



USAP News

United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh

www.USAofpittsburgh.org

Volume 1 Issue 2

April 2019

USAP'S FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL BODY MEETING



At the end of a very successful first year since its inception, USAP held its Annual General Body meeting (AGM) on 27th January 2019 at ICC to conduct the following business:

- Present Treasurer's report for year 2018
- Present President's Report regarding events organized during 2018
- Announce names of Executive Committee members
- Seek approval for:
 - Nominal increase in Annual Membership fee from \$25 to \$30 per ordinary member
 - Addition of 3 new committee chairs
 - Reduce AGM quorum requirement from 25% to 15%
 - Allow proxy voting at general body meetings
- Inform members:
 - USAP has been declared as Volunteer based, Non-profit, Federal Tax-Exempt Organization (EIN: 82-3787994) whereby all donations will qualify for tax deduction
 - Activities conducted during 2018
 - Upcoming activities for year 2019

Despite the inclement Pittsburgh winter weather, many members attended the annual General Body Meeting. Chetan Patel (President of USAP) highlighted the following:

- A total membership of 244 (with 31 Charter Members)
- Strong financial status of USAP with current net balance of \$29,000 which includes Charter Membership contributions of \$15,500 and donations of \$9,800
- Activities completed in 2018 and received a hearty response from the audience in terms of large attendance records. Memorable events include:
 - Organized tour of Eastern Europe
 - Kal Ki Yaadein – a musical public event with Bankim Pathak and group
 - Mother’s Day Special karaoke musical gala highlighting local talent
- Members unanimously approved the following:
 - Raising the annual membership fee from \$25 to \$30 per ordinary member to cover the cost of lunch at USAP events
 - Setting up of following three new committees:
 - Public Relations and Liaison
 - By-laws
 - Events Administration
 - Reduce AGM quorum from 25% to 15%
 - Allow proxy voting at general body meetings when members are unable to be physically present due to inclement weather or other reasons.

USAP EXECUTIVE BOARD - 2019

President:	Chetan Patel
Vice President:	Dilip Desai
Secretary:	Subash Ahuja
Treasurer:	Rajnikant Popat

USAP COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Membership:	Devayani Pandit
Life & Finance:	Girish Thakar
Health & Fitness:	Dr. Chetan Ladani
Hobby & Sports:	Jayant Mirani & Sudhir Patel
Cultural, Social & Humanitarian:	Chetan Patel
Tours & Travel:	Kiran Bakshi
Social Media & Publications:	Khozem Mogri
Public Relations & Liaison:	Ved Kaushik
By-Laws:	Dilip Desai
Event Administration:	Nilam Patel
Special Assignment (Talent, Ad hoc):	Juginder Luthra
Melody Makers (Special Interest Group):	Dilip Desai, Juginder Luthra, Nitin Merchant

If you have special skills or would like to volunteer your services to any committee, the committee chairs will be more than delighted to have you on board.

COLORECTAL CANCER SCREENING

APRIL 14, 2019, 10 am at ICC



The month of March was the Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. It is among the top 3 leading cause of cancer death in the United States. It's a shame to develop colorectal cancer today because it is a highly preventable and treatable disease.

To enlighten us on this important topic of health among the seniors, and especially the immigrant population from India, Shyam Thakkar, M.D., a native of Pittsburgh and who many of us know having grown up amongst us, has kindly accepted our invitation to speak to us despite his many other commitments.

Looking at his biography listed below, we could not have asked for a more qualified speaker on this subject. He will be open to asking any questions that are of concern to us.

Please mark your calendar for this important date and make sure to attend this important meeting. It could be a life saver information for some. Please share the information with your many friends as well.

Dr. Thakkar is Chief of Endoscopy at Allegheny Health Network, Associate Professor of Medicine, Temple University School of Medicine, and Adjunct Professor of Biomedical Engineering, Carnegie Mellon University. Administratively, he oversees the endoscopic services of Allegheny Health Network (AHN) including diagnostic and therapeutic procedures. He develops the vision and strategy of the Endoscopy Service Line at AHN. This service line includes a multidisciplinary collaboration between nurses, physicians, trainees, and administrators to advance clinical delivery, research, and innovation through his leadership.

