



Dhammapada:

*From endearment grief is born,
from endearment fear,
one who is endearment-free
has no grief - how fear?*

*From affection grief is born,
from affection fear,
one who is affection-free
has no grief - how fear?*

*From lustfulness arises grief,
from lustfulness springs fear,
one wholly free of lustfulness
has no grief - how fear?*
~ Buddha



"An ounce of practice is worth more than tons of preaching."

~~Mohandas Gandhi~~

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*"You can't cross the sea merely by standing and staring at the water."*

~~Rabindranath Tagore~~

*I have become my own version of an optimist. If I can't make it through one door, I'll go through another door - or I'll make a door. Something terrific will come no matter how dark the present.*

~~Rabindranath Tagore~~



Dear Readers,

*It seems like not too long ago we welcomed a new year, and a few weeks back we celebrated yet another new year with the dawn of the Sinhala Aluth Avurudu. And like most of you, I can't believe it's already the end of April. MGCAANA is wrapping up the year, and this marks another landmark for MGCAANA; an AGM in the new year for MGCAANA and all of us Mayans in the United States and Canada.*

*This year's AGM will be extremely special with the presence of our honored guest Madam Principal Mrs.N.K.Pilapitiya . She will be making a very special trip to attend our annual general meeting in Charleston South Carolina on July 2nd, 2011. The office bearers and members of the Board of Directors are cordially inviting all Mayans to attend this very special AGM. Every year, the AGM takes place in a different city to attract new members and to reach out to a different group of Mayans in a different geographical area. This year's AGM is going back east and we are hoping all members in nearby states such as Georgia, North Carolina, Florida, Maryland, and Mississippi will attend. You get the opportunity to meet fellow Mayans and mingle with our former Principal Mrs.Pilapitiya , who has devoted years of her life for the betterment of Mahamaya Collage.*

*The dawn of a New Year means, we are looking for new members to take on Board positions and serve as committee member's in MGCAANA. It is a great way to make a difference and put your ideas to work for MGCAANA. Taking up positions in MGCAANA committees is a rewarding way to do some charity work for your alma-mater. It is also a great way to connect with all our MGCAANA members. Please let us know if you would like to join MGCAANA's Board of Directors or if you have any recommendations.*

*As always, we would love to hear from our readers about ideas and ways to improve our organization and the newsletter. No idea is too small for us and we welcome your feedback.*

*Without further delay let me welcome you to flip through the pages of our April issue which is filled with information about the upcoming AGM and the special attendance of Mrs. Pilapitiya.*

*Happy reading from the editorial committee!*



## In This Issue :

Page 1 : Editorial

Page 2 : Announcements

Page 3 : Sinhala song & Trivia

Page 4 : Special Message

Page 5-7 : Editor's Picks

Page 6 : Scholarship Updates



## ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTICES



### You are invited to the 7th Annual General Meeting of MGCAANA Please Save the Date

**When** : Saturday, July 2nd, 2011 from 1.00 pm – 5.00 pm

**Where** : The Hampton Inn, 160 Fairchild Street, Charleston, SC 29492

**Chief Guest** : Mrs.N.K.Pilapitiya (former Principal)

**Who are invited** : All Mayans, their families, honorary members, and well wishers.

**Hosts** : **Ravi and Erandi Suriyaarachchi**

The meeting will be followed by a dinner starting at 7:30 pm at the residence of Ravi and Erandi Suriyaarachchi in Charleston, South Carolina.

We will distribute a map and directions to their residence at the AGM.

Please book your air/train/bus tickets early and make plans for this great annual event.

It will be lots of fun!!

If you have any questions please email us at: [Mahamaya\\_alumnae@yahoo.com](mailto:Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com)

We hope to see you and your families at our 7th Annual General Meeting in Charleston, on July 2nd, 2011.

Stay tuned ...we will be mailing out the official AGM invitations, agenda, & ballot information about electing your 2011/12 Board members soon.

