

Maya Puwath - මායා පුවත්

Bi-Monthly Newsletter of Mahamaya Girls' College
Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA)

Volume 14 – Issue 6 – December 2018



Message from the Editors

Dear readers,

As we are well into the holiday season, we hope that you are enjoying some downtime and getting ready for the new year! This will be the last issue of Maya Puwath for 2018, and we hope you enjoyed all six issues we brought to you over this past year. We would love to hear from you.

In this issue, we have quite the collection of talents, from contributions from valued MGCCANA members to their children to a couple of our Mahamaya sisters from Australia. There is also a delicious recipe and also some “බඩේ අප්පිරිණයට අත් බෙහෙත්” from our beloved Mrs. Werake. You will also find in this December issue some news items from Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy.

It has been a busy year for all of us in the Maya Puwath Newsletter Committee, but it has certainly been a rewarding experience. We always welcome any support, so do let us know if you'd like to be part of our Committee in the new year. Until we meet you in 2019, we hope that you and your families will take good care and enjoy a happy and safe holiday season!

Best wishes,

Maya Puwath Newsletter Committee

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***Utthanena' ppamadena
samyamena damena ca
dipam kayiratha medhavi
yam ogho nabhikirati.***



“Through diligence, mindfulness, discipline (with regard to moral precepts), and control of his senses, let the man of wisdom make (of himself) an island which no flood can overwhelm.”

[Dhammapada \(Verse 25\)](#)

Poetry to Ponder

To The Elder

By S. M. U. P. Mawalagedera

I met an Elder,
Specifics; an "Aboriginal Elder",
Full of pride, Yet a little hurt!
Full of wisdom,
Yet forgiving and forgiven,
He was an insignia;
Of stolen generations!
He was exemplarity;
For calling earth-his mother!
He was as much same- as you and me,
Yet, he was all too pure!
So- I met an Elder!

S. M.U. P. Mawalagedera is a second-generation Mahamayan from the Class of 2006, currently residing in Australia doing graduate studies. This "Poetry to Ponder" segment would be an ode to where she came from and what she has experienced.

MGCAANA UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (2018-2019) **DEADLINE EXTENDED!**

The Selection Committee of the MGCAANA Undergraduate & Graduate Scholarship Program is looking for Mahamaya alumnae who demonstrate outstanding academic achievements, leadership and active participation in extra curricular activities and also a significant level of financial need. Intended to cover the cost of textbooks for a semester, scholarships of \$500.00 each will be awarded to two (2) candidates.

Application Period & Deadline: September 1, 2018-~~December 31, 2018~~ **January 31, 2019**

Award Notification: By ~~January 31, 2019~~ **February 28, 2019**

Once the application period begins, please visit <http://www.mahamayaalumnae.org/scholarship.html> to view and download the scholarship application. If you have any questions about this scholarship program, please contact us at mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com.

We look forward to receiving your applications!

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Sent in by Sujatha Werake

Leopard and deer

I watched seated in the safari Jeep
The leopard about to make its leap
I hear the cries of the mother deer
Bleating to her little fawn
The deer don't want to go away
Crying in unison and harmony
Pleading to the leopard to spare the prey
The sounds of the little one delays
Not to be heard ever again

How many times must I have been that fawn
How many times must I have been the mom
How many times must I have been the leopard
How many times hunted and fallen prey

How many lives must I have run away
Frightened and trying to get away
How many lifetimes must death have caught up
When I have thought there was another day

The crocodile silently opens his mouth
Motionless lies beneath the mud
Unsuspecting the little boar comes close
Instantly closes the jaw of death

How many life times must I have been the croc
How many lifetimes the little wild boar
How many life times given and taken
Life after life in this cycle of birth

Sent in by Nilmini Dorabawila



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Amala Jayasekara (nee De Silva) was a student of Mahamaya College (1970-1976) and was boarded at the school hostel. She was appointed as a Vice Captain of Sangamitta House (1973) and School Captain (1974/1975), held the positions of the President of the Buddhist Society and the Arts Circle and was a member of the school choir.