His clinical practice focuses on advanced therapeutic endoscopy. He devotes a significant amount of time to clinical research, and has served as the principal investigator on numerous studies. His most recent research focuses on natural orifice surgery and optimizing colonoscopy. With regard to enhanced colonoscopy, Dr. Thakkar is the primary investigator in a project utilizing artificial intelligence. He has received several grants in this regard. Furthermore, he has been a primary investigator in a project directed at creating a novel snake robot for natural orifice surgery. He is also part of the first investigational team in Pennsylvania to perform the Per-Oral Endoscopic Myotomy(POEM) for Achalasia. Dr. Thakkar has additionally served as faculty at multiple international conferences including Ambassador to Vietnam for the American Society of Gastrointestinal Endoscopy where he taught hemostasis.

Dr. Thakkar received a BA with majors in Biology and Economics from Washington University St. Louis. He then went on to earn a Doctor of Medicine degree from Temple University. He completed Internal Medicine training at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center, and Gastroenterology training at the Allegheny General Hospital. He further completed a specialized advanced endoscopy fellowship at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, Harvard Medical School.

INDIA REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATION

USAP joined hands with local Indian organizations in celebrating Republic Day of India on January 26, 2019. Although India's Independence Day has been celebrated with great pomp and splendor by the Indian Nationality Room Committee for many years, this Republic Day of India prompted many local organizations, including the Gujarati Samaj, Maharashtra Mandal, Bengali Association, PIC-5K, Pittsburgh Cricket Association, Pitt Masti and Nandanik Dance Academy to unite under one banner at Indian Community Center (ICC). This is the first time that India Republic Day was celebrated by the Indian community in a united manner. USAP is proud to be one of the organizers and part of the celebrations.

INDIA REPUBLIC DAY
At Indian Community Center (ICC)

On Saturday, January 26

With our Local Organizations

Gujarati Samaj of Greater Pittsburgh
United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh
The Bengali Association of Pittsburgh
Maharashtra Mandal, Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh Cricket Association
PIC-5K and Pitt Masti

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS SENIORS' BIRTHDAYS ARE IMPORTANT TOO!



All birthdays deserve a celebration, and more so in our senior years. We celebrated the birthdays and the wedding anniversaries of all whose special days were in January, February and March of 2019. The birthday cake was big enough to serve some 80 people in attendance. If you will let us know the month of your birthday and your wedding anniversary, we all will join you in celebrating your special event. When you share your happy moments with your friends, the happiness gets multiplied.

HELPING USAP WHILE SHOPPING WITH AMAZON

If you plan to shop at Amazon, did you know that if you access their website by typing smile.amazon.com, you can select **United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh** as your charity of choice?

With that slight change, every purchase you make will add to USAP's AmazonSmile donations. This alternate entry point to Amazon won't change the price you pay or the items you see... It just allows Amazon to contribute a portion of your purchase proceeds to USAP. If that works for your plans, USAP would be most appreciative of this additional help.

YOGA, MEDITATION & AYURVEDA APPROACH TO HEALTHY LIVING



Attendance at Yoga session on February 24, 2019 conducted by Bhavna Mehta

Year 2019 started off with great incentives for senior citizens to adopt active life styles for healthy aging.

Bhavna Mehta, a highly qualified yoga teacher for 18 years with Himalayan Institute, and a Certified Health Counselor (National Ayurvedic Medical Association) in the science of Ayurveda, believes Health is not only physical but also mental and emotional well-being. Hope you were able to attend and benefit from the four weekly practical and interactive sessions on Yoga and Ayurveda conducted by her during February and March of 2019.



BHAVNA MEHTA



THE WORLD IS FULL OF NICE PEOPLE. IF YOU CAN'T FIND ONE, BE ONE

MELODY MAKERS
Karaoke Group in the making
First Meeting set for April 26, 2019




Melody Makers is a karaoke singers special interest group that plans to meet regularly and sharpen their singing skills. These music lovers formed a karaoke singing group at the recent meeting in March 2019.

It has been said that singing keeps you from aging, and thus keeps you young longer. If you believe in that, then you ought to join the Melody Makers. Close to 30 people have signed the sheet showing interest in being part of this Melody Makers.

