



Dhammapada:

“Believe nothing. No Matter where you have read it, or who said it, even if I have said it, unless it agrees with your own common sense.”

“Our life is shaped by our mind; we become what we think. Suffering follows an evil thought as the wheels of a cart follow the oxen that draws it. Our life is shaped by our mind; we become what we think. Joy follows a pure thought like a shadow that never leaves.”

“Those who have failed to work toward the truth have missed the purpose of living. “

~ Buddha



~~~ ANNE FRANK ~~~

*“In spite of everything I still believe that people are really good at heart. I simply can't build up my hopes on a foundation consisting of confusion, misery and death”.*

~~~~~

“Parents can only give good advice or put them on the right paths, but the final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands”.

“Have a heart that never hardens, and a temper that never tires, and a touch that never hurts”.

~~~~~

*“Happy, happy Christmas, that can win us back to the delusions of our childhood days, recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth, and transport the traveler back to his own fireside and quiet home!”*

~~~CHARLES DICKENS~~~



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Dear Readers,

This is the last Maya Puwath issue for year 2010. We hope that we have succeeded in bringing you the important happenings of MGCAANA and helped you to stay and feel connected. We are hope that we will be able reach more of you & get you more involved in the process of the making of Maya Puwath next year.

As we approach the end of the year, most of us will have a moment of reminiscence of all that we have achieved. We hope all your achievements, big or small, have given you a sense of pride and a moments of accomplishment. But there are those moments when we feel that the year went by too fast & we could not accomplish all that we set out to do. So we lament over the lack of time, and curse the tough or rough rout that we had, to the smallest achievement in our life. We beat ourselves over small issues that seem very important until we look a little further and see, really see the problems of other people . This not to say that our problems are irrelevant or of lesser importance. But it is to remind us of all that we have, that we should be grateful for. A roof over our heads, a warm meal everyday and people who love & care about us. In our race for a better life we forget our blessings, the everyday comfort that we take for granted. A home, a car, ability to buy any food we wish and most importantly our friends & family. So as we end another year let us be thankful for all that we have along with all that we achieved.

We at the MGCAANA are trying our best to give a better future to some financially challenged children in our Alma mater, to achieve their highest potential by giving them some financial help. We hope that in the new year many of you will give generously towards this noble cause.

For the new year MGCAANA is hoping to organize some fund raising activities. Due to the fact that most of our members are spread out in different parts of the American continent, we are trying to come up with innovative ways to fundraising. The usual car wash would not work as there are very few members to be found in one town to make such activities work. We look forward to joining every one of you participate in these fundraising activities and help meet MGCAANA's goals for the year 2011.

Finally, we would like to thank each & every MGCAANA member for their support during this past year. None of our goals would have been achieved without everyone's support. We hope we can count on your continued support.

Wishing you all a merry Christmas and a very happy and prosperous new year!!!!!!

The Editorial Committee.



ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTICES

Mahamaya Girls' College
Alumnae Association of North America
2010-2011 Undergraduate & Graduate Scholarship Program

This scholarship is intended to provide cost of books and material for a single semester for Mahamaya Girls' College alumnae pursuing **undergraduate** or **graduate** studies in the United States and Canada.

The scholarship award may range from \$250.00 to \$300.00, depending on the availability of funds.

The scholarship will be awarded to (a) student(s) demonstrating outstanding academic achievements, leadership ability, participation in extracurricular activities, and a significant level of financial need.

Relatives of the Board of Directors and Officers of MGCAANA *are* eligible to apply, if they qualify otherwise.

APPLICATION PERIOD AND DEADLINE:

September 15, 2010 – January 30, 2011

Applications postmarked after the deadline will not be accepted.

AWARD NOTIFICATION:

On or before February 15, 2011

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

Please visit our website at <http://www.mahamayaalumna.org> to view and download the scholarship application*.

Be sure to read the 'Directions and Requirements' carefully before completing the application.