### More information about getting to Charleston, South Carolina .

#### Airport:

5500 International Boulevard, Charleston, SC (843) 767-7010 (Use airport code CHS to search for flights).

#### Where to stay:

Hampton Inn, 160 Fairchild Street, Charleston, SC 29492.

(this is the closest and will be the most convenient since the AGM will be held here)

*Note : We can arrange for MGCAANA members to get a group rate if at least 10 rooms are booked. Please let us know if you and your family are hoping to stay at the Hampton Inn so we can receive a discounted rate.*

Enjoy the Independence Day Weekend in Charleston, South Carolina. Here are some suggested activities for you and your family:

**Patriot's Point:** Take a look at the USS Yorktown (CV-10), one of the 24 Essex-class aircraft carriers built during WWII. This has now become the main attraction at the Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum. If you are staying on till Monday, July 4<sup>th</sup> don't miss the spectacular fireworks display at Patriot's Point.



For more information visit:  
[http://www.patriotspoint.org/visitor/visitors\\_guide/](http://www.patriotspoint.org/visitor/visitors_guide/)

**Historic Charleston Downtown:** the well preserved districts in the down town area give you a glimpse of U.S. and Southern history.

Take a stroll downtown to visit the oldest museum in the U.S. which was build in 1773.

**Plantations:** Pick your favorite, or simply visit both:

**Boone Hall Plantation:** Walk through beautiful gardens and visit one of the most famous plantation houses. For more information, and to plan your trip call 843.884.4371 or visit [www.boonehallplantation.com](http://www.boonehallplantation.com)

**Magnolia Plantation:** Originally built by the Drayton family in 1938 and handed over to the national trust, this is a beautiful masterpiece of Georgian architecture.

To learn more: visit [www.draytonhall.org/](http://www.draytonhall.org/)

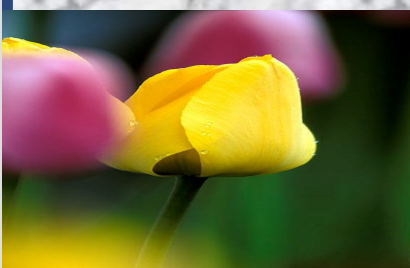


**Beaches:** Charleston is famous for its beautiful beaches. Whether you are interested in relaxing, swimming or watching dolphins, you can spend your weekend enjoying the warm sun and the beautiful beaches. Select from a variety of beaches: Folly beach, Island Palms and Sullivan's Beach.

**Fort Sumpter:** This is where the Civil War began in 1861. A great tour for the entire family, especially for the kids. Learn about the start of the civil war and enjoy the magnificent views of the Charleston harbor.

*A 'No' uttered from the deepest conviction is better than a 'Yes' merely uttered to please, or worse, to avoid trouble.*

~~Mohandas Gandhi~~





Dear Mayans,

We are planning on gifting our esteemed guest, Mrs.Pilapitiya with a collection of articles written by Mayans. It could be a memory of your school days, a poem ,some photos or even a funny joke you remember sharing with your class friends. Looking back most of us can laugh at the many assembly meetings that we had to attend and how the strict dress code was a major problem for some of us who had more fashionable hair styles!!

Please feel free to send in your special memories of when you were at school .If we get sufficient articles we could get it printed & bound in a beautiful cover which we could present it to Mrs.Pilapitiya.

We have it on good authority that this is a gift that Mrs.Pilapitya would really treasure.

Please submit your articles by June 15th 2011 at :  
[Mahamaya\\_alumnae@yahoo.com](mailto:Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com)

Thank you .

Maya Puwath Editorial Committee.