With Nitin Merchant, Juginder Luthra and Dilip Desai taking the lead, brief instructions on karaoke singing were given at this introductory meeting. You need to have keen interest, more so than talent, to join this nascent fun group. The organizers offered their help and guidance to the novice singers if needed.

If you had ever wanted to promote yourself from being a bathroom to a stage singer, there'll never be a better opportunity to join the Melody Makers. Please mark your calendars for the next meeting.

Meeting Date, Time and Place
FRIDAY, APRIL 26, 2019; 6:30 pm; ICC

Fee \$10 per person (includes light snacks & dinner.... BYOB  )

To register, please call Nitin Merchant (412-260-1001); Dilip Desai (412-916-2473); Juginder Luthra (304-794-6336); or Chetan Patel (412-908-1711).

**STRIVE NOT TO BE BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE
BUT TO BE BETTER THAN YOU USED TO BE**

LOOKING FOR BUDDING PLAY ACTORS



If music is not your cup of tea, maybe Play Acting is! USAP is planning to organize short Hindi Plays towards the end of October/early November 2019 and is looking for members who would be interested in participating in these and/or future Plays.

Art in any form enriches life. Besides play-acting, there are many related activities, like skills in writing, directing, lighting, sound effects, sound system, make up, stage set up etc. Maybe you've done all these in your college days. You can help us out with your skill and expertise. This will

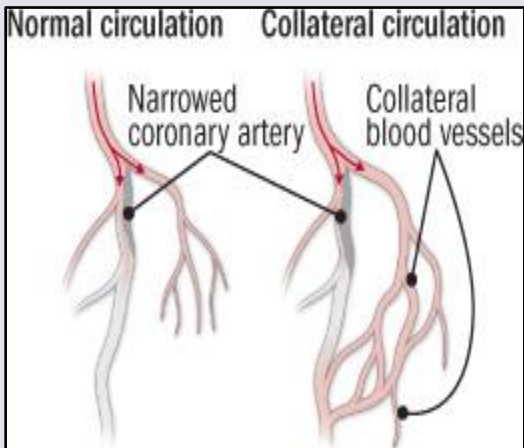
be a great fun activity for seniors to become involved in and bond while enjoying the play-acting practices. If interested, please contact -

Juginder Luthra 304-784-6336; Subash Ahuja (412-216-8135); Dilip Desai (412-916-2473); Rajnikant Popat (412-787-2211); Chetan Patel (412-908-1711) or Ved Kaushik (724-816-9818).

HEALTH TIPS

DO-IT-YOURSELF CARDIAC BYPASS SURGERY

(Excerpted from Harvard Heart Letter, January 2008)



When the blood vessel that supplies blood to the heart gets clogged, the body has an innate capacity to create tiny blood vessels in the heart (so-called collateral vessels) to reroute some of the blood flow around the blockage. Exercise can boost these blood vessels.

Exercise dramatically increases blood flow through the coronary arteries. The inner lining of the arteries responds to this "stress", by stimulating collateral blood vessels to elongate, widen, and form new connections.

However, a little bit of exercise won't do the trick. You need to push your heart. If you aren't used to exercising, that may mean brisk walking. Any activity that gets your heart beating faster will

do as long as you keep it up for 20 to 30 minutes at a time and do it several times a week.

Exercise is a great way to prevent heart disease, and a host of studies show that it can help some people with narrowed coronary arteries safely avoid bypass surgery.

Regular exercise improves everything – hypertension, diabetes mellitus, lipid profile, endothelial function, heart failure, diastolic dysfunction, weight loss, catechol regulation, mobility, balance, strength, endurance, and mental function.

INCOMPATIBLE FOOD COMBINATIONS ACCORDING TO AYURVEDA

Ayurveda, our ancient medical science, offers very scientific approach to diet. It teaches us about the importance of strong, healthy digestive fire, proper absorption of food, and elimination of waste products from the body. Understanding some basic principles of eating food will help us keep our body balanced.

Every food has its own taste, specific energy, and a post digestive effect. So when we eat two or more food items together and if it is poorly combined, like easily digestible fruits and heavily digestible beans together, it may overload our digestive system. It may lead to gas, indigestion, acidity, and eventual production of AMA (toxins). But both of these fruits and beans are very healthy if eaten separately.

