



Dhammapada.

The Wise

As a solid rock is not shaken by the wind, so the wise are not shaken by censure or praise.

Few among men cross over to the further shore; the multitudes who remain run to and fro on this shore.

He should focus his mind upon that exalted state (nirvana). Having given up all sense pleasures, possessing nothing, let the wise, cleansing the mind from defilements, purify the self.

The man who exhorts, instructs and dissuades his fellowmen from unworthy acts is dear to the virtuous and hated by the wicked.



Shrine Room—Mahamaya Girls College

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Greetings Dear Readers,

Here's hoping all of you are having a wonderful relaxing summer. With the end of August and the onset of Fall season, most of us who have children are readying ourselves for a new school year. Just as the 8th Annual General Meeting heralds in the New Year for MGCAANA. We, the Newsletter Committee hope the newly elected members along with the office they hold, are off to a great start. The Newsletter Committee will forward our fullest support to all the new projects and endeavors that are being planned by the new Board of Directors. Some members and distinguished guests have shared their thoughts, good times and appreciations with us, to be published in this issue of Maya Puwath. Please enjoy the read on "Reminiscences of the 8th AGM".

Celebrating the 8th anniversary in 2012, MGCANNA and Maya Puwath has done much to keep in touch with our Alma Mater and alumnae. Maya Puwath has been the link between our alma mater and the constantly changing world. The Newsletter Committee would love to have your write ups, comments and articles to better our efforts as a committee and bring out the best reading experience possible.

Lastly, as many of you may know, September 9th is National Grand Parents Day. It is a secular holiday celebrated in the United States since 1978 and is officially recognized in numerous countries, as Grandmothers Day and Grandfathers Day. With a special day marking our ancestors, it's our goal to educate ourselves and the younger generation about the important contributions our grandparents have made throughout their life. If not for our grandparent's, and great grandparent's efforts, today won't be the same in many aspects of life, may it be a personal or a combined effort. A prime example being the growth of our Alma Mater and where she proudly stands today.

With the end of summer and the onset of Autumn, on behalf of the News Letter committee, I wish and hope you reap the best harvest of good health, happiness and prosperity!

With the blessings of the Triple Gem!!

Asha Ranatunga

Grandparents Day

Grandparents day originated in the USA. President Jimmy Carter decided that Grandparents Day would be celebrated on the first Sunday after Labor day.

Though their presence or absence, our **grandparents** leave their indelible mark on each one of us...

There's nothing like having a grandchild to restore faith to heredity.

~Doug Larsen

Perfect love sometimes does not come until the first grandchild. ~Welsh Proverb

Surely, two of the most satisfying experiences in life must be those of being a grandchild or a grandparent.

~Donald A. Norberg

"On the seventh day God rested. His grandchildren must have been out of town." ~ Gene Perret

*A garden of
love grows
in a Grandparent's
Heart!*

~ Author Unknown



MGCAANA ANNOUNCEMENTS & NOTICES

Professor Hashini Mohottala Wins an Award for her Research in Classroom Teaching

It is with great pleasure that we announce to our community about a special achievement of our own Dr. Hashini Mohottala who is a member of our Newsletter Committee. National Office of the “National society of Leadership and Success” commended her with the award of “Excellence in Teaching”.

As many of you know, she is an assistant professor in Physics at the University of Hartford, Conn. She was not aware of the award until it landed on her hands on Friday, August 17th. It took her by surprise. The criteria for nomination was, I. Teach with passion and inspire students beyond the classroom, II. Demonstrate dedication to developing students beyond academic qualifications, III. Make a positive difference in the lives of Society members. By winning this award, she has proved herself to be a professor who wants to make a change in teaching in this technological era, taking Science teaching to a new level that makes huge difference in the students’ lives.

Hashini has done pedagogical research on Wikispaces and how to incorporate it in a class where she teaches hard sciences like Physics. The research was very successful and well received by students. She was able to publish two papers in the Physics Teacher magazine based on her research. She turned away from the traditional classroom environment giving a new face to teaching by centering the students. Her work in this area was presented in many conferences as well.

Hashini remembers her father with gratitude who was a principal in Sri Lanka, spent all his life passionately teaching the economically disadvantaged kids. She says that her father inspired her to become a professor.

We wish her the best in future endeavors!



