

AZ KONKANI ASSOCIATION

2023



Photo captured at the Arizona Konkani Association Annual Picnic in 2023

A Warm Welcome

We would like to welcome everyone to our first official Arizona Konkani Association (AZKA) newsletter. In these newsletters, we will look back at our year together. Thank you to all our AZKA members for making 2023 a year to remember and cherish.

2023 Executive Committee

In 2023 AZKA assembled their first official Executive Committee. Thank you to all our former board members for your efforts in planning these incredible events for our AZKA members to enjoy. The events would not have been such a huge success if it were not for your valuable contribution.

President: Shilpa Rao

Treasurer: Sankalpa Shanbhag

Deputy Treasurer: Amita Prabhu

Director, Food Coordination: Shreeja Baliga

Deputy Director, Food Coordination: Akshata Bhandarkar

Setup Specialist: Hema Prabhu

Cultural Activity & Entertainment Associate: Vyshali Mallya

Choodi Pooja Associates: Sasikala Kamath & Gopika Pai

Rescue Squad: Yogesh Kamath

2024-2026 Executive Committee

At the end of 2023, our 2024-2026 Executive Committee members were elected. A hearty congratulations to all who were elected. We are excited to see what these next two years will bring!

Presidents: Shreeja & Guru Baliga

Treasurer: Sasikala Kamath

Deputy Treasurer: Hema Prabhu

Director, Food Coordination: Gopika Pai

Deputy Directors, Food Coordination: Pavithra & Shirish Kamath

Cultural Activity & Entertainment Associate: Vyshali Mallya

Cultural Activity & Choodi Puja Associate Preeti Kamat

Website Manager: Nithin Jakrebet

PR Specialist: Tanisha Baliga

Arizona Konkani Association Annual Spring Picnic

AZKA held their annual Spring Picnic on April 2nd at the Kiwanis Park in Tempe. We are so excited to say that we hit a new record of attendance with over 100 attendees this year! We all enjoyed our time by sharing delectable food made by our lovely members. In addition, we held a variety of activities such as a "Toot Your Horn" session to get to know our newer members better, played some games, cricket, badminton, and volleyball, danced to Bollywood music, and of course indulged in the obligatory humorous panchadik. We are so glad to have had such a success this year thanks to all of our new and old AZKA members, which is why we are even more excited to announce the AZKA Spring Picnic for 2024!



Choodi Puja & SVK Fundraiser

The ladies of the AZKA came together to perform the special Konkani ritual of Choodi Puja at the Sri Venkata Krishna Kshetra (SVK) Temple in Tempe on August 20th. These women brought their

AZKA 2024 EVENTS

YEAR: 2024

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH
		<p>2ND SPRING PICNIC 10:30-4:00 PM EL DORADO PARK</p>
		<p>16TH FMSC VOLUNTEERING 2:30-4:00PM</p>
APRIL	MAY	JUNE
JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER
	<p>CHOODI PUJA TBD</p>	
OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
	<p>AMGELE DIWALI TBD</p>	

hand-crafted choodis to worship Tulsi devi via devotion, aarti, and bhajans. This beautiful tradition of theirs was followed by the divine SVK prasad.

During August 2023, AZKA families hosted their inaugural fundraiser for SVK and were able to raise a remarkable amount of over \$4000! We thank our AZKA families for their kindness and generosity on behalf of the SVK Temple.



