

Maya Puwath - මායා පුවත්

*Bi-Monthly Newsletter of Mahamaya Girls' College
Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA)*

Volume 18– Issue 3 – June 2022



Message from the Editors

Dear readers,

We hope everyone enjoying the summer and finding some time to travel and relax. We hope you had a great year and enjoyed the many activities MGCAANA had to offer. We successfully held our 18th Annual General Meeting virtually, on May 21st, 2022, where we elected a new Board of Directors (BOD) and a new Executive Committee for 2022-20223. A warm welcome to our new leaders and we look forward to what's in store for the year ahead!

Also, a big thanks to our outgoing BOD and the Executive Committee as well and we are very grateful for all the hard work they did in 2021-2022. To mark this transition in MGCAANA leadership, you will see in this issue messages from our outgoing President Dasmanthie De Silva (Chin) and the incoming President Chathurani Ekanayake.

In this issue, you will find pictures from the AGM, a warm welcome to the new BOD and the executive committee and pictures from the Virtual Talent Show. You will also see a touching remembrance of Late Mrs. Manel Weerasinghe by Mrs. Sujatha Werake followed by a beautiful poem by Ms. Malini Jayasinghe, we hope you enjoy reading them. To those who are with young ones, there is a great summer activity to keep them busy during this summer break.

June has been filled with various celebrations and as the month comes to an end, we are entering the month of July by celebrating Canada Day and Independence Day. As usual, we didn't forget to include a tasty recipe as well, an easy summer pasta salad recipe. We hope you try it out, and if you have any recipes to share with us, we always welcome them!

We hope you enjoy reading this issue of Maya Puwath. Until we meet in August, we hope you all have a wonderful summer.

Stay safe and take good care!

The Newsletter Committee

In this issue

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- Welcome the new BOD and Executive
- Letters from the Outgoing President and the incoming president
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- Virtual Talent show recap
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- Celebrations
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- MGCAANA News



Dhammapadha

*Andhabhuto ayam loko
tanuke'ttha vipassati
sakuno jalamuttova
appo saggaya gacchati*



Blind are the people of this world: only a few in this world see clearly (with Insight). Just as only a few birds escape from the net, so also, only a few get to the world of the devas, (and Nibbana).

(Verse 174)

