cleanser. Secondly, it also stimulates the heart. It is considered mild cardi tonic as it promotes heart circulation and stimulates the heart.

CORIANDER SEEDS (*DHANIA*) POWDER

According to Ayurveda, coriander has the most “cooling” powers among the spices. Coriander powder offers an immediate “cooling effect” and counters the “heating effects” of Cayenne Powder. It helps maintain the temperature of the body. It is called “*MUTRAL*” as it supports urinary functions and is very healing for the urinary system. It clears cellular toxins by carrying to the urinary bladder and expelling through the urine.

Tadka spices add flavor not only to our food but really, to our life itself!

Ayurveda is an age-old traditional medicine of India. With its holistic approach to wellness, it has valuable contributions to make towards healthy aging. Dr. (Vaidya) Lina Thakar is an Ayurveda Doctor, an Integrative Wellness Consultant, International Speaker and a best-selling author. She has kindly agreed to write periodically in USAP News on topics pertaining to healthy aging.

LIFE CAN BEGIN AT 60

Chandra Pujara

Life can begin at 60, it is all in your hands!



Ten mantras to age gracefully and make life pleasant after retirement.

1. Never say I am old:

There are three ages, chronological, biological, and psychological. The first is calculated based on our date of birth; the second is determined by the health conditions; the third is how old we feel we are. While we don't have control over the first, we can take care of our health with good diet, smile, laughing, exercise and a cheerful attitude. A positive attitude and optimistic thinking can reverse the third age.

2. Health is wealth:

If you really love your kith and kin, taking care of your health should be your priority. Thus, you will not be a burden to them. Have an annual health check-up and take the prescribed medicines regularly. Do take health insurance coverage.

3. Money is important:

Money is essential for meeting the necessities of life, keeping good health and earning family respect and security. Don't spend beyond your means even for your children. You have lived for them all through and it is time you enjoyed a harmonious life with your spouse. If your children are grateful and they take care of you, you are blessed. But, never take it for granted.

4. Relaxation and recreation:

The most relaxing and recreating forces are good sleep, music and laughter. learn to sleep well, love good music and see the lighter side of life, cultivate healthy relationships with others.

5. Time is precious:

It is almost like holding a horse's reins. When they are in your hands, you can control them. Imagine that every day you are born again. Yesterday is a cancelled cheque. Tomorrow is a promissory note. Today is ready cash - use it profitably. Live this moment; live it fully, now, in the present time.

6. Change is the only permanent thing:

Change is inevitable. Embrace change. Consider change as progress, and a sure way to stay young.

7. Enlightened selfishness:

All of us are basically selfish. Whatever we do, we expect something in return. Focus on internal satisfaction and the happiness we derive by doing good for others. Perform a random act of kindness daily, and do not expect anything in return.

8. Forget and forgive:

Don't be bothered too much about others' behavior. We are not spiritual enough to show our other cheek when we are slapped on one. Learn to forgive and forget. That is a sure way to keep peace and harmony in our life.

9. Everything has a purpose:

Take life as it comes. Accept yourself as you are and accept others for what they are. Everybody is unique and is right in his own way.

10. Overcome the fear of death:

We all know that one day we must leave this world. Still we are afraid of death. We think that our spouse and children will be unable to withstand our loss. No doubt they may miss you, but time heals everything. Accept death as a reality of life; and prepare your family to accept this ultimate truth.