



## MAYA PUWATH

Volume 1 Number 1  
October, 2005



### STAYING CONNECTED

2005 has truly been a phenomenal year for all Mahamayans in North America. Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA) had its successful Inaugural Annual General Meeting this summer. We recognized the outstanding work done by our Steering Committee and welcomed the newly elected Board Of Directors as well as new members, who came from all over United States, and Canada. The day ended with heartfelt warm feelings about our school, making new friends, and finally walking away with one common vision. The Mayan goal for the years to come is to "stay connected" in order to maintain a successful and productive alumnae association. Your commitment, involvement, and support will be the key to our success. As an important step in that effort the newsletter committee proudly offers the first edition of "Maya Puwath" to you.

We will be sharing current news and upcoming events from our alma mater and hope to maintain a close relationship with Mahamaya OGA, Kandy and its Colombo Branch.

You may not be a creative writer or a storyteller...But we need you!!!! Your ideas, suggestions, comments and thoughts will be extremely valuable for us to produce future publications.

There are several special areas, where you can pen down your ideas. Let's go down the memory lane and share some of your most memorable moments. How about memories of a special person from your school days?

Thanks Chathuri for sharing the life long lessons from your mom, our teacher, who left us not too long ago.

Remember to stay healthy with our medical column. Valuable information from Devi will encourage us to think twice about our health.

The recipe corner is for someone like me. Making an exotic dish from our motherland will bring back many fond memories from Sri Lanka; The Land Like No Other. Thanks Nazrana! "Fish Mouille" sure sounds scrumptious!!

We are not limited to these columns. We want to create the "most delicious" newsletter that any alumnae have ever published. Please send any and all ideas to [namahamayans@yahoo.com](mailto:namahamayans@yahoo.com).

"Maya Puwath" will be coming to your home electronically. If anyone wishes to receive a hard copy please let us know.

Finally, my deepest gratitude goes to the fellow members of the newsletter committee for finding the time to bring our initial publication, "Maya Puwath" to you. We look forward to "staying connected" to each and everyone!!!!

Submitted by Priyanka Jayakody, Member, Editorial Committee

### FROM THE PRESIDENT...

It is with great pleasure that I send my best wishes to the inaugural issue of MGCAANA monthly Newsletter for its success in every step of the way. As we all know, a newsletter could serve a very important function in our organization by strengthening cooperation, developing mutual understanding among the members, addressing issues that are important to us, bringing ideas, writings of members, and the news of our alma mater and alumnae to the membership. Further, it helps to promote networking, build goodwill and create fellowship among members. In simple words, the newsletter brings us together. In this modern age, publishing an Internet newsletter of this nature would be immensely helpful in bridging the vast distances and bringing the most recent news of Mahamayans within a short time to our members.

MGCAANA is fortunate to have a talented group of alumnae in the Newsletter Committee who have committed themselves to launch this venture and I am profoundly grateful to them on behalf of our Association. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Newsletter Committee for bringing out this first issue within a short time. I earnestly request the members to help the Committee by sending important news that are relevant to us, articles, stories, etc., for publication. Needless to say how important it is to continuously support this hardworking committee to carry on their work. Please get involved. Let's make a difference. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sujatha Werake  
President  
MGCAANA

\*

### NEWS FROM MAHAMAYA

— A bring & buy sale organized by Past Pupils' Association(

*1. Mind is the forerunner of all things. With an impure mind if one speaks or acts, then misery follows him, in the same way as the cart wheel follows the ox-hoof.*

*2. Mind is the forerunner of all things, If with a pure mind one speaks or acts, happiness follows him like his shadow that never leaves him.*

*--Dhammapada*

## AMMA'S LESSONS

Many of you know my mother as Chitra Nugawela. In your minds you may recollect a simple woman with graying hair in a pointed osariya, soft in speech. A person who wore her sari jacket so long to ensure that bare flesh on her back was not exposed when she raised her hand to write on the black board, and who lined every single jacket she wore to school so that the under garments would not be visible through the sari jacket.

Although English, Sewing and home science were her subjects she also sought to teach modesty and simplicity. Now as I remember both my parents with love and sincere gratitude I decided to share some of my memories of Amma with you.

1. Once I announced "Justice is on my side". Amma said "Justice is never on anybody's side, it is impartial. You make sure you are on the side of justice".

