



# MAYA PUWATH

Volume 5 Issue 6– December 2009

## Editorial

The end of the year is here and everyone is busy trying to get all that needs to be done in time for the holidays. It is one of the busiest times of the year when everyone is trying hard to put their best foot forward and make a good impression and have a good feeling about the end of yet another year.

It is at this time of the year that we are forced to think of our fellow human beings. Those that have fallen on hard times and of the less fortunate. This year we are hearing and seeing more families in need of human kindness. Families that cannot make ends meet leave alone getting ready for the festive holidays. It is at times like these that we should try and give more to charity and try to make a positive difference in society.

Our Newsletter is marking the end of its fourth year. Hence, we are planning on changing our look and adding new exciting features. We hope the new look will give our readers greater satisfaction and more opportunities to interact with the Newsletter. An article featuring all our new ideas and new look is elsewhere in this newsletter. Hope you all will give us your ideas for our new facelift and make it more interesting.

By the end of the year 2009 we have seen MGCANNA help many students of Mahamaya Girls' College with our scholarship fund. We hope that we could continue and advance our outreach in the New Year. It is with your help that we can move forward. We thank you for all your contributions and hard work. And we hope we can count on all your support for the year 2010.

**THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE WISHES ALL OUR READERS  
HAPPY HOLIDAYS & A HAPPY, PROSPEROUS AND JOYFUL  
NEW YEAR !**

## Dhammapada

"These sons belong to me, and this wealth belongs to me;" with such thoughts a fool is tormented. One does not belong to oneself; how much less sons and wealth? "

***A beautiful thought to keep in mind as you enter a brand new year...***

Go not to the temple to pray on bended knees,  
First bend down to lift someone who is down-trodden.  
Go not to the temple to ask forgiveness for your sins,  
First forgive from your heart those who have sinned against you.

Rabindranath Tagore



**Wish You A  
Very Happy  
New Year**





## New Year Message from the President

We have come to the end of an eventful year. The time has come that I should, on behalf of the BOD and the executive committee of MGCAANA, wish all of you a successful and a Happy New Year .

Every single accomplishment of ours in 2009 is attributed to all of you, the MGCAANA community, and please accept my sincerest gratitude together with the New Year's greetings. I would also like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the advisors, the BOD & the Executive committee and other committee members as well. MGCAANA also owes a special word of thanks to all our families for their unconditional support throughout the year.

More importantly, in 2009 we successfully initiated the Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund in Sri Lanka, and thus opened the door to a better future for economically disadvantaged students at Mahamaya Collage. I take this opportunity to recognize the encouraging support from our members, the well wishers and dedication of our endowment committee and the newly elected Board of Trustees in implementing the Vidya Trust. Your enthusiasm and dedication to this great cause is an inspiration to the MGCAANA & Mahamaya community; we highly value your time, energy, and passion.

As we end one year and begin another, we must commit ourselves to continued success of our beloved MGCAANA and alma mater. Let us continue to work together to achieve these objectives and, in the process, make 2010 the finest hour of MGCAANA.

A Happy New Year to you all!

Himashinie V. K. Diyabalanage

President MGCAANA 2009/2010

### "Sudeepa" The Safe Bottle Lamp Foundation Won the First Prize in 'The World Challenge - 09' Contest Run by BBC, Newsweek and Shell.

Thank you so much to all our members who voted on line for this project. Every vote was important to win the first prize! Chandrani Wimalasena Godakumbura wrote to MGCAANA: "My husband and I would like to say a BIG THANK YOU for voting and passing the message which helped us to get this WIN! So its a win for all of us! Each one who spread the message too deserve a BIG THANK YOU."

The Safe Bottle Lamp Project launched in 1992 is the brain child of a Sri Lankan Surgeon, Dr. Wijaya Godakumbura. He designed a simple safe lamp that could be easily mass produced at low cost using recycled glass, for free distribution. He is the husband of our own alumna Chandrani Wimalasena Godakumbura who graduated in late 1960s. Chandrani served as the President of the Mahamaya Old Girls' Association Colombo Branch two years ago.

Over 300,000 people die of burns globally every year, and 95% of these deaths, disabilities and disfigurements occur in developing countries. There was a crying need for a simple, inexpensive and quick solution.