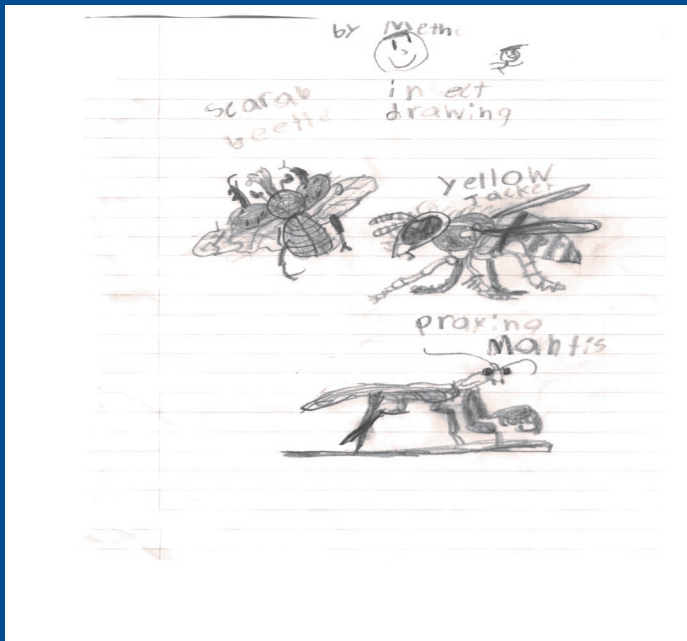
If you have any questions about the MGCAANA Undergraduate & Graduate Scholarship Program, please contact the Scholarship Selection Committee at Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

**All application information is for selection purposes only and will be strictly confidential.*

Thank you very much for your interest in the Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America Undergraduate & Graduate Scholarship Program, and we look forward to reading your completed application.

