

Maya Puwath - මායා පුවත්

**Bi-Monthly Newsletter of Mahamaya Girls' College
Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA)
Volume 17 – Issue 6 – December 2021**



Message from the Editors

Dear readers,

We are reaching the end of yet another year, and even though COVID is still around, we hope you were able to enjoy some family time over the holidays and adjusted to the new normal.

This is our last Maya Puwath issue of Volume 17. In this issue, we have important information about MGCAANA Undergraduate & Graduate Scholarship Program. We have also included useful (and hopefully interesting!) links to inspire our readers as you prepare for the New Year. You will also find information from CDC regarding the new COVID variant Omicron and suggestions on how to protect each other.

As in previous issues, we have not only one, but two lovely poems written by two MGCAANA members who have contributed often to Maya Puwath. We hope you enjoy reading both. As always, we encourage our readers to contribute your own creations as well!

Are you still thinking about a dessert to satisfy your friends and family who are attending your new year celebrations? Not to worry, we have a delicious recipe in our Recipe Corner. Enjoy!

Last but not least, we included a gentle reminder about renewing your MGCAANA membership, including different ways to renew it.

We hope you enjoy our last issue for the year 2021. We have enjoyed putting together Newsletters of 2021. We look forward to receiving your contributions for future Newsletter in the New Year.

Wishing you all a happy and prosperous 2022!

Best wishes,

Maya Puwath Newsletter Committee

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Dhammapadha

*Sada jagaramananam
ahorattanusi kkhinam nibbanam
adhimuttanam attham gacchanti
asava.*



*In those who are ever vigilant,
who by day and by night train
themselves in the three sikkhas
(i.e., sila, samadhi and panna),
and who have their mind directed
towards Nibbana, moral
intoxicants become extinct*

[\(Verse 226\)](#)

MGCAANA UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (2021-2022)

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 extracurricular activities, while demonstrating 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: November 15, 2021 - February 28, 2022
Award Notification: By March 31, 2022

Once the application period begins, please visit the following page to view and download the 2021-2022 scholarship application:

<http://mahamayaalumna.org/scholarship.html>

If you have any questions about this scholarship program, please contact us at mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com.

We look forward to receiving your applications!

Wishing all our MGCAANA members and their loved ones a very happy holiday period and a happy New Year!

Thank you for your support over the past year, and we look forward to meeting you again in 2022!

-Maya Puwath Newsletter Committee



Inspiration for 2022

Are you looking for some inspiration as you prepare for 2022? Are you setting new goals for your professional and personal lives? Are you open to hearing about how we can cope with emotional exhaustion in difficult times? We have put together links to a collection of talks, articles and videos that we thought might be of interest to our readers. Enjoy and let us know what you think!

- **TED Talk:** [“How to Gain Control of Your Free time”](#) by **Laura Vanderkam**
“There are 168 hours in each week. How do we find time for what matters most? Time management expert Laura Vanderkam studies how busy people spend their lives, and she’s discovered that many of us drastically overestimate our commitments each week, while underestimating the time we have to ourselves. She offers a few practical strategies to help find more time for what matters to us, so we can “build the lives we want in the time we’ve got.”
- **Blog:** [“How Scheduling Worry Time Can Make You More Resilient”](#) by **Dr. Craig Dowden**
- **Article:** [“The Science of Mattering: Why Feeling Significant Is So Significant”](#) by **Dr. Zach Mercurio**
- **YouTube:** [“If You Want To ACHIEVE Your Goals WATCH THIS!”](#) by **Jay Shetty**
- **YouTube:** [“Emotional Exhaustion”](#) by **Ajahn Brahm**
“Ajahn Brahm gives advice on how to deal with emotional exhaustion and weariness which may be experienced from our work. Ajahn shares a relevant story about seven monks and thieves to help illustrate his point.”
- **Harvard Business Review Article:** [“Make the Most of One-on-One Meetings with Your Manager”](#) by **Octavia Goredema**
“One-on-one meetings with your manager present valuable career opportunities. How can you make sure you’re getting the most out of that time with your boss? Work with your manager to determine how the agenda for your meetings will be created and reflect on your priorities and professional development goals. During your meetings, use your body language to underscore your words and your actions. Be a good listener, embrace feedback, and default to solving problems. Use your time after your one-on-ones to consider areas where you can focus, adapt, or make improvements moving forward. This approach reinforces your commitment to problem solving for your boss, your team, and your own career, and that’s a powerful attribute to acquire.”

Interested in trying out a new and free meditation app?

Try **“Insight Timer”**!

“Join millions learning to meditate on Insight Timer to help calm the mind, reduce anxiety, manage stress, sleep deeply and improve happiness. Guided meditations and talks led by the world’s top mindfulness experts, neuroscientists, psychologists and meditation teachers from Stanford, Harvard, Dartmouth and the University of Oxford.”