This concept is explained in classic scripture CHARAK SAMHITA as Unwholesome diet or incompatible food combinations (not to be eaten together). Here are some of the examples:

- Milk - with sour fruits, garlic, melons, yogurt, reddish, fish, and meat
- Yogurt - with fresh fruits, cheese, eggs, fish, tomatoes
- Honey - with equal amount of ghee by weight. Boiled or cooked honey loses its potential.
- Beans - with eggs, milk, cheese, yogurt, and fruits. (If we cook some ingredients together and use particular spices then it's different)
- Grain - with fruit and tapioca
- Nightshades - with cucumber, melons, and dairy products

Fruits should be eaten separately.

Also, with new technological advancements, unseasonal fruits are available anywhere in the whole world, even if they are grown on opposite corners. It may be excellent for a particular weather and time of the year but not for everyone everywhere. Nature is providing us what we need locally. Eating unseasonable food may mean eating the right foods at the wrong time. Some foods are proper for certain body types and not for others (Sweet foods are not good for diabetics). Certain foods may be good in one weather and not in another (We should drink cold lemonade in 90-degree weather and not in 10 degree weather). We should not eat heavy meals when one's digestive fire is low.

As long as we have strong digestive fire or if we become accustomed to certain combinations, our meals will not negatively affect us. We can use some spices and certain herbs to make foods more "compatible."

Many of us combine incompatible foods from time to time. Please pay attention to how you feel after eating them. Bring the changes slowly. Be kind to yourself during practice. It will awaken true intelligence of the digestion and it will become easier with time.

Happy eating.

(Based on readings from Dr. Lad's Ayurveda book)

Bhavna Mehta, AHC, ERYT-500

ebhavna@hotmail.com; 412.443.0959

FOOD – WHAT WE EAT IS SO IMPORTANT FOR GOOD HEALTH

By Rajnikant Popat, MD

Numerous studies in Nutrition Science have shown that the food we eat has a major impact on our physical and mental health.

Protein is an important building block for our muscle and thus, our strength. Our Indian diets are rich in carbohydrates. Many plant-based foods contain protein, and there are other creative ways to increase the protein content in our diet.

Here's a brief summary of food ingredients and how we can enrich our meals and modify our eating habits.

PROTEIN

- Dairy products – cottage cheese (low fat or non-fat); Greek yogurt
- Lentils – all varieties of beans, chickpeas, daals, edamame
- Eggs, poultry, sea foods, meats.

One can further enrich the Indian meals by adding supplemental protein products like Whey powder, Nutrilite, etc. to the flour and made into bread, naan or chapatis. By this way vegetarians can easily meet the daily protein requirement (45 grams for women and 55 grams for men).

FATS

- Not all fats are bad, if taken in small amounts. Unsaturated fats such as olive oil, canola oil, sunflower oil and avocado oils contain all the omega 3 fatty acids and are preferred.
- According to Ayurveda, ghee (although, a saturated fat) can be consumed in small amounts (about two tablespoons a day) and is beneficial to good health.
- Other saturated fats like palm oil and butter could be easily avoided. Also, to be avoided are hydrogenated fats such as Dalda.
- Nuts, especially almonds and walnuts, in small amounts daily are also a good source of omega fatty acids.

CARBOHYDRATES

- Indian diets are disproportionately rich in carbohydrates and added sugars. Carbohydrates should provide not more than 25% of daily needed calories. Remember each gram of carbohydrate provides 4 calories.
- Cut down on all soda and fruit drinks. Instead eat two to three varieties of fruit every day. Besides carbohydrates, they are a good source of vitamins and minerals and much needed fiber as well.

OUR CHARTER MEMBERS **BACKBONE OF USAP**

Charter Members are life time members who have made a onetime contribution of \$1,000 per couple (\$500 per person). We are grateful for their support. Please consider becoming a Charter Member.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Ahuja, Subash | 10. Pandit, Devayani |
| 2. Bakshi, Kiran & Viharika | 11. Patel, Chetan & Bakula |
| 3. Desai, Dilip & Kirtida | 12. Patel, Gauttam & Rita |
| 4. Desai, Nainesh & Jayna | 13. Patel, Mina |
| 5. Kaushik, Ved & Alka | 14. Popat, Rajnikant & Bharati |
| 6. Kumar, Ashok | 15. Sahai, Ashok & Ranjana |
| 7. Ladani, Chetan & Lina | 16. Tamboli, Adi & Jasmin |
| 8. Luthra, Juginder & Dolly | 17. Thakar, Girish & Lina |
| 9. Monpara, Pravin & Rekha | |

Annual Members pay \$30 per person for the calendar year (January – December).