. Thank you to our Outgoing Newsletter Committee Member Nazrana Caffoor after 7 years of Service and Working on 40 Newsletters

For Maya Puwath readers all around the world Nazrana Caffoor needs no introduction. She had been in the Newsletter Committee from the first volume that was published in October 2005, up to April 2012. I recall affectionately how Nazrana took a painstaking interest behind the scenes, in getting Maya Puwath out to the reader on time all these years, even when she had to do all the work by herself at times, when other Committee members did not have time to engage in the process due to exams, trips abroad, illnesses, and so forth. She underwent a lot of inconveniences ungrudgingly because of her dedication, to her work as a Newsletter Committee member and to the Organization. Several years back she took the initiative to design the present heading for the Newsletter to give a professional look. Working on the Newsletter in the first few years was all about learning how to be its best in appearance and content. She worked hard at it. On behalf of our Organization, thank you Nazrana for all your hard work, unwavering leadership, and many many hours and sleepless nights that you spent to bring it up to standards acceptable to you. Your standards were high and always you strove to give your best and nothing less. We were extremely blessed to have you as a Committee member for last 7 years. Our heart-felt thanks go out to her husband Moe Effam for sharing Nazrana’s time with us.

While appreciating Nazrana’s contribution for last seven years, when reflecting the history of Maya Puwath, I have to recognize Priyanka Jayakody, as a founder member who took the responsibility in initiating the first Newsletter, when it was proposed at the first Annual General Meeting in Seattle in August 2005. Priyanka who has the innate creativity and being a public school teacher, courageously took the leadership and said firmly that “We can do it!” Then Chathuri Nugawela-Munasinghe, Nazrana Caffoor, and Devi Gunasekera joined in the Newsletter Committee and with the insightful understanding of each other, the first Volume was published in October. I am happy to say that Priyanka is still with us as a Newsletter Committee member from the original Committee. Later years, some members left and new members joined in. They all did a great job in maintaining the standards. Maya Puwath reaches you every other month on 25th without fail thanks to our energetic, committed and creative Newsletter Committee.

Sujatha Werake

Thilini Jayasinghe

Not all the sports stars would become lucky to create history but Thilini Jayasinghe is one of them who had that rare honour of becoming the first ever woman shuttler to represent Sri Lanka in the centenary-old history of the modern Olympic Games.

She represented Sri Lanka at the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games. Having made it to the last 48 in the women’s singles draw for London 2012 Games, Jayasinghe has the distinction of qualifying for back to back Olympic Games on merit.

A product of Mahamaya Girls School, Kandy, Thilini has won all major women’s badminton titles in Sri Lanka, including the Sri Lanka National women’s singles ‘crown’.

A banker by profession, she has been working hard to gain Olympic qualification by playing in several international ranking tournaments all over the world in the past year.

Having won the Under-13 junior national title in 1998, Thilini went on to win the national women’s singles title in 2004. She won her first title at the age of 13 in

a Kandy under-13 tournament and soon became the national champion in the same

age group. She continued her success, winning national age group titles until she was 19.



Congratulations !!!!



Our alumnae Dulanjalie Dhanapala wedded Thilan Ganegedara on the 22nd of June 2012. We would like to wish the newlyweds a happy and a prosperous future !!!!

Congratulations Kaushalya!!!

Another MGCAANA Member Completed her Ph.D. in July, 2012

Kaushalya Premachandra Vandercone received her Ph.D. from University of Missouri in Physics. The thesis was on complex scaling behavior in animals foraging patterns. She returned to Sri Lanka this month with her two children Lihini and Prithvi to join her husband Dr. Rajnish Vandercone, who is a faculty member at the Rajarata University.

Be a part of Maya Puwath Newsletter Committee

We would like to invite our members who may wish to join our Newsletter Committee. We hope that with new members we will be able to discover ways we can all adorn Maya Puwath and bring out the best to our readers. If you have any questions or require additional information please contact us through : [Mahamaya alumnae@yahoo.com](mailto:Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com)

Grandparents and grandchildren

When my parents were giving the best education to us, my sister and I, they may have never thought it would become a boomerang and come after them when they are spending their retirement lives. My father was a school principal and my mother is pretty well educated and qualified to become a teacher. My maternal grandfather, for some reason, decided all his daughters should stay home. As a result, both my sister and I had the pleasure of having a wonderful childhood. Our mother was there, when we left to school and returned, when we left to university and returned, and when we left to work and returned. Even to this date, her unconditional love is visible and available to us readily.

My father was very determined to give us the best possible education in the world. He had the necessary background for that. My only aunt, his sister, had already joined the workforce breaking the perception of woman only should take care of her children, husband and house (kitchen) etc. I had few maternal-aunts as well who joined the workforce later and raised kids. They all needed extra help to get their work done and did not have a smooth-flow as ours but able to survive.

