72 - Hour Marthon Dance
Category : January 1997
Published by Anonymous on Jan. 01, 1997

72 - Hour Marthon Dance

Jennifer M. Flaker

That drives a marathoner to go the extra mile? When Vidya Chandra Sekhar set a new world record for dancing in May, 1996, she was guided by the strength of her late father's love. She danced 72 hours and 10 minutes of non-stop Bharata Natyam for the American Heart Association and the Bharatiya Temple of Troy, Michigan. The program raised $25,000 in honor of her father, Sankarnarayan Chandra Sekhar, who died of heart disease in 1992. With blistered feet and pure exhaustion setting in, Sekhar, 27, held onto that love to see her through her three-day sadhana.

Approximately 600 people watched this iron-willed daughter perform the final dance. She had injured her left knee the previous Sunday night and was finding it difficult even to stand between dances. "Talk about stamina," said J.P. Cartmill, Sekhar's co-worker from Syntel, Inc. "I can't believe she's standing, let alone dancing!"

The American Heart Association was "a great help" to Sekhar during her father's illness. With tears of joy running down her face, exhausted after the event, she pleaded with the audience, "My tears are for my father. I can't bring him back.

But you can love your families. Stay close, love them and please, exercise and watch your health. Take time for the little moments, that is all I ask."