

MAALA VARTHAMANAM

മാല വർത്തമാനം

S U M M E R E D I T I O N J U N E 2 0 2 5

VOLUME 2



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President's Message

Dear MAALA Family,

It gives me immense pride and joy to share the incredible spirit of our vibrant community over the past few weeks.

We recently hosted our very first **Pickleball Tournament**, and what a smashing success it was! With energetic participation from both men and women, the event not only showcased friendly competition but also highlighted the growing enthusiasm for fitness and togetherness in our community. A big thank you to all the players, volunteers, and cheering squads who made it memorable.

In parallel, we continued our commitment to giving back by organizing a **Soup Kitchen** initiative. Through this, we were able to serve those in need with warm meals and warmer hearts. The selfless contribution of our volunteers truly reflects the core values we stand for – compassion, service, and unity. MAALA also contributed by donating paper cups, plates, and silverware for the ongoing use.

Looking ahead, we are excited to present one of our most anticipated cultural showcases – the **Mega Thiruvathira** performance! Over 25 women and girls from across the Indian diaspora will join hands in a beautiful celebration of tradition, rhythm, and grace. Accompanied by the electrifying beats of Chendamelam, this promises to be a visual and cultural delight.

As we continue this journey of connection, celebration, and service, we invite and encourage your continued participation and support. Whether through volunteering, performing, or simply being present, your involvement makes all the difference in strengthening our MAALA community.

With gratitude and warm wishes,
Praveen Ramachandran
PRESIDENT, MAALA



MAALA Soup Kitchen Event

MAALA organized a soup kitchen event at **Advent House Ministries in Lansing, MI, on Saturday, April 12th**, as part of its yearly charity efforts. This is something MAALA does every year, and it's always a meaningful experience. For this year's event, MAALA received great support from the previous board members, and their help was truly appreciated. The event was planned for around 2 PM, and once the team reached the location, people had already started coming in. The crowd included a mix of men, women, and older adults who were all kindly welcomed.

MAALA's youth club and kids did a fantastic job — they helped in every way possible and were very responsible. **Eshaan** led the youth team, and he was joined by **Arjun Rajeev , Joel Manjasseril, Abhimanyu Rajeev, Charvi Maneesh, Nikita Nair, Shreya Sanal (from Ohio), Diya Praveen, Jordan Abraham, and Isabel Abraham**. They were all energetic and kind while serving food. MAALA board members and active family volunteers — **Sunil Devasia, Santhosh Abraham, Jino Manjasseril, Sanal Krishnan from Ohio and Rajesh Nair** — were also there, helping throughout. Everyone's support made a big difference, and MAALA can't thank them enough for stepping up.

Serving food at the soup kitchen was not just about giving — it was also about realizing how fortunate many of us are. Sometimes we forget the basics we have — a roof over our head, food to eat, a car to drive — while many people out there are struggling with those very things. This experience was a good reminder for all of us to be grateful. One of our members, Sunil, did a great job helping the guests, answering their questions, and making them feel comfortable while also serving food. It was touching to see the kindness and care from everyone involved. MAALA is proud of the kids and youth who were part of this. They showed maturity, leadership, and compassion. This kind of event brings everyone together — families, volunteers, and our young ones — and shows how a small act of service can go a long way.

MAALA is thankful to everyone who took part and supported this event. These moments remind us how important it is to stay connected with the community and give back whenever we can. The smiles and appreciation from the people we served made it all worthwhile.



Participant Gallery – Soup Kitchen Day





MAALA Pickleball Tournament – A Day of Sports, Smiles, and Togetherness

MAALA hosted its first **Pickleball Tournament** on **Sunday, May 11th, at Court One Athletic Club in Lansing, MI** — and what a day it was! Pickleball, a fun and fast-paced game that mixes tennis, ping-pong, and badminton, turned out to be a big hit among our members. With a paddle in hand and a plastic ball full of holes, players quickly picked up the game and got into the spirit. This event wasn't just about winning; it was about trying something new, being active, and sharing laughs together. From beginners to regulars, everyone gave their best. It was really nice to see how MAALA families practiced hard before the event and showed up with great energy on game day.

A big shoutout to our Pickleball winners and runners-ups

Men's 3.5 category:

- Winners – Nikhil and Ayush Arora
- Runners up – Prasanth and Sarath

Men's 3.0 category:

- Winners – Phani Chowdary Gadde and Sai Mosali (Winners)
- Runners up – Joel Manjasseril and Jonothan Manjasseril (Runners – up)

Women's team:

- Winners – Tannu Arora and Anya Arora
- Runners up – Aysel Praveen and Diya Praveen

Winners were awarded gifts from **Joola**, adding to the excitement and celebration of the day!

One of the best parts of the day was seeing how much the kids enjoyed themselves. They may not have played all the matches, but they were everywhere — cheering, running around, trying out the paddles, and simply having a blast. Their excitement added a joyful vibe to the whole event. It was equally heartwarming to see grandparents come by, sit on the sidelines, and enjoy watching their kids and grandkids play. Their proud smiles and relaxed chats made the event feel more like a big family picnic. A special shoutout goes to our dear MAALA family member Leslie, who despite being a new dad and juggling a lot, made the effort to pick up the food from Detroit. His patience and helpful spirit truly meant a lot. **Thank you, Leslie** — we honestly don't know how to thank you enough!