It is an effective, inexpensive and a quick solution to a prob-

lem encountered in many developing countries. The WHO and UNICEF have stated that the use of this lamp "could prevent the many kerosene burns that occur around the world each year". The project has won Rolex, Lindbergh and Reader's Digest awards in the past. Congratulations to Dr. Godakumbura and the project team!

~ Sent by Sujatha Werake



For more information:  
[www.safebottlelamp.org](http://www.safebottlelamp.org).

Dr. Godakumbura at the safe  
bottle lamp factory  
Courtesy: Sunday Times, Sri  
Lanka

Only a man who knows what it is like to be defeated  
can reach down to the bottom of his soul and come  
up with the extra ounce of power it takes to win  
when the match is even.

~Muhammad Ali



2010

# Maya Puwath



We, the MGCAANA Newsletter Committee is proud to announce to all our dear readers that we will be publishing Maya Puwath with a new look in 2010. We will include a variety of features covering topics such as culture, religion, leisure, news from Sri Lanka etc. We give all our members across the USA and Canada an equal opportunity to voice your opinions through Maya Puwath, and therefore, you are more than welcome to send in your contributions to

our Newsletter. Another new feature you will see in our future newsletters is the Children's Corner. This column will consist of artwork, puzzles, poems, essays and Sinhala lessons for your children. Please feel free to send in your child's creations to our committee by contacting us at: [mahamaya\\_alumnae@yahoo.com](mailto:mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com).



## ~MGCAANA Scholarship ~

The MGCAANA scholarship is offered to two recipients who are pursuing undergraduate or graduate studies in the United States or Canada. The scholarship provides \$250-\$300 (depending on the availability of funds) which is intended to cover the cost of books for a semester. MGCAANA is proud to have given out two scholarships every year since the program was created in 2006. We would like to thank all the MGCAANA members who have renewed their membership for the current year which has enabled us to continue to support our alumnae and their education by providing the scholarships to two students who have demonstrated outstanding academic performance, leadership and participation in extra curricular activities.

## Poems for the cold and wet winter days...

### Pouring

Chilly are the evenings,  
winds pushing me sideways.  
Silvery water needles  
spraying at lashes,  
blurring my vision.  
Lips trembling, ears roaring—  
stray strands of hair  
whipping rose red cheeks.  
Palms buried deep within  
the warmth of pockets.  
Rivulets trickling down the face  
in intricate webbed patterns.  
Cashmere scarf flapping  
against an icy chin.  
Boot heels clicking,  
escaping the snarling menace  
of another autumn day

~Dulanjalee Seneviratne

### The Rain

I hear leaves drinking rain;  
I hear rich leaves on top  
Giving the poor beneath  
Drop after drop  
'Tis a sweet noise to hear  
These green leaves drinking near

And when the sun comes out.  
This rain shall stop  
A wondrous light will fill  
Each dark, round drop  
I hope the sun shines bright;  
'Twill be a lovely sight

~ William Henry Davies



### ගෙල වට බැන්දාවු - ප්‍රියා සූරියසේන



ගෙලවට බැන්දාවු මුතුපොටේ-දිස්නෙට මුහුනෙහි ඔප වැටේ  
ඔසරි නෙරියට නලල් තිලකෙට-බැන්ද සිත පෙම ආනන්දවේ

කෝකිල සංදේශ කවි පොතේ-ඔය වැනි උපමාද තව ඇතේ  
රුවැනි ලදකට තනිව මගතොට-යන්න නිදහස දැන් නෑ වගේ

සංකඩගලපුර පෝදා හඳ මෙනි-මේ මුතු මැණිකේලා  
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කාගේ කවුරුද ඉන්නේ කොතැනද-නෑ අප හඳුනන්නේ  
ආගන්තුක අපි ආවම කඳුරට- නැතුවද පිළිගන්නේ