Amala graduated from the University of Peradeniya in 1980 and completed her postgraduate studies at Utah State University, USA. She worked at the Department of Agricultural Engineering and the Postgraduate Institute of Agriculture of the University of Peradeniya until 1994. Amala was elected as the first female President of the Agricultural Engineering Society of Sri Lanka. Once migrated to Australia with her family in 1994, Amala worked at RMIT University in Melbourne. From 1999, she has worked for the Australian Government and has had opportunity to represent the Australian Government at several UN/FAO multilateral meetings.

Amala has now retired from her permanent position but continues to work for Australian Government while pursuing her other interests, including creative writing. She has published some of her writing on her blog at: <http://amalajayasekara.simplesite.com/> and in various newspapers and online publications.



The back story.....

Amala Jayasekara was inspired to write this poem when she saw the image of a young woman and a child that MGCAANA member Nirmala Gunapala posted on social media that depicted the life of millions of disadvantaged women and children around the world. Most these people have no voice and sadly are forgotten by the rest of the world that keeps chasing materials and distracted by trend after trend. Amala really appreciated Nirmala's efforts to make us stop and think about these issues.

After Amala posted this poem on her social media, MGCAANA member and former MGCAANA President Geetha Eragoda came across it and reached out to Maya Puwath to see if we can share not only the poem and the image, but also the story behind Amala's inspiration.

MGCAANA is always touched by the sisterhood that goes beyond borders, spanning across the world!

The Interview

In this segment, the Maya Puwath team sits down with a MGCAANA member to hear about what they are up to these days, their experience with MGCAANA, and any advice and tips they would like to share with our readers. E-mail mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com if you would like to be interviewed by the Maya Puwath team or if you know of a MGCAANA member you would like featured in "The Interview".

Erandi Suriyaarachchi

Q: Please tell us a bit about who you are what you are up to these days.

A: I attended Mahamaya Girls' College since Kindergarten and graduated in 1997. My family and I migrated to the United States straight after that. I attended the University of Texas in Austin to obtain a degree in Electrical Engineering, and a Master of Engineering Management from Penn State University. Currently, I work for The Boeing Company as a Lead Design Engineer for the 787 program. I live in Charleston, South Carolina with my husband (Ravi – honorary member since 2006) and my 7 year old twin boys Sanuth and Dinuth. I joined MGCAANA soon after it was established with the recommendation of Mrs. Sujatha Werake and Mrs. Neranjika Dissanayake, and I am so glad I did. I was honored to serve as the Secretary during the year of 2006/2007 and the President during the year of 2007/2008. In 2011, I hosted the AGM in Charleston, South Carolina.

Q: You once served as a MGCAANA President and also hosted an AGM in the United States. Could you talk about your overall experience with MGCAANA?

A: I was honored to serve as the President of MGCAANA as I was able to help not only my Alma Mater but also other nonprofit organizations across North America. Thanks to MGCAANA, I also met many members (junior and senior to my batch) whom I would have not met if it weren't for MGCAANA. When I decided that I wanted to host the AGM in Charleston, South Carolina, at first I was nervous as I didn't think anybody would show up to this part of the country and luckily I was wrong. Not only many members showed up but we had the honor of having late Mrs. N.K. Pilapitiya (a former Principal of Mahamaya) attend the AGM as the Chief Guest. I also learned that Mrs. Pilapitiya taught my father when she was a teacher at St. Anthony's Boys' College as well. It was a great re-union and we were swapping stories well into the nights and had a wonderful time.

Q: Do you have any tips or advice on maintaining a healthy work-life balance?

A: I have been a working mom and a wife since the very beginning. I was lucky enough to have help when my twins were little, however, now I run the household without many extra hands. My parents and my sister's family live in Texas therefore, we do not have any family living nearby to help either. What helped us the most was to understand when to say "no" to work and prioritize the family needs ahead of work. Yes, there were times when I had to miss a school performance due to work, however I made sure that either myself or my husband attended every school event. We tag-team every school event and sports time. During vacation time I make sure to shut down my work phone and not take the work laptop along. Last December, we took a whole month off and vacationed in Sri Lanka to spend more time with my husband Ravi's parents. I was worried that work will suffer due to my absence, but before leaving I delegated my work to others. All I had to do was trust my coworkers and work survived without me and I was able to enjoy a much needed time off.