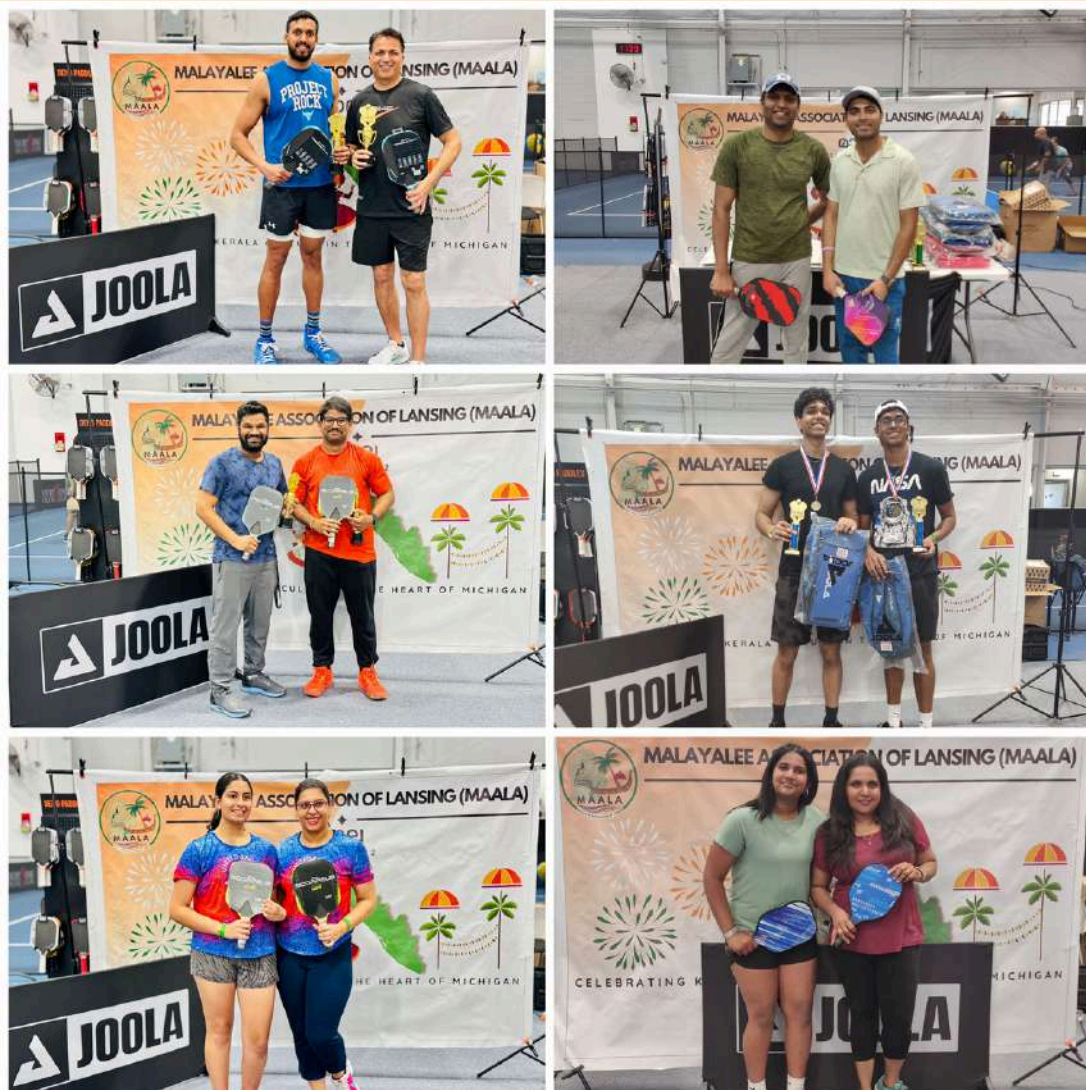




And of course, May 11th was also **Mother's Day**. MAALA didn't miss the chance to honor all the wonderful moms who do so much every day. Each mom was recognized with a small token of appreciation — a simple but heartfelt gesture that brought smiles and warm moments throughout the day.

The games were super competitive, yet full of fun and team spirit. Everyone gave their best, and more importantly, everyone had fun — which is what really matters. A big thank you to all the players, supporters, volunteers, and families who made this event a huge success. Looking forward to many more like this in the future!

MAALA Pickleball Winners & Runners-Up





MAALA Pickleball Mother's Day celebration





A Day for Them

A Poem for Father's and Mother's Day

May 11th for sweet moms, June 15th for bold dads,
We mark the days with flowers and cards.
But deep in our hearts, we know it's true
Every single day, we think of you.

Some of us are near, some far away,
Living abroad, missing you every day.
A call, a memory, a photo we keep,
Your love is with us, awake or asleep.

Some are lucky—celebrating side by side,
Planning a meal or a little surprise.
Asking Dad, "Where would you like to go?"
And watching his face with a happy glow.

But some of us remember through quiet tears,
Holding onto your voice across the years.
To every sweet mom and bold dad, here or above,
We send you our thanks, our endless love.

So here's to the fathers—we honor you today,
And to all the mothers—a warm belated hooray!
Not just one day, but all year through,
We send heartfelt wishes to all of you.





SAVE THE DATE



MEGA THIRUVATHIRA

MAALA proudly presents Kerala's timeless tradition — the spectacular
MEGA THIRUVATHIRA at this year's
CELEBRATE MERIDIAN FESTIVAL

Get ready to experience the rhythm, grace, and beauty of Kerala's cultural legacy! A vibrant group of 25-30 women will bring Thiruvathira to life with a stunning performance on open ground — celebrating our culture in front of a larger, diverse audience right in the heart of our community.

The performance will be followed by the electrifying CHENDA MELAM — a traditional percussion ensemble that fills the air with powerful, rhythmic beats, evoking the festive spirit of Kerala like nothing else.