## Criticism - By Viduranga Waisundara

There is too much of it, rather than too little. From my personal perspective, criticism is a disguised version of finding fault. One may call it constructive, but I call it prejudice. There may be genuine instances where comments would be stated for the benefit, betterment and development of another. However, if it is not coming from someone with unconditional love for one self, I would boldly refer to it as discrimination. I, for one, receive criticism every day – ‘advice’ or ‘facts’ they are called most of the time. There are no positive notes in these speeches which I receive on a daily basis. I let these vocalizations enter through one ear and pass out through the other without allowing any psychological alterations to take place (I could only thank my every other day dosages of meditation for the stability I receive to withstand these comments and not even flinch a single muscle). Why do we criticize one another? We always carry a yardstick with us against which we measure people. If at one point, our personal perception for happiness is 5 feet, we would demoralize those who are at a happiness factor of 7 feet till they reduce to a 5 – and we call this ‘constructive’ when it actually is destructive.

We always have a psychological textbook of how people or their lifestyles should look like. Anyone who does not seem to follow this textbook would be deemed as an outcast within our mindset when in reality, there is actually no right or wrong in life, there is only delusion.

I have noticed many a time that those who criticize i.e. find fault are those who ultimately suffer in life the most. Obviously! These inequities and biases are nothing but heavy burdens in the mind. There will be nowhere to escape if one finds fault with everything.

I have to admit, I may also be biased and prejudiced in giving this article a tinge of antagonism up till now. Thus, let me convert this negativity into something positive. After all, our lives are scarred with suffering. There is no escape from it, so might as well make the best of these downward moments.

So here is my two-cents worth... First and foremost, for those who are like me, who show that you earnestly listen to these hollow criticisms but do nothing about it, and maybe wonder afterwards what you have done to deserve an ear-load of empty words, think of it this way. We may get to deal with this person for maybe a few minutes or a few hours in our life. However, they have to live with their criticizing self the whole day and throughout their entire lifetime! As such, have pity on them. Treat them with sincere kindness. These criticizing agents are providing you with the perfect opportunity to develop some good karma from your end – mainly patience and positive endurance. Following Ajahn Brahm’s story on mosquitoes (for those who have not heard or read it before, you could refer to his book ‘Opening the Door of Your Heart’), call these people ‘Ajahn so-and-so’. They will teach you something about one thing or the other in life.

Do not let anyone control your happiness for you. We are all human, and our hearts may sink way down low after receiving a whole plethora of criticisms – especially if you do not deserve it. However, you cannot allow another person to enter into your mind and be its driver. Not only is this physically impossible, but it is psychologically unacceptable as well. This is one strategy which has the potential to be developed further into achieving ‘Samadhi’, or the stillness required to attain the higher order states of the mind. We must not let our happiness be leveraged on the unachievable as well. For instance, if we decide to be happy only on criticism-free days, we would never be happy throughout this entire samsara. In addition, we need to be mindful on what makes us happy. If shouting verbal abuse at someone who passes negative remarks each time they set sight on you is your idea of happiness, believe me, regardless of my statement that there is no right or wrong in life, this is not an enlightening method of dealing with the situation – if you ask me, leave it to the karma and the other orders of life to take care of such people!

As a concluding statement, let me quote the following from the Dhammapada: **‘Do not speak harshly to any one; those who are spoken to will answer thee in the same way. Angry speech is painful: blows for blows will touch thee’.**



## Complete Thripitaka Online

For many years, we were dreaming to see the Complete Thripitaka through the Internet. There can be seen different types of Translations and publications done by different schools, but not the Buddha Jayanthi Thripitaka Series. Now the day has come for us to download the Buddha Jayanthi Thripitaka Series through the net and the same can be downloaded **Free of Charge**.

**You can download some Audios from the following link:**

<http://www.aathaapi.com/>

<http://www.aathaapi.net/>

**Thripitaka Downloading in PDF version can be done through:**

<http://www.aathaapi.net/Thripitaka.html>

<http://www.aathaapi.com/Thripitaka.html>

~A heartfelt thank you to our member Priyadharshani Sandanayaka for sharing this message with us ~

## An Easy Holiday Recipe—Candy cane Marshmallows

Peppermint marshmallows are easy to make; they get their red swirl from a quick marbleizing technique. Follow our recipe, then package them in small cellophane bags to show off their good looks. Fold the top of each bag over once, and staple it shut. Use a small hole punch on either side of the staple. Thread a length of red twine through the holes, and knot it in front. Pull one end through a gift tag, and finish with a bow.