2. When I wore make up Amma said, "What is so shameful about your face that you cannot present your true self? Why do you need to hide your face in paint?" Apparently, Amma refused to wear make up even as a bride.

3. When I asked why me? Amma said "You don't have a right to question. This is Karma, accept there are bigger forces than you in this world, don't waste time asking why, think about how to deal with the situation and carry on".

4. Amma nursed Appachchi for 16 long years without a single day's holiday after he fell ill. I offered to give her a break. Amma said "I married him for better or for worse. He is my responsibility till one of us die. There are no breaks from responsibility"

5. . I asked what she would buy me if I passed my exams. Amma said, "They are your exams. As a Parent I am ensuring that you have the opportunity and all you need to perform. I will not bribe you".

6. After asking for an expensive dress Amma responded. "We cannot afford it. We have enough to fulfill your needs but would never have enough to fulfill your greed. What you can do without, do without".

7. I told Amma that a friend's marriage was in trouble. Amma said, "Tell her, if there is a problem within a marriage the solution is also within them and to seek it. No third party can provide answers".

8. When someone was proposed to me and asked what my parents were giving me as dowry, Amma and Appachchi said, "Our blessings". The proposed guy never came back. As I languished on the shelf fast approaching my sell by date, I saluted their will to stick to their principles and not in effect bribe anyone to marry me.

9. When looking for a husband Amma said to me, "Find a

— A bring & buy sale organized by Past Pupils' Association (PPA) was held in the college premise on April, 05 2005. The sum of Rs. 81,000 was collected and donated to the PPA and will be used to fulfill the educational needs.

— The Annual Sil Campaign was held on May 25th and followed by Bakthi Gee program.

— Mrs. W.M.B. Wijesinghe the principal of school for the past five years retired from the service on the May 05th,2005.

— Mrs. Vishaka Herath was appointed to cover duties and Mrs. Indra Withanachchi was appointed as the acting principal.

## October Events:

— Mahamaya Prize Giving was held on October 14, 05 at the Mahamaya Auditorium.

—The Colors Nite will be held on October 26th

WAY TO GO.....

## 2005 A/L results.

**Arts Section– 11 students with 3A's**

**2 students with 2 A's & 1 B**

**1 student with 2 A's & 1 C**

**Commerce Section**

**5 students with 3 A's**

**3 students with 2 A's & 1 B**

**Science section**

**3 students with 3 A's**

**4 students 2 A's & 1 B**

**5 students with 1 A & 2 B's**

Chathurika Senanayake came first in the island obtaining 3A's for English Language, English Literature and French. This is the first time in Maya history a student from the arts section was ranked 1st place in all island level.

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!!**



## News from MGCAANA:

### Help for Hurricane Katrina:

In August the members in Seattle did a carwash to raise funds for Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. The total collection of \$200.00 was sent to Mercy Corp's relief efforts in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama.

### Computer needs for Mahamaya Girls' College:

From the recent telephone conversation with the principal of Mahamaya College, Mrs. Indra Vithanaachchi, Sujatha Werake learnt that the school is in a great need of computers. Mrs. Vithanaachchi said that the school has only four computers and she appealed to MGCAANA for help in getting more computers. If our members have any ideas on how to meet this need, please write to [mahamaya\\_alumnae@yahoo.com](mailto:mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com) and help us brainstorm possibilities.

Thank you for your efforts.

9. When looking for a husband Amma said to me, "Find a man who would love you and respect you. It doesn't have to be a rich man. Money can be made but happiness cannot be bought".

10. After marriage, when I referred to my in laws as his (My husbands) relatives, Amma said, "make sure there is no yours and mine business in your marriage".

11. When I was pregnant and reluctant to exercise, Amma said "Motherhood is about what is best for your child".

12. When I went home and told Amma that I planned to marry a guy whom she had never met, Amma was taken aback. Amma asked "are you thinking about it or have you given him your word?" I said I had accepted his proposal. Amma was not happy but said "In that case now what is left to do is to see that "you honor your word to him". "Unless your husband is unfaithful, or abuses you physically or psychologically, a marriage is for all intents and purposes a one way ticket. Meet him half way. It doesn't always have to be your way".

13. When I rejoiced at seeing a person who was nasty to us with a flat tyre, Amma said "Revenge is not a pursuit for us mortals. I will not bribe you". The forces of Karma, much greater than us will take care of all that when it is time".