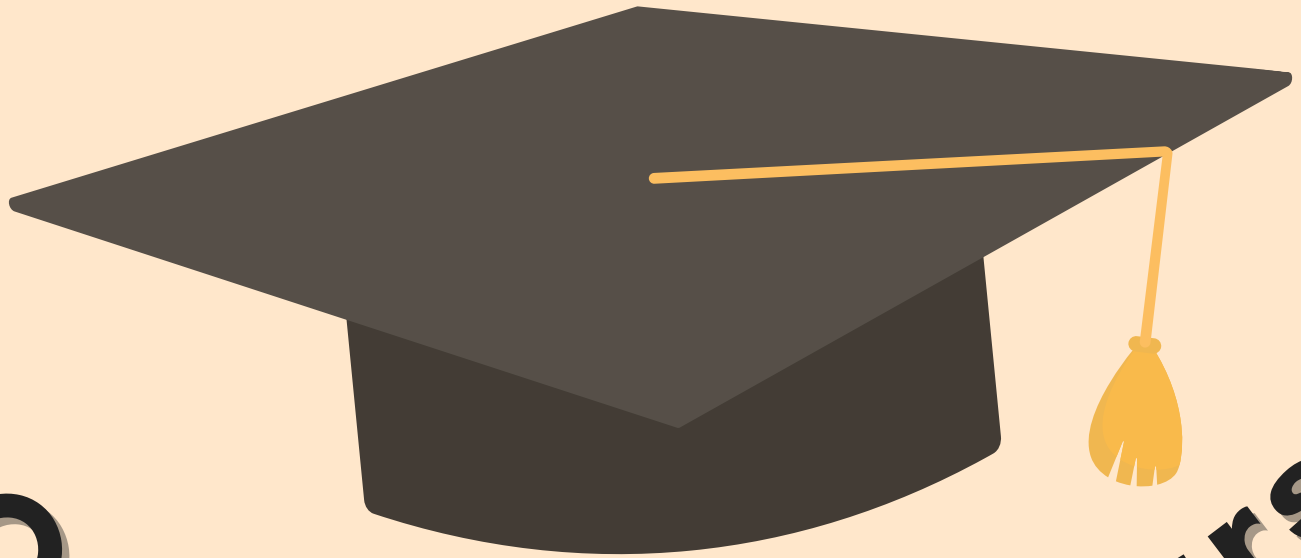
Come witness tradition in motion — where unity meets elegance in every step!

June 28th, 2025 from 5PM-7PM
5151 Marsh Road, Okemos
maalaorg@gmail.com

Let's make this event truly special - one graceful step at a time!

**THANK
YOU!**

**Dr. George and Eye Level for sponsoring
the Chenda Melam!**



Our Shining Stars



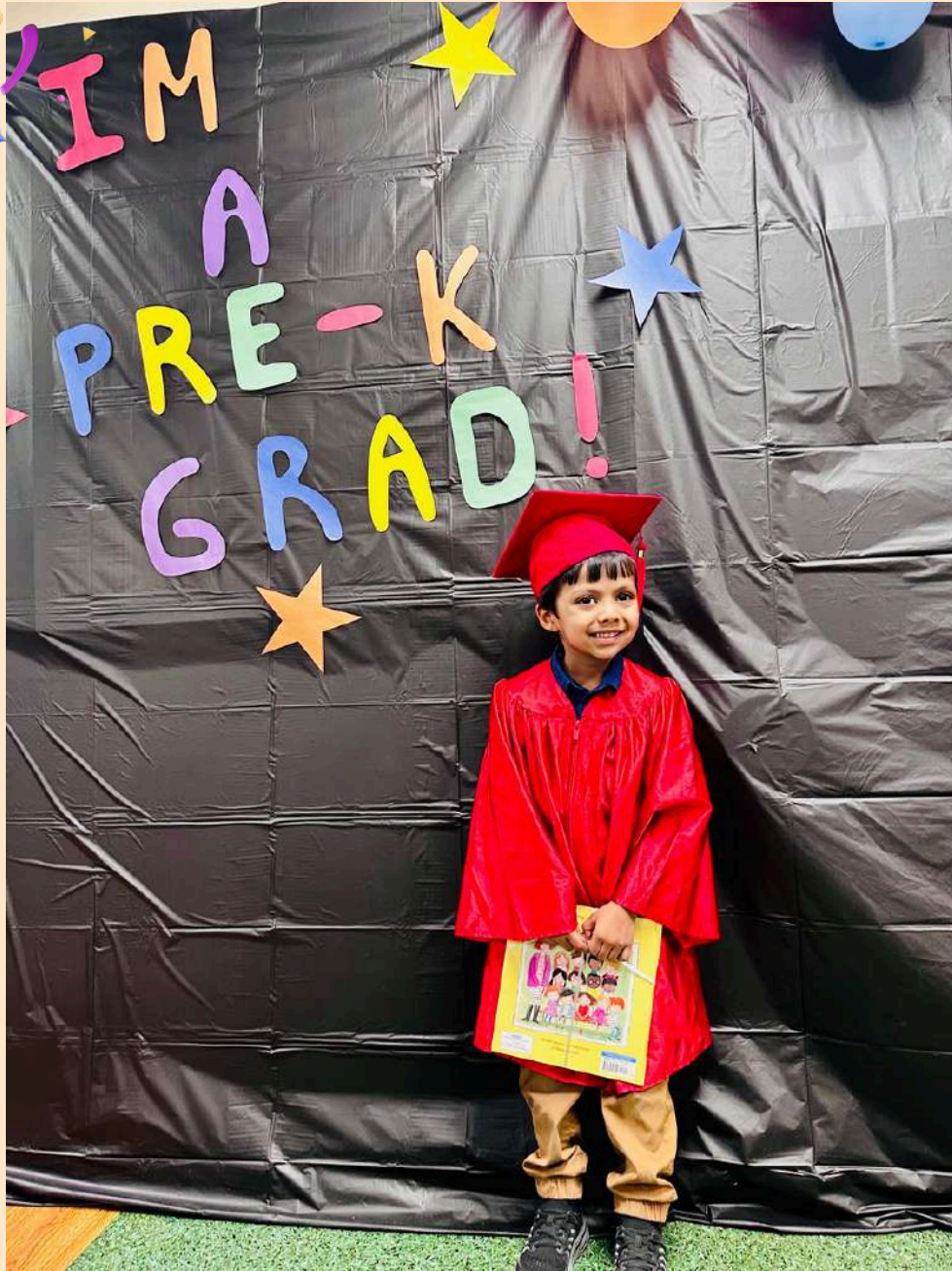
Anush Mathai
Okemos High School graduate





Sandra Rajesh Nair
Wayne State University
BS in Business Administration





Adri Prasanth
Preschool Graduate





Abhimanyu Rajeev
Kindergarten Graduate





Oru Fire Hydrant Aparatha!

A few weeks ago, I went to Detroit with my daughter for her friend's graduation. After dropping her off at her dorm, I thought I'd grab some Indian food nearby — because let's be honest, nothing makes waiting better than a good biryani!