Please renew your membership for 2019. You can easily become a member or renew your membership online at www.USAofPittsburgh.org. If you do not want to worry about renewing your membership every year, why not become a charter member. USAP is a charitable organization and all contributions made to USAP are tax deductible.

USAP E-MAILS & WEBSITE

We hope you are receiving all e-mails from USAP. It is important that you include the USAP e-mail address: usaofpittsburgh@gmail.com in your Contacts List, so that e-mails from USAP do not get sent to your spam folder inadvertently.

If you would like to be put on USAP mailing list, please visit USAofPittsburgh.org and subscribe to the mailing list. You can also become a member or renew your membership on the website as well.

Our website is under renovation and soon, you will have a much-improved site that you will be very happy with we are making progress!

USAP NEWS IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY UNITED SENIORS ASSOCIATION OF PITTSBURGH FOR THE PURPOSE OF KEEPING ALL ITS MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIBERS INFORMED AND CONNECTED. YOUR COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS ARE WELCOME TO FURTHER IMPROVE THE DIALOGUE.

EDITORS
Subash Ahuja
Chetan Patel
Dilip Desai
Khozem Mogri

OVERSEAS TOURS (2019)

USAP organized two Eastern Europe tours in 2018 and were a tremendous success. See the summary write up by Dilip Desai in this issue.

Due to popular demand, USAP has organized guided tours to China and Africa for 2019. Some tours may already be sold out. If interested, please contact Kiran Bakshi (Chairman of Tours and Travels) for the latest updates.

CHINESE ADVENTURE TOUR WITH YANGTZE RIVER CRUISE

Beijing- Xian - Guilin- Yangtze River Cruise – Shanghai (Duration: 14 Days).

Dates: Depart Pittsburgh September 10. Arrive Pittsburgh September 24, 2019

Day 1-3: Beijing including The Great Wall

Day 4-5: Xian

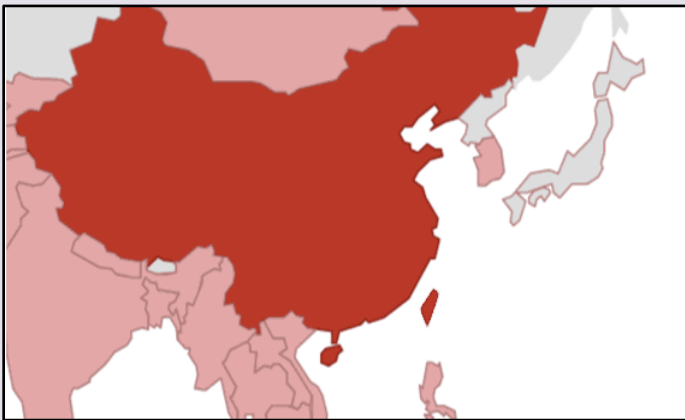
Day 6-7: Guilin including Half-Li River Cruise

Day 8-10: Yangtze River Cruise

Day 11-13: Shanghai

Day 14: Depart from Shanghai to Pittsburgh

Total Cost : \$ 3225 per person including ALL airfares, attractions, meals, accommodations



KENYA - SOUTH AFRICA - VICTORIA FALLS - CHOBE NATIONAL PARK

Nairobi-Mara-Naivasha-Nakuru-Nairobi-Capetown-Knysna-Johannesburg (Duration: 14 Days. Includes Masai Mara Game Reserves during migration season).

Day 1: Nairobi

Day 2-4: Masai Mara : Game Viewing

Day 5: Lake Naivasha-Lake Nakuru-Nairobi

Day 6-8: Cape Town

Day 9-10: Garden Route, Knysna

Day 11: Johannesburg

Day 12: Victoria Falls (Zimbabwe)

Day 13: Chobe National Park (Botswana)

Day 14: Depart from Victoria Falls to Pittsburgh

There are two trips planned for Africa with different dates. (Dates & Costs based on 25-30 individuals).