Q: We have readers who are not yet members of MGCAANA. What's your message to them to encourage them to become members of our great organization?

A: I think most Mayans who don't join might be thinking they don't have enough time to spend with MGCAANA, because life gets in the way. I think they are wrong. Would you feel the same way, if we say if you join we can help Mayans in Sri Lanka or Mayan living in the USA and Canada? Would feel the same way if we say you will get to meet other Mayans who are well accomplished and might have a lead on getting your next job or a reference to a job? Would you feel the same way, if we say, you might meet great friends who will be your lifelong friends all over North America? Would you feel the same way if we say it will help you develop your communication skills, leadership skills and networking skills?

I think you can spend an extra 10 minutes to join MGCAANA not only to help others but to help you. Think about it!

Thank you so much Erandi for your valuable time! It's been a pleasure interviewing you!

My pleasure!



Maya Puwath has been reaching the MGCAANA membership since 2005, and "Pause – Rewind – Play" re-publishes past contributions to Maya Puwath, by MGCAANA members.

Teach your kids about Buddhism with the help of these books.....

The Story of Angulimala - Buddhism for Children Level 1

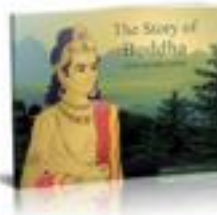
A beautifully illustrated story of hope and personal transformation from the life of Buddha that addresses many of the issues confronting both children and adults today.



These books can be found at "Tharpa Publications" at
<http://www.tharpa.com/us/buddhist-books-for-children#.U6JV0DwVpw>

The Story of Buddha - Buddhism for Children Level 2

The story of Buddha's life is timeless and is as relevant today as it was 2,500 years ago when Buddha was alive. It shows how we can learn to maintain a peaceful mind all the time so that we can be happy all the time, and in this way fulfill our own wishes as well as the wishes of all our friends.



What is Buddhism? - Buddhism for Children Level 3

This book introduces the mind, as distinct from the brain, and invites the reader to explore and develop their mind using scientific methods taught by Buddha.

It shows how the problems we encounter in life do not exist outside of our self, but are part of our mind that experiences unpleasant feelings.

Learning to control our mind, especially our desire, is the only way to bring all our problems to an end.



What is Meditation? - Buddhism for Children Level 4

We know from our own experience that when our mind is peaceful we are happy all the time, even if our external conditions are poor, but when our mind is not peaceful we are not happy, even if our external conditions are excellent.

The method to make our mind peaceful is training in meditation.

This book explains a simple breathing meditation suitable for all ages and briefly introduces more advanced forms of meditation.



Prepared By
Hemalika (Karunaratne)
Abeyesundara.

Some Upcoming MGCAANA Activities

- Board Meetings (January, February)
- Next Newsletter (February)
- MGCAANA Undergraduate and Graduate Scholarship (Application period now closes on January 31, 2019)

One Pot Lemon Garlic Pasta

From Tasty

Ingredients

for 4 servings
8 oz linguine
2 tablespoons olive oil
8 tablespoons unsalted butter, 1 stick
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1 ¼ lb shrimp
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
1 teaspoon dried oregano
4 cups baby spinach
¼ cup parmesan cheese, grated
2 tablespoons fresh parsley, chopped
1 tablespoon lemon juice

Preparation

Under 30 min

- In a large pot, boil water and add pasta. Cook (stirring frequently) until al dente.
- Drain and set pasta aside.
- In the same pan, heat olive oil and 2 tablespoons of butter. Add garlic and crushed red pepper, cook until fragrant.
- Toss in shrimp, salt and pepper to taste, and stir until shrimp start to turn pink, but are not fully cooked.
- Add oregano and spinach, cook until wilted.
- Return cooked pasta to the pot, add remaining butter, parmesan, and parsley. Stir until well mixed and the butter is melted.
- When the shrimp are cooked, add lemon juice, mix once more, then serve while hot.
- Enjoy!

