



# MAYA PUWATH

Volume 2 Number 3 Part 1 -June 2006

Hi Everyone,

It is with great pleasure I'm writing my second editorial column in the Maya Puwath history. Time has vanished before our eyes as well as MGCAANA has successfully growing into another great year of her career. I like to take this opportunity to admire and show my gratitude to the retiring BOD, who has done an outstanding job to keep MGCAANA alive and wish to welcome our brand-new BOD who will continue to make us proud as Mayan girls.

Many committees has been formed ; Membership Committee has taken a step forward to create the "MGCAANA Host and Travel Club" to participate in a host family program and host MGCAANA members, non member Mahamaya alumnae, and friends of Mahamayans primarily single undergraduate students residing in Canada or the United States during their long and short breaks.

MGCAANA is extremely proud of their achievements in giving an opportunity for our currents students to explore technology improving the computer lab in Mahamaya College.

Publication Committee would like to publish a commemorative volume to honor the Alma Mater and all the Maya women who have contributed to Sri Lanka and the world both as mothers and professionals for last 75 years. The 75<sup>th</sup> jubilee will be celebrated in January 2007.

Fundraising Committee has just finalized their first raffle to raise money for future events in MGCAANA.

MGCAANA. Membership Drive Committee and Website Organizing Committee are our strongest, hardworking committees who help us to bring this publication to you.

Membership Drive Committee also working hard to spread the word around of our existence and to attract more members and to help our association grow.

The Website Organizing Committee is as busy as ever, maintaining the website and disseminating information amongst the membership as well as assisting the Editorial Committee to bring Maya Puwath to you.

Newsletter Committee is busy keeping everybody informed about our organization and its activities by publishing Maya Puwath every two months. It is encouraging to know that Maya Puwath has readers from all over the world now.

Congratulations to my fellow members of the editorial committee for your exceptional work and support!!!

As a proud Mahamayan and also behalf of the Editorial Committee I wish to thank each one of you, who has done an extremely wonderful job to create this organization and help to thrive it day by day.

Priyanka Jayakody



Hi,  
My name is  
Priyanka  
Jayakody ,  
editor of this  
Maya Puwath  
edition..I was  
at Mahamaya

from 1977-1980. Thereafter, I Entered Sri Jayawardanapura University and earned my bachelors degree in science and also met my husband for 20 years. I worked as a school teacher for 4 years and moved to U.S.A. in 1989. I pursued my passion and career as an educator and currently residing in the Washington State with my husband and two daughters, Mindy (16 yrs) and Ianthie. (13 yrs). In my leisure time I love to read, listen to Sri Lankan music and walk.

## THE NEED TO SLOW DOWN

When we are too plain busy we have no time to absorb the present moment, notice our surroundings or meditate. Nor do we have space to reflect on our lives, analyze where we are going and whether we even want to go there. Busyness undermines our capacity for acts of love by robbing us of time to listen to others, notice how they're feeling and help them. To quote the Buddha:

**The restless, busy nature of the world, this, I declare, is at the root of pain. Attain that composure of mind which is resting in the peace of immortality. Self is but a heap of composite qualities, and its world is empty like a fantasy.**

Those of us who juggle career and kids know that when we're stressed over our workload, spending time with our children can be exasperating. It's so trying to spend time at a park when there's "important work" to do. When you become too obsessed with productivity it's hard to adapt to the children's pace, to be present and accepting of the present moment.

Sometimes we have little choice but to be busy- family life seems to require this of us. But at other stages in our lives we need to ask, could

## The Power Of Coconuts

*Lying on the dirt laden ground*

*A hot summer's day*

*Surrounded by friends*

*On a tropical island*



*Surrounded by friends  
 On a tropical island far away...  
 Gasping for breath  
 In-between running here and there  
 Rolling, tumbling, wrestling and such..  
 Tired we finally feel it's only fair...  
 To run home as a gang  
 Nag for the knife  
 Take it to the gardener  
 As if he has no other life  
 Beg him to cut Curumba for us all  
 As we start to die of thirst  
 Yet as he brings the fruit down  
 We fight not for who is first  
 He swiftly hacks the top open  
 From one after the other  
 Hands one to each child  
 Who stare happily at one another  
 Soon everyone comes  
 Villagers, parents, workers while children run  
 The coconut tree gives all it has  
 To soothe a hot summer's sun*

**Written By**  
**Upuli Anuradha Dissanayake**  
**Grade 10, Oak Hall School**  
**Gainesville, Florida**



Sometimes we have little choice but to be busy- family life seems to require this of us. But at other stages in our lives, we need to ask, could we be burying ourselves in activity to avoid facing the big questions? Do we find it so difficult to cope with unstructured time that we set our lives up to avoid it? If this is the case, what is the price of our addiction to busyness? For many the price is a feeling of disconnection from those around them and from any chance of fostering the kind of families and communities that humans so profoundly need. Or the price could be disconnection from us, addiction to stress or a failure to find joy in life.