18th AGM: Recap



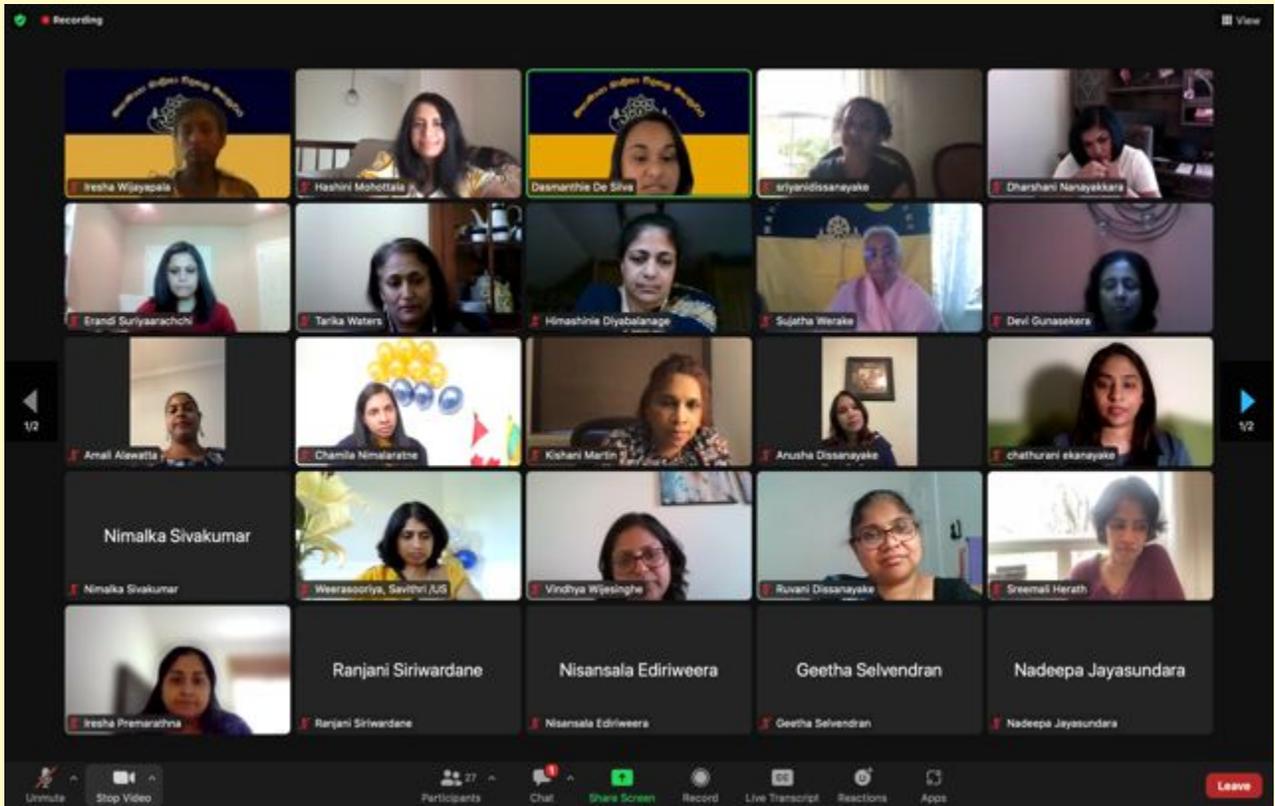
Our Vision

Trust fund

- Our goal was to establish a fund with an initial capital of, at least, \$20,000 (achieved in 2018). Goals of \$30,000 and \$40,000 (achieved in 2022). New goal \$50,000.
- The interest goes towards awarding around 20 scholarships per year to ensure continuity of the project.
- Scholarships primarily based on financial need and pay for education expenses and/or boarding fees of students attending Mahamaya.



18th AGM: Recap Con't



Renewing MGCAANA Membership for the Year 2022-2023

Thank you to members that already renewed their membership for the year 2021-2022. If you have not renewed your membership yet, this is a friendly reminder to renew your membership to support MGCAANA's ongoing activities. How you can renew your membership:

Online: Use your credit card or PayPal account to pay your membership fee through the MGCAANA membership renewal page.

By Mail: Please mail a check payable to MGCAANA (\$ 15 - Students; \$ 25 - Regular). Address: Treasurer, MGCAANA, 2417 NE 20th, Renton, WA 98056

Note: If you wish, you can also renew your membership for 3, 5, or 10 years by paying US\$70.00, US\$115.00 and US \$230.00 respectively. Your support helps MGCAANA continue its legacy in helping Mayans and their communities in North America as well as current students at Mahamaya Girls' College, Kandy, Sri Lanka.

Congratulations to our new BOD for the year 2022/2023, Executive Committee and Advisory Committee

BOD for the Year 2022/2023

- Anusha Dissanayake
- Ruvani Dissanayake
- Nisansala Ediriweera
- Chathurani Ekanayake
- Sreemali Herath
- Harshani Konara
- Iresha Premarathna Galkande
- Vindhya Wijesinghe

Executive Committee for the Year 2022/2023

- **President** : Chathurani Ekanayake
- **Vice president** : Sreemali Herath
- **Secretary**: Vindhya Wijesinghe
- **Treasure**: Iresha Premarathna Galkanda
- **Webmaster**: *Looking for a suitable person. Please join the team.*

Advisory Committee

- Sriyani Dissanayake
- Devi Gunasekera

Newsletter committee would like to welcome our new BOD, Executive Committee and Advisory committee. Looking forward to work alongside with you this year.