Option A: Dates: Depart Pittsburgh, July 25 - Arrive back Pittsburgh, August 9, 2019.

Total Cost \$ 6525 per person (including ALL airfare, attractions and accommodations)

Option B: Dates: Depart Pittsburgh, September 7 - Arrive back Pittsburgh, September 22, 2019.

Total Cost \$ 6350 per person (including ALL airfare, attractions and accommodations).

EASTERN EUROPE TRIP 2018 REMINISCED

USAP members spend amazing 18 days in Eastern Europe travelling to 12 major cities in 8 countries

Dilip Desai

In August and September of 2018, United Seniors Association of Pittsburgh (USAP) organized an international tour for its members to 12 cities in 8 Eastern European Countries. 2018 was USAP's very first year in existence and also a very first adventure of such kind. We wanted to organize a trip offering a unique and optimum experience for our members. The seeds for this tour were planted during Thanksgiving of 2017 when I was visiting Chicago. I was at Patel Brothers, Schaumburg, IL and happened to see an office of AirTours, Inc. in the same plaza. I visited AirTours office and after giving a background on USAP, requested them to submit a few itineraries to various countries for possibly planning and organizing USAP's own International tour.

We decided to develop a customized itinerary for our tour once Eastern Europe was selected as our tour destination. Customized itinerary was to ensure the trip would cover all key highlights of each country - including places usually not offered by tour operators in pre-packaged tour packages - thereby maximizing the value for the money and duration of the trip. First example of customization was adding Croatia country and Salzburg, Austria city to the basic itinerary sent to us. We also included several other key points of interest such as Plitvice Park, Croatia, Ice Caves in Salzburg, Mozart Concert in Vienna, a cruise in Prague River. We invited bids from various Indian and popular American Tour Operators. After evaluating bidders based on price, quality, experience and their flexibility to negotiate and work with us, AirTours Inc., Chicago was selected as our Tour Operator. USAP member's response was beyond our imagination! 70 people registered to travel in a matter of a couple of weeks forcing USAP to organize three groups to Eastern Europe. The Eastern European tour consisted of visiting eight countries in 18 days - Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Slovenia, Austria, Czech Republic and part of Germany.



Everyone thoroughly enjoyed amazing 18 days in Eastern European countries. It exceeded everyone's expectations. Lots of laughter, having fun singing, sharing jokes between friends of many years was best part of the tour! We celebrated member's birthdays, played group games such as antakshari and shared jokes during longer bus rides, ventured out in small groups during free times, sang and danced during boat ride and even performed garba in the heart of Prague square! From the very start, it was clear that AirTours had this tour very well-organized with competent, highly experienced tour managers with each group. The tour price included conveniently located four star hotels, daily buffet breakfast with delicious daily local/Western/Indian meals, all transfers and entrance fees to all attractions, deluxe air conditioned coach, services of a professional and experienced tour Manager, and tips to driver and local English speaking guides. The tour was leisurely paced for the most part and covered a lot of sights and experiences.



In addition to the guided city tour of Warsaw, Krakow, Bratislava, Budapest, Zagreb, Ljubljana, Prague, Vienna, Dresden & Berlin, tour highlights included, Wieliczka Salt Mines, Tour of Auschwitz Concentration Camp in Krakow, Poland, a river cruise in Budapest, the Buda Castle, Hungarian Horsemanship Show, the beautiful Plitvicze Park in Croatia, Riding a funicular to the medieval Ljubljana castle, the "Pletna", boat ride to Bled Island, the church of St. Mary, Experiencing the Sound of Music tour, Visiting the world's largest Ice Caves near Salzburg, Schonbrunn Palace and Gardens, Enjoying a thrilling Mozart Concert in Vienna, Dinner Cruise on Vltava River Prague, and Visiting the Zwinger Palace and Berlin Tower in Berlin.

Members who could not join, when heard the amazing tour stories are excited now to join in future tours of USAP. USAP has organized 2 International Tours for 2019 and they have received an overwhelming response from the members. ⚙️