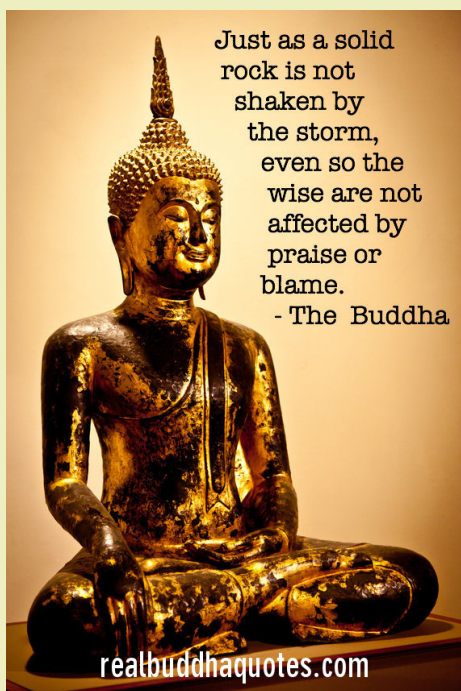


Volume 10
Number 3

June 2014

Maya Puwath

BIMONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF MGCAANA



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We are hermits, O
Great King, adherents
of the Buddha.

With concern towards
you all, have come
hither from India.



In this Issue.....

- Page 1: Editorial.
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- Page 8,9: Celebration of Poson Festival.
- Page 10: Editor's Pick.

Resources : Google images

Dear Members,

With the summer breeze blowing around, I am presenting another issue of Maya Puwath to our beloved Mayan community. As the MAGCAANA is celebrating its 10th anniversary, I welcome the new executive committee and the new board of directors. We are blessed to have another wonderful team to continue the services done by MGCAANA. I would like to take this opportunity to say a big "THANK YOU" to the 2013/14 committee and the BOD for their hard work and dedication provided throughout the previous year.

June is an important month to us as Buddhists because of the "Mahindagamanaya". Our motherland entered a new era with the establishment of Buddhism and it laid the foundation to education institutes such as our alma mater. We are in debt to King Ashoka the Great and Arhath Mahinda for gifting us this rich-full religion and culture which shaped every corner of our lives.

Although we are far away from all the merriments of Poson Festival in our motherland, MGCAANA had been able to build a bond among us to stay connected to it. As we celebrate the 10th anniversary of MGCAANA, let us join together to remember everyone who helped to create MGCAANA and stood behind it along the journey of ten successful years.

I am honored to present this issue of Maya Puwath at the beginning of a new year and I hope you all will enjoy it while promising to stay with MGCAANA for many more wonderful years.

Hemalika (Karunaratne) Abeysundara.



Dear Mrs. N.K. Pilapitiya
(The former Principal, Mahamaya Girls' College, 1980 -1990)

May you attain Supreme Bliss of Nibbana

Mrs. Pilapitiya passed away on Friday, June 20th around 9:00 pm Sri Lankan time (US PST 9:30 am on Friday, June 20th), due to a heart attack. The funeral will be in Colombo and the body will be kept at her daughter Shakamala's house in Colombo.

The memorial is going to be held at the Musaeus College Auditorium. Alumnae of both Mahamaya Girls' College and Musaeus College will be working together.

A Message from Newly Elected President for 2014/2015



Mahamaya Girls' College
Alumnae Association of North
America

Dear MGCAANA members,

I am both humbled and honored to be elected by you as your President for the year 2014/2015. Fellow Mayans, Thank you for having faith in me and giving me the opportunity to serve you. I am looking forward to work with you all to have a successful and memorable year 2014/2015. It is important to have your active support and participation to make it a success.

I like to extend my heartiest gratitude to our outgoing president Miss Upeksha Thilakawardena, outgoing BOD members, and the Executive committee members and all other committee members for their contributions and outstanding work. Year 2013-2014 had been another successful story in our MGCAANA community.

I am open to any suggestions, proposals that you may have to improve the services of MGCAANA. Also, if you have any fundraising ideas, let us know. We are scattered all over United States and Canada and are busy in our everyday lives. We are what we are today, thanks largely to our beloved Alma Mater.