We would also like to give our heartfelt thanks to the outgoing BOD, Executive committee for a great year and the Advisory committee for committed service in past few years and providing us valuable guidances.

Thank you
Newsletter Committee

Interested in trying out a new and free meditation app?

Try "[Insight Timer](#)"!

"Join millions learning to meditate on Insight Timer to help calm the mind, reduce anxiety, manage stress, sleep deeply and improve happiness. Guided meditations and talks led by the world's top mindfulness experts, neuroscientists, psychologists and meditation teachers from Stanford, Harvard, Dartmouth and the University of Oxford."



Letter from the Outgoing president

Dear MGCAANA members,

As the outgoing President of MGCAANA, I am extremely grateful to everyone who attended our 18th AGM, held virtually on the 21st of May 2022. It was a memorable event for all of us as we carried out all of MGCAANA's ceremonial rituals and entertainment items even when the meeting was virtual. We connected with all our members, across North America at one time on one screen. I thank everyone again for making this event a great success.

During the year 2021/2022 MGCAANA carried out a successful fundraiser, made donations to two charitable organizations, and offered a scholarship to MGCAANA alumni. The success of all the activities is the effort of many who helped the organization, especially the outgoing Executive Committee (EC) and Board of Directors (BOD) who worked tirelessly throughout the year. I thank them profusely for all their hard work and support to make the year 2021/2022 a huge success!

I also thank our outgoing advisory committee Mrs. Himashinie Diyabalanage, Mrs. Dharshani Nanayakkara, and Mrs. Geetha Eragoda for their constant support throughout the year. I also would like to extend my sincere gratitude to our VSTF, NPLMS, and the newsletter committee members for their time and effort in successfully conducting all the activities over the year. I also like to give a huge shout-out to our founder, the strength of our organization Mrs. Sujatha Werake for constantly supporting us and for resolving every hurdle we faced throughout all these years. Lastly, I thank all the volunteers and nonmembers who helped MGCAANA to make the year successful.

As I bid farewell I congratulate the new committee of MGCAANA and wish them all the very best for a great year ahead.

Sincerely,
Dasmanthie De Silva (Chin)



Letter from the Incoming president

Dear Mayan community,

I am grateful to serve as the newly elected president of the Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association in North America (MGCAANA) for the term 2022-2023. I want to begin by conveying my gratitude to the founding members of our association, the previous board of directors (BOD), and all the former and present members for their contributions. I would also like to convey my sincere gratitude to all the members who attended and whose help was paramount in organizing the recent AGM.

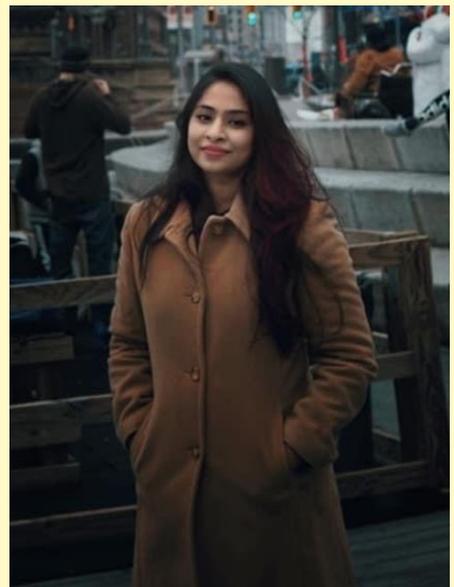
Since the founding of MGCAANA in 2005, we have made great strides in offering scholarships, making charitable contributions, and supporting our community in a variety of ways. These achievements have also facilitated our personal growth and the development of close bonds among our Mayan sisters. To accomplish our collective goals for the upcoming term, the new BOD and I look forward to working with all the committed and powerful souls of MGCAANA. We will continue to support deserving charities and put much more effort into enhancing our alma mater and our association.

yan legacy as we live up to our mission of "work together to improve the society"!

