

Maya Puwath - මායා පුවත්

**Bi-Monthly Newsletter of Mahamaya Girls' College
Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA)
Volume 16 – Issue 5 – October 2020**



Message from the Editors

Dear Readers,

We hope that all of you are continuing to keeping safe, as we approach the winter months. For our readers in Canada, we hope you had a lovely Thanksgiving. COVID-19 has truly changed our lives and has made irreversible changes to our daily activities. Most adults teleworking and children learning online have become two major changes that our families have had to adapt to. It is during this time that we have to be thankful to our families and friends for being supportive and with us. We truly hope you are all managing, and please know that we are all in this together.

This issue of Maya Puwath is comprised of some information on MGCAANA's charitable donations for 2020. It is thanks to your membership fees and other contributions to MGCAANA that we're able to "give back" to the communities we live in and benefit from, in North America. You will also find details of the MGCAANA Undergraduate and Graduate Scholarship Program, as well as information on the next webinar of the popular MGCAANA Guest Speaker Series in this issue. As active members of MGCAANA, we hope that you take advantage of these various initiatives that our Board of Directors, the Advisory Committee and other MGCAANA Committees put a lot of effort into organizing.

Our poetry corner has two poems written by Dr. Nalini Jeyapalan and Nilmini Dorabawila, followed by a beautiful drawing by one of our young friends of MGCAANA! There are also not just one but two mouth-watering recipes that are perfect for these colder days.

Last but not least, we would like to wish our readers from the United States a blessed Thanksgiving.

Take care and happy reading!

The Newsletter Committee

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Dhammapadha

*Asaresaramatino
sare casaradassino
te saram nadhigacchanti
micchasankappagocara.*



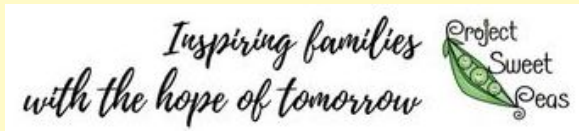
*They take untruth for truth;
they take truth for untruth;
such persons can never arrive
at the truth, for they hold
wrong views.*

[Dhammapada \(11\)](#)

Charitable Donations from MGCAANA for 2020

According to the guidelines created last year regarding charitable donations made by MGCAANA, the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee voted and approved on the following two organizations as this year's organizations. As such, MGCAANA will donate \$100 each for these two organizations.

Project Sweet Peas (USA)



Project Sweet Peas is a 501(c)3 national non-profit organization coordinated by volunteers, who through personal experience have become passionate about providing support to families of premature or sick infants and to those who have been affected by pregnancy and infant loss.

Project Sweet Peas acknowledges the importance of parental involvement in caregiving and decision-making in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), and seeks to promote family-centered care (FCC) competencies in hospitals nationwide. Care packages, hospital events, peer-to-peer support, financial aid, educational materials, and other Project Sweet Peas services, support the cultural, spiritual, emotional, and financial needs of families as they endure life in the NICU.

CancerCare Manitoba Foundation (Canada)



The mission of CancerCare Manitoba Foundation, in partnership with its donors, is to support CancerCare's strategic priorities. Your generosity enables the Foundation to maximize the funds provided to CancerCare Manitoba each year. Donor contributions help bridge the gap of initiatives and programs not eligible for government funding or where financial resources are not available, including prevention, early detection, clinical trials and leading-edge research and treatment. Thanks to the generosity of donors, CancerCare Manitoba Foundation has been able to grant more than \$134 million since 2000. This support to CancerCare Manitoba profoundly impacts patient outcomes.

CRA Charitable Registration Number:
88688 6746 RR0001

MGCAANA Guest Speaker Webinar Series

We are excited to inform you that the Board of Directors and the Executive Committee is continuing to introduce more guest speakers in the coming months to conduct lectures/talks on topics that will benefit our member community. We hope that you already got a chance to participate in the four webinars hosted over the past few months. For those new to this series, a few examples of the topics we would like to cover include: mindfulness; entrepreneurship; leadership; medical advice; advice for international students; COVID-19 and the pandemic season; college admissions; financial and retirement planning; buying a house or a property; balancing family/work/life; social issues; introducing Sri Lankan culture to our children, etc.