Anduru Kutiya Thula - T.M Jayarathna

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[www.SiYaLLa.com](http://www.SiYaLLa.com)

Vocals : T.M. Jayaratna  
Music : Premasiri Kemadasa  
Design by rose\_garden



1. What does "SPF" mean on sun-screen containers?
2. Who did Colonel Gaddafi succeed in 1969?
3. Who wrote East Of Eden?

4. Which American married a former King of England?

5. Who created Bugs Bunny?

6. What is the largest river in the world in terms of volume of water?

7. In British tradition, this herb is placed on the graves of English heroes.

8. Who is considered to be the founder of Scientology?

9. Many cricketers have superstitions. Australians tend to be wary of the number 87 because it is 13 short of 100. English cricketers are more suspicious of the number 111. What is this number known as?

10. Who was the first African-American to win an Academy Award?

Sent in by Himashinie Diyabalanage



The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence.

~~Rabindranath Tagore~~



## *A Dear Principal 's upcoming visit*



Dear Alumnae of Mahamaya,

This is a special request to every Mayan in the US and Canada:

I would like to draw your kind attention to a very special visit to USA of our former Principal (1981-1990) Mrs. N. K. Pilapitiya who will be visiting Charleston, South Carolina, to attend our MGCAANA Annual General Meeting on Saturday, July 2, 2011.

She will be making this long journey from Sri Lanka to meet the Mayans in North America with so much enthusiasm, to experience the joy of seeing them as adults who are living successful lives. This is something similar to a mother who worked so hard to bring up her children and then looking forward to see them as adults. Let us as Mayans who have reaped the fruits of her labor welcome her with warmth and gratitude. As we all know, at her age (78 years) it is not an easy task to travel so far. However, her strength to travel comes from the unconditional love that she has for you, and the great need to see you.

Quite a number of you studied at Mahamaya during her time that she served as the Principal. There is no doubt that the students who came after her period were also benefited by her contributions to the school. The programs she introduced, the standards she set up, the buildings she added (the Auditorium, the three-story Science Block, Home Science Building, the three story library building and a new building in the Primary Section) and the extra-curricular activities she introduced (swimming, chess, gymnastics, cadetting, table tennis, writers' group, cadet band, etc.) would have been part of your student life. Her work paved the way to produce national swimmer Nilmini Wickremeratne Dorabawila, national Table Tennis player Deepika Rodrigo who represented Sri Lanka in international events, and hundreds of productive professionals who serve all over the world today. During her time, Mahamaya was upgraded to a "National School" which is the highest level in government secondary schools in the island.

Therefore, we would like to give her a memorable welcome and invite you to participate in this special event by:

1. Attending the AGM and celebrating her visit
2. Giving a call to her during her stay in USA. It brings her joy to receive calls from her former students. Last time when she was in USA, some students called her and she was overjoyed to hear from them. To get a telephone number to call her please email: [frontrunners4@yahoo.com](mailto:frontrunners4@yahoo.com) or call 425-228-0988.
3. Send us any suggestions that you might have in celebrating her visit during her stay and make it a memorable visit for her.
4. If you would like to contribute to a gift for her, you may send your contribution to: Treasurer, MGCAANA, 2417 NE 20th Street, Renton, WA 98056, USA. We will include your name in the special welcome note that will be included with the gift card.

For those who might not be able to attend: We will try to add the video recording of the AGM to our website so that we can share her visit with you at least through a video.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

By Sujatha Werake



*He who is too busy doing good finds no time to be good.*

*~~Rabindranath Tagore~~*

All picture are courtesy of Google images

AISLS: 2011 Sri Lanka dissertation planning grants competition:

The American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies announces the continuation of its dissertation planning grants competition. AISLS dissertation planning grants are designed to enable graduate students to make a pre-dissertation visit to Sri Lanka to investigate the feasibility of their topic, to sharpen their research design, or to make other practical arrangements for future research. Applicants will normally be enrolled in a PhD program (or equivalent) in a US university. There are no citizenship requirements, but some of the funds available for this program may only be spent on awards for US citizens. The competition is funded in part by a grant from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, US Department of State.