We need to create some space in our lives if we want to progress along a spiritual path. Before children, when life became too troubling we might have thrown ourselves into our work, started new hobbies or lost ourselves in a social whirl- anything to distract ourselves from facing time alone with our thoughts. Now we are parents and in danger of neglecting our children if we chase these time-consuming distractions. We need to find ways to live in harmony with ourselves and our families.

Buddhism for Mothers By Sarah Naphthali

Sent by Priyanka Jayakody

**TREACLE AND DATE COOKIES**

Makes about 24

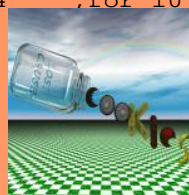
- \* 50g/2oz/ 1/4 cup butter or margarine, softened
- \* 50g/ 2 oz/ 1/4 cup caster sugar
- \* 50g/2oz/ 1/4 cup soft brown sugar
- \* 1 egg lightly beaten
- \* 2.5ml/1/2 tsp bicarbonate of soda (baking soda)
- \* 30ml/2tbsp warm water
- \* 45ml/3tbsp black treacle (molasses)
- \* 25g/1 oz / 1/4 cup stoned (pitted) dates, chopped
- \* 100g/ 4oz / 1 cup plain flour
- \* A pinch of salt
- \* A pinch of ground cloves



Cream together the butter & sugars until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the egg. Mix the baking powder with the water, then stir in to the mixture with the remaining ingredients. Drop spoonfuls on to a greased baking sheet & bake in a preheated oven at 180C/ 350F/ Gas mark 4, for 10 minutes.

from: Classic 1000 Cake & Bake recipes

**By Nazrana Caffoor**



Do not pursue the past.  
 Do not lose yourself in the future.  
 The past no longer is.  
 The future has not yet come.  
 Looking deeply at life as it is.  
 In the very here and now, the practitioner dwells in stability and freedom.  
 We must be diligent today.  
 To wait until tomorrow is too late.  
 Death comes unexpectedly.  
 How can we bargain with it?  
 The sage calls a person who knows how to dwell in mindfulness night and day, 'one who knows the better way to live alone.'  
*Bhaddekaratta Sutta*

**Recollections of a** It was good to see the teachers who had been mundane. I basically thought that

## Recollections of a memorable event

On the 27<sup>th</sup> of May 2006 we, the past pupils of Mahamaya College Kandy, now living in North America reached a very important mile stone. MGCAANA celebrated its first birthday and those who couldn't attend due to numerous reasons missed a treat! I missed the inaugural meeting in Seattle but I was lucky to be present for this.

Mayans were there from all over, from the East coast, the west coast and from the middle of the United States. The Teachers and Neranjika (nee Dissanayake) Akka graced the occasion in sari. As for me I have saris with jackets and under skirts that no longer contain my womanly assets, so had to resort to wearing a skirt and blouse.

To me it was interesting to meet and talk and discuss the courses our lives had taken with people I had shared my yonder years with under shady frangipani trees, Mango trees and the numerous class rooms of Mahamaya. To see Harshi Akka, Vajira Akka and Neranjika Akka who were the ideal students in our days whom we looked up to was a treat.

It was good to see the teachers who had taught me, advised me and I was surprised that they actually remembered me 15 years since leaving school, a good 30-40 pounds heavier and with a shorter hair cut. Meeting with Kishani (Nee Samarakoon) Akka in particular brought back fond memories of the time I had spent in the front room of the then hostel, now museum in Mrs. Eheliyagoda's music class with her youngest sister Manori. This meeting also brought back memories of my mother, who is no more. Amma used to talk so highly about Kishani Akkas mastery of the English Language and her noteworthy creative writing. It was also a rude awakening of sorts as the youngest participants at the AGM had not even started at Mahamaya by the time I left! Basically I was old enough for them to call me Aunty as Sri Lankans often do. Thankfully they were nice and called me Akki instead.

It was also indeed a privilege to have had the opportunity to treat everyone to a meal of string hoppers in our humble home. It was also a perfect chance to give my better half, Jeeva and my kids the opportunity to take a glimpse at my formative years - my life before they arrived.

Four years ago when Mrs. Werake called me to condone with me on the demise of my mother, who was her teacher and mentioned about the forming of an Association I was skeptical, and shied away. My memories of my school years

were mundane. I basically thought that Mrs. Werake was naive to even imagine that we albeit Mahamayans with such diverse lives could get together for a larger and productive cause. How could we, scattered across this vast continent even meet was my thought. But I am humbled today and am glad that I have been proved wrong, so very wrong. For an Association in a nascent stage, we have achieved a lot, and benefited a lot from it. And I am glad that I was "roped in" literally by Ms. Werake into this and to be a part of the News Letter Committee and I am proud to be a part of MGCAANA.

I look forward to an action packed new year at MGCAANA!