SewaDiwali Fundraiser

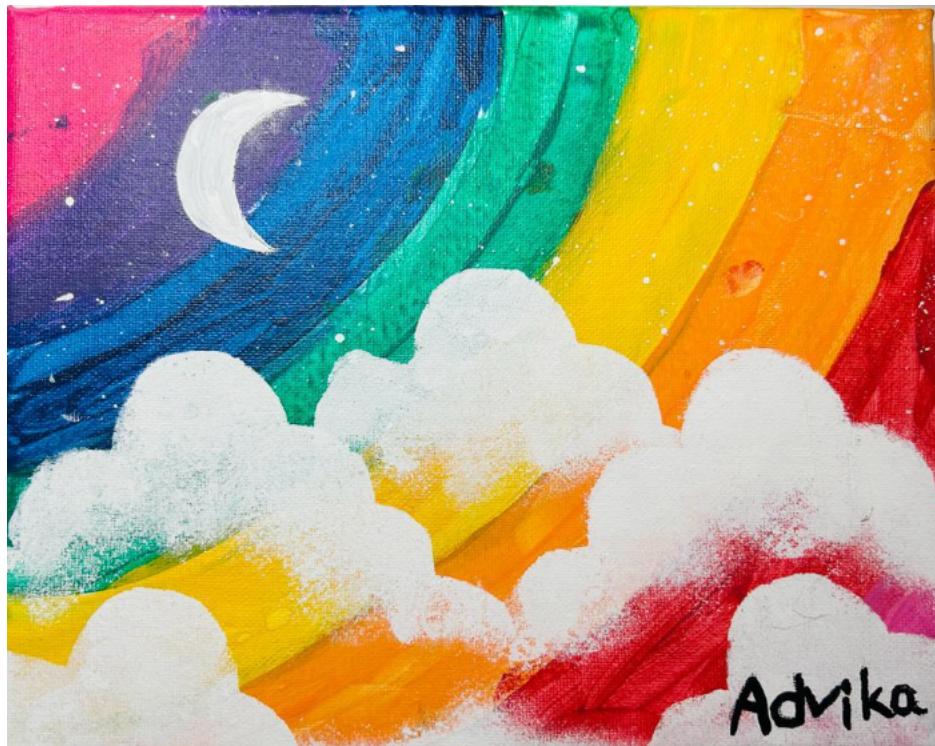
Following the AZKA SVK Fundraiser, our members also partnered with the SewaDiwali organization during November 2023, to gather food and staple items to assist those in need residing in the Navajo Nation in Flagstaff. Our efforts were contributed to SewaDiwali's total of 9300 pounds in food donations and warm clothing. These donations were able to be split amongst three beneficiaries.

Events to Look Forward to in 2024!

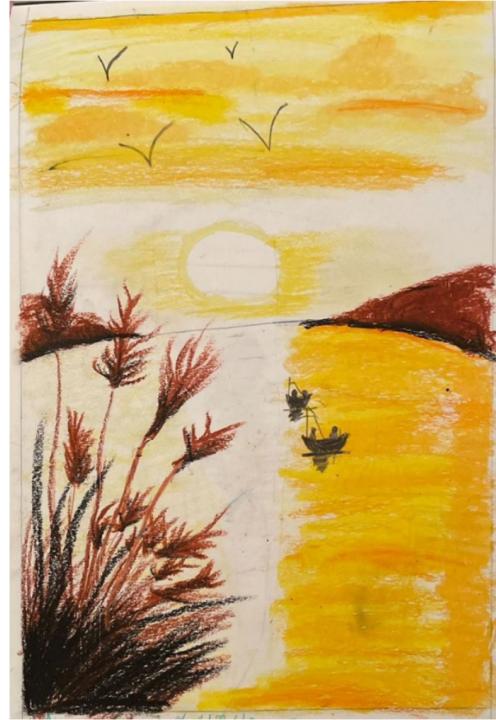
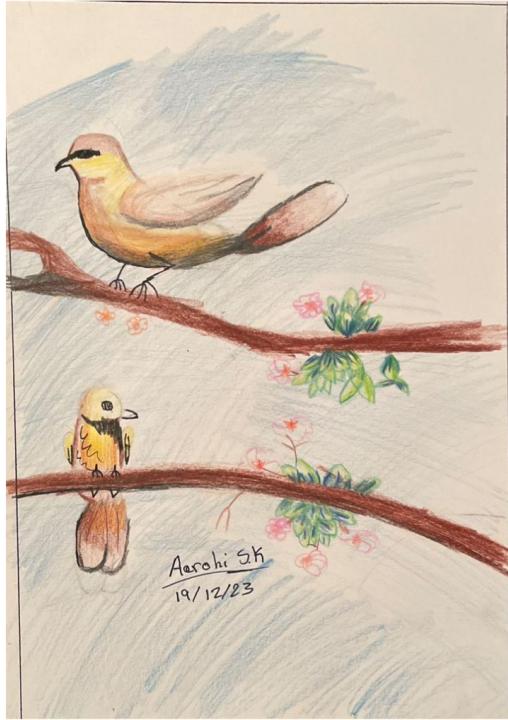
Events with more details to be determined will be updated throughout the year, thank you for your patience!