Source: <https://tasty.co/recipe/one-pot-lemon-garlic-shrimp-pasta>

Sent in by *Berlini Narampanawe*

Recipe Corner



Image source:
Buzzfeed <https://www.pinterest.ca/pin/548735535833871008/>

News from Mahamaya Girls' College

“Colours Night” of Mahamaya Girls' College Kandy

To recognize Mayans' achievements in sport in 2017, Mahamaya Girls' College annual colours awarding ceremony was held on Friday, October 26, 2018 at the school auditorium in Kandy, Sri Lanka. The Chief Guest for the occasion was Lieutenant General Mahesh Senanayake, Commander of the Army, who presented trophies and certificates to over 600 students.

Recipients of “Pahana,” the highest award presented for Sports

- *Shalani Ranasinghe - Chess*
- *Janani Dissanayake - Chess*
- *Ruvinya Malporu - Netball*
- *Uththama Silva - Netball*

The Best Sportswoman of 2017

- *Peshala Bandara - Table Tennis*



MGCAANA would like to congratulate our sisters for their achievements, commitment and dedication to sports, and also thank coaches, teachers and parents for their continuous support.

Sources: [Ceylon Daily News \(November 12, 2018\)](#); [Sri Lanka Army \(October 27, 2018\)](#)

Cricket: Mahamaya Girls' College Gets a New Practice Net

On Friday, November 9, 2018, Thilina Tennakoon, the President of the Kandy District Cricket Association (KDCA) commissioned a new practice net at the Wewasiri ground belonging to Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy. Himali Senadheera (Principal), Bagya Devapriya (Teacher in Charge) and Nilu Wijekoon (Prefect of Games) were present at the event, and Ms. Senadheera thanked KDCA for the practice net as it will greatly help cricket careers of Mahamaya cricket players.

Source: [Sunday Observer \(November 11, 2018\)](#)

Tarika Harini Waters, Age 10

Kids Corner



Season's Greetings!

MGCAANA wishes you happy
holidays and a very happy new
year!

Want to know what your new Board of Directors (BOD) will be undertaking in 2018-2019?

Please read the minutes of the BOD's monthly meetings posted on MGCAANA website:

<http://www.mahamayaalumnina.org/minutes.php>

If you have new ideas, concerns, or suggestions to improve how MGCAANA operates etc. please feel free to connect with the BOD through e-mail:

Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

Contributing to Maya Puwath

Contributing to Maya Puwath is a great and easy way you could be an active member of MGCAANA. We accept content produced by you, articles written by others with proper acknowledgement, as well as news from Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy, Sri Lanka.

No time to write an article but would still like to contribute to Maya Puwath? Not a problem! We welcome content produced by children of MGCAANA member that we will feature in the Kids' Corner of Maya Puwath.

Please send your contributions to the upcoming October issue of Maya Puwath:

Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF)

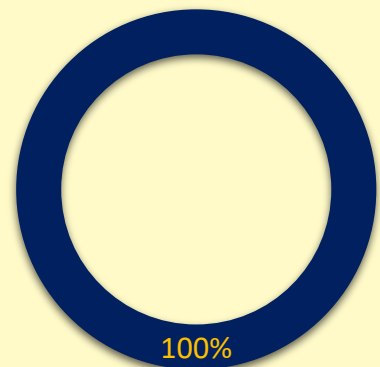
VSTF awards scholarships to the most deserving, economically-disadvantaged students who do well in their studies and extra curricular activities from grades 6 and up at Mahamaya. **We are happy to announce that VSTF has officially reached its initial goal of \$20,000 thanks to generous donors like you!**

If you would like to support MGCAANA in its fundraising efforts, you can donate (online/check) and most importantly, encourage others to donate:

<http://www.mahamayaalumnina.org/vstf.php>

Stay tuned for VSTF's next goal!

VSTF Progress: Initial Goal of 20,000.00



■ Funds Raised

Newsletter Committee: Vihara Dharmaratne, Vajeera Dorabawila, Lilika Molligoda

Maya Puwath is a publication of Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association in North America (MGCAANA)