Sincerely,

Chathurani Ekanayake

Incoming President of MGCAANA (2022-2023)



**Precious memories of Late Mrs. Manel Weerasinghe, Mahamaya Games
Teacher
from 1957 to 1990 (34 Years) on Her 1st Death Anniversary**

*In my high school years
You were my games teacher
My hero
My mentor
My friend
My confidant
You gave me the confidence, resilience, skills and training
That carried with me during the rest of my life
That helped mold and shape me into the person I am today
I still hear your gentle voice and your laugh now and then
My heart aches for the loss
Those precious memories live on
You touched the lives of many
I worked with you for eight years as colleagues
But in my heart you remained my beloved teacher
I, forever your student with endless gratitude and love.*



This is in celebration of Mrs. Mahanil de Silva Wirasinha, known to all of us as Manel Weerasinghe, the distinguished games teacher of Mahamaya for 34 years. At the age of 85, she left us on May 9, 2021 in Colombo where she and her husband lived after retirement. She was not well only for about two months. Her eminent career stretched under the Principals, Mrs. Soma Pujitha Goonawardena from 1957 until 1972, Mrs. Lalitha Fernando from 1972 to 1980, and Mrs. N. K. Pilapitiya from 1980 to 1990.

During her tenure, she brought Mahamaya's sports to the national level. She produced national players in Netball, basketball, table tennis, athletics, and swimming. These are incredible accomplishments. She was well known in national sports circles. She mentored many of us to be more than the best we ever could be. She was a great role model.

In early 1960s she had a great influence on me and my team mates. Being a visionary, she introduced Basketball to Mahamaya before any other school or club in Sri Lanka. I left school in 1964. Five of us in the Basketball team who entered the University, started the first ever Women's Basketball team at the University of Peradeniya. Mrs. Weerasinghe lifted us up single-handedly and made a better version of us. She demanded excellence, taught patience, resilience, and how to handle responsibilities with honesty and dedication. She painstakingly refined our skills. We celebrated our accomplishments together with the Principal. We are much better people today because of her. I think many of us who were trained under her share similar sentiments of affection and appreciation for her. Her leadership led to incredible accomplishments in our lives. Many of these Mayans are in leadership roles in the world all over.

Cont. from previous page

We all have personal stories to tell about our experiences and how close she was to us. What was important to us as young adults was not only refining our skills in chosen sports, but finding a confidant in her who lent us an ear to listen to our growing up issues. Some of us including me, came back to school from the university, to confide with her and get her advice. She was only about ten years older than me. Certain things that we dare not share with our parents, we shared with her to get her wise advice. I am certain she knew lots of secrets of many of us. She was more than a mother/sister and a friend to us.

Being a visionary leader, Mrs. Weerasinghe's demeanor, and positive attitude, made us calm before a match. Even if we win or lose, she took it graciously. She motivated and inspired us. When she coached me she was in her twenties. She came to school around 7:15 am to take our daily morning practice. Until the first bell rang at 8 am, we would continue our practices. Then again in the evening after school, she would take our practices. This routine changed in 1967. She got married that year. I was fortunate to have got the opportunity to bring her beautiful wedding saree from Bombay when the University Women's Basketball Team went to participate in an Inter-Collegiate Women's Basketball tournament that year. Then her first baby boy was born the next year. Our principal Mrs. Goonawardena made a request to me to come to school from University of Ceylon, Peradeniya, in the evening and take basketball practices and hostellers' evening games. I was paid Rs.100 for the service, that was a big amount those days. That time, Mrs. Weerasinghe and her family were living in Queen's Hotel with the new born baby. Her motivational mentoring continued at Queen's Hotel for me. When she retired, she suggested to the then Principal to appoint me to her vacant position as the Prefect of Games which I was given after she left.

