



Sankar Narayanan, President from 2007 to 2010



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When I look back on my 12+ years of active and direct responsibilities as a member of the CMANA Board in various roles, many special and fond memories come up. I got introduced to and interested in, CMANA when we used strap our children into car seats, pack coloring books for them, and drive from CT to NJ for concerts missing an exit here and there, in the pre-GPS era!

I saw and felt how CMANA was serving the cause of CM, and so when I got a professional opportunity to move to NJ I not only grabbed it gleefully but also joined the Board as a co-opted Trustee, naively underestimating the amount of non-musical, mostly- logistical activities and the 30+ days of intense planning that goes in the background for every 3+ hour concert which, many times, the trustees do not have the luxury of sitting and enjoying!

In my full tenure I had the pleasure of teaming and working with 4 Presidents – Mr. T.V. Krishna, Ms. Asha Janardhan, Dr. Soundaram Ramaswami, and Dr. P.N. Aruna. In 2007 I was unanimously chosen as President with a 3-year term under the newly revised Constitution. I started with the appreciation that I was standing on the shoulder of many giants who had spear-headed CMANA before me – *“endarO mahAnubhAvulu andariki vandanamulu”*; I strived to continue many of the trends and momentum they had set but also to deviate and improvise as needed.

During my stint as President we continued to grow CMANA’s membership base, a majority of this growth was via parents becoming members around or before our flagship youth event – Great Composers Day (GCD). We also continued CMANA’s another long-standing and unique tradition of arranging the tours of up-and-coming artistes – we had a successful and satisfying tour Sikkil Gurucharan in 2008 and Ms Nisha Rajagopalan in 2009.

I was also privileged to chair an awards-committee and later felicitate Sangita Kalanidhi Madurai T. N. Sheshagopalan with the coveted SangeethaSaagara award in October 2007 which he followed by a delightful Harikatha on “Meenakshi Kalyanam” where Sri TNS demonstrating his multi-faceted vidwat in story-telling, slokas, puranas, music, singing, humor, historic and contemporary anecdotes, and so on!

A major administrative step we took in the right direction was shifting to electronic mailing of flyers and going paperless. This was based on member survey, anecdotal feedback, the societal allergy towards junk mails, and the like. This was a daunting shift that required collecting members’ emails and updating our database. This proved to be an on-going effort with multiple paper reminders and announcements. Thanks to subsequent re-design of the CMANA website is now largely a self-service activity.

In conclusion, I look back with satisfaction on these achievements but with the unfulfilled desire that much more could be done if we had 48 hours in a day, bottomless energy, and an army of volunteers.