We got the best education in Sri Lanka – we both attended leading schools (high schools) in the country and earned Degrees in science from leading public universities. Today, we are happily married with children. We are educated women who are not willing to make the same compromises that our mother made on our behalf. Even if we decide to stay home and play the role of a stay-home mom, naturally a massive guilt would haunt us by bringing back memories on how our parents strived to bring us to the place where we are today. The guilt of not working, not doing anything to the society is unbearable. Honestly speaking, I am not willing to jeopardize the life-long effort of my parents.

My parents are grandparents today. Our children (their grandchildren) have major challenges ahead of them. Simply they don 't have the access to their parents (us) as much as we did to ours. Grandparents, who have walked the walk, have no physical strength left in them to take care of the grandkids. Today, I am home in Sri Lanka, visiting my family. My sister, with two children, struggles between work and home. My dear mother with an older helper struggles between grandkids and household chores. Unlike before, servants are no longer available – even if one finds someone they are not as loyal as before. As a result, all three generations suffer equally bad!

This is my story and not a single part is made up. My in-laws are going through the same, bit worse as there are five kids in the family – with one daughter. Daughter is educated and the sons got married to educated, career oriented women. In addition to above, some of my girl friends have given up their studies as well as jobs and are living unhappy lives; they are turned into desperate housewives.

Where did things go wrong?

Should we blame the parents who educated their daughters? What about if you have only daughters (like mine) ?

Should we blame the daughters for not staying home after getting the best possible education in the world?

Should we blame the grandkids for not behaving well – to minimize the trouble for the available grandparents?

Or, should we blame the governments, bad economies etc.?

A friend of mine, with a four-month-old baby is ready to go back to work leaving the baby home with a helper under the on and off supervision of her mom. Her mother can 't take the sole responsibility as she is taking care of another grandchild at a different place. I was worried for them. The husband in the family told me, “ Akke, we can 't make both ends meet without two jobs – my wife has to work ! ”. From outside, they appear to be well off, but within they are not. The family is another member of the suffering young parents' society in Sri Lanka. The tendency is common to leave a servant with a young child under the supervision of their grandparents. Naturally, the kids (babies) tend to turn toward the love they get for free of charge leaving the other party alone, good for them, but bad for the grandparents.

This has become a burning issue in Sri Lanka. Daycare system in Sri Lanka is not as systematic as in Europe and other western countries. Limited services are available in Colombo and suburbs and not popular in other areas. Some of my working cousins who are sending their young ones are complaining about the service they get but they have no other options. Unlike in some other developed countries, mothers in Sri Lanka do not have the choice of returning to a job after a while when the kids are at school age. Age (less) and experience (more and continuous) are major job finding factors in Sri Lanka.

My uncle has eight sons. Most of them got married to less career oriented women. Those who had jobs, decided to stay home after giving births to their children. Today, I am observing and enjoying the happiness of those children while sympathizing my own son and the nieces. I often recall the cherished memories of our childhood where both parents were accessible to us at all times.

I asked my mom if she regrets for giving up her job opportunity under the influence of my grandfather. The answer was a firm “No” . It is a simple yet an honest answer and I believe her. Then I asked if she enjoys having the grandchildren around her. Her answer was a solid “yes ”, but along with that, she said she is not the same person who she was 10 to 15 years back. As much as she enjoys having the grandkids around, she hates to have them watched by outsiders who are not necessarily trained for child-care. Thus she involves in the job herself, leaving the physical inabilities aside.

The bottom line is, parents who educated their daughters are suffering twice as much as the others. First it happens when they become parents and then again when they become grandparents. We, the daughters, are helpless for not wanting to make our parents ' life-long effort a futile one and on the other hand for not knowing how to face the related social issues and commitments without a job. Our children are also helpless and searching for love. Our parents, who are proud of us and happy to see us giving birth to babies, are helpless as they do not have any strength in them to support this newly created - less family and more work - oriented society.

Today as the adults, we are helpless and painfully watching the situation, and one day, if our children, who are desperate for love and care, become less creative, dysfunctional, self-oriented adults with no strong ties to their parents , who should be blamed for that?



(I am dedicating this letter for all the grandparents , parents and the children in the 21st century)

By Hashini Mohottala

Mind and Mindfulness

“Mano Pubbaṅgama dhammā

Mano setthā Manomaya”

The first verse of Dhamma Pada reminds us, the importance of the mind. According to the Buddha’s teachings there is no energy or power other than human mind. The mental faculties are dominated by mind, governed by it and made up of it. Mind can be used in the sense of the whole content of consciousness. Manas in the sense of ‘vijñāna’ are the active thinking principle.