I drove around, finally found a parking spot about a block away from the restaurant, and happily walked over without really paying attention to where I parked. I sat, enjoyed my food, and just relaxed there for almost two hours.

Then came the fun part. When it was time to pick up my daughter and head to the graduation venue, I walked back to my car and saw something flapping under the wiper — a parking ticket! It said I had parked in front of a fire hydrant. I looked around and saw... nothing. No hydrant, no sign, just me and confusion.

I tried calling the number on the ticket hoping to explain my innocence — no answer. So I left it, thinking maybe I'd deal with it later (mistake!). I picked up my daughter, we went to the graduation, and the whole time I kept wondering where this mysterious hydrant was. I even Googled "fire hydrant pictures" to double-check what they look like — just in case they changed styles recently!

At home, I told my family the whole story. My husband just looked at me and said, "Seriously? Who parks near a fire hydrant?" Clearly... I do.

Eventually, I paid the fine — with an extra \$20 late fee for my overconfidence. So now I've learned my lesson: next time I park, I'll do a full 360-degree scan for hidden hydrants, gnomes, or anything that looks even slightly official.

Last week, when I went to a subdivision, I saw a fire hydrant right next to the parking spot — and someone had already boldly parked there. Entha alle... I felt like telling them, "Welcome to the club, buddy!"

Now wherever I go to park my car — even inside a calm little subdivision — my younger one turns into a mini traffic cop: "Ammaaa... is there a fire hydrant?"

One small mistake, one big memory — oru fire hydrant aparatha!



Sreelekshmi Rajesh



The Magic of Pi (π)

In nature, so many objects are circular. The sun, the moon, the pupils of our eyes and the earliest manmade objects are all circular. By 2000 B.C., people noticed that if we double the distance across a circle, then the distance around it is also doubled. This discovery led to the idea of ratio and proportion. People found that the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter was a constant. This constant is denoted by the Greek letter π . This notation was introduced by William Jones in 1706.

The appropriate value of π is $22/7$ as a fraction, 3.14 as a decimal. It is used in calculations involving length and area of a circle, and surface area and volume of sphere, cylinder, and cone. It also arises in problems dealing with periodic phenomena like the motion of pendulums and electric currents. The actual value of π cannot be written either as a fraction or in the decimal form. Even from ancient times mathematicians search for methods to evaluate π to greater degrees of accuracy. Accuracy to six decimal places is adequate for practical purposes. By the end of the 20th century, computers had calculated π to more than 200 billion decimal places and now 5000 crore places.

π is a transcendental number. The real numbers are classified into two types, rational and irrational numbers. Numbers in the form of fractions whose numerator and denominator are integers are called rational numbers, and the others are irrational numbers. Irrational numbers are also of two types, algebraic and transcendental. The numbers that can be expressed as solutions of algebraic equations with rational coefficients are algebraic numbers. The irrational numbers that are not algebraic are transcendental. π , e , and numbers raised to the power of an irrational number are transcendental numbers.

The word transcendental means "the one which is not based on experience or reason, and which cannot be understood by practical experience." It is not clear to ordinary minds and is known only by intuition. This is why the meditation developed by Maharshi Mahesh Yogi got the name transcendental. This spiritual development technique was popular even in the West in the 1960's. This meditation technique is not strictly connected with any religious tradition, but it has roots in Vedanta. The technique is the mental repetition of a mantra to still the activity of thought and experience a deeper level of consciousness.



Prof.V. Muralaeeharan Nair



Parked Emotions

Let's meet at Panera," my friend said on one of those snowy, gloomy days in the early 2000s when being cooped up at home felt like a trap. So, off we went for the warmth, the sandwiches, and the much needed catch up sessions.

We met. We munched. We gossiped. We giggled about our husbands like the only women who are too perfect for them can. After our well deserved dose of entertainment, we headed back out into the snow to part ways.

My friend reached her car, hit the unlock button, and... nothing. The lights blinked, the car beeped, but the door refused to open. We blamed the snow. Clearly, the ice had frozen the door shut. Like the brilliant women we are, we headed back into Panera, fetched hot water, and poured it generously along the door edges. Still no luck.

We tried the passenger side. No luck. That's when we spotted it: a lone shoe on the seat. My friend wrinkled her nose. "Seriously? Why would my husband just leave a shoe there?" I agreed. Men!

Eventually, we surrendered. It was time for male intervention. I called my husband, gave him the 911 of our snowy saga, and like the good man he is he drove out through the flurry to rescue his damsels in distress.

Meanwhile, we waited in the parking lot, gossiping away, our laughter echoing through the cold air. My friend's laugh is delightfully contagious, and honestly, we were probably melting more ice with it than the hot water we had.

Soon enough, my husband arrived. He parked and began walking toward us, but then... suddenly stopped.

We were confused.

"What is he doing?"

"Did he stumble on something?"

"Sami, tell him to come here!" my friend said, puzzled.

But he just stood there. In front of a car. That looked suspiciously like my friend's.



We were looking at him with disappointment, wondering why he was just standing there not realizing our mistake.

He was looking at us with disappointment very much realizing our mistake.

And then it hit us.

We'd been trying to open a stranger's car the entire time.

Yes. The car we had watered. The one we had yanked at. The one we judged for having a rogue shoe in the front seat? Not my friend's. Just a poor, innocent stranger's car now slightly soggy.. thanks to us!

We howled with laughter. My husband chuckled too because what else do you do when your wife and her partner in crime are halfway to car theft in a Panera parking lot? Still giggling, we walked over to my husband, where the actual car was. We pressed the unlock button and—voilà—it opened without protest.

We burst out laughing. Again. And again. All the way home, warmed by our ridiculousness and reminded that life is just better with a friend to be silly with.

Dedicated to my bestie, Sanjeeda – Thank you for always being the perfect partner in mischief, madness, and memorable moments. May our friendship continue to unlock joy, even if we occasionally unlock the wrong car.



