



MAYA PUWATH

Volume 4 Issue 1 February 2008

DHAMMAPADA

What neither mother, nor father, nor any other relative can do, a well-directed mind does and thereby elevates one.—The Buddha

EDITORIAL

We wish all our readers a Happy & prosperous 2008. This is the time to make a new beginning for most of us. We make resolutions at the dawn of the new year hoping that it will be so much different than the year that just went by in a flash. And while most of us manage to make some of the resolutions work it is not done without a struggle.

We hope the year 2008 will be a year to make innovative & creative changes to our Newsletter. And we want our readers to be a part of the making of the newsletter. Help us take it to a higher level with your feedback. Give us your views & ideas. This will help us in giving you what you want to read in the newsletter. Our newsletter must reflect our readers in what they want or it will not be a success.

While that is our resolution for the Newsletter there are many others out there making resolutions and hoping they will have the motivation to keep them. Ranking on the top of the list of resolutions is Eating Healthy. This is a general resolution made by many of us hoping to break some life long bad habits & introduce healthy food in to our daily diet. In this very fast & busy life making healthy choices in food ranks very low in our daily makeup. We tend to reach for the most convenient and easy to make food than go the extra mile in search of a healthy choice. This is not by choice as most of us are aware of bad eating habits and the profound effect they have on the health of us & our families. To make healthy eating work for us we have to make it part of our lifestyle thus making it easier to maintain and continue in the long run.

With this in mind we have decided to help our readers by choosing “healthy eating” as our theme for this first edition of 2008. Hope we can all learn easy methods to make healthy eating habits and make some significant inroads towards a healthy lifestyle.

Nazrana Caffoor— Editor —Mayapuwath—Current Edition

You are invited to the 4th Annual General Meeting of MGCAANA on May 24th 2008

See page 2 for details on the **AGM** and the **ELECTIONS**

We Invite You to Join Our Face book Group: MGCAANA

On behalf of MGCAANA, I am pleased to invite you to our Facebook group. In addition to our website and our newsletter, *Maya Puwath*, we expect that this group will help us stay more connected with our alumnae who live outside the territories of North America. This group, which is hosted by MGCAANA, is open not only to our members, but also to all Maya alumnae, current students of Mahamaya, and well-wishers of Mahamaya and MGCAANA who are living all over the world. This group will help us bring our alumnae together, meet old friends and make new friends, hear your voices, exchange views through the discussion board, post and view related photographs, post information about upcoming events, projects, and important topics, such as job vacancies, stay connected, create a positive and supportive environment, and enrich the lives of all Mayans, their families, and friends. We hope that all of you will use this privilege responsibly and positively and will respect everyone's privacy and protect a secure environment within the Facebook group for all our members.

How to join us: If you don't already have a Facebook account, creating one will only take a few minutes.

Please visit <http://www.facebook.com> and follow a few simple steps to create your personalized account.

Search for our group (MGCAANA) and send a request to join us; please give us a brief introduction of yourself, including the time period that you were at Mahamaya. That is important to us and will help us a great deal. We will gladly accept it and welcome you to our group. If you receive an invitation from one of our administrators, please accept it. So far, more than 90 Maya alumnae from around the world and from all decades have joined us. Together, we have accomplished a lot, and we are certain that you will continue to support us in our future endeavors. Once again, we cordially invite you to join and help us serve our alma mater, fellow alumnae, and society. We look forward to hearing from you.

With best regards.

Dharshani Nanayakkara -Director, MGCAANA



Invitation to the Fourth Annual General Meeting

Dear Maya Alumna:

You are cordially invited to the Fourth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the members of Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA). The meeting will be held on:

Date: Saturday, May 24th, 2007 (Memorial Day week-end)

Venue: Boston, MA

Time : TBD

Dinner after the Annual General Meeting:

Following the Annual General Meeting, we will be hosting a dinner to all the attendees and their family members at Priyadharshani Sandanayake(nee Navaratne))'s residence. More information will be provided at the meeting.