Applicants should have completed most of their graduate coursework by the time they take up their grant. The grant is especially intended for students who are in the process of completing their dissertation proposals and preparing applications for funds to support their dissertation research, but other purposes may be proposed. Applicants should normally plan to spend at least six weeks in Sri Lanka.

For complete details, including application materials, please go to <http://www.aisls.org/diss-plan.html>  
The application deadline is 1 December 2011.

Japanese scholarships for Lankans

The Japanese government, will award scholarships to Sri Lankan students under the Monbukagakusho (MEXT) scholarship scheme 2012, in the categories of Postgraduate Research, Undergraduate and College of Technology. The closing date for applications to the Ministry of Higher Education is May 6, 2011. Selection of candidates will be done through an examination conducted jointly by the Japanese Embassy and the Ministry of Higher Education.

Prospective candidates could forward their applications to the Ministry of Higher Education, No. 18, Ward Place, Colombo 7, according to the specimen application format published by the Ministry. Application forms downloaded directly from the website of the government of Japan will not be accepted for the preliminary processing. Undergraduate and College of Technology applicants should apply for one scheme only (either Undergraduate or College of Technology).

Further information regarding this scholarship could be obtained on <http://www.mohe.gov.lk/>

For past papers of the qualifying examination  
<http://www.studyjapan.go.jp/en/toj/tojo0308e.html>  
For more information please contact Cultural Section on telephone 2693831-3 (ext 266).

Would you like to serve MGCAANA?

We are looking for Mayans to volunteer for the 2011/12 year. If you would like to serve MGCAANA in the next year, please let us know. We are looking for candidates to serve as officers and board members for our 8th year.

Serving on the board is a rewarding and exciting way to serve your alma mater.

Please write to us at :  
[mahamya\\_alumnae@yahoo.com](mailto:mahamya_alumnae@yahoo.com)  
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- Answers:
- 1. Sun Protection factor
  - 2. King Idris of Libya
  - 3. John Steinbeck
  - 4. Wallis Warfield Simpson
  - 5. Tex Avery (Frederick Bean Avery)
  - 6. Amazon
  - 7. Rosemary
  - 8. L. Ron Hubbard
  - 9. Nelson
  - 10. Hattie McDaniel (She won the award for Best Supporting Actress for her role of ‘Mammy’ in Gone with the Wind in 1939)

FUNDRAISING RAFFLE DRAW

Dear Members,

In order to raise much needed funds to continue our projects and the Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund, we are having a raffle draw.

In the next few weeks, a member of the Board of Directors will be contacting you. We hope you open your hearts and offer to purchase as many raffle tickets as possible and become eligible to win GREAT prizes.

- 1st Prize: 8G iPod Nano
- 2nd Prize: GPS Navigation System
- 3rd Prize: Blown glass vase
- Other prizes include a \$50 Visa gift card and batiks

