

# Maya Puwath - මායා පුවත්

**Bi-Monthly Newsletter of Mahamaya Girls' College  
Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA)  
Volume 15 – Issue 5 – October 2019**



## Message from the Editors

Dear Readers

Hope you are enjoying the beautiful fall colours and preparing for Halloween. We also hope that our readers from Canada had a good Thanksgiving early this month and that our readers from the US are getting ready for theirs in November.

On a somber note, you might have got to know that our dear teacher Mrs. Indrani Karunanayake passed away in October. A couple of tributes to Mrs. Karunanayake is included in this edition and we wish her the supreme bliss of Nibbana.

In this edition, we have picked up an exciting article from our October 2012 edition for the Pause-Rewind-Play segment, about a road trip to Yellowstone National Park. We have also included a mouth-watering recipe on how to make a no bake “crème caramel” and an emotional poem the “Homeward Bound.” In addition, this Newsletter includes an interesting interview with our MGCAANA Treasurer Devi Gunasekera.

We would like to remind you that the application period for MGCAANA Undergraduate & Graduate Scholarship is still open, and that if you are qualified to apply, you have time until December 31, 2019 to apply. In this issue, you will find the relevant information to apply.

Last but not least, we would also like to inform you with a lot of excitement that the Maya Puwath Newsletter Committee recently welcomed a new editor, Berlini Narampanawe!

Happy reading!

The Maya Puwath Newsletter Committee

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***Passa cittakatam bimbam  
arukayam samussitam  
aturam babusankappam  
yassa natthi dhuvam thiti.***



“Look at this dressed up body, a mass of sores, supported (by bones), sickly, a subject of many thoughts (of sensual desire). Indeed, that body is neither permanent nor enduring.”

[Dhammapada \(Verse 147\)](#)

## Passing of Mrs. Indrani Karunanayake

It is with great sadness we inform to MGCAANA about the passing of Mrs. Indrani Karunanayake, a prominent retired teacher of Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy. Mrs. Karunanayake passed away on October 8, 2019, leaving behind her loving family, friends, and many Mayans who had the fortune of having her as a teacher at Mahamaya. As we pass our condolences to her family, we hope that Mrs. Karunanayake attain the supreme bliss of Nirvana.



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Canberra Australia  
23 October 2019

## A Tribute to a Teacher

*People will forget what you said,  
People will forget what you did,  
But people will never forget how you made them feel.*  
-Maya Angelou-

Mrs. Indrani Karunanayake, one of the most beloved teachers when some of us were students at Mahamaya left for her heavenly abode on October 8, 2019, after a brief illness. Although her passing is widely known across the Mayan community, I consider it my duty and honor to write an appreciation to pay tribute to her, on behalf of all Mayans in North America.

Before becoming a teacher at Mahamaya, Mrs. Karunanayake was an alumna of Mahamaya. She had been a brilliant student and demonstrated her leadership qualities by serving her alma mater as the Head Prefect. She was at Kandy Girls High School for part of her elementary studies and joined Mahamaya from grade two until she completed her Advanced Level exam. She received the best results in Kandy, and went on to university further studies. In the early 1970s, after her graduation, Mrs. Karunanayake joined Mahamaya as a teacher. She took an early retirement in 1990 and went to work in Oman as a teacher for seven years. After returning to Sri Lanka, she taught at the Department of English at Peradeniya University, and also at the American College in Kandy.

The most important qualities of Mrs. Karunanayake that we all remember are her patience and kindness. I do not recall a single moment of harshness from her toward any student. Her kindness enhanced her qualities as a teacher. She never raised her voice, either in the classroom or outside. This is not to say that she was not a disciplinarian either. She disciplined us by setting examples and by being firm, in the gentlest manner. Her treatment to all students was nondiscriminatory. Whatever the problem was, she handled it with love and care. She was one of the teachers at school with whom we were able to share our happiness, sorrow and even personal issues, with confidence and respect. She guided us to be what we are today. THANK YOU.