Human beings produce various types of thought forces exist in the environment and they are perceived by the individuals as thoughts. These thought forces exist in association with the living human body as subconscious force, and is connected and communicates with the whole universe. The subconscious force of the individual is described as Bhavāṅga Citta. It is an invisible mental energy that exists in our body. This mental energy consists on thoughts. The mind is a fore runner of thoughts and actions. It is one of the Six Sensory bases of a living creature.

Mind consists of conscious thoughts described as Sāmpajāna Mano Sankāra and unconscious thoughts as Asampajāna Mano Sankāra. Thoughts depend on motivation. Rāga, Dosa, Moha and Alobha, Adosa, Amoha caused basically on motivation. Sometimes mind is a gold mine as well as sometimes rubbish heap. Thoughts and mind cannot separate. Without thoughts there is no mind. Both are connected each other, like two sides of a coin. The mind is like an ocean and thoughts are like its waves. Emptiness of mind, without think so much on materials or gaining unnecessary objectives is the best way to the correct path. Mind should be neutral without suffering. It should be independent and tamed. If we tamed the mind you have tamed everything.

The five psychological obsessions that keep the mind locked are Nivaranas. Kāmachchanda is the first mental cover and it has the power to drive the victim mad with infatuation. Vyāpāda is the second that makes the mind restless. Thinamiddha is the third that has power to blunt intellectual sensitivity. Uddhacca kukkucca, the forth, churns the mind with pride and excitement. Vicikiccha is the fifth, that always fill the mind with suspicious. These psychological obsessions prevent us from experiencing the light of wisdom. When these defilements arise in one’s mind they weaken our mind and leads us to a state of discomfort and dissatisfaction. The more we have these defilements in mind we suffer more and there is no peace in mind.

According to the teachings of Buddha it is described Nibbāna as a state of mind free from hatred, greed and delusion. Ariya Atthangika Magga explains how to train our mind to attain Nibbāna, developing ethical conduct – Sila, mental discipline - Samadhi and wisdom – pañña.

Mental discipline consists of three factors of the eight fold path, namely Right Effort, Right mindfulness and Right concentration. Right Effort is the energetic will to prevent evil and unwholesome states of mind. Human being who develops right effort will be able to develop the right mindfulness, and one who develops mindfulness he will be able to develop right concentration.

As in the Satipattahana Sutta Right mindfulness or attentiveness on the activities of the body (Kāyānupassanā), sensations or feelings (Vedananupassana), activities of the mind (Cittānupassanā), ideas, thoughts and conceptions and things (Dhammānupassana) are required to develop the practice of concentration. The development of concentration on breathing is introduced as “Ānāpānāsati Bhāvana”. It is the well-known exercise for the mental development.

Mindfulness or Satipatthana has been explained as one should be clearly aware of all forms of feelings, sensations pleasant and unpleasant, and neutral and of how they appear and disappear, with in one self. Concerning the activities of the mind one should be aware whether ones mind is lustful or not, hatred or not, deluded or not, distracted or concentrated etc. Human being should be aware of all movements of the mind, and develop the concentration of the mind.

The form of this mental culture or meditation is treated in detail in Satipattāna Sutta as setting up mindfulness. Anguttara Nikāya, Ekaka nipata, Amata Vagga explained one cannot miss Nibbana if he establishes mindfulness on Kāya” - Amatam tesam parinibhuttam, yesam kāyagatā sati paributtā”. In the same way if someone practices mindfulness on Vedanā, Citta and Dhamma, they will be able to attain Nibbana.

Meditation is important to lead a successful life as well as to purify the mind. Even as a child, prince Siddhatta practiced Anāpānāsati – mindfulness on breathing. This was happened on the day of his father king Suddhodana took part in the ceremonial ploughing (Vapmangalya). Anāpānāsati Bhāvanā is the best way to control our uncontrolled mind, Buddha preached;

“Anāpānāsati Bhikkave, Bhavitā Bahulikatā

Cattaro Satipatthana paripurenti.

Cattaro Satipatthana Bhavitā Bahulikatā

Satta Bojjanga paripurenti.

Satta Bojjanga Bhavitā, Bahulikatā

Vijja vimutti paripurenti”

when mindfulness of breathing practiced the four foundations of mindfulness and the seven factors of enlightenment , knowledge and deliverance is automatically accomplished.