Thank you again for the trust you have placed on me. I truly need all your help to make a great year for MGCAANA. I look forward to work with you ALL, the newly elected Board of Directors and the Executive Committee, all other committees and the Advisory Board.

My contact information: mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com
sri_dissa@hotmail.com

Sriyani Dissanayake (nee Galahitiyawa)

President,

MGCAANA, 2014/2015

Board of Directors for 2014-2015:

Mrs. Sriyani Dissanayake.

Mrs. Nayana Fernando.

Mrs. Malika Godamudunage.

Dr. Nirmala Gunapala.

Dr. Yamuna Kollalpitiya.

Miss Upeksha Thilakawardena.

Mrs. Pavithra Wettasinghe.

New Executive Officers for 2014-2015:

President: Mrs. Sriyani Dissanayake.

Secretary: Miss Upeksha Thilakawardena.

Treasurer : Mrs. Pavithra Wettasinghe.

Web Master: Dr. Yamuna Kollalpitiya.

From *MGCAANA Annual General Meeting*



Mahamaya Girls' College
Alumnae Association of North
America

OUR ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND DINNER:

THANK YOU GAYATHRI, PRASAD AND LITTLE MAYA GANKANDA!!!!

We, the participants of the 10th Annual General Meeting of MGCAANA on May 24th and 25th are so grateful to this year's hosts Gayathri and Prasad Gankande for the marvelous job they did. They had attended to every little detail of the two events, the Dinner and the Meeting. Everything went flawlessly. What an experience we had in Utah!!! Adorable little Maya, their 3 month old baby girl added more happiness to our joy of seeing each other.

Gayathri and Prasad were great hosts. The dinner was at their beautiful newly built home at South Jordan, 15 minutes away from Salt Lake City. The hotel they booked for us in advance was the best hotel I have ever stayed so far. (Hilton Home2 Suites) It was very clean, newly built, excellent service, had big 2-room unit with kitchenette, grand breakfast, swimming pool, conference rooms and more. As a group we got a lower group rate thanks to Gayathri. Our Annual General Meeting was held in this magnificent place.



After the meeting we were taken as a group event for sight-seeing by Gayathri and Prasad. We visited Salt Lake City, the Mormon Temple Square, State Capitol, and the Great Salt Lake with vast quantity of salt where there is no fish living. Utah is a place one must visit during your lifetime. It is a unique place geologically and culturally. Some of us reached Utah 2-3 days early and visited the most spectacular scenery in Utah's national parks, such as Arches National Park, Bryce National Park, Canyonlands National Park, Capital Reef, Zion etc. They are breathtaking with beautiful red rock, and land formations. The Colorado Plateau is a heaven for geographers, geologists, and nature lovers. I will definitely visit again to see those marvels.

See <http://www.fiveutahparks.com>



Thank you Gayathri and Prasad for giving us the opportunity to visit Utah. Thank you Maya for being such a joy to all of us. It was a memorable experience. Your hospitality was beyond expectations!!! It was like visiting our own family. Thank you for hosting the event! We had such a wonderful time!