Kindly RSVP as soon as possible by e-mailing us at Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com.

For information, please visit our website at www.mahamayaalumna.org.

We thank you very much for your continuous support and hope to see all of you at the Annual General Meeting.

Sincerely yours,

Board of Directors and the Executive Committee

Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America

2008-2009 ELECTIONS

If you would like to serve as a member of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and/or any other committee(s) during the 2008-2009 year, please complete the online nomination form at :

<http://www.mahamayaalumna.org/nomination.php> at your earliest convenience. These positions will offer you tremendous opportunities to serve our Alma Mater, fellow alumnae, and community, while growing as a leader. The experience that you gain by directing our organization can also be used to strengthen your résumé. We encourage you to be an active member of MGCAANA.

NEW ARRIVAL!



Samadhi Tennakoon

Date: Nov 26th 2007

Weight: 7 lb 9.7 oz

Length: 20 inches

ProudParents

Dusmantha and Inoka Tennakoon

Editorial Committee: Nazrana Caffoor- Editor for current issue- Priyanka Jayakody, Dhakshika Bandaranayake & Chathuri Nugawela-Munasinghe

The theme for the next
Newsletter is

“a better world”

encompassing all we can
do to leave behind a bet-
ter place for future gen-
erations. We look forward
to your contributions!

-Editor-

MGCAANA'S FRENCH BOOK PROJECT

Around April 2007, MGCAANA received a request from the Mahamaya Old Girls' Association, Colombo Branch asking us to donate French books to Mahamaya's French program. The teacher in-charge of French had sent a list of fifty books that were needed. At the monthly teleconference, Executive Committee and the Board of Directors decided to allocate \$250 for the French book project. Kishani Samarakoon Martin graciously offered to take the lead. She was a director and the vice president of MGCAANA at the time. Nilmini Wickremeratne Dorabawila who served as a director of MGCAANA the previous year, joined Kishani in her efforts. Kishani, Nilmini and other members of the Executive Committee and BOD started searching for French books in Amazon.com, Alibris, Craigslist, Halfprice Books, and number of other possible places. They were looking for possible donors as well. Kishani and Nilmini found a donor called Allan on Craigslist who lived in West Virginia. Nilmini went and picked up the books from this person. The next big donation that we received through Nilmini was 34 French books from her sister-in-law, Catherine Wickremeratne. The books were:

.Dans un mois dans un an 2.Le Theatre Comique AU Moyen Age 3.Le Proces 4.Prisons et Paradis 5 .L'île 6. le bourgeois gentilhomme 7.Paul et virginie 8.Les marçais 9. mont- dragon 10. L'annonce faite a Marie 11. La chanson de roland 12.Les Lion 13.Les Mouches 14.le Tartuffe 15.Le theatre religieux 16.Poesies choisies 17. Blazac 18.Le Roman de renard 19.Proust ducote de chez swann 20.Le Lutrin 21.Contes II 22. Garhantua 23. Le Provonciales 24.Jules et Jim 25. Dictionnaire Des Synonymes 26.la chanson de rolan (there was another one) 28.Une Femme 29. Moira. 30 La Grammaire Facile de "anglais 31.Les Femmes Savantes 32.le Cid 33.Typhon 34. Anna Katenine

One day members in the BOD and Executive Committee received a letter written in French. That was from our own Kishani, writing to the French embassy in Washington, DC asking for donation of French books. Since all correspondence from MGCAANA has to go through the Executive Committee and the BOD, Kishani's letter was sent for approval. The letter was approved although some of us did not understand much of it.