Buddha’s teachings, particularly, his way of meditation, aims at producing a state of perfect mental health, equilibrium and tranquility. Mindfulness aims at cleansing the mind from impurities and disturbances as lustful desires, hatred, ill will, worries and restlessness etc., and cultivate qualities such as concentration, awareness, intelligence, energy, confidence, joy, etc... leading finally to the attainment of highest wisdom realizing the truth. The two forms of Bhāwana (meditation), Samata and Vidharshanā are two methods of meditation to develop mind. When you are mindful your breathing it will be a mental training as well as mental satisfaction. Forgetting all other things, surroundings, in environment it will bring you a peaceful mind.

At the beginning you will find it extremely difficult to bring your mind to concentrate and to be mindful. But when you practice and experiencing and tamed the mind it will be a pleasure and you may think the value of the mindfulness for day to day work. As a result you will be able to be mindful in every moment and the daily work may be easily done without any disturbances. Practicing mindfulness regularly for a long time it will be a great pleasure and a mental satisfaction and concentrate on understanding reality.

Practicing mindfulness Examination candidates will be able to develop their memory power. It effects physical health, for relaxation, sound sleep and for the efficiency on daily work. It makes you calm and tranquil. When you are nerves or excited if you practice mindfulness on breathing, with in couple of minutes you will see for yourself that you become immediately quiet and peace, and feel that you have awakened after a good rest. It is very important to practice mindfulness when you walk talk, drink, cook or whatever you do etc...

If you act mindfully you live in the present situation or at the moment. This does not means that you should not think of the past or the future at all. You should think of them relation to the present moment or present action, when and where it is relevant.

Most of the people do not live generally in their actions in the present moment. They live in the past or future. When people live somewhere else in their thoughts, in there imagines, problems and worries they are unhappy and discontented with the present moment. Instead of this if you develop the mindfulness of the present moment what you do you will enjoy the life as well as you will be able to do the activities correctly.

Real life is the present moment not the memories of the past which is gone and not the dreams of the future, which is not born. Live in the present moment mindfully is the real life and is the happiest.

Mindfulness does not mean that you should forget yourself completely and lose yourself, what you do. That is only, you should not be self conscious. Just keep mindfulness or awareness with regard to our activities. What Buddha taught is,

“Uttānavato Satimato Sucickammassa Nisammakārino

Sanyattassa ca dhammajivino appamattassa yaso be vaddati”

If a person is reflective, if he rouses himself, if he is ever mindful of his deeds are pure, if he acts with consideration, if he is self restrained and lives according to law, his glory will increase. (Appamada Vagga : Dhamma Pada)

Through being mindfulness regarding to all feelings it will be a form of meditation that helps to control the mind and become “Citta Ekaggata”. Then the mind grows dispassionate towards the sensation, and becomes detached and free. When ever your mind is over powered by ill will, jealousy, hatred or compassion, full of love you must observe it mindfully. Everyone should be bold and sincere to look at their own mind as one looks at one’s face in a mirror.

If you can see things as they are mindfully and cultivate good qualities and meditate methodically you will be a Wiseman in this world.

Suddhassanam Sunipunam

Yattakāma – nipatinam

Cittam rakkheta medhavi

Cittam guttam sukhāvaham

Wiseman guards his thought, which is difficult to perceive, which is extremely subtle, which wanders at will. Thought which is well guarded is the bearer of happiness.

“Sabbè Sattha Bhavnathu Sukhitatta !!!”

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33 and counting - My road trips around the USA - part 0

2008 January 4th That was the day I set my foot on the US soil to attend Texas Tech University as a graduate student. It took me several weeks to get used to the dry flat nature of Lubbock. I guess you can imagine how badly I missed the greenness and mountains from Kandy. Eventually my headache passed away as I started to appreciate the opportunity of seeing 10-15 miles around me with the great flat land of Lubbock. As they say "As big as Texas", I found that everything is bigger here, people, animals, buildings, roads and of course the good hearts of Texans. The purpose of this article is not to share my thoughts about Texas but to share some lovely and unforgettable memories I experienced by going out of Texas.

After my husband Sachith joined with me to study at TTU, starting from Fall 2008, we started thinking about how to visit as many states as we can while our 5-6 year stay in the USA. And that was how our countdown began. Well, the first three years of our stay was out of the league due to hard work we had to deal with finishing course work and qualifying exams for the doctoral degree program. Of course, money matters were there.... No need to mention it... we were grad students!!!

After a considerable amount of planning, our first road trip launched in May, 2011. We covered 8 states starting from Texas to Wyoming. The next trip was to Vancouver, Canada in June 2011 followed by the New York trip which covered 17 statesf in August 2011. The Nebraska trip came next in October 2011 and finally the trip to California which covered another 5 states in December 2011. That was how we covered 33 states within 8 months....well it is counting because there are many more road trips to come in future.