Charity begins at home, and justice begins next door.

~~~ Charles Dickens~~~



Meth aged 8 & Iru aged 6 are children of Jeeva & Chathuri Munasingha of Maryland, USA .



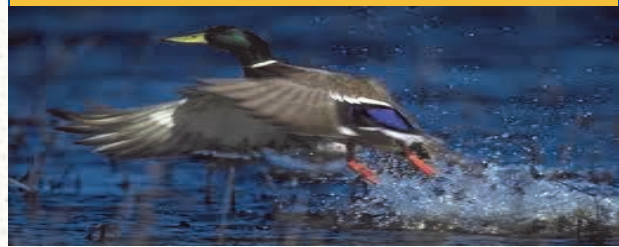
Poetry for Children

**Goosey goosey gander where shall
I wander,
Upstairs, downstairs and in my
lady's chamber
There I met an old man who
wouldn't say his prayers,
I took him by the left leg and
threw him down the stairs.**

Mage podi thara

(Sinhala)

**Mage podi thara – Pip Pip gewa
Hota rathu patai – anga sudu patai
Ara ara pena – seethala pokune
Ath thatu salamin – peena peena newa**



New Year's Message from the President of MGCAANA

As we approach the end of another year, it's wonderful to look back and see how far we have come. I hope that all of you had a year filled with countless blessings, love and joy. On behalf of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee of MGCAANA, I would like to every one of you and your families a happy and prosperous new year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank every one of you for being part of MGCAANA and for supporting us. Without your support, MGCAANA will not persist. I would also like to thank the family members of all our members who have encouraged us and supported our cause. My heartfelt thanks to the advisors of MGCAANA, who have guided and given their unwavering support to the organization.

Most of us reached milestones or had a family member reach important milestones. No matter what happened during the year, I hope we can look at the year gone by and learn from our experiences and be strong as we face a new year. MGCAANA has continued to raise funds for the Vidya Trust Fund this year. This is by far the biggest project that MGCAANA has undertaken so far. It's not been an easy task, but the endowment committee members have continued their hard work and with the help of the Board of Trustees in Sri Lanka we have invested \$ 8,0000 .Therefore we can begin distributing some scholarships in 2011.

As we look back at the year we have traversed, I hope you all count your blessings and give thanks to all that you have in your life. At the same time, I hope you take a few minutes to help an economically disadvantaged Mayan studying in Sri Lanka and donate to the Vidya Trust Fund. Together, we can make a child's dream of a better future come true.

At the close of year 2010, I urge you to be a more active member in MGCAANA. I hope you take time to serve in the many committees of MGCAANA . I hope you will take time to send in an article to the newsletter and most of all, I hope you strengthen your existing relationships with fellow Mayans and build new connections to help and grow as individuals and as an organization.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee, I wish you and your family a wonderful 2011!

Pamuditha Mahadiulwewa

**A message from
Mrs. Pilapitiya**



**I must say well done and congratulations.
Though you are all living far and wide in America
your solidarity and togetherness as Mayans is re-
markable. So much has been achieved during this
short period though your planning and implement-
ing is through remote control .**

**I believe that you will all agree with me
when I mention Sujatha Werake as the pivotal
head who holds you all together. I understand that
you are very busy people and time is the biggest
constraint.. But keep the Mahamaya Flag flying
high .**

**The future and success of the Association is in the
hands of you young people'.**

**My sincere good wishes to a great future
of MGCAANA and to you dear children for all suc-
cess in life.**

May The Noble Triple Gem Bless You.

Mrs. N. K. Pilapitiya



**Slander cannot destroy an honest man - when the flood recedes the rock is there.
Chinese Proverbs**

The Visit of Mrs. N.K. Pilapitiya, the Principal of Mahamaya, 1981-1990

As most of you personally know this great human being, needs no special introduction. She was one of the greatest principals in the history of Mahamaya who brought the school to unprecedented heights in all spheres. Later she served as the Principal of Musaeus College, Colombo, for another 14 years until she retired at the age of 75 in 2008. What a great life!

Mrs. Pilapitiya was visiting her daughter and her family in Cincinnati, Ohio, in September this year. First, the Musaeus alumnae invited her to California for two weeks. She had a great time doing site-seeing and visiting her past pupils. Then, on behalf of MGCAANA we wanted to welcome her to the Northwest. Seeing her again was indeed a rare privilege and honor. Harshi Waters quickly went online and bought a ticket for her. We knew the national parks were to close on the 30th of October for winter season. After that everything went as planned.

Friday, Oct. 29th:

She reached Seattle-Tacoma Airport around 12:30. I picked her up from the airport, Priyanka Jayakody and her mother Vishaka were waiting at our house to receive her. We had lunch together at my house and all four of us left to see the Boeing Plant in Everett, Washington (40 miles north? of Seattle) By the time we reached it was 3:10 and the last bus had left for the Plant and we could not do the tour that day. Then Priyanka and I decided to take her to the Space Needle. It is a tower, the symbol/landmark of Seattle. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Space_Needle It is 605 ft tall. has a circular observation deck, a rotating restaurant, From the top of the Needle, one can see not only the Downtown Seattle sky-line, but also the Olympic Mountains and Cascade Mountains, Mount Rainier, Mount Baker, Elliott Bay and the Puget Sound with surrounding islands. Weather was not too bad. Mrs. Pilapitiya brought the sunshine with her. So we were able to see the surrounding area. We did some sightseeing on our way home.

Devi and her husband Gamini invited Mrs. Pilapitiya and us for dinner at their house. Priyanka, her husband Primus, and Priyanka's mother Vishaka joined the dinner as well. Little Vishaka, (Devi's daughter) was there too. Mrs. Pilapitiya enjoyed seeing her own past pupils grown into wives and mothers. After a nice evening at Devi's we came home and she had a restful night after that 5 hour flight from Cincinnati in the morning.



Saturday, Oct. 30th:

It was a rainy day, with some sunbreaks. Harshi and I knew that the national parks were to close on the 31st of October. and will remain closed through the winter. So, 30th was the day for Mt. St. Helens, 96 miles south of Seattle, Washington, and 50 miles north of Portland, Oregon. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mount_St_Helens. Elevation: 8,365 ft. Mount St. Helens is an active volcano as most of you know which erupted in 1980. In May,1980 shaken by an earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale, the north face of this tall symmetrical mountain collapsed in a massive rock debris avalanche. Nearly 230 square miles of forest was blown down or buried beneath volcanic deposits. At the same time a mushroom-shaped column of ash rose thousands of feet skyward and drifted downwind, turning day into night as dark, gray ash fell over eastern Washington and beyond. The eruption lasted 9 hours, but Mount St. Helens and the surrounding landscape were dramatically changed within moments. Few people died. It has an exciting recent history to it. As a geography major, she loved every moment of it.

We drove up to Johnston Ridge Observatory, which is the closest to the crater. It was opened but area was windy and cold, and rainy. We saw the 2/3 of the mountain. The crater was covered with fog. The fog was rising and blowing through the mountain ranges. Snow had fallen the previous night. We crossed the majestic Columbia River to get to Portland. I am glad we took her there. Then we drove to Harshi's beautiful house sitting on a westword ridge in Portland. She and her husband Curt and baby Tarika were waiting for us. Dinner was ready. It was a joyful moment for both parties. We had dinner with them. The beds were ready for us to spend the night, but we had to leave Portland that night as we had to head to Eastern Washington the next morning. Mrs. Pilapitiya was so happy to see them, so were we. Tarika was warming up to have a great conversation with us when we left. Came home around 10:00.

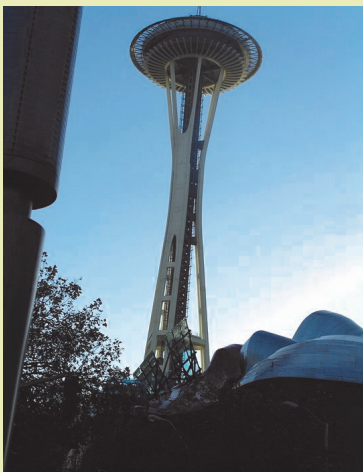


Sunday, Oct. 31st

Our destination was Eastern Washington's Vantage, where the Ginkgo Petrified Forest State Park is. It is 136 miles from Seattle on Route I-90. This is one of the famous fossil forests in the world. There are more than 50 species petrified at the site, ginkgo, sweet gum, douglas fur, maple, walnut, to name a few. See: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ginkgo/Wanapum_State_Park These trees were living 15 million years ago. Now you find them as rock. It is a very interesting story of the earth. Mrs. Pilapitiya LOVED this experience. The museum center over there had great samples and we walked to the real forest to see the real petrified trees that are exposed from underground. The area is composed of basaltic rock.

On our way, we saw "Wind Farms"(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wild_Horse_Wind_Farm). We stopped by one called Wild Horse Wind Farm. The turbines are placed on the high open ridge tops of Whiskey Dick Mountain, which was chosen for its energetic wind. The turbines can produce electricity with wind speeds as low as 9 mph. (Why don't we use this in SL???)

From Seattle we drove across Cascade Mountain range and experienced the difference between the wet Seattle and the arid Eastern Washington behind the mountains with almost no trees except greyish green color shrubs, and farms. Bought some fruits and vegetables from stalls. We visited the spectacular Snoqualmie Water Falls in North Cascades on our way. Then we came to Priyanka's house for a wonderful dinner around 8:30 pm. Devi's family was there as well. Mrs. Pilapitiya got to see Priyanka's younger daughter, Imanthi.



Space Needle, Seattle



Boeing



So often we dwell on the things that seem impossible rather than on the things that are possible. So often we are depressed by what remains to be done and forget to be thankful for all that has been done.

Monday, Nov. 1:

We could not resist visiting Boeing Plant in Everett again where air crafts are in production. What a magnificent place that is! That place lifts you up as a human being, when you see how creative the humans can be. We toured this factory where Boeing makes 747s, 767s, and 777s, 787 the Dreamliner and saw airplanes in various stages of production, flight test and manufacture. The building is an enormous airplane assembly building that can accommodate 75 football fields. In Guinness Book of World Records, this is the largest building in the world. She was happy to see this place.

After that we took the Ferry from Mukilteo (very close to Boeing Factory) to Clinton Terminal in Whidbey Island in the Puget Sound, which was a short ride. You just drive into the ferry, go up to the deck and look outside. Then we drove on the Whidbey Island on Route 525 just to get an idea about the area. We returned to the ferry and drove around the University of Washington Campus, and back home after dark. Ferry ride was a new experience for her and she enjoyed that too.

Had dinner and went to bed a little early.

Tues. Nov. 2:

We had to be at the airport at 10:30 am. After breakfast, we drove to see the Microsoft Campus in Redmond. And then we headed to the airport. There we saw lots of geeks walking to their offices in the morning in the Microsoft Headquarters.

During her visit, she also saw, Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates' house, [Amazon.com](#)'s headquarters, from the distance, drove around the University of Washington Campus, saw my office and the library where I work, sat in my office to take a picture. We had long chats during her stay. We had a lot of catching up to do. My husband and I shared the joy of spending some quality time with her.

We were on time at the airport. Within four days we did a lot of traveling and site-seeing. Everything went smoothly. We said our good-byes and Mrs. Pilapitiya's plane left Seattle around 12:20 pm. It was difficult to watch her leave. She is part of my family.

When she was close to leaving Seattle, she said that she will plan her next trip to US to attend our MGCAANA's Annual General Meeting in July. I was so glad to hear that. We hope to see her in July.

By Sujatha Werake



Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.