Samitha Thaj Mohamed



My 7th Grade Camp at SpringHill

This year our 7th-grade camp was at SpringHill, and honestly, it was one of the best trips ever. We stayed there for four days and three nights, and it was packed with fun, laughter, and so many memories.

Day 1

The night before camp, I was so excited I could barely sleep. I was packing everything—like warm clothes, pajamas, snacks, and all that stuff. We had to be at school by 8:00 AM, so I made sure to double-check everything that morning.

At school, everyone was buzzing with excitement. We loaded our bags into the buses and said goodbye to our parents. I was kind of bummed because my friend Sean couldn't come, but the rest of my friends were there, so that cheered me up. The bus ride was long and kind of boring, but at least we had snacks.

We got to SpringHill around 11:10 AM, and it was freezing—colder than Okemos for sure! We found our cabins, and I picked a bottom bunk (my friend called the top one anyway). After unpacking and taking a hot shower (which felt amazing after being in the cold), we headed to the cafeteria for lunch.

That night, we had Skit Night, which was really funny. Some of the groups were hilarious. After that, we went back to our cabins and passed out—we were all super tired.



Day 2

People in my cabin started whispering at like 5:45 AM, so I couldn't sleep in at all. I finally gave up and just got up to take a shower. After breakfast (which was actually really good, kind of like a buffet), we had some of the best activities—tubing and ice skating! They were so fun, even though walking from one place to another in the cold wasn't great.

After all the outdoor stuff, we had dinner and went to Song Night in the auditorium. Everyone was trying to act out the song by some motions and it was really funny, it was a great way to end the day. Lights out was at 10:30, and I crashed right away.



Day 3

I woke up around 6 again (thanks to more whispering) and got ready for another busy day. After breakfast and a quick call to my parents because I really missed them and I felt a little homesick, we started the day with archery, which was a so far from our cabin but really fun. Then we did, capture the flag, laser tag, tie-dye, and even made keychains—it was a packed day.

Later in the day, we did indoor activities like glow-in-the-dark mini golf and hung out in the game room. After dinner, we had a movie night and dance party, and we didn't get back to the cabin until midnight. It was so fun but also exhausting!

Day 4

The last day was kind of sad. Everyone was moving slowly, and we were all tired. We got up, packed our stuff, ate breakfast one last time, and got on the buses to head back home. It felt weird leaving, but I was also kind of ready for my own bed.

SpringHill was such a cool experience! I tried so many new things, hung out with my friends all day, and laughed a ton. I will never forget this trip—it was definitely the best part of 7th grade so far.



'HAPPY'
Camper



Nikita Nair



Embracing the Future: How AI is Transforming Our Lives

Introduction

As we gather as a vibrant and close-knit Malayalee community here in Lansing, we often celebrate our traditions, culture, and shared values. But alongside our cherished customs, we are also living through one of the most transformative times in human history—an era shaped by Artificial Intelligence (AI).

You may have already encountered AI in your daily life—whether it's through voice assistants like Siri, Alexa or Google, personalized recommendations on Netflix, or even the navigation apps that guide us through Michigan's snowy roads. But AI is more than just convenience. It's a powerful tool that is reshaping every field—from healthcare and education to agriculture, finance, and even the arts.

Why AI Matters to All of Us

One of the most exciting things about AI is that you don't have to be a tech expert to benefit from it. Whether you're a student, a teacher, a healthcare worker, a small business owner, or a retiree, AI is quietly working behind the scenes to make life easier, safer, and more efficient.

- For Students and Parents: AI-powered tools can personalize learning, helping children grasp difficult concepts at their own pace. It can also assist parents in tracking academic progress and finding resources tailored to their child's needs.
- For Professionals: From automating repetitive tasks to analyzing large amounts of data, AI helps professionals focus on what truly matters—creativity, strategy, and human connection.
- For Seniors: AI-driven health monitoring systems can alert caregivers in real time, ensuring safety and peace of mind for our elders.
- For Our Community: Imagine AI helping us organize MAALA events more efficiently, translating Malayalam for second-generation kids, or even preserving our cultural stories through voice and video archives.





A Positive Force for Good

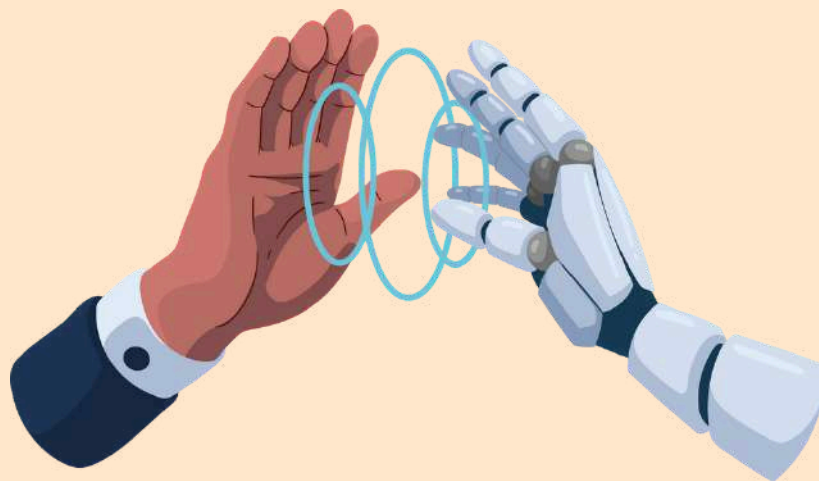
While there are valid concerns about AI—like job displacement or data privacy—it's important to recognize that AI, when developed responsibly, can amplify human potential, enhance access to education and healthcare, and help solve global challenges. With thoughtful regulation, ethical development, and community awareness, AI can be a force for equity, empowerment, and innovation.

As Malayalees, we've always been known for our adaptability, education, and global outlook. Let's embrace this new chapter with curiosity and confidence. Let's encourage our children to explore AI not just as users, but as future creators and leaders in this space.

Looking Ahead

In the spirit of MAALA's mission to foster growth, connection, and leadership, let's start conversations about how we can use AI to uplift our community. Whether it's through workshops, youth projects, or simply sharing knowledge, we all have a role to play in shaping a future where technology serves humanity.