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We shared all sorts of stories with her without any fear. She was there to listen. We always waited by the Araliya tree in front to greet her as she walked through the main gate at school. We wanted to see what kind of saree she would wear to school that day. She wore beautiful sarees to school and never wore the same saree twice. We competed against each other to get closer to enjoy the pleasant scents she wore. We always admired her beauty. We learnt not only subject matter, but also life lessons while talking to her during our free time.

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ඇ පාසල් නාව දාට පන්තිය පාලයි..."

During this time, her oldest daughter Lilanthi was becoming a popular singer. The lines above were penned by Clarence Wijewardena for Mrs. Karunanayake's daughter to sing, reflecting her own mother. I remembered ordering all Lilanthi's albums through Mrs. Karunanayake. She managed to keep her daughter's fame at a low profile so that Lilanthi could enjoy her childhood. She was always very humble and warmhearted.

It is very difficult to let go of someone whom we loved so dearly and a mother to all of us when we were growing up. As Lord Buddha said, nothing is permanent in this world. On behalf of all Mayans who live in North America, I wish her journey in Samsara to be short in reaching the supreme bliss of Nirvana.

By Sriyani Dissanayake

March 2018





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

## **33 and counting - Part1 – Mount Rushmore & Yellowstone National Park**

**By Hemalika Abeysundara (Karunaratne)**

It was mid of May in 2011 and the summer break for us. We were excited about our road trip to Yellowstone national park. Our team was me, my husband Sachith, our friend and batch mate from University of Peradeniya, Priyantha and his wife Sakunthala and finally Roshan malli (brother of Vindya Thilakaratne, '99 MCK). They too are all graduate students at TTU Math department and Sakunthala (Saku) came to the USA few months ago to join with her husband. Our plan was to camp two nights at Yellowstone National park and visit few other places on our way. The map was finalized, motels and camp sites were booked and the SUV we rented was fully loaded with camping gear and all necessities for a seven day trip.

Since fast food and eating out would not work with most of us, we decided to prepare Sri Lankan meals for the trip. We made fried potatoes, fried pol sambol, soya curry and seeni sambol. Also we packed enough raw rice and dhal with other cooking needs. A rice cooker, a portable gas cooker, an electric hotplate and microwave safe jugs and plates were packed. We didn't forget to pack enough tea bags and sugar for our morning tea. All the cooked dishes were packed in coolers and we made sure that the motels we booked have a microwave and a refrigerator. We decided to buy milk, bread and eggs when we reach our night stays. Me and Saku had the responsibility to check the coolers and refill ice when necessary. We also prepared some snacks to have while we drive and bought water and drinks. In that way we can save lot of time and money during our trip and be energetic and healthy.

We left Lubbock on 25<sup>th</sup> of Wednesday around 5 pm and drove all night while stopping at few places to get some rest and change the drivers. It is important that someone is awake to accompany the driver when you are having long day and night drive. So we took shifts to fill the driver's position and the companion's position and picked some fun topics to talk on our way while other three are sleeping soundly. We had a chance to view the sun rise over the highway and green hillsides which are much different than south plains. After refreshing in the next morning, we reached our first destination, "Mount Rushmore" in South Dakota. Although stone carvings are not new to us since we have seen incredible work in Polonnaruwa and Anuradhapura, the hugeness of monuments and how good they have captures the presidents, astonished us at the very first sight. After visiting the monuments we took off to Red Lodge, Montana to spend the night after a long drive.

Our goal was to enter the national park through the north entrance in the morning which gives us a chance to view the Beartooth Mountains. The entrance was scheduled to open on 27<sup>th</sup> of May for the summer. Unfortunately they postponed it in the morning, which had never happened in previous years, so we had to change our plans. We had a good Sri Lankan meal and went half way through the entrance until they allow us, while enjoying piles of snow and cool creeks. There were heaps and heaps of snow and we played on them like kids..... well we never get a chance to do so in Texas!!!