Sujatha Werake



Arches National Park



Great Salt Lake from air

Memories of MGCAANA AGM 2014



Mahamaya Girls' College
Alumnæ Association of North
America

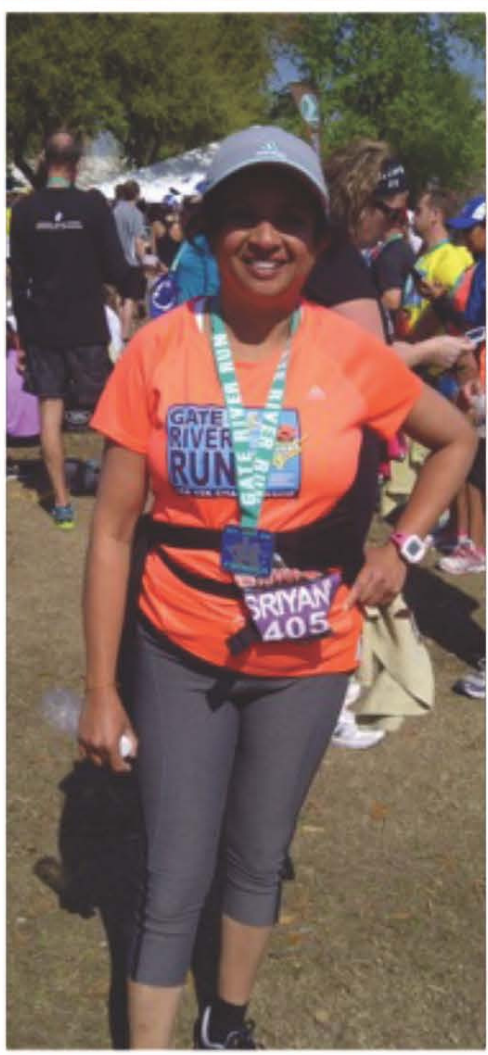


MGCAANA Announcements



Mahamaya Girls' College
Alumnae Association of North
America

5 K (3.1 mile) Run/Walk for a good cause & to stay healthy!



FUNDRAISER FOR MGCAANA

Let us all come together to raise
funds to help fellow Mayans.

DATE: Sunday, October 26th 2014

WHERE: Where ever you live-

In your own neighborhood

TIME: 7 a.m.

How to Register:

Go to MGCAANA site and click on the link of Fund raising
Activity. Follow the directions.

Insert the link here: _____

You can ask your family and friends to join you.

Registration Fee: Adults: \$10 Children \$ 5

More Information will be **available soon** on MGCAANA Website :

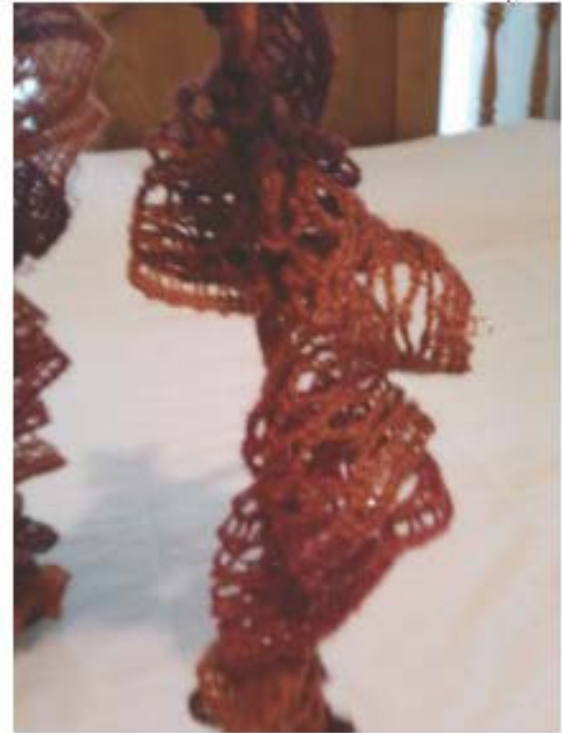
<http://www.mahamayaalumnina.org/>

MGCAANA Announcements



Mahamaya Girls' College
Alumnae Association of North
America

Fashion for fall and winter



By Sriyani Dissanayake a MGCAANA Member

All Proceeds will go to
MGCAANA Funds

How to Order: Please go to
MGCAANA and find this link:

**NEED YOUR HELP TO HELP
FELLOW MAYANS!**

Can do it in your color of choice. Please order now!

Stay tuned for more information and email alerts



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

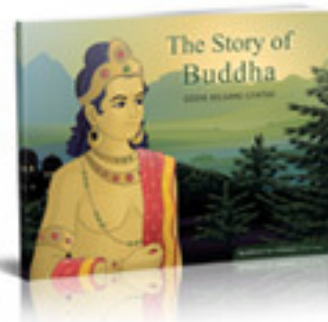
The Story of Angulimala - Buddhism for Children Level 1

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.



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.