We can be proud that we have many MGCAANA members excelling in a multitude of fields in the USA and Canada. We cordially invite you to support by contributing toward conducting a session to share your knowledge/expertise with the community. Please also note that we welcome guest speakers outside the MGCAANA community as well.

These sessions will be held virtually via Zoom, in the form of a webinar (with possible live streaming on MGCAANA Facebook page). The duration of each event so far has varied between 45 minutes to one hour. The dates & times will be decided based on the number of speakers & speakers' availability. MGCAANA members will receive meeting invitation with a Zoom link prior to each webinar.

Upcoming webinars:

- "Let's Talk Life...", by Aruni Marapane (Pilapitiya) (November 21, 2020)
- "Pathways to Your American Dream," by Harshi Waters (December 19, 2020)

Past webinars:

- "Speech- Language, voice, swallowing, & cognition: SLP tips for birth to 100+" by Dakshika Bandaranayake (October 17, 2020)
- "Gratitude and Mental Health," by Sugi Subawickrama (September 19, 2020)
- "Entrepreneurship: What Does It Take to Start Your Own Business?" by Gaya Samarasingha (August 15, 2020)
- "Mindfulness & Its Impact on Excelling Day-to-Day Life," by Ven. Nedagamuwe Samitha Thero (July 12, 2020)

JOIN US

GUEST SPEAKER WEBINAR

November 21st Saturday, 2020
7pm EST/ 6pm CST/ 5pm MST/4pm PST

Zoom details via email



Let's talk life.....
"Have I loved enough?
Have I listened enough?
Have I given enough?"
What would be your answer?

Aruni Marapane (Pilapitiya)

- MSc. Gerontological Studies (Miami Uni. - Ohio)
- Buddhist Chaplain for hospital settings & hospice
- Healing touch practitioner
- Vipassana meditation practitioner
- Grief support group facilitator



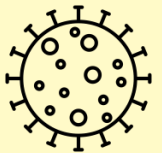
Use of Masks to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19



Your mask may protect them. Their mask may protect you.

Please visit the following links for various important information regarding masks:

- [How to Select Masks](#)
- [How to Wear Masks](#)
- [Considerations for Masks](#)
- [Making Masks](#)
- [Washing Masks](#)



Source: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

Resources related to talking about race and being anti-racist

1. [Talking about Race](#) (The National Museum of African American History and Culture)
2. [Being Antiracist](#) (The National Museum of African American History and Culture)
3. [The 1619 Project](#) (New York Times)
4. [Institutionalized Racism: A Syllabus](#) (JSTOR)

Happy World Teachers Day!

October 5, 2020

Thank you to our amazing past and current teachers of Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy!



Thank you to Mayans including our MGCAANA members who were inspired and follow the footsteps on becoming a teacher!

Those who educate children well are more to be honored than they who produce them; for these only gave them life, those the art of living well. -Aristotle

The Maya Puwath Newsletter Committee would like to wish all MGCAANA members in Canada and the United States a Happy Thanksgiving! We are grateful for your continued support for MGCAANA!



MGCAANA UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (2020-2021)

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 a significant level of financial need. Intended to cover the cost of textbooks for a semester, a scholarship of 300.00 will be awarded to one (1) candidate this year.

Application Period & Deadline: September 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020

Award Notification: By January 31, 2021

Once the application period begins, please visit <http://www.mahamayaalumna.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!