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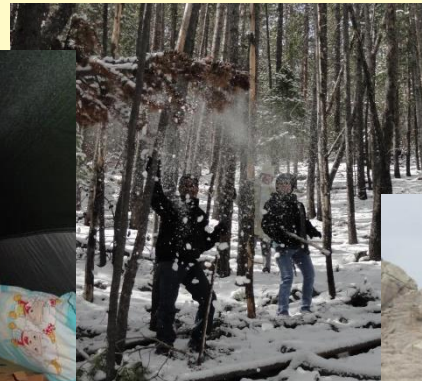


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We entered the Yellowstone National Park from an alternative entrance and drove around while watching wild life and geysers. There were hundreds of Bisons and we had a rare chance to see a mother grizzly bear with her cub. It was getting dark when we reach our camp site. Temperature was almost freezing but we were well prepared for that. Each camp site was provided with a fire ring and a barbeque grill and there were strict rules regarding waste due to bear attacks. We put up our tent and made a fire to warm up ourselves. Every other occupant in our camp site was in heated RV's but not in tents like us. Passers by were looking at us hopefully thinking what a stupid gang to camp outside in this cold. Of course, who wants to freeze outside like that!!!!

After having hotdogs and a nice hot tea, we were ready to end the day inside our cozy tent. We could hear the soft sound of falling snow and a wild yip of a fox somewhere far away. Priyantha was making jokes about bear attacks and scary noises while Saku is experiencing the real winter weather for the first time. I tried to catch some sleep meanwhile dreaming about all the fun times we had camping as a girl guide and wondering how different it is to camp in woods like this.

Await for the next part to discover how we survived our night in the cold and the rest of our road trip.



*After she completed her PhD in Statistics/Mathematics, Hemalika returned to SL in January 2015 and joined University of Peradeniya as a Senior Lecturer in Statistics at the Department of Statistics and Computer Science, Faculty of Science. She currently teaches undergraduate Stat courses and also MSc. Level courses at the Postgraduate Institute of Science (PGIS). Hemalika's research work covers Survival Analysis, Clinical Data Analysis, Actuarial Statistics and Asymptotic Theory. She has a 6 year old daughter (Miyuru - Who was born in the US) who is in grade 1 at Mahamaya Girls' College now, and a 2 year old son (Hasaru). Hemalika's husband Dr. Sachith Abeyesundara is also a senior lecturer in Statistics at the same department. Hemalika is involved in various OGA activities and currently is the Treasurer on the Sri Lankan side for the MGCAANA Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF) Board of Trustees.*



## Recipe Corner

# FLAN / CRÈME CARAMEL, NO BAKE

By  
Sureni Ranasinghe

### Ingredients:

#### For Caramel sauce:

- 1 cup Sugar
- 1/4 cup hot water

#### For the custard

- 3 large eggs
- 1 can (14oz/400g) condensed milk
- 1 can (14oz) water
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- A medium size dish to make the flan/ Crème caramel
- Large pan to steam the caramel

### How to:

#### To make caramel sauce,

- ❑ Add sugar and hot water to a pan with a heavy bottom
- ❑ In medium heat stir until the sugar dissolves
- ❑ When the sugar dissolves stop stirring and let it melt, DO NOT stir afterword just swirl the pan if needed to stir
- ❑ When the sugar starts to change color, keep a closer look as it will burn fast
- ❑ When the sugar melts and it turns golden brown pour it to the baking tray, tilt tray to coat the entire bottom and leave it aside

#### To make custard,

- ❑ Add eggs, break the yolks and whisk it for few minutes, then add condensed milk, from the same can add one can of water & give it a good mix. Finally add vanilla essence & mix.
- ❑ Using a sieve, pour the custard mixture to the pan coated with caramel sauce, this will help to get rid of any lumps and reduce air bubbles.
- ❑ Cover the dish from a foil to avoid letting water get in to the pudding. Tightly secure the edges
- ❑ In a Large pan lay a towel in the bottom and keep a cooling rack to elevate the caramel dish from the bottom of the pan, pour water covering up 1/3

of the caramel dish. Close the lid and bring water to a boil.