14. When I wanted to dye my hair as I started graying Amma said, "learn to grow old gracefully. There is no reason to despair. This is nature taking its own course, the impermanence of life manifesting it self. Don't deny it. Accept it".

15. When I advised a friend in trouble, Amma said "Never give unsolicited advice and read a quote from memory "Have compassion in another's trouble and courage in your own"

Submitted by Chathuri Nugawela-Munasinghe

## ARE YOU AT RISK???????

Do you know the heart disease

is women's number one killer?

Yes! Cardiovascular disease

claims more women's lives than

the next six causes of death

combined, about 500,000



women's lives a year. Cardiovascular disease is mostly preventable, so understanding these serious health threats can make a lifesaving difference. The most common type of cardiovascular diseases are high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, (heart Attack), angina pectoris or chest pain) and stroke.

High blood pressure also called hypertension, means the pressure in your arteries is consistently above the normal range. Its written in two numbers, such as 122/78 mm Hg. The top Systolic number is the pressure when heart beats. The bottom (Diastolic) number is the pressure when the heart is at rest.

Hypertension is a consistently elevated pressure of 140mm Hg systolic or higher and/or 90 mm Hg diastolic or higher. The great danger

is that you usually can't tell you have high blood pressure. There are no signs and no one knows exactly what causes it



## FISH MOUILLE

Boiled or steamed fish

1 gill fish stock

1 gill thick coconut milk

1 dessertspoonful butter

1 level teaspoonful corn flour

2 chillies (1 red/ 1b green)

A small sprig of curry leaves

A pinch of saffron powder

A piece cinnamon

Pepper and salt

To make the sauce – Melt butter in a pan, put in the curry leaves and cinnamon and sauté. Add the stock seasoned with salt & pepper. Bring to the boil and add the chillies cut in to strips & the coconut milk in which has been mixed the corn flour and saffron. Add a sufficient saffron to color the sauce a nice yellow. Stir until it thickens. Stir continually or the sauce will curdle. Pour sauce over the boiled fish & serve with rice or dinner buns.

Sent by Nazrana Caffoor(courtesy of Daily News Cookery Book)

is that you usually can't tell you have high blood pressure !! There are no signs and no one knows exactly what causes it.

Heart attacks occur when the blood flow to a part of the heart is blocked, often by a blood clot. If this clot cuts off the blood flow completely, the part of the heart muscle supplied by that artery begins to die. In this case you might notice chest discomfort, discomfort in other areas of upper body, shortness of breath, cold sweat, nausea and light headedness.

Heart failure means that your heart isn't pumping blood as well as it should. It keeps working, but the body doesn't get all the blood and oxygen it needs. In heart failure you may experience swelling in the feet, ankles and legs (edema) and fatigue.

Stroke and TIA ("mini" stroke) happen when a blood vessel that supplies oxygen to the brain gets clogged. Then that part of the brain can't work and neither can the part of the body it controls. A stroke can also occur when a blood vessel supplying part of the brain ruptures. Signs of a stroke include sudden numbness or weakness of the one side of the body or a part of a body, confusion, trouble speaking, vision problems, loss of balance, severe headache etc.

You need to be aware of the key risk factors for heart diseases. Excessive cholesterol can cause build up of atherosclerotic plaque. Accumulation of plaque in arteries can block blood flow and lead to a heart attack.

High blood pressure is strongly associated with stroke as well as with heart failure and kidney failure. Diabetes is another risk factor for heart disease, mainly heart attacks and strokes. You can lower your risk of heart disease by, stop smoking and avoid secondhand tobacco smoke, get at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day, eat heart healthy diet and limit intake of trans fatty acids such as those found in hydrogenated oils, and maintain a healthy weight.

Women who are considered to be at highest risk (who already have cardiovascular disease, diabetes or chronic kidney disease) are most likely to benefit from preventive therapy. Beside lifestyle changes and controlling major risk factors, several drugs have been shown to prevent heart attack or increase survival in this group.

Overwhelming evidence suggests that heart disease can be prevented in both women and men. The new guidelines, if they are used, can help women lower their risk of developing heart disease. You should know what your risk level is and talk to your doctor about the prevention goals and the best way to reach them.

By knowing your risks and following preventive measures you can help say Good Bye to heart disease.

Sent By Devi Gunasekera.