Around 2004, when we were searching Mayans who lived in North America to form our Organization, she immensely helped us to find them through her contacts. She knew contact information of number of Mayans here. She gave me suggestions to find more.

After I left the country, we continued our communication with each other by phone and by letters. With much gratitude I recall these conversations with her. I still have her letters that she sent me. I visited her in Colombo several times that we both enjoyed. The last time was at her funeral that was online, thanks to technology, I was able to attend.

Mrs. Weerasinghe's services extends through multiple generations. I am certain that the Mayans who closely associated Mrs. Weerasinghe have similar sentiments like mine. We miss her immensely.

Our beloved Games Teacher, Mrs. Weerasinghe, May your samsaric journey be shortened and may you attain the Supreme Bliss of Nibbana!!!

By. Sujatha Werake.

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2021.08.08



Virtual Talent Show: Recap



Virtual Talent Show: Recap





Summer Fun Creativity by Sriyani Dissanayake

All of us in North America are facing heat waves and hot summers. Children are on summer break, and some are taking vacations in elsewhere or staying at home. If you are a mother of a young children, it is hard to find activities to keep them busy all day long. You may have signed them up with summer camps, but very young children either attend a day camp or stay at home. This is one way to keep your child busy and occupied for hours. It builds up their creativity and designing ability. However, parents need to do the first preparation and it is very easy.

Building Sand Sculptures

Materials: -

1. Sand Matrix: This is the binding agent that holds the sand together so that your child can build durable sculptures.
2. Clean Sand. Can buy it in a garden supply store or in a Toy store.
3. Googly eyes for decoration
4. Craft stick and toothpicks for shaping up the sculpture.





Preparing the Matrix:

1. Stir constantly while adding 1 cup of Cornstarch gradually to 1 cup of cold water in a saucepan.
2. Heat the mixture over low heat, continuing to stir. Keep stirring until about threequarters of the matrix has thickened to the consistency like soft mashed potatoes. The rest will be soupy.
3. Remove the mixture from the heat and stir it until it is consistent and cool. It may get thick as pudding. Store it in a covered container, zip bag, or jar.

If the mixture gets too thick, add a little water. Keep the mixture in a refrigerator and you can keep up to a week.

I made into balls as in one picture so all my students will get an equal amount. Each child will need only a half a cup of sand and knead well until it mixed well, and you can make a ball again. Each child can make their sculpture, an animal, a mythical creature, or let their imagination go wild.

Find a place to dry your sculpture and near a sunny window it might take 2-3 days to dry. You can then color your sculpture.

See next page for photos that I did with my group.

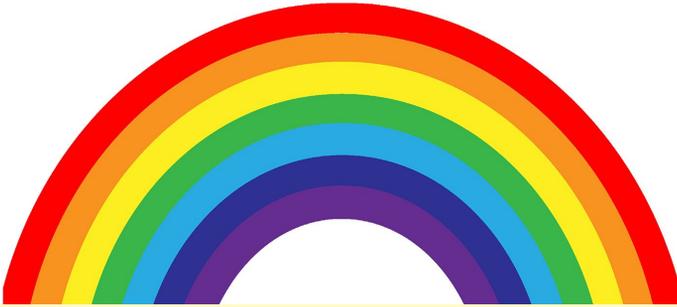


SUMMER

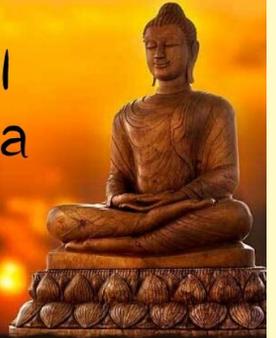


June Celebrations

June is Pride Month



Happy
poson full
moon poya
day



June 19
2022

Juneteenth
Celebration of freedom



HAPPY
Canada
DAY
July 1



Easy Chickpea pasta with Spinach

Recipe Corner

Ingredients

- 8 ounces rotini chickpea pasta
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1–15 ounce can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
- Juice and zest of 1 lemon
- 1 cup torn baby spinach
- 1/4 cup grated Pecorino cheese plus more for serving
- 2 tablespoons chopped parsley