- ❑ When it boils open the lid and carefully place the caramel dish in the pan on top of the rack (be careful with the hot steam) close the lid tightly and steam in medium heat for about 35-40 minutes. Or until a skewer inserted comes out clean.
- ❑ When done, cool it completely on a countertop and keep it in the fridge for about 5-6 hours or overnight. Run a knife around the edges to release the pudding from the pan and turn it upside down to a plate.



✓Video for the recipe:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jehbURI7Hnk>

✓To use baking method check the recipe:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yke9cKcD9Sk>

✓Caramelizing sugar step by step process:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VXng8guLTQg>

## 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](mailto: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".*

# Devi Gunasekera

**Q: Devi, you've been a very active MGCAANA member for quite a while. For those who are new to MGCAANA or haven't had the opportunity to work with you yet, please tell us a bit about who you are.**

**A:** Hi, I am Devi Gunasekera (nee Subasinghe). I was at Mahamaya from 1981-1989. After Mahamaya, I received my MBBS degree from Medical Faculty, University of Peradeniya and worked as Physician at Base Hospital, Nawalapitya before moving to the US with my husband. I lived in the West Coast for about 13 years and one of the founding members of MGCAANA. After I completed my medical licensing exams in the US, I joined a research institute as a Research Fellow. Currently I live in Potomac, Maryland with my husband and teenage daughter and work at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences as a Scientist.



**Q: Serving as Treasurer must come with a lot of responsibilities. How do you describe your experience to date?**

**A:** This is the third year I am serving as Treasurer for MGCAANA. When I accepted the position, I didn't have any prior experience or much idea about the responsibilities. It was a bit challenging at the beginning, but I had a lot of help from fellow Mayans. I learned many aspects of finance and accounting field I never would have otherwise. As the Treasurer, I work closely with MGCAANA Advisory Board, the Executive Members, the Board of Directors, and various committee chairs. I get to know and become friends with these wonderful dedicated group of Mayans. It is a great opportunity to learn new things as well as to form lifelong friendships with Mayan sisters I never would have met otherwise. Overall, it is a rewarding experience and I enjoy every minute.

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## The Interview (contd.)

**Devi Gunasekera (contd.)**

**Q: Please tell us a bit about your experience while at Mahamaya. How was it like, and what kind of activities were you involved in while studying there?**

**A:** I have many fond memories during my time at Mahamaya. It was the most enjoyable and care free period of my life. I had great teachers who made learning fun and exciting. I was a member of the Eastern Band, the Bhakthi-Gee Choir and Orchestra throughout the school years, representing Mahamaya at many national events.

**Q: What do you do for fun? What are your hobbies?**

**A:** I love to travel to see new places. I have been to many states in the US, but still have a few more to cover. I enjoy good food, music and good company. But most of all, when I get a chance, I love to curl up with a good book.

**Q: We have readers who are not yet members of MGCAANA. Do you have a message for them, to encourage them to become members of our great organization?**

**A:** Yes, I invite everyone to join MGCAANA. It is a great organization with a big focus of giving back. If you are interested in helping your school or the community, this is a great way to do it. You also get to know Mayan sisters from all over North America. Our Annual General Meeting (AGM) is a great way to meet these incredible women and have fun. So please join !

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

**A:** The pleasure is mine, Thank you!

## MGCAANA UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (2019-2020)

The Selection Committee of the MGCAANA Undergraduate & Graduate Scholarship Program is looking for MGCAANA members 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, a scholarships of \$500.00 will be awarded to one (1) candidate this year.

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

**Award Notification: By January 31, 2020**

Once the application period begins, please visit <http://www.mahamayaalumnina.org/scholarship.html> to view and download the scholarship application. **Please make sure that your MGCAANA membership is current when applying.** If you have any questions about this scholarship program, please contact us at [mahamaya\\_alumnae@yahoo.com](mailto:mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com).