In September, 2007 Kishani used her expertise in French and bought books, CDs, dictionaries, grammar books, etc. from the allocated money. She painstakingly researched for this purpose. The total expense was \$190.06. Specially the reference guides such as Larousse Advanced Dictionary: French-English/English-French, Complete French: The Basics (CD) – Living Language, Bescherelle: La Conjugaison Pour Tous were great resources. At our request, she got a stamp made to say that they were donated by MGCAANA and stamped the donated materials before delivering them to school. The purpose of buying CDs was to improve listening /pronunciation skills. As the principal editor, this was the busiest month for Kishani since she was going through the final editing of the MGCAANA's Commemorative Volume. She was to take the final version of it with her to the publisher in Sri Lanka in December which she did.Number of French books had increased to over fifty by then. Everyone involved in this project was getting worried about how to send them to Mahamaya.

Shipping:

During the same time, the team looked for ways to ship the books. In August, 2007 Neranjika Dissanayake found a shipping agent. After getting information from several other shipping agents, with the purpose of cutting down on expenses, Kishani volunteered to take all the books in her suitcases on her planned trip to Sri Lanka in December. Not many people would take such a responsibility, especially when you go to see your loved ones.

The attached picture shows you Nilmini and Kishani handing over the books to the principal Mrs. Indra Withanachchi, in December 2007.

This is what Kishani had to say after her return. "I traveled by myself to Sri Lanka and was allowed only 2 suitcases weighing 50 pounds or less. The books took most of the allowable weight. The funny thing is I told everyone that I could not bring anything much because I was carrying the books and it also forced me to manage with a few items of clothing which at the end, made me realize that you really don't need to take a lot of stuff when you travel." That made me think how selfless one can be. Thank you Kishani, Nilmini, BOD and Executive Committee members of 2006/07 and 2007/08. Nothing is impossible when you have the heart to do it. This would not have come to a successful completion without your dedication and commitment. Big THANK YOU again to everyone involved in this project.

Sent by Mrs. Sujatha Werake



Indra Withanachchi, Kishani Martin, Nilmini Dorabawila

Fatigue Fighting Tips

Fatigue is a feeling that you're chronically tired – mentally and physically. It can be caused by a number of factors, including unhealthy lifestyle choices, workplace problems and stress. There are many different ways you can boost your energy. See your health practitioner first to make sure you don't have an underlying medical problem.

Dietary suggestions

If you want more energy, look at your diet and make sure you're following these basic guidelines:

- **Drink lots of water** . A dehydrated body functions less efficiently.
- **Be careful with caffeine** . 1 or 2 caffeinated drinks per day like coffee, tea or cola can boost your energy and mental alertness, but more than 6 caffeinated drinks per day may make you anxious, irritable, and negatively affect your performance.
- **Eat breakfast** . Food boosts your metabolism and gives your body energy to burn. The brain relies on glucose for fuel, so choose carbohydrate-rich breakfast foods such as cereals or whole grain bread..
- **Don't skip meals** . Going without food for too long allows blood sugar levels to dip. Try to eat regularly to maintain your energy levels throughout the day.
- **Don't crash diet** . Low calorie diets or diets that severely restrict carbohydrates don't contain enough energy for your body's needs. The typical crash diet also deprives the body of nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and trace elements.
- **Eat a healthy diet** . Increase the amount of fruit, vegetables, whole grain foods, low fat dairy products and lean meats in your diet. Reduce the amount of high fat, high sugar and high salt foods.
- **Don't overeat** . Large meals can drain your energy. Instead of eating 3 big meals per day, try eating 6 mini-meals to spread your calorie intake more evenly. This will result in more constant blood sugar and insulin levels. You'll also find it easier to lose excess body fat.

Eat iron rich foods . Women in particular are prone to iron-deficiency (anemia). Make sure your diet includes iron rich foods such as lean red meat. <http://www.actnowbc.ca/>

Sent by: Nazrana Caffoor

Fruits and vegetables - a cornerstone of healthy eating

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables has been shown in over 4,500 studies to reduce the risk of cancer, heart disease, stroke and diabetes. In addition, people who eat at least 5-10 servings of fruits and vegetables a day are less likely to have weight problems, hypertension, high cholesterol levels or intestinal problems. In other words, eating fruits and vegetables is an easy, safe way to improve your health and reduce your risk of chronic disease.