Off the Track

By Dr. Nalini Jeyapalan

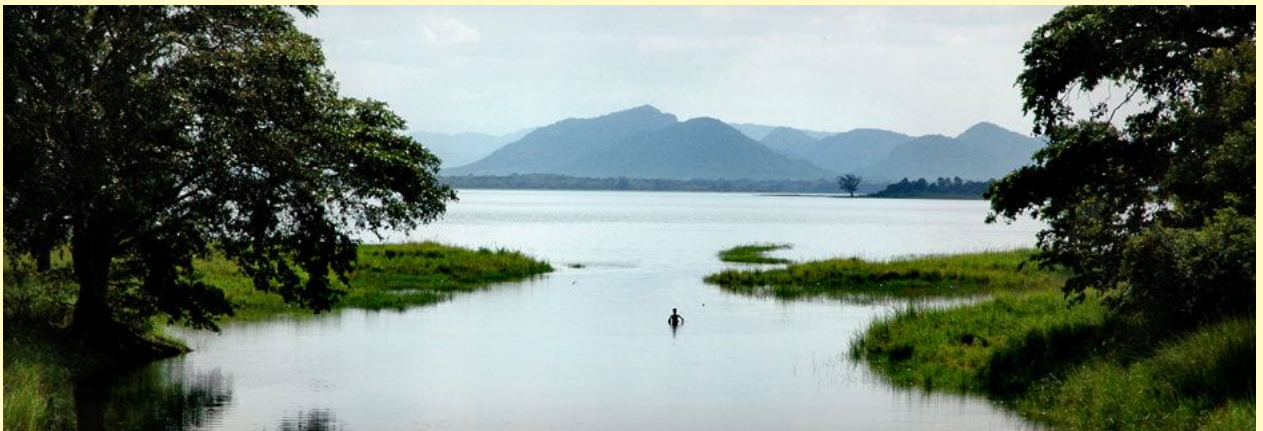
Images in mind to red-dot focus come,
To burst forth in rich array,
In sunless January, quelling the heart's dismay.
A king-made lake within a hill-ringed fortress;
A home on the hill striding red-tiled roofs lower;
White dagobas (burial tombs dour);
Rising resplendent above rain-tree flowers,
Up to a red-hot sun sizzling down
Upon retaining wall chiseled by ancient hands
With dwarfs and elephants between a frieze of lions
White clad women under evergreens,
Their red-stained mouths intoning prayers,
For one-way flights to heaven
From lives poorly endowed, karma driven.

Endearing sounds, I also hear:
Waves lapping the golden-green shores of
Minneriya;
And your prayers 'beneath a sacred Bo tree
That witnessed the birth of this man-made sea;
Were they for a bountiful life for me?
Or for riches, that with him you never knew?

Feelings too: the caress of your hand
Gentle as a morning breeze,
As I skip alongside, in quick short steps at
ease,
On sunny days of which so few
Where I now live.
Blame you not, 'tis I who diverged without guilt,
From the yellow brick road you painstakingly
built.
Tread trembling on frozen ground,
With my breath, escaping like smoke-rings
From incense wands you lit

Before an enigmatic Buddha
To light your path to Nirvana.
Can't clear mine.
I've left those temples behind
And their grounds where you meditated
Under sun full skies,

As the unseen sun sinks o'er phantom hills,
My heart so full of you and yours,
Fondly remembers those days that are no
more.



Source: <https://www.lanka-excursions-holidays.com/minneriya.html>

Leopard and Deer

By Nilmini Dorabawila

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



“Playing with My Friends in Fall”



By: Prabashi Isidhara Nawarathne (5 years old)



Bread Pudding

Jayani Christopher

This is a simple recipe for making bread pudding, with just a few ingredients.

Ingredients

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 3 cups sweetened condensed milk
- 2 bread rolls
- 1 cup sugar



Directions

- Break the bread rolls into a few small pieces
- Add eggs, milk, condensed milk and bread into a blender jar.
- Soak the bread rolls in the mixture and blend until there are no lumps.

To make the caramel:

- Add sugar into a pan.
- Add about 1/8 cup of water and mix the sugar. **Adding water is important to get the perfect consistency and the color of the caramel.**
- Heat on a low to medium flame with continuous stirring. **Do not use a high flame to avoid burning of sugar.**
- Heat until the mixture turns light brown color and turn off the flame. With the heat on the pan soon it will be turned to dark brown color. **At this stage the caramel has to be a liquid.**
- Quickly pour the caramel into the baking tray while it is hot.
- Pour the bread-milk mixture on top of the caramel.
- Bake in a pre-heated oven at 350 °F for 1 hour. **Baking times may vary depending on the oven. Check time to time whether the pudding is baked.**
- Refrigerate for about 1 hour and it is ready to be served.

