

NEW ZEALAND THIRUMURUGAN TEMPLE SOCIETY INCORPORATED

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – 28 SEPTEMBER 2008

Dear Members,

Good afternoon, a very warm welcome to all of you. We sincerely thank you for your kind presence here this afternoon. With complete surrender to the Almighty, it gives me great pleasure to present the President's report for the last 12 months.

Annual general meetings are an important part of the Temple calendar. It provides an essential forum for the committee to outline its activities and for members to discuss opportunities to progress the Temple's objectives.

Thirumurugan Temple is now well entrenched in our community. Attending the temple on Fridays and all auspicious days have become a priority for the community. Patronage shows an increasing trend particularly during week days and major festivals. All spiritual services and educational teachings have continued to a high standard. Let us hope and pray that the blessings of the Almighty are showered on everyone.

Ladies and Gentlemen, while the Temple in its current form by and large meets the current need of the community, we cannot lose sight of the fact that what we have is a temporary arrangement. When we set out to establish a Temple back in year 2000, the goal and mandate from the community was to work towards building a Temple in the traditional form. This goal was re-emphasised by the board of trustees in a recent meeting. The management committee with guidance from the board of trustees will work towards achieving this goal in the near future. As always, we welcome suggestions and advice from everyone in respect of this.

Our focus during the last 12 months was to consolidate the priorities identified previously including:

- Enhancement to the way festivals are celebrated particularly in respect of time management
- Involvement of Children and Youth on temple programmes through devotional singing, cultural programmes & Waitangi sports day
- Strengthening our communication including regular flyer distribution, radio announcements, email updates and timely update of the temple web site
- Establishing a weekly library system.
- Completing high priority building maintenance work such as installing smoke exhaust systems, professional cleaning of the ceiling, the shower/bathroom downstairs, pantry cup-board storage facilities at the rear of the temple and a sink for washing and cleaning.

Maintenance requirements of the temple building are particularly high, given the growing patronage and the type of activities conducted with Hindu rituals. Therefore, an effective preventive maintenance programme is vital. High priority work identified but still to be completed include installing efficient drainage facilities, plumbing from the Shrines to avoid the use of buckets, tiling the steps of all three Altars, upgrading our sound systems, improving the appearance of the frontage, improving the reception area and refurbishing the wash room upstairs. We have obtained competitive quotations to complete most of these projects but due to the costs involved, we can only address them one by one. Members and well wishers are welcome to support one or more of these projects by sponsoring them.

Financial

The engagement of the second Priest, increase in building maintenance costs and the general increase in operating costs in the current economic environment present us with many financial challenges. A number of fund raising activities with huge support from the community take place to support this. The Society places strong emphasis on responsible financial management, integrity and transparency. A code of financial policies and procedures is in place to ensure key internal controls are adhered to. An Internal Auditor, independent of the finance committee reviews all transactions and recommendations are implemented.

Membership

I wish to take this opportunity to remind all members and devotees that the temple's legal status is an incorporated society. Therefore, membership of the community is central and fundamental to its status. We kindly request devotees to formalise your membership by completing the membership form and paying the annual subscriptions.

Management Committee

I wish to acknowledge the support and enormous contribution of the management committee over the last two years. Managing a Temple requires a huge commitment and personal sacrifice from those who are entrusted with the task. It is our Lord Murugan's grace that we are blessed with such a dedicated group of people.

Acknowledgements

The success of an organization like ours is entirely dependent on its volunteers. Enormous amount of financial, physical and moral support has been given at every step along the way by many people. While it is almost impossible to single out individuals, please do bear with us as we wish to express our gratitude to the following:

- Our Patron Mr P Murugasu for his valuable advice, encouragement and guidance at all times.
- The Board of Trustees for their vision and direction.
- The members for renewing their membership annually and supporting the management.
- Our Honorary Auditor Mr S Ravichelvan for his auditing services and recommendations.

- The regular financial donors without whose support we will not be able to meet our on going costs.
- The members who demonstrate great commitment by taking the regular Hinduism classes and Pannisai Classes.
- Those members of the community who regularly volunteer their time to look after the reception area and also help out with the pooja proceedings
- The volunteers who help out with regular cleaning after poojas, general on going maintenance, “monthly working bee” and car parks.
- The volunteers who make garlands for the Temple week after week.
- The volunteers who support our food parcel fund raising activities with order taking, purchasing, donations, purchasing of ingredients, cooking, packing, delivering and cleaning.
- The co-ordinators, teachers, students, parents, food donors, advertisers, decoration experts, car park helpers and audience at our annual cultural programmes “Pannum Parathamum” and “Muthucharam”.
- Those members who provide material for our weekly radio programme and help to present them.
- The music teachers, students and parents for their contribution to Friday devotional singing.
- Those members, particularly the youth for the help with prasatham packing and distribution at regular and major festivals.
- Those medical professionals who help out with our “health awareness” programmes.
- Those members who help us with maintaining our web site, email communication, and community newspaper pick up and distribution.
- The community as a whole for the remarkable, unwavering, continuous support at all times.

The list goes on and on and is certainly not exhaustive. We the members of the management committee are truly humbled by all your generosity and support and would like to record our sincere appreciation to each and everyone who has been part of the on going growth of the Society. We are truly grateful to God for giving us this opportunity to serve the community to the best of our abilities.

May our Lord Muruga’s blessing be with everyone!

T. Varnakulasingham
PRESIDENT