Instructions

1. Cook the pasta in a large pot of boiling salted water until al dente according to package instructions. Drain and rinse in a fine mesh strainer.
2. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the chickpeas and sauté occasionally stirring around the chickpeas. They will turn crispy and golden in about 5-6 minutes.
3. Then add the garlic, red pepper flakes, salt and pepper, cooking for 30 seconds to 1 minute, until fragrant.
4. Stir in the pasta, lemon juice, lemon zest and 1 tablespoon olive oil.
5. Add the spinach, Pecorino cheese, and parsley. The greens will wilt in a couple minutes.
6. Top with additional Pecorino before serving.

<https://www.lastingredient.com/chickpea-pasta-with-spinach/#the-recipe>

Contributing to Recipe Corner

Would you like to share with us photos of your food creations to be featured on Recipe Corner? Or do you have any of your own recipes that you would like to share with your fellow Maya Puwath readers? If so, please send in your photos, recipes as well as links to the original recipes to the MGCAANA e-mail address:

Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com



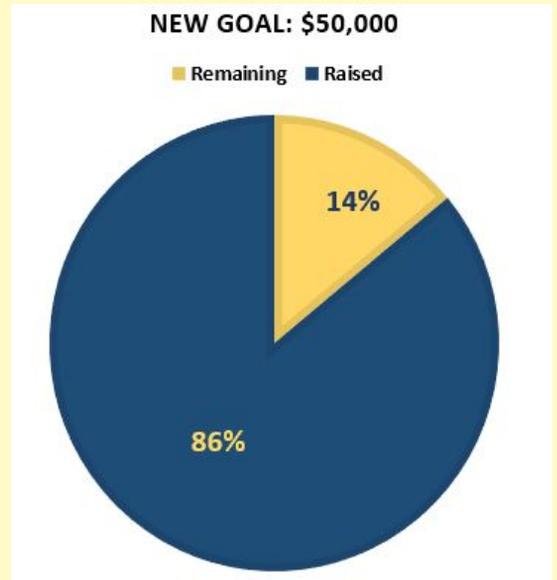
Reaching the New Goal Set for Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF)

The Vidya Scholarship Trust Fund (VSTF) set up by MGCAANA provides financial aid to financially-disadvantaged students at Mahamaya Girls' College. Scholarships from VSTF pay for educational expenses and/or boarding fees of students attending Mahamaya. "Vidya," a Sanskrit word, means knowledge or wisdom. Our initial goal was to raise at least \$20,000. We reached this goal in 2019.

The total amount collected for VSTF reached \$42956 in last January 2022. The goal was \$40000 at that time. As we passed the goal, the BOD increased the new goal to \$50,000. Currently, we are at 85.9% of the new goal.

To donate online or by cheque, please visit:

<http://mahamayaalumnina.org/vstf.php>



Want to know what your Board of Directors (BOD) is up to?

Please read the minutes of the BOD's monthly meetings posted on MGCAANA website:

<http://www.mahamayaalumnina.org/minutes.php>

If you have new ideas, concerns, or suggestions to improve how MGCAANA operates etc. please feel free to connect with the BOD through e-mail: Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com

Upcoming MGCAANA Activities

- Board Meetings (June, July, August)
- Next Newsletter (August)

Newsletter Committee:

Berlini Narampanawe, Samantha Ranaweera

JOIN US!

MGCAANA Newsletter Committee is looking to recruit new committee members to work on "Maya Puwath," the bi-monthly newsletter of MGCAANA. As part of the Newsletter Committee, you'll be able to develop these useful skills: communication; writing; graphic design; team work; creative thinking; time management; leadership etc.

If you are interested, please reach out to the Committee through:

Mayamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com