Starting from our first road trip, I would like to share my memories with all of you with a bunch of articles starting from the next issue of Maya Puwath. There will be unforgettable camping nights at -5°F , sleepless 27 hour continuous drives , sweet memories with Mr. and Mrs. Werake and breathtaking cruise trips in Pacific Ocean. I will stop for today while inviting you all to join with me to go around 33 states and counting!!!

Hemalika (Karunaratne) Abeysundara

Wisdom, Courage and Love

My maternal grandmother, who I called "Ape Amma" was an extraordinary modern day woman. She was "Ape Amma" to 21 grandchildren who grew up with her unconditional love and care. She was a liberal thinker, and was never judgmental and treated each one of us as a unique individual. She wasn't typical grandma type. She didn't cuddle us or spoiled us with sweets or secret gifts. But we all knew her love for us, it was all there in her eyes and her smile.

She always watched us from the sideline and gave her full support and was delighted when we succeeded. And when we failed in life or make a not so wise decision, she was still supportive because she knew only way to be successful is by falling and rising. I am ever so thankful for her guidance throughout my childhood.

My grandmother, Sujatha Menike Kehelgamuwa was born and raised as a strong Kandyan Buddhist. When I found a Catholic life partner from Negombo, she was the only person who didn't quiver by the news. Her simple answer was "it's her decision, not ours". Ape Amma spent a week with me before my wedding, gave me her valuable insights of life, world and relationships. She and I shared the same bed during that week and our conversations continued all night long. During that time she was losing her hearing slowly, so she couldn't hear what I ask her in the deep nights, so she couldn't answer to my million questions, so she continued to be the speaker of the night and I'm ever so thankful for her wisdom.

Unfortunately she had to outlive two of her grandchildren. I didn't see her crying. She kept her head high for all the others, and she mourned alone. Ape Amma did the same when Aththa passed away many many years before her. Unfortunately I couldn't spend much of my childhood years with my paternal grandfather, though I remember him as a loving, kind and a gentle man.

I still miss her. She lived over 90 years. She was loved to the fullest by everyone she encountered in her long journey of life.

I also want to mention that I was the apple of my paternal grandparents eyes. I was their only granddaughter and I knew they wanted the best for me. While my parents were teachers and worked in many cities in the country I did not had a chance to spend lots of time with my paternal grandparents.

Every holiday I was looking forward to go spend time with my mother's side of the family and my 20 cousins, and I got to know my maternal grandma and I still think of her fondly today.



With my paternal grandfather, maternal grandmother and my mother on my wedding day

Priyanka Jayakody



My maternal Grandparents in February, 1970 at my Engagement

My grand mother and MGCAANA member, Avanthi Hulangamuwa's great grand mother was the rock of our families, who had so much wisdom and clarity, gave love, assurance and stability. She had a strong personality. My grand father was fun to have around, , warm and kind person. My grand mother lived 110 years and passed away in 1993. My grand father lived 92 years and passed away in 1980.

I never got a chance to meet my paternal grand parents since they had already passed away when I was born. I wish I had a chance to meet them.

I still miss my grand parents that I knew. May all of them attain the bliss of Nibbana!

Sujatha Werake

Remembering Those Far gone “Mahamaya Days”

It is with great pleasure that I receive through my email and read 'Maya Puwath'. A big thank you to all the dedicated Editors of the newsletter! You are doing a wonderful job!

As an 'old girl' of Mahamaya (1960 to 1972) who is now working in southern USA, the chance to go through Maya Puwath and enjoy its content also gives me a moment to dwell on my memories from those far gone days at Mahamaya. That lovely environment up on the hill overlooking the Kandy lake, the white uniform with our own trademark- the blue buckle, the playground that we loved to run to, the big “Kaju gaha” by the playground (not there anymore) under which my friends and I spent major part of our lunch interval, the beautiful “Budu Ge” where we learned to be influenced by Buddhist thoughts, those classrooms and class teachers that we passed through year by year as we grew up, the laboratories with that characteristic 'chemical smell' in addition to so many little events that happened here and there within that past are indeed undying memories. Forty plus years later I am happy that most my classmates from school days still keep in touch as friends. Although we are scattered around the globe now, we get to meet occasionally in Sri Lanka and our reunions never fail to become more joyful with few recalls from those innocent school-girl days at Mahamaya.