After all, the heart of any innovation is not the machine—but the people it empowers.





Raspberry Pi

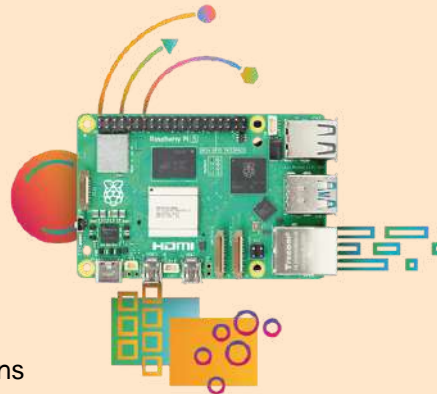
What Is a Raspberry Pi (and Why Should You Care)?

Imagine a computer the size of a deck of cards that costs less than a fancy dinner. That's the Raspberry Pi. It's a tiny, affordable computer originally made to help kids learn how to code—but it's grown into a global favorite for hobbyists, students, and even professionals.

So, What Can It Do?

A Raspberry Pi can:

- Browse the internet
- Stream videos
- Run simple games
- Control robots or smart home gadgets
- Teach you programming
- Even power art installations or weather stations



It's not going to replace your gaming PC or handle heavy video editing, but for basic tasks and creative projects? It's a champ.

Why Is It So Cheap?

- **Designed for Education:** It was built to be accessible to schools and students.
- **Open-Source Everything:** The software is free, and the hardware is simplified.
- **No Extras:** You add your own keyboard, mouse, and screen—just the essentials.
- **Mass Production:** Millions are made, which keeps costs low.

Why Use It Instead of a Regular Computer?

- **Cost:** A full setup might cost \$50-\$100. A regular PC? Try \$500+.
- **Size:** It fits in your pocket.
- **Power Efficiency:** Uses way less electricity.
- **Tinker-Friendly:** Great for learning, experimenting, and building cool stuff.

In short: if you want a cheap, fun, and surprisingly capable little computer for learning or light tasks, the Raspberry Pi is your new best friend.



What are some easy projects I can do with a Raspberry Pi?

There are tons of fun and beginner-friendly Raspberry Pi projects you can dive into—no engineering degree required. Here are a few that are both easy and rewarding:

- **Retro Gaming Console**

Turn your Pi into a mini arcade using software like RetroPie. Just add a controller and relive the classics.

- **Media Center**

Install Kodi or Plex and stream movies, music, and more. It's like building your own Netflix.

- **Smart Home Light Controller**

Use your Pi to control smart bulbs (like Philips Hue) with custom schedules or voice commands.

- **Weather Station**

Hook up a few sensors and track temperature, humidity, and air pressure. Great for learning about both coding and climate.

- **Minecraft Server**

Host your own Minecraft world for you and your friends. It's surprisingly easy and teaches you about networking.

- **Wireless Print Server**

Make your old printer wireless by connecting it to your Pi. No more USB shuffling.

- **Simple Web Server**

Launch a basic website from your Pi using Nginx or Apache. Perfect for learning web development.

- **Parent Detector (Motion Sensor Camera)**

Set up a motion sensor that snaps a photo or records video when someone walks by. Great for security or just pranking your siblings



Raspberry Pi 5 16GB RAM



Maneesh Mohan



This is a poem about my struggles to write my first poem.

****ശൂന്യത്തിലെ ആദ്യവാക്യം****

ഒരു വരി എഴുതണം...

എന്നെപ്പറ്റിയോ, ഇവിടെ കോരിച്ചൊരിയുന്ന മഴയെപ്പറ്റിയോ?

അതോ ഹൃദയം തൊട്ടൊരു ഗാനത്തെപ്പറ്റിയോ?

തൂലിക പിടിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു,
കടലാസ്സിൽ പതിവ് പോലെ,
മുന്നിൽ ശാന്തമായ ശൂന്യപത്രം
പിന്നിൽ വാക്കുകളില്ലാതെ കാറ്റിന്റെ നീക്കം.

മനസ്സിൽ അലഞ്ഞു നടക്കുന്ന ചിന്തകൾ.
പക്ഷേ, വാക്കുകൾ എന്തേ ഇണങ്ങുന്നില്ല?
എഴുത്ത് തേടുന്ന ആദ്യ വാക്ക്
രാത്രിയുടെ മൗനത്തിൽ മൂടപ്പെട്ടിരിക്കുന്നു.

Cursor തളർന്നു നിൽക്കും,
ഒരു blink പോലെ, പ്രതീക്ഷയുടെ പച്ചവെളിച്ചം.
ഉൾക്കാഴ്ചകളോ? Buffering...
അക്ഷരങ്ങൾ drafts ആയി മരിച്ചവണ്ണം.

കവിതകൾ ഉണ്ടാകേണ്ട സമയം,
ചിന്തകൾ ഉറങ്ങുകയാണ്.
മനസ്സിന്റെ മറുപുറം
നിശബ്ദതയുടെ ഭിത്തിയല്ലാതെ ഒന്നുമില്ല.

വാക്കുകൾ ചിതറി കിടക്കുന്നു
എവിടെയോ മനസ്സിന്റെ കോണുകളിൽ,
പൊക്കാനാകാതെ ഞാൻ
വാക്കിനെയും ചിന്തയെയും നോക്കി നിൽക്കുന്നു.

എനിക്ക് എഴുതാനാകുന്നില്ല —
ഒരു ശൂന്യത,
ഒരു നിലാവ് ഇല്ലാത്ത രാത്രിയുടെ പോലെ.
പക്ഷേ, ഈ ശൂന്യവും
ഒരു കവിത തന്നെ ആണല്ലോ?