What makes fruits and vegetables so special?

- **Vitamins!** This food group is the major source of vitamin C, beta carotenes and folates (the naturally occurring form of folic acid). They have been shown to reduce the risk of some types of cancer, heart disease, stroke and cataracts.
- **Potassium!** Studies have linked this mineral to lower blood pressure.

Fiber! Fiber helps prevent bowel disorders such as constipation, diverticulosis and hemorrhoids. Some studies have linked fiber to a reduced risk of bowel cancer.

- They're naturally low in fat and calories (except for avocado and coconut), but high in nutrients. Eating fruits and vegetables in place of other higher calorie foods can help you achieve and maintain a healthy body weight.
- **Disease prevention!** Fruits and vegetables contain over 4,000 identified phytochemicals – naturally occurring compounds that help prevent disease in different ways. Some are linked to reduced risk of cancer, heart disease or stroke while others are involved in preventing eye disease or slowing the aging process.



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- **Colour!** In general, the darker the color of a vegetable or fruit, the higher its nutrient value. Enjoy fruits and vegetables of all colors and tastes to get the maximum health benefit.

Fruits and vegetables high in Potassium:

Bananas, Broccoli, Kiwi fruit, Melons, Potatoes, Rutabaga, Tomatoes, Winter squash

Fruits and vegetables high in beta carotene:

Apricots, Cantaloupe, Carrots, Mangoes, Pumpkin, Sweet potatoes, Winter squash

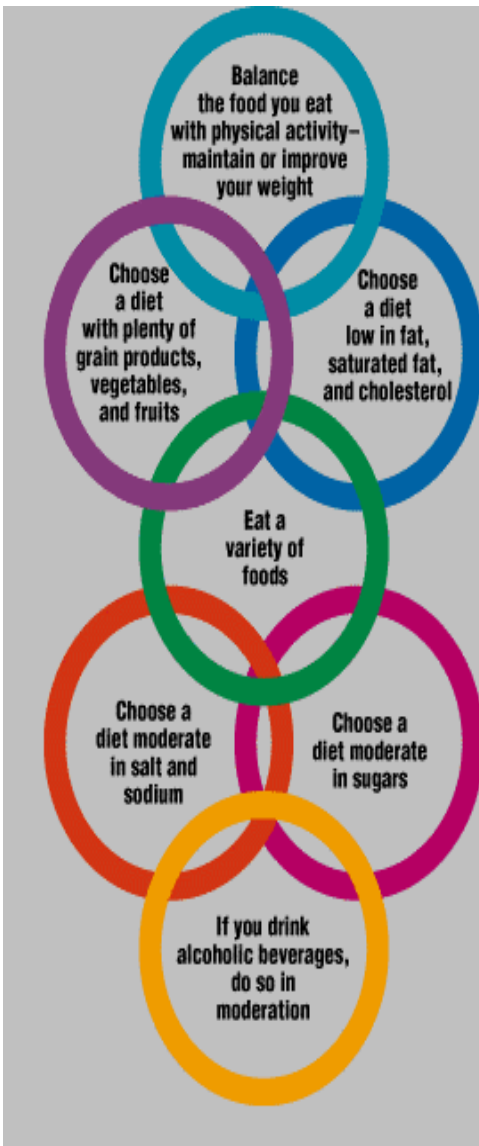
Fruits and vegetables high in Fiber:
Berries, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Kiwi fruit, Mangoes , Papaya, Pears, Peas, Prunes , Pumpkin

Fruits and vegetables high in Folates:

Beets, Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, Cantaloupe, Cauliflower, Oranges, Peas, Romaine Lettuce, Spinach

<http://www.actnowbc.ca/>

Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans Sent by: Nazrana Caffoor



Family Trivia!