Draw:  
All prizes will be drawn by  
our special guest Mrs. N.K. Pilapitiya  
At the AGM, in Charleston, SC  
All winners will be notified.  
Each ticket \$2  
~~~~~



All picture are courtesy of Google images

Those who own much have much to fear.

~~ Rabindranath Tagore ~~



Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America

Congratulations to our 2010-2011 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 finalist from this most qualified applicant pool. Our goal is to motivate our student members to shine academically as well as personally, so we truly hope that you will take advantage of this wonderful opportunity in the years to come. For your convenience, we have also made the scholarship application available online. As always, if there is anything that we can do to help you, please let us know.

We are extremely proud to announce our 2010-2011 MGCAANA Scholars – **Samanthi Prasangika Kumari Abeyrathne** and **Lahiru Koshalika Narangammana**. Each winner received a **\$250.00** scholarship.

Samanthi Abeyrathne is a senior undergraduate student majoring in chemistry at the Georgia College and State University (GCSU). After successfully completing the G.C.E. Advanced Level Examination in science at Mahamaya in 2004, she got accepted to study agriculture at the Wayamba University. She later decided to come to the U.S. for higher education and entered the Lake Forest College in Illinois. At Mahamaya, she received a Special Progress Certificate for continuously maintaining excellent grades. At the GCSU, she was awarded a four-year research stipend from the Department of Chemistry and Physics. Samanthi is an active member of the International Club at the GCSU and has represented Sri Lanka on several occasions. She is a member of the Catalyst Network, a club for underrepresented minorities in science. She has also participated in many events organized by ANGELS (AIDS Now Grips Every Living Soul), such as the World's AIDS Day and AIDS Awareness Week. Through the YES (Youth Enrichment Services) Program, Samanthi tutors school children. She has also spent time rehabilitating homes damaged by tropical storms and hurricanes in New Orleans and Mississippi through the American Democracy Project at GCSU. She has also worked part-time as a Computer Lab Assistant at the Lake Forest College and GCSU. Upon completing her studies, Samanthi plans to teach and conduct research at a university. She wishes to go back to Sri Lanka in the future and share her knowledge and skills with students there.

Lahiru Narangammana is a graduate student majoring in physics at the University of Connecticut (UConn). After successfully completing the G.C.E. Advanced Level Examination in physical science at Mahamaya in 2002, she entered the Faculty of Science at University of Peradeniya to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in physics; she also minored in mathematics and statistics. Lahiru's hard work and dedication earned her an honors degree in physics with a first class. Afterwards, she gained admission to the UConn with a scholarship to pursue a Ph.D. in physics. She has received several prizes at the Annual Prize Giving at Mahamaya. At Peradeniya, she was awarded the University Award for Academic Excellence. Lahiru received the Ruth and Paul Klemens Fellowship at UConn. She is one of the 32 students from North America who was selected to attend the summer school conducted by NIST Center for Neutron Research to study fundamentals of neutron scattering. At Mahamaya, she was an active member in the Writer's Club, Photographic Society, and St. John's Ambulance Service; she has also served as a Junior Prefect (School Monitor). At UConn, she is conducting her thesis research project in experimental condensed matter physics. Her research goals include inventing new superconducting materials and studying interesting electronic and magnetic properties of these materials. Upon successfully completing her Ph.D., Lahiru plans to conduct postdoctoral research in condensed matter physics. She aspires to serve as a faculty member at a Sri Lankan University in the future.

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

Best regards,
Dharshani Nanayakkara
Chairperson, Scholarship Selection Committee



Let us not pray to be sheltered from dangers but to be fearless when facing them.

~~ Rabindranath Tagore ~~

Motherhood

The Noble Path towards Achieving the Ten Perfections I would not have realized this until I took my first steps towards motherhood. Maybe I am biased, since after all, I would only be able to take up the role of a mother, and not of a father during this lifetime. However, it never dawned to me until very recently that being a mother is but a start to fulfilling the ten perfections or pāramita which eventually lead to enlightenment. There may be many different interpretations of these perfections (some due to translational discrepancies), but let me elaborate these ten factors from a maternal perspective:

Dāna: Generosity, or giving of oneself. A mother will always relinquish her ego and lay aside her personal gains in place of the child's welfare. She will sacrifice a lifetime of goals and ambitions and delight herself in addressing the needs and requirements of the child. She cares less for materialistic prospects, for she realizes it will do nothing for the moral development of a child. This maybe why we see our mothers wearing crumpled clothes, walking around without any cosmetics, having ruffled hair, eating a clutter of leftovers from the meals she has cooked (I am sure she will not mind eating a mess of food collected during an alms-round some day!) – simply put, donating her self-esteem, for the sake of harmony and well-being of the family rather than her own personal needs.