AZKA Talent Spotlight

For our 2023 AZKA newsletter, we have asked our youth members to share their talent with the rest of our community. We are so proud of all these talented children and could not be happier to have their talent be a part of our community!



Art by Advika Shenoy, Age 5



Art by Aarohi Kamat, Age 10



Art by Vibha Bhat, Age 12

The Secret Cave

Story written by Prachi Shenoy, Age 9

Once upon a time, there were two girls named Prachi and Nikita. They lived in India. One day, their besties Aanya, Rushi, and Vibha came over to their house to play.

On their way there, they discovered a cave! They ran to Prachi and Nikita's house knocked on the door, and Prachi opened it. Nikita was standing next to Prachi. They ran in, and Aanya said,

"There is a secret Cave near the temple! Do you want to go check it out?"

Prachi and Nikita said,

"Yes!"

So, they were off! After about 20 minutes of walking, they finally reached. Vibha said,

"We're here!!"

Rushi said," Wow! This is a really old temple."

Suddenly, a man started running towards them! The five friends jumped. The man said,

"Hello. Would you like to come inside the temple?"

Nikita said," No thank you."

The man said," Okay."

Vibha asked," How old is this temple?"

The man said," 9,000 years old."

The five friends said," Wow!! That is really old!"

Then they heard a voice. The man vanished. Nikita said," Prachi, I'm scared."

Prachi said," It's ok Nikita."

Rushi said," Can we go in the cave now?"

Aanya said," Yeah. Let's go inside."

They climbed in. They saw a little light. Vibha said," I see a very faint light. Should we follow it?"

Prachi said," I guess."

They followed the light. Then the path split into 4 paths. They didn't know where to go. Everyone except Aanya stood in front of a path, Aanya called Vibha's name!

They went in the path on the farthest left, which was the one Vibha was standing in front of. They started running because the light got bigger Rushi and Nikita were leading the way.

They ran and ran until they ran into a room in their playhouse, they found out that their parents made a pathway to the treehouse. They never found out who the strange man at the beginning of the tunnel was.

Being Amchi

Poem by Aanya Nayak, Age 10

I love that I'm an Amchi, and I have to say,
Speaking a different language is fun in a lot of ways.
Being a different culture, having fun rituals,
Makes me a very unique individual!
Speaking our language is always exciting,
Learning new words, it is definitely enlightening.
Having Amchi friends, playing together,
Do I ever get bored with them? Nope! Never!
Sometimes I forget to speak Amchi in our home,
But my parents always remind me to, that is known.
Wearing kurtas, kurtis, saris and dresses,
Do I love dressing like this? Absolutely yes!
Going to temples, traveling so far,
Kids in school ask so much, I feel like a star!
I am very different from kids in school too,
But I'm proud of my culture, that is always true.
Celebrating Diwali and being so festive,
How far I've gotten with speaking, now that is impressive.
Again, I love that I'm an Amchi and I have to say,
I absolutely love it in so many ways!

Newsletter & AZKA Talent Spotlight Compiled

by Tanisha Baliga