

BAGC Survey 2007

by Shanku Ghosh

The first ever members survey is now history. Before we discuss the results, let's first review the context. For those of you either new to BAGC or didn't see the green insert in the last newsletter, BAGC 2007 Committee conducted a membership survey to understand members' interests, priorities and also a bit of demographic data. In terms of demographics:

- 89 families took the survey representing 185 adults and 90 children - 275 total.
- 45 members expressed interest in participating in one or more committees with Cultural (18) and DB/Website/Email (10) receiving the most interest.
- Bengali Proficiency was solicited from the respondents. The following table summarizes the current proficiency of respondents:

| Bengali Proficiency | | Speak | Read | Write |
|---------------------|------------|-------|------|-------|
| All | Count | 184 | 135 | 123 |
| | Percentage | 67% | 49% | 45% |
| Adults | Count | 140 | 122 | 118 |
| | Percentage | 76% | 66% | 64% |
| Kids | Count | 44 | 13 | 5 |
| | Percentage | 49% | 14% | 6% |

In addition to demographics, input was also solicited on proposed 2007 activities and longer-term priorities. The following chart summarizes the overall interest in proposed 2007 activities.

| | Saraswati Puja | Naba Barsha/BSD | Picnic | Special Star Event | Children's Camp | Tournament | Parade | F/A Cultural Function | Children's Day | Overnight Camping | Mohalaya | Durga Puja | Kali Puja |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------|------------|------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Attend (Number of Families) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Yes | 54 | 46 | 33 | 20 | 10 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 21 | 6 | 20 | 63 | 54 |
| No | 7 | 7 | 10 | 7 | 26 | 26 | 25 | 22 | 16 | 25 | 8 | 2 | 4 |
| Maybe | 5 | 10 | 18 | 28 | 16 | 15 | 21 | 24 | 14 | 16 | 12 | 3 | 8 |
| Total | 66 | 63 | 61 | 55 | 52 | 48 | 51 | 55 | 51 | 47 | 40 | 68 | 66 |
| Percentage | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Yes | 82% | 73% | 54% | 36% | 19% | 15% | 10% | 16% | 41% | 13% | 50% | 93% | 82% |
| No | 11% | 11% | 16% | 13% | 50% | 54% | 49% | 40% | 31% | 53% | 20% | 3% | 6% |
| Maybe | 8% | 16% | 30% | 51% | 31% | 31% | 41% | 44% | 27% | 34% | 30% | 4% | 12% |
| Weighted Average (WA) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Yes (3) | 162 | 138 | 99 | 60 | 30 | 21 | 15 | 27 | 63 | 18 | 60 | 189 | 162 |
| No (-3) | -21 | -21 | -30 | -21 | -78 | -78 | -75 | -66 | -48 | -75 | -24 | -6 | -12 |
| Maybe (1) | 5 | 10 | 18 | 28 | 16 | 15 | 21 | 24 | 14 | 16 | 12 | 3 | 8 |
| Sum of WA | 146 | 127 | 87 | 67 | -32 | -42 | -39 | -15 | 29 | -41 | 48 | 186 | 158 |
| Rank | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 10 | 13 | 11 | 9 | 8 | 12 | 7 | 1 | 2 |

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the survey was the membership's perspective on BAGC's long-term priorities. The chart below summarizes the membership's perspective in terms of the top three and the bottom three priorities.

| | Improve Current Events/Activities | Bengali Cultural Education of Younger Generations | Indian Religious Education of Younger Generations | Mega Cultural Events (NABC, Bangamela) | Smaller Scaled Cultural Events | Establish Heritage Center for future generations |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|--|--------------------------------|--|
| Alignment (Number of Families) | | | | | | |
| Strongly Agree | 20 | 28 | 15 | 11 | 17 | 26 |
| Agree | 30 | 29 | 23 | 26 | 28 | 17 |
| Neutral | 10 | 5 | 20 | 11 | 13 | 15 |
| Disagree | 1 | 0 | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 61 | 62 | 61 | 57 | 60 | 63 |
| Weighted Average | | | | | | |
| Strongly Agree | 9 | 180 | 252 | 135 | 99 | 153 |
| Agree | 3 | 90 | 87 | 69 | 78 | 84 |
| Neutral | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Disagree | -3 | -3 | 0 | -6 | -12 | -6 |
| Strongly Disagree | -9 | 0 | 0 | -9 | -45 | 0 |
| Sum of WA | 267 | 339 | 189 | 120 | 231 | 258 |
| Long-Term Priority Rank | 2 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 |

Now What? What do we do with all this info?