Poetry Corner

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Poetry Corner

The Choice

By Nilmini Dorabawila

While I was driving on a windy road
A car cut across me very bold
I braked hard but felt I must
Show the dude who was boss
So pressed the pedal
The other car braked
I sped forward with a smile on my face
A little victory felt pretty neat
But a little voice uttered "how rude!"

"Would have been nicer to stop at once
Let the other car pass out of choice"
The little voice told me from then on
To let the cars cut in front
To let the person cross the road
To let the worrier pass the light
To wait patiently for the next one

To do every time offered a choice
The good thing, the nice thing
The choice was mine
To every person whenever I can
Smile and help to learn this guide

It felt so good because every time
From home to work I took that choice
To let the hurrier get ahead
Smile and let pass the worrier instead

The journey became a lovely adventure
Not just a road to rush to the center
The traffic faded and the lights stayed green
The journey of life became a pleasant stream
Where the sun seemed to bath me

Out of choice, gentle rays of pure delight
The wind seemed to touch and caress my face
The rain a gentle sprinkle refreshing instead
The flowers seemed more colourful
Their fragrance so pure
The birds seemed to sing a melody of glee
The butterflies fluttering their beautiful wings
The animals and trees all over the place
Seemed to nod at their own pace
To show me that finally I have come
To the center of the circle of life

Where every being is equally free
To fly or stutter, to let be
Everywhere good vibes are there
All we need is to choose them there
Every breath seemed so much lighter
The air outside pure and fresher

The whole universe in a harmonious step
Myself seemed to matter less
As the borders of self and others scattered
We all became silent yet so much awake
The trees and the plants, the sky and earth
The insects and animals all united
The birds and the bees danced away
Every heartbeat seemed not out of tune
And the whole universe became a light
And the little voice inside became silent as night

Recipe Corner

Bûche De Noël - Chocolate Yule Log Cake By Sureni Ranasinghe

Ingredients

SPONGE:

- 5 large eggs, room temperature
- 65 g (½ cup) all-purpose flour
- 30 g (¼ cup) cocoa powder
- 100 g (½ cup) sugar
- 60 ml (4 tbsp) of milk, room temperature regular milk
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) of vegetable oil
- 1 tsp Vanilla extract

FILLING/FROSTING:

- 40 g Semi-sweet chocolate
- 236 ml (1 cup) Heavy whipping cream

GANACHE:

- 228 g (8oz) Chocolate; author used 171g (6oz) Semi-Sweet chocolate & 57 g (2oz) 90% Dark chocolate
- 236 ml (1 cup) Heavy whipping cream

Method:

Sponge:

- Grease and line a 13x8 pan.
- Beat the room temperature eggs in a large bowl until frothy. Add half of the sugar and beat till the mixture is doubled in size. Add the remaining sugar and continue beating until the mixture is light in color and doubled in size; add milk & vanilla, beat; add oil, give it a mix.
- Sift flour and cocoa into the mixture, using a balloon whisk, and fold it in. Fold in gently without knocking off too much air off the batter. Transfer the batter to the prepared pan, spread it evenly, and tap it few times to release any big air bubbles. Bake until a skewer inserted comes out clean.
- Lay a clean kitchen towel on the counter that is the size of the sponge or larger. Dust icing sugar onto the towel.
- Release the cake from the edges of the pan, dust icing sugar on top of the cake, while it is warm.
- Carefully flip the cake onto the towel. The cake shouldn't stick to the towel due to icing sugar.
- Gently take off the baking sheet and dust icing sugar on top of it as well.
- With the help of the towel roll the cake while it is warm and set it aside for about 20 minutes.

Prepare the filling:

- Add a little bit of heavy cream to the semisweet chocolate and microwave until it is melted. Make sure to microwave in 15 seconds increments. Every 15 seconds stop the microwave and give it a stir. Do this until the chocolate is fully melted.
- Pour the remaining heavy cream into a bowl and beat until soft peaks form.
- When whipped cream from soft peaks take a little from the whipped cream and add to the chocolate mixture and give it a mix, this helps to cool down the chocolate mixture and to loosen up the consistency.
- Then add the chocolate mixture to the whipped cream bowl, and beat until well combined.
- When well combined, set aside.

BAKE:

Preheat oven to 350F/180C for about 20 minutes & bake for 15-18 minutes until a skewer inserted comes out clean. Use a 13 x 8 baking pan, lined and greased.

DECORATION:

- Meringue Mushrooms
- Few Rosemary
- Cocoa powder
- Icing sugar



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Making the Swiss roll:

- Unroll the cake. The cake should be cooled by now.
- Spread the chocolate whipped cream frosting evenly onto the unrolled cake. Leave about 1/2 inch around the cake without icing.
- When frosting is layered, roll the cake gently and cover it in plastic wrap, and then cover with the cloth.
- Chill in the fridge for about 4-6 hours or overnight until the cake sets.

