

## **President's Report 2005**

This report covers the period 05 March 2005 - 29 January 2006, which is a month shorter than usual. The contents cover the work done by the entire committee consisting of Jay Nagendran, Sunil Ranasinghe, Lakshaman Samarasinghe, Gothami Wickramasekera, Ransirimal Fernando, Anil Fernando (until Oct.) and I. There were two vacancies Director of Social & Recreational Activities and Director of Cultural Affairs, which we could not fill due to lack of interest from the membership to take up positions. Despite these key vacancies, I believe the committee was able to accomplish much and we had a very successful year. This was due to the fact that we were able to work as a cohesive team and I am happy to state that once decisions were made all followed them without any dissention. As promised at the beginning of the year, I believe we put in place structure, process, and accountability.

There were six committee meetings in all and the mid year general meeting. We had four major events – the New Year function in April, Heritage Festival & Calgary Encounters in August, and the Appreciation Night in November. In spite of limited resources at executive committee level, they all were well-organized events. Kudos should go to Gothami, Anil & Lakshaman, Sunil, Ransirimal and Jay who were the lead persons from the committee in these events. The Heritage Festival also had a live wire in Lal Weera who did the Arts & Crafts section on a grand scale. The annual picnic in July was a well-attended activity and so were the First Friday gatherings, which had an average attendance of around 20 persons. I thank Upali Samarakoon for organizing the First Friday gatherings. The spring road-cleaning project was a success and the fall road-cleaning project was cancelled in consultation with the City of Edmonton due to road construction.

Seniors functions were very successful during the year in review and the Coordinators, Anil (until October) and Dilu from then on, deserve special mention for all their extra efforts which made this event a much looked forward to activity for all seniors.

We had a very efficient Building Management Committee consisting of Lakshaman Samarasinghe, Mahinda Witharana, Ranjan Kumburutenne, Ransirimal Fernando, and Upali Samarakoon who did the day-to-day management of the building on behalf of the executive committee. We should be thankful to them for the very effective service provided in keeping with the established practices.

In keeping with the decision made at the mid year general meeting, we equally distributed the approximately \$4400 we had collected for Tsunami Relief to the PIN Foundation and Devapathiraja College in Sri Lanka. We have a written update from the PIN Foundation on what they have done and a verbal update from Devapathiraja College (a written update is on the way).

I must thank the membership for their generous contributions to the Nelson Appuhamy bereavement fund that enabled the association to give a cheque for \$2500 to the Appuhamy family. Lal Weera who volunteered to coordinate the phoning / collection of pledges supported by Ramona Fernando and Neil Hewapathirana deserves our thanks. The executive committee was able to collect all the moneys that were pledged.

We have worked within the spending limits given to us at the last AGM, thanks to the huge profit made through our food, pop, and tea sections at the Heritage. A point to consider in the future will be the additional expense that we have to incur if we are to

hold functions at community league halls, which are now asking for liability insurance and a liquor license. It may be cheaper to have functions in catering facilities such as what we did for our appreciation night this year, so that we would not incur these additional expenses. However, the membership fee alone is not at all adequate to cover the expenses incurred at these functions and we have to look at charging extra if we are to be sustainable.

As you can see from our financial statements, the source of major revenue to us is the casino funding and therefore we must do everything in our power to preserve that. We have been awarded two days (March 14 & 15, 2006) at the Casino Edmonton in Argyll Road and will need your help to manage the manpower requirements. The 5 main positions have been filled with Asoke Weerasinghe as General Manager. These past few years, people who cannot get their needs addressed to their full satisfaction through the association have been going to the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission with their problems. This is a violation of our own code of ethics and should be discouraged and stopped. The AGLC is not a body to arbitrate issues within associations and our membership must realize that these irresponsible actions will only lead to our own association getting blacklisted by the AGLC and our source of funding put in jeopardy. There is a misnomer that Casino funds are available to do anything we like. I would urge you to take in a GAIN session (or download the manual from the AGLC website) conducted by the AGLC where they clearly explain what can and cannot be done. The main thing is that there is a process and a way to get things done and running to the AGLC individually with our internal issues is not the way. The AGLC is a very understanding and accommodating body. They want process to be followed before spending money and if the executive committee takes the time and effort to write to them with details of their intentions and rationale for use of proceeds, they most likely approve the use without too many questions. Payments over \$1000 to be sent out of Alberta and any amount to be sent out of Canada, requires prior written approval of the AGLC.

I would like to say a big thank you to my fellow committee members Jay, Sunil, Lakshaman, Gothami, Ransirimal, and Anil without whom we would not have been able to have this successful year. My task was made easy by the fact that I could depend on the team – Jay for sound advice at all times despite his very busy work schedule, Sunil for accurate and concise record keeping, Lakshaman for being methodical and following process for all financial matters, Gothami for bringing in the feminine perspective to all committee matters, Ransirimal for promptly responding to information sharing electronically, and Anil for his willing support to the committee as long as he was able to. Their spouses too deserve special thanks for giving them the leeway to volunteer their time to the association amidst very busy schedules. I would also like to thank Sharmini & Sandamali who did the same for me and also gave me all their support during the year. Last but not least, I would like to thank you the membership for electing me to this position and I hope that I was able to meet up to your expectations.

This report need not be formally proposed and seconded, as it is personal to me. However, I am open to any questions or comments from the house. Before doing that, I would like to ask any of the present committee members whether they want to add anything.

Chris Senaratne  
President SLCFA 2005  
29 January 2006