**We look forward to receiving your applications!**

### **Mahamaya Girls' College Places 2<sup>nd</sup> Place at the 46<sup>th</sup> Milo All Island Schools Swimming Championship**

The 46<sup>th</sup> Milo All Island Schools Swimming Championship took place at the Sugathadasa Indoor Swimming Complex concluded on September 8, 2019, with Mahamaya Girls' College placing 2<sup>nd</sup>. A major highlight of this 5-day event was Visakha Vidyalyaya breaking the 20-year reign of Mahamaya Girls' College by winning the Championship. Although this was a major upset, Mahamaya won the Girls' Under 20 Overall Team Championship.

MGCAANA would like to wish Mahamaya Girls' College Swim Team and Mahamaya's Under 20 Team on their achievements. MGCAANA also contragulates Visakha Vidyalyaya for their victory!

Sources: [The Papare](#), [Sunday Observer](#)

### **Mahamaya Girls' College Wins All Island Western Band Competition – Girls Division**

The National Cadet Corps held its Western Band Competition Camp in early September 2019, at the NCC Training Center in Rantambe. The award ceremony was held on September 10, 2019, under the patronage of Major General M. M. S. Perera, Director, NCC, at the Training Centre Parade Square. Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy secured the Girls' Championship, while Bandaranayake College, Gampaha secured the Boys' Championship. 55 Western band platoons across Sri Lanka were selected for this competition.

MGCAANA would like to congratulate Mahamaya Girls' College Western Band for its victory!

Sources: [cadet.lk](#)

## Mahamaya News

### “අෆිස් දිස් රසදුන් '19”



The Annual **Photographic Day** of Mahamaya Girls' College was successfully held on September 17-18, 2019 at the school auditorium. Photos of this event can be accessed from the album “[අෆිස් දිස් රසදුන් '19](#)” in the Photographic Society of Mahamaya Girls' College Facebook Page.

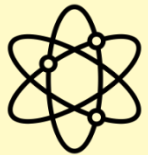
### “EMINENZA '19”

Mahamaya Girls' College held its Annual **Commerce Day** on September 28, 2019 at the school premises. Photos of this event can be accessed from the album “[EMINENZA '19](#)” in the Photographic Society of Mahamaya Girls' College Facebook Page.



### “ENDIAFERON '20”

Mahamaya Girls' College held its Annual **Science Day** on October 2, 2019 at the school premises. Photos of this event can be accessed from the album “[ENDIAFERON '20](#)” in the Photographic Society of Mahamaya Girls' College Facebook Page.



### “ASTERI '19”

The Astronomical Society of Mahamaya Girls' College successfully organized its annual **Astronomical Night Camp and Workshop** on October 4-5, 2019 at the school premises. Photos of this event can be accessed from the album “[ASTERI '19](#)” in the Photographic Society of Mahamaya Girls' College Facebook Page.



## Some Upcoming MGCAANA Activities

- Board Meetings (November, December, January)
- Next Newsletter (December)
- MGCAANA Undergraduate & Graduate Scholarship Program Deadline (December 31, 2019)

### Homeward Bound

By Nalini Jeyapalan

How to wean the mind from pain  
That alerts the senses, seldom wanes?  
When the heart grudgingly churns  
And the body yearns for costless care;  
'T is then, in mind, I go where,  
A gentle hand strokes un-whitened hair.  
Thought you then that I'll forget  
The years of toil you gave  
Me, like a faithful slave.  
Thought you then that I'll forget  
All that labor you gave unselfishly;  
lovingly,  
When from your side I frisked away.  
Thought you, Mother dear  
Your contentious voice I could not endure,  
Like a screeching echo would fade away?  
No! In my mind you're always here -  
somewhere.  
Stirring from some darksome state,  
On a restless night or listless day,  
I long to be by your side  
Like in those days of unshared delight.  
Neither grudge nor resent, Mother dear  
When fragile and beyond repair,  
You lived alone without my care.

### Want to know what your Board of Directors (BOD) is up to?

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](mailto: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 December issue of Maya Puwath:

[Mahamaya\\_alumnae@yahoo.com](mailto:Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com)

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# Happy Halloween!