The big kid in the family aka my husband eats greens by the bundle. Often when I go grocery shopping and buy six bundles of kale or collard for the week, many have looked at me in wonder. Some have plucked up enough courage to actually ask me what I did with them- So there I stand explaining how to make mallung in the middle of the grocery store. One person asked me if I had rabbits at home- I politely responded- I am married to one! Didn't know that Rabbits ate kale!

The other two kids in the family is another story. Meth, my son told me the other day that when he eats Broccoli he dreams of a Broccoli Monster coming after him and this apparently gives him nightmares. I suggested he stopped eating turkey bacon, and lamb sausages and strawberries too in case bacon, sausage and strawberry monsters also started coming at him! I went even further and tried to ask what they looked like- because I would love to meet this monster at least in my dreams to give him a piece of my mind- but got no response. So then, I said, may be we need to stop eating ice cream too because there might be ice cream monsters next. Oh no! he, responds and says, now that I am a big boy I can fight them if they come again. Iru on the other hand keeps telling me that there are so many people with no food in this world (what I had told her many times) and that we should send all the vegetables to them so that they can be "helpful" and "appy".

In the good old days when I was a stay at home mom, and when my kids had not been in the wide world and didn't know that French fries and pizzas existed and that other kids actually got to eat them, what I would do most of the time is mix all the vegetables in to the rice - even kohila- when I can find it and feed it. Now I puree Broccoli and add into Pasta sauces. Invisible- but there. Sometimes I decorate the plates and make a face with broccoli as hair and carrots as a nose and ketchup for the mouth.

For our daughter I offered to teach her the good stuff about vegetables. She said " I don't know about it and I don't want to learn about it! Of course when her majesty speaks, we back off . Instead of food values, now I tell her how pretty she will look and I said to her if you eat tomatoes, your cheeks will be rosy like a tomato and she promptly burst into tears. I do not want tomato's growing on my cheeks Amma she said. So I am working on her- trying to come up with new and fancy ideas to make vegetables a "cool" thing to eat. If you have any ideas, let me know.

Chathuri Nugawela Munasinghe.

Teenagers and food

Our eating habits today are different from those of a generation ago in so many ways. Fast foods, takeaways and eating out are part of this generation's culture.

There are no simple solutions to improving your teenager's diet. It can be very difficult for parents of teenagers to convince their children of the benefits of healthier eating when they are also competing with the powerful messages of food advertising and peer pressure. Knowing about 'normal' teenage eating can help put your mind at rest.

What parents can do

Set a good example

- The way you eat and look after your own body sends a powerful message to your child.
- Have family rules about 'everyday' foods and 'sometimes' foods.
- Avoid junk foods yourself and don't complain about your own body (or others) in front of your teenager. Talking about being on a diet is very common in our everyday conversation, so try and avoid this too.

Shop for a range of healthy foods to have in your cupboards and fridge.

Encourage

- Help your teenager to view growth and body changes as a normal part of growing up. Help him to feel comfortable with the fact that everyone's body matures at a different pace. Encourage an acceptance of his shape and size.
- Try to focus and comment on qualities of your teenager other than appearance. This will help fight the pressures of society about looking a certain way.

Encourage regular physical activity, walking or riding instead of always being a passenger.

Respect your teenager's opinion

- Respect that your teenager may want to eat differently from the family (providing this is reasonable).

Try to accept the fact that your teenager may have very strong and different views from yours. Letting eating become a war helps no one and only damages your relationship.

Provide healthy food

- Make it clear that you provide a range of mostly wholesome and nutritious food and your teenager decides the amount he needs, and what he wants to eat. Don't be surprised if he opens the fridge which is full and says 'There's nothing to eat in here'.
- Make sure you provide a wide choice of foods from all the food groups such as:
- grains (for example, bread, pasta, rice, cereal)
- vegetables and legumes
- fruit
- dairy products (milk, yoghurt, cheese)
- meat, fish, poultry, eggs, nuts.
- Growing children need snacks. Provide food from the above food groups for snacks. Making a fuss if your teenager eats lots of less than healthy 'sometimes' foods is not usually helpful or likely to make him stop, and can make him 'switch off' if it happens too often.