Deepak Varma



Homemade Grape Wine Recipe

Ingredients:

Grapes - 1 kg

Sugar - 1 ½ kg

Water - 750ml * 3

Yeast - a pinch

Caramelized Sugar - 3-4tsp

Method:

- 1) Wash and pat dry grapes.
- 2) Boil water and let it cool down completely.
- 3) Put the grapes into the jar and crush it.
- 4) Now add water, caramelized sugar, sugar and yeast to the container and mix well.
- 5) Close the jar tightly with a cloth.
- 6) Stir daily 4 times with a wooden spoon for 1 week.
- 7) After one week, keep stirring it with wooden spoon until 21 days.
- 8) Stir two times a day if possible, maintain the same timing.
- 9) After 21 days, filter the wine and don't squeeze, and let it sit for 2 days.
- 10) Transfer the clear wine to glass bottles and enjoy your wine 😊



Gina Pulickal



Plantar Fasciitis

What is plantar fasciitis?

Plantar fasciitis is a painful inflammation of the bottom of the foot between the ball of the foot and the heel.

How does it occur?

There are several possible causes of plantar fasciitis, including:

- wearing high heels
- gaining weight
- increased walking, standing, or stair-climbing.

If you wear high-heeled shoes, including western-style boots, for long periods of time, the tough, tendonlike tissue of the bottom of your foot can become shorter. This layer of tissue is called fascia. Pain occurs when you stretch fascia that has shortened. This painful stretching might happen, for example, when you walk barefoot after getting out of bed in the morning.

If you gain weight, you might be more likely to have plantar fasciitis, especially if you walk a lot or stand in shoes with poor heel cushioning. Normally there is a pad of fatty tissue under your heel bone. Weight gain might break down this fat pad and cause heel pain.

Runners may get plantar fasciitis when they change their workout and increase their mileage or frequency of

workouts. It can also occur with a change in exercise surface or terrain, or if your shoes are worn out and don't provide enough cushion for your heels.

If the arches of your foot are abnormally high or low, you are more likely to develop plantar fasciitis than if your arches are normal.

What are the symptoms?

The main symptom of plantar fasciitis is heel pain when you walk. You may also feel pain when you stand and possibly even when you are resting. This pain typically occurs first thing in the morning after you get out of bed, when your foot is placed flat on the floor. The pain occurs because you are stretching the plantar fascia. The pain usually lessens with more walking, but you may have it again after periods of rest.

You may feel no pain when you are sleeping because the position of your feet during rest allows the fascia to shorten and relax.

How is it diagnosed?

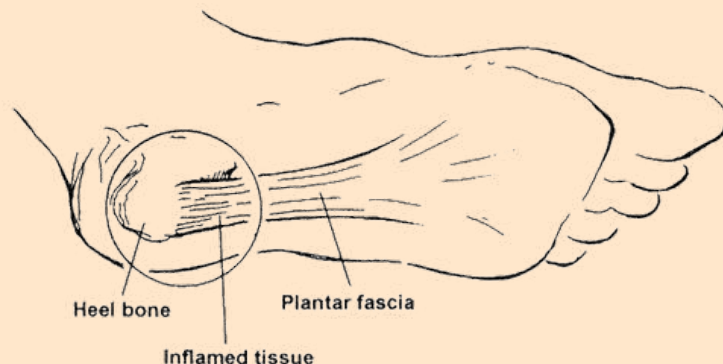
Your health care provider will ask about your symptoms. He or she will ask if the bottom of your heel is tender and if you have pain when you stretch the bottom of your foot. An x-ray of your heel may be done.

How is it treated?

Give your painful heel lots of rest. You may need to stay completely off your foot for several days when the pain is severe.

Your health care provider may recommend or prescribe anti-inflammatory medications, such as aspirin or ibuprofen. These drugs decrease

Plantar Fasciitis





pain and inflammation. Resting your heel on an ice pack for a few minutes several times a day can also help. Try to cushion your foot. You can do this by wearing athletic shoes, even at work, for awhile. Heel cushions can also be used. The cushions should be worn in both shoes. They are most helpful if you are overweight or elderly.

An orthotics sole support, specially molded to fit your foot, may be part of your treatment. These supports can be particularly helpful if you have flat feet or high arches.

If your heel pain is not relieved by the treatments described above, your health care provider may recommend physical therapy. The goals of physical therapy are to stretch the plantar fascia and to strengthen the lower leg muscles, which stabilize the ankle and heel. Sometimes physical therapists recommend athletic taping to support the bottom of the foot. A splint may be fitted to the calf of your leg and foot, to be worn at night to keep your foot stretched during sleep. Another possible treatment is injection of cortisone in the heel. Surgery is rarely necessary.

How long will the effects last?

You may find that the pain is sometimes worse and

sometimes better over time. If you get treatment soon after you notice the pain, the symptoms should stop after several weeks. If, however, you have had plantar fasciitis for a long time, it may take many weeks to months for the pain to go away.

When can I return to my sport or activity?

The goal of rehabilitation is to return you to your sport or activity as soon as is safely possible. If you return too soon you may worsen your injury, which could lead to permanent damage. Everyone recovers from injury at a different rate. Return to your sport will be determined by how soon your foot recovers, not by how many days or weeks it has been since your injury occurred. In general, the longer you have symptoms before you start treatment, the longer it takes to get better.

You may safely return to your sport or activity when, starting from the top of the list and progressing to the end, each of the following is true:

- You have full range of motion in the injured foot compared to the uninjured foot.
- You have full strength of the injured foot compared to the uninjured foot.

- You can jog straight ahead without pain or limping.
- You can sprint straight ahead without pain or limping.
- You can do 45-degree cuts, first at half-speed, then at full-speed.
- You can do 20-yard figures-of-eight, first at half-speed, then at full-speed.
- You can do 90-degree cuts, first at half-speed, then at full-speed.
- You can do 10-yard figures-of-eight, first at half-speed, then at full-speed.
- You can jump on both feet without pain and you can jump on the injured foot without pain.

For rehabilitation exercises for plantar fasciitis, press

How do I prevent plantar fasciitis?

The best way to prevent plantar fasciitis is to wear shoes that are well made and fit your feet. This is especially important when you exercise or walk a lot or stand for a long time on hard surfaces. Get new athletic shoes before your old shoes stop supporting and cushioning your feet.