Butternut Squash Soup

Sent by Berlini Narampanawe

Ingredients

- 2 cups of vegetable stock
- 4 cloves of garlic, peeled and minced
- 1 carrot, peeled and roughly chopped
- 1 medium (about 3–4 lbs) butternut squash, peeled, seeded and diced
- 1 white onion, peeled and roughly chopped
- 1 sprig of fresh sage
- 1/2 teaspoon of salt
- 1/4 teaspoon of freshly-ground black pepper
- A pinch of ground cinnamon and nutmeg



Stovetop Instructions:

1. Add vegetable stock, garlic*, carrot, butternut squash, sage, onion*, salt, pepper, cinnamon and nutmeg a large stockpot. Toss to combine.
2. Cook on medium-high until the mixture reaches a simmer. Then cover, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer for 20-30 minutes until the vegetables are all tender and mash easily with a fork.
3. Remove and discard the sage.
4. Use an immersion blender to puree the soup until smooth. (Or you can transfer the soup in two batches into a traditional blender and puree until smooth, being extremely careful not to fill the blender too full with a hot liquid.) Taste, and season with additional salt, pepper and cayenne as needed.
5. Serve warm, topped with your desired garnishes.

* For extra flavor, sautéing the garlic and onion before adding the remaining ingredients. Just heat 1 tablespoon oil over medium-high heat. Add diced onion and sauté for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until tender. Then add minced garlic and sauté for 1-2 additional minutes until fragrant, stirring occasionally. Then add the remaining ingredients and continue on with the recipe.

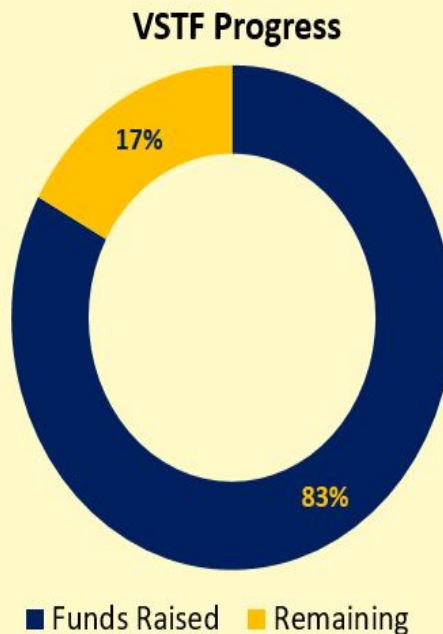
<https://www.gimmesomeoven.com/slow-cooker-butternut-squash-soup-recipe/#tasty-recipes-60202>

Reaching the New Goal Set for Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF)

The Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF) set up by MGCAANA provides financial aid to financially-disadvantaged students at Mahamaya Girls' College. Scholarships from VSTF pay for educational expenses and/or boarding fees of students attending Mahamaya. "Vidya," a Sanskrit word, means knowledge or wisdom. Our initial goal was to raise at least \$20,000. We reached this goal last year. By September 2019, we reached that goal, having raised over \$ 20,700.00, the interest from which has been going toward awarding around 14 scholarships per year.

To continue this noble cause, a new goal was set to **\$30,000**, and as of August 2020, \$24,880 has been raised. To donate online or by cheque, please visit:

<http://mahamayaalumna.org/vstf.php>



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.mahamayaalumna.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

Newsletter Committee:

Vihara Dharmaratne, Vajeera Dorabawila, Lilika Molligoda, Berlin Narampanawe

Some Upcoming MGCAANA Activities

- Board Meetings (November, December, January)
- Deadline - 2020/21 MGCAANA Undergraduate and Graduate Scholarship (December 31)
- Guest Speaker Webinars (November, December)
- Next Newsletter (December)