Sīla: Virtue and morality. A mother is fully aware that she is the primary source of education for her child during the early years. She has to be mindful over her own actions before discipline and proper conduct is implemented upon the child, for as far as a youngster is concerned, it is simply 'monkey see, monkey do'. A mother needs to walk the path of ethics and principles before taking her child along the route. Therefore, she has to turn herself into a self-disciplinarian, watching over her own demeanor which bears similar importance in the path of discovering the noble truth.

Nekhamma: Renunciation of worldly attachments. Beginning with the renunciation for materialistic needs, a mother will have no hard feelings or regrets in sacrificing all worldly pleasures for the betterment of her child's future. Although she may ultimately develop a non-sacrificial attachment to her child, she already has a head-start in giving up the things which many a sentient being may consider as 'treasures'.

Paññā: Insight and wisdom. We all know that our mothers are healers, psychiatrists and mind-readers! Although a doctor may cure physical illnesses, it is the mother who eventually cures the mental distress, and she does this by caring, listening and paying attention to her child's feelings and emotions as well as her own. A mother's wisdom can do wonders to the weary-minded for it always comes from her heart, out of kindness, compassion and unconditional love for her child.

Vīriya: One may interpret vīriya as energy and effort. However, from a nurturing point of view, I would like to describe this as positive endurance, for a mother's fortitude and resolution comes from wisdom. When endurance is not intertwined with wisdom, one may end up in exhaustion and fatigue – we all know mothers will never give- up the struggle until her child's needs are fulfilled. She will fight all the evil in the world to keep her child away from its vicious grasps. How will she benefit from this attitude of hers in the long run? When the time comes to face māra and battle the kilesas which have been the cause of the timeless samsara, it takes more than a compassionately courageous soul to uproot these defilements and replace them with unfailing mindfulness and wisdom – a mother has it all!

Khanti: Acceptance and patience – one may even call this tolerance or even an overlap of endurance. For one to be patient, one needs to accept things as they are. At this point, I would like to quote the story of Angulimāla. He was a mass-murderer, but a victim of a cunning plan marred with jealousy. When the entire world was looking forward to his downfall, the only person who had the will to go after him and stop him from doing more evil was his mother (and of course, Lord Buddha). A mother will always accept the child for what he or she turns out to be – that is the power of her unconditional love

Sacca: Honesty and integrity. The mother is the guardian of the fourth precept: Adinnādāna veramanī sikkāpadam samādi-yāmi. She will encourage her child to divulge the truth, no matter how disheartening or displeasing it may be and most of the time, children are honest only with their mothers. She will teach the child to hold the moral integrity rather than shatter its foundations with dishonesty. An honest livelihood is always easier to maintain rather than one filled with deception, lies and deceit. *Adhiṭṭhāna*: Determination and resolution. In my point of view, this has somewhat of an overlap with vīriya. However, if I am not mistaken, adhiṭṭhāna infers working towards a goal where vīriya is required for working towards it. All I can say is, at some point, a mother's goal or ambition turns out to be one and the same as her child's. If her child wants to be the first in class, it will turn out to be the mother's goal as well to facilitate the process in making the child's dream come true. As I mentioned under dāna pārami, a mother abandons her personal goals to make a better future for her child. *Mettā*: Loving kindness – a member of the four immeasurables or brahmavihāra. This requires no further elaboration, for a mother is known to have overwhelming loving kindness for her child as well as any other sentient being which crosses her path. *Upekkhā*: Equanimity – another member of the four immeasurables. From a maternal perspective, I would say this refers to self-control which somewhat latches onto sīla. A mother needs to be level-headed, given the trials and tribulations set in front of her. It is not easy for one to undergo suffering without having to verbally whine and complain about it. However, mothers will never be voice-out their suffering – at least, not for their children to hear – such is their self-composure.

It is believed in some Buddhist countries that women cannot attain enlightenment unless they become men in another lifetime, and for that they must collect sufficient merit. Given the role that women play as mothers (as well as wives), for the way the engage themselves in maintaining nobility and virtue, for the self-sacrifice, for letting go of their identity and self, do they not deserve to follow the path to enlightenment as much as men? Do they not possess the perfections required to pursue in this noble direction? As far as I know, they are already on their way to attaining nirvana while the rest of the world is debating over good versus evil.

By V iduranga Waisundara