*"Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence."* --Helen Keller  
- Chathuri Nugawela-Munasinghe

### **Sad note.....**

**Mrs. Eloma Hettiarachchi's husband, Mr. Karunaratna whom you met at the AGM dinner lost his mother few days ago**

## **Second Annual General Meeting of MGCAANA in Maryland and the Dinner Reception that followed**

The second Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday, May 27<sup>th</sup> 2006 at the Davis Community Library in Bethesda, Maryland. Our members came from different parts of the country to attend the meeting. The alumnae and honorary members who participated in the AGM were (in alphabetical order), Neranjika Dissanayake, Nelum Dorabawila, Tamara Dorabawila, Vajeera Dorabawila, Harshi Ehelepola, Shashikala Galpoththawela, Eloma Hettiarachchi, Kishani Samarakoon Martin, Chathuri Nugawela-Munasinghe, Dharshani Nanayakkara, Inoka Nanayakkara, Iyanka Karunaratne Ponnampereuma, Thanujee Navaratne, Hemali Rajapakshe, Upeksha Thilakawardana, Sujatha Werake, and Sandhyani Wijesundara.

This was a festive and social occasion to celebrate the sense of community and our accomplishments, and to express the appreciation to all our members who contributed to make it a warm, healthy and dynamic environment in our organization. It was a great experience to see them all under one roof, some of whom I saw after many years. We were overjoyed to see each other. After serving as the first president of the organization and a traveling companion during our long journey, this gathering helped me realize how stimulating and heartwarming experience it was to feel the power of Maya family, although at times our journey was intense and challenging as we navigated through unfamiliar waters during our formative years.

Our meeting went on from 1:30 to 4:15 pm. The Board of Directors and members of the Executive Committee talked about our Organization, what we did so far, and what we plan to do in the future. Secretary Dharshani presented the annual report, treasurer Neranjika presented the accounts for the year. Vajira talked about the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Volume

Organization, what we did so far, and what we plan to do in the future. Secretary Dharshani presented the annual report, treasurer Neranjika presented the accounts for the year, Vajeera talked about the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemorative Volume, and the Host and Travel Club, Harshi talked about the setup of the organization. We sang our School Anthem together after many years. Our school flag which is so close to our heart, was hanging in the meeting-hall. Chathuri Nugawela-Munasinghe, LLB. was appointed as our Returning Officer and she counted the secret ballots and they were stored in a sealed envelope. Thus, the new Board of Directors was appointed with the members' votes, for the year 2006/07. Congratulations to Dharshani Nanayakkara, our new President, the new Board of Directors and the Executive Committee. From among the participants, some of them joined the committees since there was a need for more members. Iyanka Karunaratne Ponnampereuma organized the drawing of the Raffle, since Chairperson of the Fundraising Committee Nadeeka Gunasekera Ranasinghe was unable to attend the AGM. The three former teachers, Mrs. Eloma Hettiarachchi, Mrs. Sujatha Werake, and Mrs. Sandyani Wijesundara were asked to draw the Raffle and the three prize winners were picked.

After the meeting, we went to Chathuri and Jeeva Munasinghe's residence for the dinner reception. They surprised us by carefully preparing a grand, festive dinner in celebration of the occasion in an exceptional way. The beautifully decorated dinner with numerous tasty special dishes was served, in addition to a big birthday cake made by Chathuri in the shape of the numeral 1 in celebration of the first birthday of MGCAANA. Chathuri and Jeeva did not forget to make vegetarian dishes for the Dorabawila family who are vegetarians. The members, their spouses, and children had a wonderful time together. About thirty people attended the dinner. It was so wonderful to meet the spouses and children who belong to our Maya family. Chathuri and Jeeva, Thank you for your hospitality. The time the Maya family spent at your house was most enjoyable, and most memorable.

Thank you members who organized the AGM in Maryland. Thank you all the members of the committees who do exceptional work during the year. Thank you to the members, family members of our active members, members of the Executive Committee, and the Board of Directors, for your unfailing support. Thank you all for your excellent teamwork dedication, love and understanding. All members, please get involved in our activities. We need to hear your ideas, input, opinions, suggestions, priorities and wisdom. We are ready for a great new year under the new leadership.

By Sujatha Werake



**FRIENDSHIPS**

**CONNECTIONS**

**ACHIEVEMENTS**

**CONFIDENCE**



from L to R: (Standing) Chathuri Nugawela-Munasinghe, Nelum Dorabawila, Dharshani Nanayakkara, Vajeera Dorabawila, Iyanka Karunaratne Ponnampereuma, Harshi Ehelepola, Inoka Nanayakkara, Hemali Rajapakshe, Thanujee Navaratne, Tamara Dorabawila, Upeksha Thilakawardana, Shashikala Galpoththawela, Kishani Samarakoon Martin, (Seated) Neranjika Dissanayake, Sujatha Werake, Sandhyani Wijesundara, Eloma Hettiarachc



**CELEBRATING**



**LAUGHS**



**OPTIMISM**

**FAMILIES**





HOPE