~~~~ T.S. Eliot~~~~

All pictures courtesy of [www.google.ca/pic](#)

After a long spell of silence I thought I will pen a few lines-

Since my last write up, I have returned to full time work, been in multiple car accidents, been to Sri Lanka and back, been sick with nothing in particular but generally not very healthy with iron and vitamin D deficiencies and sinus infections and a plethora of other ailments.

The kids are progressing in school and their vocabularies have increased nine fold. Meth has calmed down, become quieter, serious yet thoughtful, sensitive but absent. He has a good sense of humor and a liking for good food. When I pick him up usually he is already planning his menu for the night. I am trying to give him what we have as I want to teach him that he won't get everything he wants in life.

Little miss Iru has blossomed into a vibrant, energetic, even more verbose than before, determined, street smart, "pretty conscious" lass who still continues to love pink and has a "possession" in every single room of the house.

The personalities of the two are as far apart as chalk and cheese. It is indeed a wonder that the same parents could produce off spring so vastly different. Then again, that was something my mother mused about often given the very different natures of me and my sister. Déjà vu moment indeed. In the midst of all these things daddy dear is ever so busy with research and homework and karate and cooking wonderful meals for the kids as there are days that I cannot hold it all together and I wouldn't be able to hold it together if not for him. I hope all those who had doubts about how long my marriage would last owing to my lack of culinary and housekeeping skills, please sigh a sigh of relief! We just celebrated 10 years of wedded bliss! Life has not always been a bed of roses, but no one promised it would be so. We have overcome many hurdles and tides, but together we have made it work!

Anyway, some of the "funny" things that have happened in the past years have been that we have received notes from Meth's teacher saying that she would like to see more assistance to him from home. As parents we were perplexed. We have somehow, made him finish his homework every single day. Some days it has not been easy, but still we have made it. And then to be given this note was mind boggling to say the least. Then many weeks later when we were looking for something we may have accidentally thrown away in the recycling bin, we found Meth's home work. So now when I pick him up I confiscate his bag, tell him NOT to open it till we get to the family room, because I know better now as to what happened to the homework.

Iru has self assigned the role of "Mom" for Meth. She makes sure he has his jacket, gloves, home work with him when he leaves the house. Meth occasionally teases her but she is able to hold her own very well. I feel bad for Meth often as he doesn't only have a Mom but also a sister who "hen pecks" him often- albeit with the best of intentions. Once hearing her telling something in a very authoritarian voice I told her to stop it because it made it sound as if she were a bully. Pat came the response" Amma, I am not a bully, I am aS VICTIM". She also said that it is not good to be "Body Stander" (I am sure she meant by stander). I wasn't quite sure where to take the conversation from there onwards, bemused beyond words, I made a hasty retreat till I could think things through to respond! Last evening Iru told me that I need to keep Meth on a leash! Now she is into giving parenting advice, all from experience she has garnered I am sure at the ripe old age of 6!

With that I will leave you, hope you have a happy holiday season and a wonderful 2011

Chathuri Nugawela-Munasinghe

Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund – Our Progress So Far

Today, I write to inform you of the progress we have made so far. It took nearly three and a half years of hard work and dedication to complete the task of setting up the trust fund. The President, Dr. Samanmala Dorabawila, and the Treasurer, Mrs. Nilakshi Weragama, along with the rest of the members of the Board of Trustees and the MGCAANA Endowment Committee, worked diligently on finding the best investment option for the trust fund. Mrs. Visakha Wickremaratne, the Secretary, keeps records of all our meetings and discussions with utmost care. Thanks to our generous donors, we have already sent US \$8000.00 to be invested in Bank of Ceylon, Sri Lanka. From the interest incurred, we are planning to award scholarships to economically-disadvantaged, yet intelligent and hard-working, students at Mahamaya Girls' College starting January 2011. Mrs. Indrani Karaluwinne, the Assistant Secretary, has done a beautiful job translating the scholarship application created by the Endowment Committee into Sinhala. With the help of Mrs. Uthpala Seneviratne, the Vice President, as well as the class teachers at Mahamaya, we will be distributing the scholarship application to eligible students in the near future. Mrs. Sujatha Werake and I, Dharshani Nanayakkara, also members of the Board of Trustees, serve as liaisons of MGCAANA to the trust – we ensure clear communication between MGCAANA and the Board of Trustees. We will make every attempt to choose deserving candidates in a fair and transparent manner. We look forward to announcing the first batch of scholarship recipients in an upcoming issue of *Maya Puwath*.

While we celebrate this accomplishment of starting the trust fund in Sri Lanka, we need your generous help to continue this project. Our goal is to collect an amount of US \$20,000.00, and we still have a long way to go. Please spread the word among your family and friends. If you need copies of the brochure, please let us know, and we will be happy to mail you some. An electronic copy of the brochure is also available at [www.mahamayaalumnina.org/VidyaTrustFund/MGCAANA\\_Vidya\\_Scholarship\\_Trust\\_Fund\\_Brochure.pdf](#). All contributions are tax deductible in the U.S., and we will send a receipt acknowledging your donation. Hundred percent of your donation goes to the cause as all of us working for the trust fund are volunteers. This is indeed a cause worthy of your support, a cause, in the long run, that will empower the women in Sri Lanka with education so that the hand that rocks the cradle will be a well-educated and balanced one.

We would love to hear your ideas about how to improve our project, so please write to us at [Mahamaya\\_alumae@yahoo.com](#). Thank you so much for all your support and encouragement.

With best regards,  
Dharshani Nanayakkara  
Co-Chair, Endowment Committee  
Trustee, Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund

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