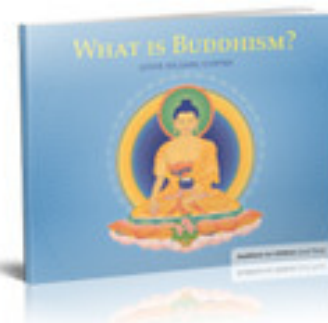


What is Buddhism? - Buddhism for Children Level 3

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.

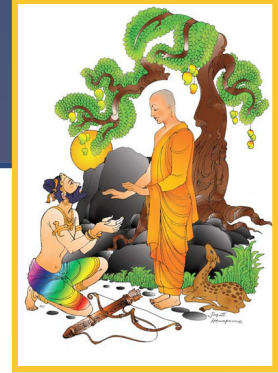


These books can be found at "Tharpa Publications" at

<http://www.tharpa.com/us/buddhist-books-for-children#.U6JV-0DwVpw>

Prepared By Hemalika (Karunaratne) Abeyesundara.

Celebration of Posen Festival



POSON BEAMS OF JUNE AND THE MESSAGE OF MAHINDA TO SRI LANKA

FOR US TO THINK OF AND ACT UPON IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Bhikkhu Professor Dhammavihari

The message of Mahinda turns out to be the most fortunate we Sri Lankans have ever received, and that a little over two thousand three hundred years ago. At that time, during the reign of King Devanampiya Tissa, we apparently had reached a high level of culture. Our pre-Buddhist king of Anuradhapura at that time had taken to deer hunting as a royal sport. The arrival of Thera Mahinda in Sri Lanka marked a turning point in our history. Within a couple of centuries we were turned away from hunting, both as a sport as well as an avenue for gluttonous eating. Forget not that pre-Buddhist Sri Lanka even had a God-of-the-Hunt or *Vyàdha* - *deva* whose abode was a palm tree or *Tàla* - *rukkha*. Let an honest study of history enlighten us Sri Lankans.

It was by royal decree, a few centuries later, that security to animal life - bird and beast and fish - via the injunction of ***mà ghàta* or No Slaughter of Animals** was introduced. Sri Lankan kings like Amandagamini, Silakala, Aggabodhi IV and Mahinda III, who had by then taken to Buddhist life in earnest, imposed a ban on the slaughter of animals [*mà ghàtam kàrayi dāpe sabbesaū yeva pāḍi-naū*. Mhv. 41.v.30]. Our indebtedness as a country or nation to the source of this inspiration has to remain incalculable for all times. But behold the world today. After more than twenty-three centuries, re-writng of history to serve contemporary needs of religion, politics and ethnicity is seen to be having its disastrous consequences on human life, both here in our native land and elsewhere.

This is indeed the message the whole world today is looking up to, conscious or unconscious in the process of doing so. It is the message of Shakyamuni the Buddha, given to mankind as a whole, with no thoughts of chosen or selected people. His dhamma was more than mere good news to the poor and the oppressed. This is what earns for Buddhism its honoured title of **Fastest Spreading Religion** in many parts of the world today. At the time it was delivered, it was not meant to be Indo-centric. Within a very short time, overriding barriers of ethnicity and physical terrain, it reached as far west as the Caspian Sea, over today's Middle East regions of Afghanistan, Iran etc. In the north, it traversed over deserts along oases of the ancient Silk Route, reaching China as early as 50 A.D. during the reign of Emperor Ming Ti. China, Korea and Japan came under its benign influence, reflecting to the world even today their cultural enrichment under the guidance and inspiration of Buddhism. Think of Japan's *āke bana* or the art of flower arrangement or its rich heritage of landscape gardening.

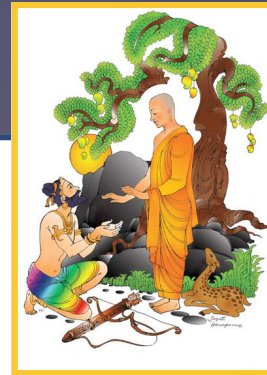
In the message of Buddhism, the world shall find comfort today in the face of threats of violence both at social and domestic levels, of rape and brutal murders prompted by sex excitement and evils of drug addiction, of pathetic devastation of mankind, at all ages, resulting from Aids, HIV, STD or sexually transmitted diseases. The much debated problems of abortion, fatherless homes and unmarried mothers, witnessed all around us and everywhere, could very well be kept at a low ebb, only if sanity prevailed and the words of the Buddha were adequately heeded. The Buddha clearly stated that the world would be saved through an understanding of and living up to the ideals of the Dhamma. ' He who sees the Dhamma sees me ', he said [*Yo dammaū passati so maū passati*]. As a redeemer, he does not need to be reborn.