Don't stock fizzy drinks—buy as a 'sometimes drink'—if they're easily available teenagers are more likely to choose them over water and milk.

Share the kitchen

- Give teenagers some responsibilities in the kitchen and in preparing meals.

Expect both sons and daughters to contribute in some way to food preparation. Encourage them to have a say, even if it's one meal a week, in planning, shopping for and preparing a meal of their own choice for everyone. Help your child develop these skills and build confidence.

Support

- Support teenagers through fad diets but check out with them whether their diet is nutritious. (You need to be sure you know what a nutritious diet is.)
- There are many entertaining experiences to be had on TV, videos, computers, but it is important to keep in mind what young need for their healthy development.

They need encouragement to build strong bonds with real and caring people, time for physical exercise and 'hands-on' activities of all kinds.



Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America

Congratulations to our 2007-2008 Scholarship Recipients

We received applications from several of our alumnae who have demonstrated excellence in their academic achievements, leadership ability, and participation in extracurricular activities. We would like to thank all our outstanding applicants who took the time and effort to send in their application. It was not an easy task for the Scholarship Selection Committee to select the finalists from this most qualified applicant pool. We are proud to announce our 2007-2008 scholarship recipients – they are **Pamuditha Mahadiulwewa** and **Upeksha Thilakawardana**. Each winner received a **\$250.00** scholarship.

Pamuditha Mahadiulwewa is a junior undergraduate majoring in Business Administration (Accounting) at the California State University, Fresno. After studying at Mahamaya Girls' College from 1986 to 2000, Pamuditha studied Business Administration, Marketing Special at the University of Kelaniya. She graduated, with highest honors, from Fresno City College with an Associate of Arts degree in Liberal Studies. She is a member of the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society for Community Colleges and Phi Kappa Phi. Pamuditha has been nominated to the Dean's List and the National Dean's List for 3 years. She participated in the 2002 Cancer Walk organized by the Sri Lankan Cancer Society. Pamuditha has served as a note taker for disabled students and currently tutors numerous subjects, including accounting, math, English, economics, and art history, at the Fresno City College. She aspires to pursue her graduate education, obtain a CPA (Certified Public Accountant) license, and to become a teacher.

Upeksha Thilakawardana is a sophomore undergraduate majoring in General Studies (Nursing) at the Northern Virginia Community College. She will be graduating with an Associate of Science degree in May 2008. She was a student at Mahamaya Girls' College from 1991 to 2003. At Mahamaya, Upeksha has served as the president of the senior Girl Guide (Scout) group and also the St. Johns Ambulance Brigade, where she provided first aid services for the school and community. In 2000, she earned the President's Guide rank (equals to Eagle Scout in the U.S.), the highest honor that is conferred to girl guides of the Sri Lanka Girl Guides Association. Upeksha was also a school prefect and an assistant house captain at Mahamaya. With fellow girl guides, she has volunteered at the Kandy General Hospital, cleaning hospital wards. Upeksha has been nominated to the Dean's List and is also a Presidential Scholar at the Northern Virginia Community College. She aspires to pursue her graduate education.

On behalf of MGCAANA, the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee, and the Scholarship Selection Committee would like to sincerely congratulate Pamuditha and Upeksha and wish both of them continued success in their academic and professional pursuits.

Best regards,

Dharshani Nanayakkara

Chairperson, Scholarship Selection Committee, Director, MGCAANA

"Winners don't do different things. They do things differently."

-Anonymous- Sent by: Nazrana Caffoor

A publication of the Mahamaya Girl's College Alumni Association of North America