Prepare the Ganache:

- Heat the heavy cream in a pan on low to medium heat until you see bubbles around the pan. Do not boil.
- Combine dark & semi-sweet chocolate in a bowl and pour the heated whipped cream into it.
- Let it sit for about 3 minutes and stir to combine until chocolate completely melts. If needed, pop in the microwave for about 30 seconds.
- When chocolate is completely melted and well combined, set aside until it sets to the desired consistency. This might take about 3-4 hours. If you want to speed up the process, keep it in the fridge for about 20-25 minutes, *BUT you HAVE to take it out every 5 minutes and give it a stir. Don't skip this step.* Don't leave ganache for 20 minutes straight in the fridge it will solidify.
- When the ganache is ready we can assemble the cake.

Assembling the Bûche De Noël:

- Have the ganache ready, it should have a spreadable consistency.
- Unwrap the Swiss roll and place it on the platter or the board that it will be served.
- Cut a slice on one end to reveal the swirl.
- Cut a slightly bigger piece from the other side, cut it diagonally.
- Take the piece and place it on the side of the roll as a branch, apply some ganache and secure it to the big roll.
- Take the ganache and apply it around the cake except on the cross-sections. Let the swirl reveal.
- Take a spoon and add some texture to make it more like a log.
- Dust some cocoa powder for soil and some icing sugar for snow. You can also make some meringue mushrooms as additional decorations. Decorate as you like, use rosemary, cranberries, etc.
- Hope you will enjoy this beautiful Yule Log during this festive season with your loved ones.

Check out the link for the step-by-step method.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qbUO1s-PpKQ&t=4s>



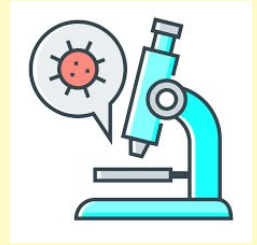
Contributing to Recipe Corner

Would you like to share with us photos of your food creations to be featured on Recipe Corner? Or do you have any of your own recipes that you would like to share with your fellow Maya Puwath readers? If so, please send in your photos, recipes as well as links to the original recipes to the MGCAANA e-mail address:

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



Omicron Variant: What we need to know about it and what can we do to protect each other



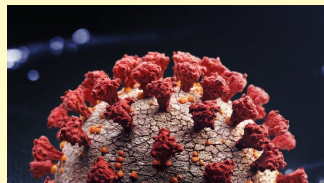
- First detected in South Africa on November 11, 2021.
- **What is different:** The spike protein of the Omicron variant is characterized by at least 30 amino acid substitutions, three small deletions, and one small insertion.
- **Spread:** The Omicron variant likely will spread more easily than the original SARS-CoV-2 virus and how easily Omicron spreads compared to Delta remains unknown. CDC expects that anyone with Omicron infection can spread the virus to others, even if they are vaccinated or don't have symptoms.
- **Disease Severity:** Currently, it is unclear if infection with the Omicron variant is associated with more severe disease. Due to the small number of cases attributed to the Omicron variant, assessment of disease severity is difficult.

What can we do to protect each other?

1. Get vaccinated
2. Get boosted
3. Wear a mask in public indoor settings
4. Consider taking a test before you gather



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)



Source:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/scientific-brief-omicron-variant.html>

Renewing MGCAANA Membership

Gentle Reminder

This is a kind reminder to renew your membership for the year 2021-2022. Please support MGCAANA's ongoing activities by renewing your membership.

Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA) is registered as a non-profit in the United States and we are happy to say that your contribution will be tax exempt in the US.

We, as an organization solely rely on your donations and membership money to function. Please consider that your membership dues are very important to the Organization.

How to renew your membership AND/OR invite Mayan friends to become members:

Online:

Use your credit card or PayPal account to pay your membership fee:

By Mail:

Please mail a check payable to MGCAANA (\$15- Student/ \$ 25- Regular member)

- Address: Treasurer, MGCAANA, 2417 NE 20th, Renton, WA 98056

Note: If you wish, you could also renew your membership for 3, 5, or 10 years by paying US \$ 70.00, US \$ 115.00, and US \$ 230.00 respectively.

Your generosity helps MGCAANA continue its legacy in helping Mayans in the US, Canada, and at Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy, Sri Lanka.

Thank you! Stay safe!

With gratitude,

MGCAANA Board of Directors & Executive Committee (2021/2022)



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 in 2019.

To continue this noble cause, a new goal was set this year to **\$40,000**, and as of December 2021, **\$28,355** has been raised. This year, we were also able to award 18 scholarships for the year 2021, each scholarship at Rs.20,000.

To help reach this new goal, please donate online or by cheque by visiting:

<http://mahamayaalumnina.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.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

Upcoming MGCAANA Activities

- Board Meetings (January, February, March)
- Next Newsletter (February)

Newsletter Committee:

Vihara Dharmaratne, Berlini Narampanawe, Samantha Ranaweera

JOIN US!

MGCAANA Newsletter Committee is looking to recruit new committee members to work on "Maya Puwath," the bi-monthly newsletter of MGCAANA. As part of the Newsletter Committee, you'll be able to develop these useful skills: communication; writing; graphic design; team work; creative thinking; time management; leadership etc.

If you are interested, please reach out to the Committee through:

Mayamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com