Delivered to the world more than two and a half millennia ago, and to Sri Lanka via Thera Mahinda a few centuries later, the primary concern of Buddhism is the regulation and revitalizing of interpersonal relationships within the human community. That is where Buddhist religious living well and truly begins. This is why all Buddhist activities, not merely the rituals and ceremonies within and without the temples, begin with the voluntary acceptance and the pledge to keep and fulfill the basic code of *paṅcasāla*. They embody some of the fundamental human rights of respect for life and respect for property and a great deal more. Read no more and no less than verses 246 and 247 of the Dhammapada to discover the dynamism of this Buddhist approach to social problems. Answers to these lie not in prayer and supplication to forces outside man but in the total correction of human attitudes and approaches.

The above verses emphatically assert that maladjusted relationships in society lead both to social disruption as well as to personal deterioration and disaster, literally digging out the very roots of one's existence -- *mālaū khaḍati attano*. Why then not be morally good ? On this area of societal considerations or moral goodness in Buddhism, one only needs to be reminded of a very few basic sermons of the Buddha which he appears to have delivered at a very down-to earth congregational level. One is the Veludvareyya Sutta or the sermon at the Bamboo Gate, preached to the lay community of the Veludvara village [S.V. 352-6]. The main theme here is moral goodness and consequent moral harmony [*Sama-cariyà* and *dhammacariyà*]. The main thrust of the Buddha's argument here is ' Why not treat society in the same way you would like society to treat you ? This is called *attāpanāyika dhammapariyāya* or the self-testing method of the worth of moral goodness.

Cntd.

Celebration of Posen Festival, cntd.



The other is the Saleyyaka Sutta wherein the Buddha provides us with an almost perfect legal document with which any Buddhist who wishes to regulate and discipline his life on Buddhist lines could do so without any infringement of the Buddhist rules laid down [M. I. 285-90]. This sutta discusses in detail the rules relating to the ten offenses through thought, word and deed - *dasa kamma patha*. We would call upon all those interested in the study of moral considerations in Buddhism as a religion to take a close and careful look into these two suttas and see their total implications. Morality or *sāla* implied therein does not imply a mere negative or exclusively personal purity, unrelated to the world one lives in. It is a morality which is integrated to one's community of all that lives which includes man and bird and beast. It is calculated to achieve, more or less, a cosmic harmony. This and this alone shall be the hope of a changing world today, whether it be the territories of less affluent Asia or the more affluent and equally more devastated areas elsewhere.

In the message delivered in Sri Lanka as far back as twenty-three centuries ago, Thera Mahinda did not lose track of his thesis. With the assistance of the text of the Cullahatthipadopama Sutta [M. I. 175-84], Thera Mahinda placed the Buddha on the highest pedestal he deserves to be on, delineated his greatness as the teacher of gods and men and indicated that his path to salvation led one from the world of mundane pleasure of today's over-exaggerated women, wine and song. Within a few days or weeks, this was followed by yet another course of Buddhist instruction. We are told that the Petavatthu and Vimanavatthu provided much material for his sermons to his new converts. We are particularly interested in his choice of the Petavatthu. It is no indication, as far as we feel, of the lack of intellectual maturity of his Sri Lankan audiences. The Petavatthu is more eloquent and more vehement as a warning that the neglect and disregard of the moral instructions issued in Buddhism which could lead one in one's next life, to a total loss of the prestigious human position which one presently enjoys. This is the very realistic sense in which the Buddhist concepts of *apāya* and *niraya* are to be viewed.