### Ingredients

Makes sixteen 2-inch squares

- Vegetable-oil cooking spray
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 tablespoon light corn syrup
- 4 packages (1/4 ounce each) unflavored gelatin
- 3/4 teaspoon peppermint extract
- 2 large egg whites
- 2 teaspoons red food coloring

### Directions

1. Coat an 8-inch square pan with cooking spray; line bottom with parchment paper. Coat the parchment with cooking spray, and set pan aside. Put sugar, corn syrup, and 3/4 cup water in a small saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring, until sugar is dissolved. Stop stirring; let mixture come to a boil. Raise heat to medium-high; cook until mixture registers 260 degrees on a candy thermometer.

2. Meanwhile, sprinkle gelatin over 3/4 cup water in a heatproof bowl; let stand 5 minutes to soften. Set the bowl with the gelatin mixture over a pan of simmering water; whisk constantly until gelatin is dissolved. Remove from heat, and stir in extract; set aside.

3. Beat egg whites in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the whisk attachment until stiff (but not dry) peaks form. Whisk gelatin mixture into sugar mixture; with mixer running, gradually add to egg whites. Mix on high speed until very thick, 12 to 15 minutes.

Pour mixture into lined pan. Working quickly, drop dots of red food coloring across surface of marshmallow. Using a toothpick, swirl food coloring into marshmallow

to create a marbled effect. Let marshmallow stand, uncovered, at room temperature until firm, at least 3 hours or overnight. Cut into squares.



~Source: Martha Stewart Living, December 2004

Do you have a special story, recipe, pictures or even a joke you would like to share? We would love to hear from you, please send your articles to:

**[mahamaya\\_alumnae@yahoo.com](mailto:mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com)**

**How to stay connected ...**

- [www.mahamayaalumnina.org](http://www.mahamayaalumnina.org)
- **MGCAANA on Facebook**

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*Readers: If you know of any job opportunities that are available, please forward the information to the Newsletter Committee ([mayaalumnae@yahoo.com](mailto:mayaalumnae@yahoo.com)). We can provide the information to our readers through Maya Puwath.*

### Job Opportunities:

#### Jackson School of International Studies, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Washington

The South Asia Center at the University of Washington, Seattle, with the support of the Department of Geography, invites applications for a Visiting Lecturer in South Asian Geography for Spring 2010 (March 16-June 15, 2010), contingent on budgetary approval. Candidates must have research and teaching experience related to contemporary issues in South Asian geography: economic development, environmental studies, urban politics, cultural studies, or gender studies; knowledge of a South Asian language, fluency in English, a completed PhD, and a record of peer-reviewed publications.

*We will accept applications immediately with review beginning on 1 December 2009 and continuing until the position is filled.*

Job description [[www.washington.edu](http://www.washington.edu)]

#### Post-Doctoral Fellowships in South Asian Studies

(Humanities and Social Sciences)

The South Asian Studies Council of The MacMillan Center, Yale University

The South Asian Studies Council (SASC) at the MacMillan Center invites applications for post-doctoral positions at Yale University for AY 2010-2011. The Council expects to make up to three (3) appointments with the possibility of a one-year renewal. *Review begins on January 5, 2010 and will continue until the selections are final.*

#### Language Coordinator

Department of African, Middle Eastern and South Asian Languages and Literatures, Rutgers University- New Brunswick

*Review of applications will begin on January 15, 2010.*

Full information [[www.amesall.rutgers.edu](http://www.amesall.rutgers.edu)]

#### Post-Doctoral Fellow, South Asian Studies

T.T. and Wei Fong Chao Center for Asian Studies, Rice University

*Postmark deadline for applications is Friday, January 15, 2010.*

Full information [[cohesion.rice.edu](http://cohesion.rice.edu)]

#### Assistant Professor of South Asian History

Department of History, University of Cincinnati

*Position open until filled.*

Full information [[www.jobsatuc.com](http://www.jobsatuc.com)]

#### Tenure Track Appointment in South Asian History

Department of History, Salem State College

*Position is open until filled.*

Full information [[jobs.salemstate.edu](http://jobs.salemstate.edu)]

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