After reading Maya Puwath online, I usually take a color printout of the newsletter and mail it to my mother (Mrs. Gunapala) in Sri Lanka who was a teacher at Mahamaya for over 22 years and retired in 1982. She was a teacher during the periods of our past Principals, Mrs. Soma Pujitha Gunawardhana and Mrs. Lalitha Fernando. My mother who is 84 now, and as a past teacher she still believes that Mahamaya is the best thing that can happen to girls! She enjoys Maya Puwath and feels happy that 'girls from Mahamaya' are together and doing this great piece of work from so far away.

Being a Mahamayan is really unique. I say this because for the past 40 plus years I spent time working in Sri Lanka, Australia and the USA, and I have met and associated people from many backgrounds and from many parts of the world, but it is truly rare to find people who have this strong feeling of 'belong together' with others who studied in the same school regardless of whether they knew each other in school or not, or whether they were in school during the same period of time or not like that in Mahamayans. Many Mahamayans readily reach out and support each other no matter where they are or who they are. This I feel is a great quality that Mahamayans 'inherit' naturally through the great guiding principles of Mahamaya under which we grew up. So we are proud of our school and what it represents.

Dr. Nirmala Gunapala, New Mexico State University, USA

Reminiscences of the 8th AGM

We travelled from Windsor , Canada across the Detroit river to attend the Mahamaya AGM held in Michigan. I had plans to drop my wife for the meeting , then spend a few hours with a friend close by and return for the evening gala once the meeting was over. My idea was that I will be bored with the formalities of the meeting. So I sat down for the first few minutes and was planning to exit with the least disruption. However I was just blown away with the speeches from the head table and so impressed with the fundraising activities that I cancelled my plan leave.

I have attended numerous business meetings but this is easily one of the best I have attended. The speeches were short , precise and enlightening unlike the routine boring business meetings.

I was pleased to see I had at least some male company when I saw Para and his son monitoring the acoustics. I was so impressed to see a father son combination operating so smoothly.

Congratulations to all on a job well done!

Lal Fernando
Windsor

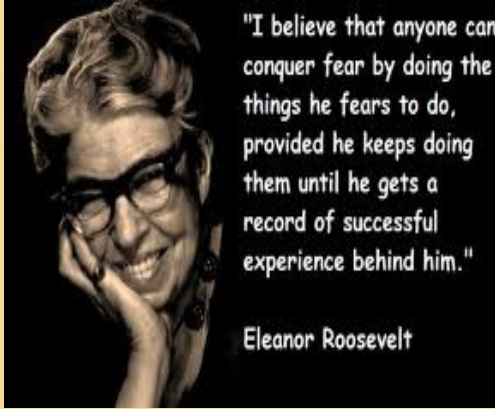
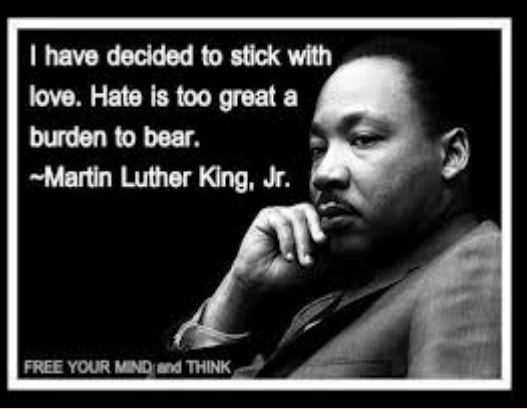
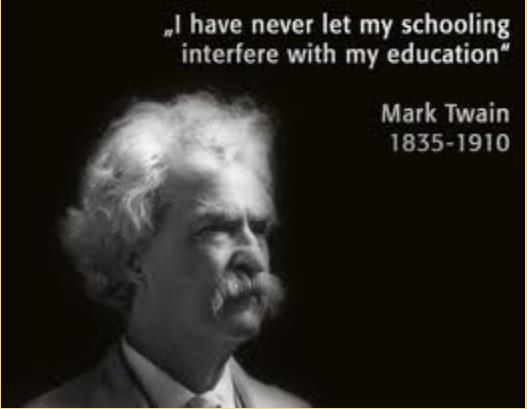
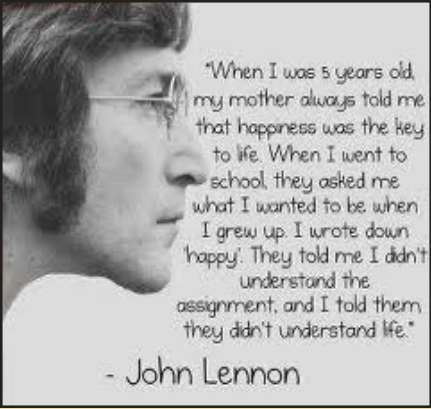
I have been looking forward to attend the Mahamaya AGM in Michigan ever since Geetha E. and Deepthi informed us in February 2012. When the day finally dawned we were so excited to drive across the border from Windsor, Canada to Michigan. My husband kindly offered to drive us four Mayans, Nanda, Dhakshika, Dammika and myself on this occasion. It was almost like going in the Peradeniya school bus in the good old days but this time we girls were donned in our fancy saris. We were rather apprehensive that we might get pulled over at the US border and sitting in the customs office especially dressed in saris is no fun !The lady customs officer had a very austere expression and when she saw so many people in the vehicle she demanded to see all our passports and to open all the doors so that she can see everybody. She was struggling to pronounce Dhakshika's name when she saw the beautiful cake (with the Mahamaya logo) on her lap. Her heart melted , we told her that we were going for our old school reunion and she just waved us through the border and told my husband 'you can wash the dishes while they are having the meeting!'