It is our firm conviction that today, with the expansion of scientific knowledge and development of technology, Buddhism is coming to be more and more correctly understood by a vast majority of non-Buddhists. This is partly because of their own keen search for truth. Therefore it is a matter of paramount importance that Buddhists themselves make a keener in-depth study of their own religion. They could not possibly be lured by attractive offers of down to earth make believe material gains of better health, more wealth and greater success. Cultic attractions in the garb of religion are becoming extremely menacing all over the world. Wonder-workers are seen robbing spiritual considerations of their true worth. Religious amalgams and alliances are being made to look more attractive and enticing than cocktails served at the bar. They are amazingly hallucinogenic. The world is becoming aware of it, except a few who are deeply involved and heavily drugged, often having seen their disastrous ill effects.

The message of Mahinda has been good enough to outlive the lifetime of the world. The fountain from which it has been derived needs no revisionist updating. No authorized or unauthorized emissaries ever descend to earth to revise the original teachings of Buddhism which are declared as the teachings of all time : *esa dhammo sanantano*. No new bulletins ever need to be issued. Therefore on this day of the Posen full moon our very kind admonition to our readers is *SuõÐtha dhÐretha carÐtha dhamme* . Give attention to this teaching. Bear it well in your mind. Live your life in accordance with it.

May all beings be well and happy. May there be peace on earth and goodwill among men.

*International Buddhist Research
and Information Center
380 / 9 Sarana Road
Colombo 7, Sri Lanka.*

This article, written by Bhikkhu Professor Dhammavihari is taken from "Mettanet – Lanka".

Link: http://www.metta.lk/english/poson_beams.htm



Editor's Pick



Remembering You

Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there; I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow,
I am the diamond glints on snow,
I am the sunlight on ripened grain,
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there; I did not die.

I dedicate this poem by Mary Elizabeth Frye to an extraordinary human being and a great soul, who has found his freedom and peace of eternity after a short stay on this earth.

I will find you in the cool Seattle breeze, I will find you in the glistening snow in Mount Rainier, I will find you in the crispy autumn rain, I will always find you in my heart..

You will be remembered..

Sent by Priyanka Jayakody

History of Father's Day in US

Modern version of Father's Day celebration originated in United States of America and thereafter the tradition spread in countries around the world. The world owes thanks to **Ms Sonora Louise Smart Dodd** a loving daughter from Spokane, Washington as it is because of her struggle that Father's Day saw the light of the day.

The idea of Father's Day celebration originated in Sonora's mind when she per chance listened to Mother's Day sermon in 1909. Fairly mature at the age 27, Sonora pondered if there is a day to honor mother then why not for father? Sonora felt strongly for fathers because of the affection she received from her own father Mr William Jackson Smart, a Civil War veteran. Sonora's mother died while child-birth when she was just 16. Mr Smart raised the newborn and five other children with love and care.

Inspired by **Ms Anna Jarvis's** struggle to promote Mother's Day, Ms Dodd began a rigorous campaign to celebrate Father's Day in US. The Spokane Ministerial Association and the local Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) supported Sonora's cause. As a result Spokane celebrated its first Father's Day on June 19, 1910. Though there was initial hesitation the idea gained gradual popularity all over US and Fathers Day came to be celebrated in cities across the country.

Looking at the heightened popularity of Father's Day in US, President Woodrow Wilson approved of this idea in 1916. President Calvin Coolidge too supported the idea of a national Father's Day in 1924 to, "establish more intimate relations between fathers and their children and to impress upon fathers the full measure of their obligations". After a protracted struggle of over four decades, President Lyndon Johnson signed a presidential proclamation declaring the third Sunday of June as Father's Day in 1966. Then in 1972, President Richard Nixon established a permanent national observance of Father's Day to be held on the third Sunday of June. Sonora Smart Dodd was honored for her contribution at the World's Fair in Spokane in 1974. Mrs. Dodd died in 1978 at age 96.

Sent by Hemalika Abeysundara based on the article at

<http://www.fathersdaycelebration.com/fathers-day-history.html>

A PUBLICATION OF THE MAHAMAYA GIRLS' COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION OF NORTH AMERICA

Newsletter Committee:

Priyanka Jayakody, Sriyani Dissanayake, Hashini Mohottala, Hemalika Abeysundara