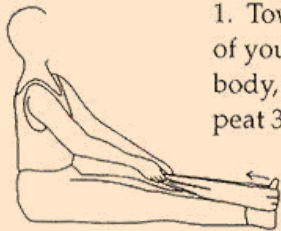
You should also:

- Avoid repeated jarring to the heel.
- Maintain a healthy weight.



Plantar Fasciitis Rehabilitation Exercises

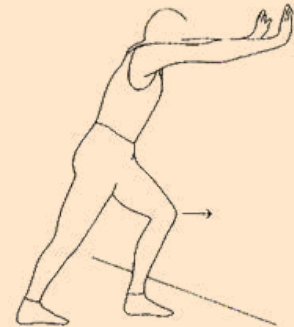
You may begin exercising the muscles of your foot right away by gently stretching them as follows:



Towel stretch

1. Towel stretch: Sit on a hard surface with your injured leg stretched out in front of you. Loop a towel around the ball of your foot and pull the towel toward your body, stretching the back of your calf muscle. Hold this position for 30 seconds. Repeat 3 times. When the towel stretch becomes too easy, you may begin doing the standing calf stretch.

2. Standing calf stretch: Facing a wall, put your hands against the wall at about eye level. Keep the injured leg back, the uninjured leg forward, and the heel of your injured leg on the floor. Turn your injured foot slightly inward (as if you were pigeon-toed) as you slowly lean into the wall until you feel a stretch in the back of your calf. Hold for 30 to 60 seconds. Repeat 3 times. When you can stand comfortably on your injured foot, you can begin stretching the planter fascia at the bottom of your foot.



Standing calf stretch



Plantar fascia stretch

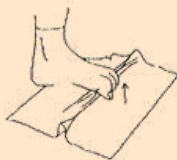
3. Plantar fascia stretch: Stand with the ball of your injured foot on a stair. Reach for the bottom step with your heel until you feel a stretch in the arch of your foot. Hold this position for 30 to 60 seconds and then relax. Repeat 3 times.

After you have stretched the bottom muscles of your foot, you can begin strengthening the top muscles of your foot.



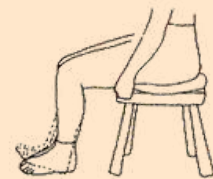
Frozen can roll

4. Frozen can roll: Roll your bare injured foot back and forth from your heel to your mid-arch over a frozen juice can. Repeat for 3 to 5 minutes. This exercise is particularly helpful if done first thing in the morning.



Towel pickup

5. Sitting toe raise: Sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor. Raise the toes and the ball of your injured foot off the floor while keeping your heel on the floor. Hold for 5 seconds. Repeat 10 times. Do three sets of 10.



Sitting toe raise

6. Towel pickup: With your heel on the ground, pick up towel with your toes. Release. Repeat 10 to 20 times.



Next, you can begin strengthening the muscles of your foot and lower leg by using a Thera-Band.

7. Resisted Thera-Band exercises for the lower leg

- A. **Resisted dorsiflexion:** Sit with your injured leg out straight and your foot facing a doorway. Tie a loop in one end of the Thera-Band. Put your foot through the loop so that the tubing goes around the arch of your foot. Tie a knot in the other end of the Thera-Band and shut the knot in the door. Move backward until there is tension in the tubing. Keeping your knee straight, pull your foot toward your face, stretching the tubing. Slowly return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets of 10.



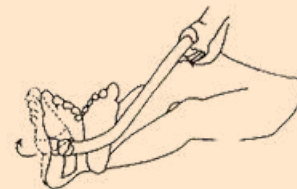
Resisted dorsiflexion

- B. **Resisted plantar flexion.** Sit with your leg outstretched and loop the middle section of the tubing around the ball of your foot. Hold the ends of the tubing in both hands. Gently press the ball of your foot down and point your toes, stretching the Thera-Band. Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets of 10.



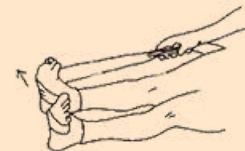
Resisted plantar flexion

- C. **Resisted inversion:** Sit with your legs out straight and cross your uninjured leg over your injured ankle. Wrap the tubing around the ball of your injured foot and then loop it around your uninjured foot so that the Thera-Band is anchored there at one end. Hold the other end of the Thera-Band in your hand. Turn your injured foot inward and upward. This will stretch the tubing. Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets of 10.



Resisted inversion

- D. **Resisted eversion:** Sit with both legs stretched out in front of you, with your feet about a shoulder's width apart. Tie a loop in one end of the Thera-Band. Put your injured foot through the loop so that the tubing goes around the arch of that foot and wraps around the outside of the uninjured foot. Hold onto the other end of the tubing with your hand to provide tension. Turn your injured foot up and out. Make sure you keep your uninjured foot still so that it will allow the tubing to stretch as you move your injured foot. Return to the starting position. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets of 10.



Resisted eversion



Shaji John



MAALA Upcoming Events – Summer 2025

June 28 – Mega Thiruvathira @ Okemos Township Global Fest

Join or cheer for our grand Thiruvathira performance showcasing Kerala's cultural beauty on an international stage!

July 12 – Family Picnic at Towner Park

Enjoy a relaxing day with food, games, and great company at our annual picnic!

July 26 – Art Workshop at Okemos Library

A fun-filled creative session for kids and families—come explore Kerala-themed crafts and art!

September – Onam Celebration

Get ready for our biggest event of the year! Traditional games, pookalam, sadya, and cultural programs await.

We warmly invite you all to contribute to our upcoming editions of Varthamanam! Please send us your articles, poems, travelogues, kids' drawings, artwork, crafts, recipes, short stories, or novels—every piece adds to the beauty and richness of our community magazine.

This edition, we truly missed **Part 2 of “Avarachante Swargam Avarachante Bhoomi” by Sunil Devasia**. We know many of you, like us, are eagerly waiting to continue that captivating journey—hopefully, we'll be able to feature it in our Onam edition!

Let's work together to make Varthamanam a vibrant success and a reflection of our collective creativity and spirit. Your continued support, participation, and encouragement mean everything to us!