The 2007 committee is reviewing the information that has been gathered to refine our plans for the current year and also to mobilize around the longer-term priorities. The top three long-term priorities are the active focus areas for the committee. You will be receiving emails in this regard shortly from various leads appointed by the committee soliciting your participation in shaping the solutions for these priorities.

You may recognize that one of the consequences of progressing multiple priorities is we need to be organized differently than we are today. To date, we've typically pursued one major project over multiple-years alongside the yearly committee that is appointed. Going forward, if we pursue projects involving potentially large capital expenses while our yearly operational budget continues to grow, our current structure of a yearly committee, potentially multiple project committees and SFC doesn't provide sufficient accountability, continuity and overall governance structure that is required. We need to begin considering a more common form of operating model that is employed by more mature organizations – a Board of Directors.

I hope you recognize the long road that is ahead of us. While the 2007 committee is excited about going down that road, it can only do so with your whole-hearted support. Let's come together and build on the momentum and the hopes expressed within this survey and work to build a better tomorrow.

2007 Summer Events

The 2007 summer promises to be a packed and exciting one. Look what's coming up and submit your names for events of your interest. Events 3, 5 and 6 will be held only if there are sufficient members interested.

1. **Picnic:** Venue: Twin Lake (Palatine)
Date: 16th June
Target: ALL members **Cost:** GFP members free, Non-GFP members \$ 25 /adult, \$ 15 /child
Beautiful lake next to 53 / 290 Highway, off Northwest Hwy exit. Day-long food and fun in lush green park in summer sunshine. Cricket, volleyball, soccer match for adults and teens. Fun games for children. Delectable picnic food. Park has boating, fishing, golfing facilities at low charges. Free volleyball, basketball courts, children's play area and restaurant where you can buy snacks, soda, beer and wine. **Inform** attending to: treasurer@bagc.net OR president@bagc.net
2. **Children's Day:** Venue TBD, Date: July/August weekend TBD
Target: Members' children 5-17 yrs **Cost:** All members free.
Afternoon of talent show of children in performing arts (songs, music, dance, mime, skits) and fine arts (paintings, sketching, modeling). One or more of the following may also be added this year: Quiz, Antakshari, Spelling or Geography Bee, May be supplemented with inter-community dance program. **Inform:** Youth@bagc.net
3. **Children's Summer Camp:** Venue: Schaumburg Library, Dates: June 16th - August 19th
Target: Members children 5-12 yrs **Cost:** \$ 20 /one month, \$ 30 / 2 months per child. Discounts for children of same family.
Minimum Needed: 25 children
Camp will span over 10 Sundays from June 16th to August 19th. Classes will be held for 2 ½ hour each day from 2:00 PM. Children will be taught Bengali reading/writing, Indian literature, geography history; interim snacks break, followed by talent

development / fun session: artwork, dancing, singing, Indian story-telling etc.
Inform: Communityservice@bagc.net by April 14th giving parents and children's names, phone numbers, e-mail addresses.

4. **Independence Day Parade:** Devon Street, Date: Aug 18th
Target: ALL members **Cost:** Free for all members
BAGC will join other Indian communities in a procession with a float showing the heritage of Bengalis. You may perform on the float itself in singing, dancing or join the walkers in the procession. Snacks will be served to participants. **Inform:** Communityrelations@bagc.net
5. **Overnight Weekend Camping:** Venue: Indiana Dunes State Park, Dates: 24-25 August
Target: All Members **Cost:** \$ 40 /individuals, \$ 70/couple, \$ 100 / families
Minimum Needed: 20 families / individual members. Campers will travel on their own transport to Indian Dunes state park camp ground on Saturday Aug 25th for a weekend 'retreat' in Log cabins, stay overnight and return home on Sunday. Each cabin housing 8 persons will be shared by two families or more individual members. Campfires, boating, hiking, fishing, biking, movies at night, games, socializing fun. Dinner, breakfast, lunch will be served and included in the cost. **Inform:** treasurer@bagc.net OR president@bagc.net by April 14th
6. **Sports Tournament:** Venue: School/Park Dist grounds TBD, Date: Sept Weekend TBD
Target: All Members **Cost:** Free for members, **Minimum Needed:** 10 players for cricket/soccer team, 2 players / tennis team, 5 players/ volleyball. BAGC teams will play three other community teams in one or more of these depending on interest of members and outside communities interested: cricket, soccer, volleyball and tennis league matches. Refreshments will be served to participants. Trophies awarded to winning teams. **Inform:** sports@bagc.net by April 14th