It was a memorable event meeting old friends and making new ones.

Thanks to Deepthi and Para for organizing this event.

I am truly proud to be a MAYAN !

Nayana Fernando (Abeyratna)



Kids’ Corner

My Grandparents

Few weeks ago my grandparents came all the way from Sri Lanka. They brought lots and lots of sweets. They are very kind to my family. My Grandma is a Montessori teacher. She helped us paint white clay cup-cakes. Also she is teaching us Sinhalese songs. My Grandpa always says that he wants to take my baby brother with him to Sri Lanka. He plays with us all the time. Also he takes care of all of us. I am so happy to have them with us.

Samadhi Ranaweera
Kindergarten
Robert Frost Elementary School
East Brunswick, NJ

My Achchiamma and Seeya

By

Chamindri Janusha Widanage

Age : 4 years 9 months

Winnipeg, Manitoba



Asparagus Kola kenda

Sent By Tharoshini Kasthuriarachchi

- Steam asparagus for 1-2 minutes.
- Blend them with 1-2 cups of water.
- Add about half cup of cooked rice (white or red) to the blender and blend all together again (if you like you can add one clove of garlic too).
- Pour this mixture to saucepan and boil it for few minutes.
- If mixture is too thick you can add more water.
- Add 1 tsp salt and 3-5 tbsp of thick coconut milk to the mixture and boil again for few minutes.
- Serve with a piece of juggery.

Note: This is similar to Hathawariya Kenda. If you like you can add parsley and curry leaves too.



How Maya Puwath Comes to You: Behind the Scenes Story You Would Like to Know...

You will be surprised to learn how much work the Committee members put into bringing Maya Puwath to you. There are several stages to this process. After Maya Puwath is released on 25th of every other month, there is a "down time" for a week or two for the Committee members.

Step 1: Then they start gathering ideas, write-ups, official announcements, pictures, news from Mayans living here in US and Canada, and from other parts of the world, and so forth.

Step 2: They caringly read each and every word of the drafts they receive, catch typos and minor mistakes, approve the colors, fonts, sizes of the fonts, settings, number of pages, etc. and discuss with each other by emails or by phone, give their honest feedback.

Step 3: Another important factor the Committee members have to be mindful of is to protect the vision and mission of MGCAANA in whatever that goes in to the publication.

If there are any parts that need to be changed/formatted and that decision is taken by the majority's approval, then they inform the writer of the article about changes that they propose. Anyone's writing is intensely personal, and Committee members recognize and respect the need to protect the writer's style and expression. With agreement with the writer they do the necessary changes.

Step 4: The next step is to do the layout and fit the articles on Publisher Format and then convert it into a pdf file.

Step 5: Send it out to all the members of the Newsletter Committee for verification. This is another opportunity to clean up the Newsletter.

Step 6: After everyone approves it, then it is sent to the Board of Directors for approval.

Step 7: If the Board of Directors request any changes, it will be done at this stage.

Step 8: After the approval of the Board of Directors, Maya Puwath is finally ready to be sent out to the readers. On 25th of every other month it comes to your mailbox from the caring and committed Newsletter Committee.

Please remember that Maya Puwath keep us informed, offers us valuable information about the Maya family, gives us a platform to express ourselves, builds and strengthens relationships among ourselves, and keeps us together. Undoubtedly, it is an important communication tool for us. Can you imagine an organization without a newsletter?

Please be an active and regular contributor to our Newsletter "MAYA PUWATH." -Sujatha Werake