



Commemorating 75 years

MAYA PUWATH

Volume 3 Number 1- February 2007

Editorial

Hi Everyone,
Happy New Year!!!

It is a pleasure coming again to your homes with this February Editorial. It is the time we all are looking forward to a new beginning. All the Mayans in Sri Lanka and around the globe were waiting to embrace and celebrate year 2007 with Mahamaya's 75th jubilee. The previous newsletter was dedicated to this distinctive event.

Since we are in progress with promising New Year resolutions, relationships, new hopes and dreams this issue of Maya Puwath will bring you topics and discussions which

are closer to our hearts and souls. During my winter break I had an opportunity to discover few wonderful books which reminded me the magnitude of many relationships.

Born and raised in Sri Lanka, taught me that the importance of family devotion and closeness is vital. It really can make a difference when you get involved in your child's life.

Relationships and associations are important to many people and they have the desire to maintain friendships. Our friends help us to define who we are, our gifts and talents, our dreams and our needs.

As we speak about new beginnings, Newsletter Committee kindly invites our members to

be part of this beautiful creation by sharing your thoughts, comments, and articles that we are looking forward to publish in our future newsletters. They should be sent to namahamayans@yahoo.com Our April issue will bring the topic, COMMITMENT.

Also we have introduced a new segment in our December issue to introduce a Mayan in each publication. Hope all of you will show your support by helping us to take Maya Puwath another step forward.

An invitation to our Annual General Meeting is posted in this newsletter. Hope all of you can attend!

Priyanka Jayakody (Chief Editor)

Let the discerning man guard the mind, so difficult to detect and extremely subtle, seizing whatever it desires. A guarded mind brings happiness.

-Dhammapada-



As from a great heap of flowers many garlands can be made, even so should many good deeds be done by one born a mortal.

-Dhammapada-

Google images

Membership Renewal and Enrollment of New Members

It's that time of year again. The membership committee would like to remind you of your membership renewal. Your annual membership fee of \$25 for non-students / \$15 for students and spouses of students is due on or before 4/30/07. The new members who sent their applications and fees after January 1, 2007 do not have to pay until next year. Rest of the members, it is very important to us that you renew your membership.

How to renew your membership: There are two methods available for you to choose from.

1. **Online Renewal:** Go to our website <http://www.mahamayaalumina.org> and fill in the Renewal of Membership Form and pay online by using your Pay Pal account or with your credit card. (http://www.mahamayaalumina.org/become_a_member.html)

2. **Mail the Renewal of Membership Form** with your check to:

MGCAANA, 2417, NE 20th Street, Renton, WA 98056

All checks payable to: MGCAANA.

We appreciate and value your support, input, love and friendship. MGCAANA couldn't have achieved its goals without your generous contributions and membership dollars. Every dollar counts. Thank you for being a member of MGCAANA!

Enrollment of New Members:

Last but not least, if you know of any past students of Mahamaya, please spread the word and invite them to join MGCAANA. If you would like to email us the information about non-member Mahamayans who live in North America, our email address is: www.mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com. We would be delighted to contact them.

Please take this opportunity to network, get in touch with old friends, make new ones, and give back to your Alma Mater!!! Thank you for being a valued member of our Maya Family.

Membership Committee

What better time than this to share some snippets about our kids.

Even though we are Buddhists we got a Christmas tree for the kids to decorate. Hopefully this will teach our children religious tolerance and Meth our son, who is five told me that Santa comes through the “Jimney” in the night and asked me to keep the bathroom light on in case Santa needed a wee wee.

During the holidays my husband and I watched some DVD’s of “mind your language”. They brought back nostalgic memories of the time we spent as students in England. Meth suddenly asked me if he could have a wife. I said, “Of course, in good time”. But curiosity got the better of me and I asked, “What will you do with one?” The response was, “Watch all my DVD’s with her sitting on the bed”. He loathes Jeeva and I sitting together, eating together and doing anything for each other. “Amma is mine” is one of Meth’s favorite phrases. The other day I spoke sternly to Meth as he had misplaced his shoes. “It’s not my fault” he said. “Then whose fault is it?” I snapped back. “It is the fault of the man you call your husband” said Meth, referring to his dad.

Iru, who is age 3 on the other hand is getting increasingly verbose. She learns things from her brother and repeats without realizing what she is saying. “Amma do you know why I fall down when I jump up?” she asks. When I ask “Why?” Iru says with a big smile, “It is because of GraPity”! Her favorite color is pink and even has a pink toy cell phone. She asked the doctor for pink medicine and the amoxicillin she was prescribed was colored pink. Iru gulped it down enthusiastically and kept asking for more! She also has learnt a few opposites, again from her brother. Big small, tall short, light heavy, fat thin she mutters to herself. Then when we are outside she walks up to people and says “you are BIG and I am small”, “you are FAT and I am thin!” Some people are amused while we, the parents are perpetually bemused by her outbursts! And Guess What? According to Iru the smallest planet (Pluto) has been renamed. She calls it Poodle and says it is a dogs planet!!

Chathuri Nugawela Munasinghe

CHILDREN - TO HAVE OR NOT TO HAVE

Someone recently commented to me that to expect anything from your grown child is not the done thing in this western life style. It is the way of the East to bring up children with the hope that they will take care of their Parents when they are old & feeble. In the west or maybe it’s the modern way, parents do not have any expectations from their children hence hoping the child would grow up without feeling a sense of obligation to their parents.

The argument for this upbringing is that we have children to fulfill some of our needs & that the child did not asked to be born. Fair enough, the child had no say in being born hence there is no reason for the child to repay anything the Parents have done for it through out its growing years.

But my argument is what is this need that we have to fulfill ? Do we really have a choice in this matter ? Would any sane ,logically thinking person willingly have children if we did not have this urge to fulfill some basic instinct ? I feel that when a human being be it male or female reaches a certain point in their lives they are overwhelmed by these basic instincts to pro create. Without this urge will there be any children at all?

Just think of the period of a person’s life that humans can have children. It is the most vibrant & robust stage of an adult’s life that most of us have to bring children into this world. Or else the clock stops ticking !! Is that not the most inconvenient time to have children ? It’s the most fun times in our adult lives . We have money, freedom & most importantly, in most cases, no responsibility !!!

So, seriously, if we did not have this need to have children believe me the world would be a much smaller place today . Women give up high paying jobs to have children. If this urge to procreate was not strong many a woman would be happy to live a care free life than devote some 18 to 20 years caring for another human being totally dependent on its parents for its well being. However much joy a child can bring in to a life they are an enormous responsibility. Both mentally & physically.

Hence, in my opinion, even though a child does not ask to be brought in to this world the adults of this world have no choice either. If we can be programmed like a robot then we have a choice .But we can’t program our feelings & urges that are essentially human .Therefore it is not fair to the parents of this world to say that the children have no responsibility towards them. The parents give the better part of their life to bring up the children & they deserve to be taken care of when they are feeble . If we bring up our children to feel that they don’t have to worry about their aging parents then they grow up just so.....not to worry or care for them.

Sent By Nazrana Cafoor

REMEMBERING LADY SARAH SOYZA, FOUNDER OF MAHAMAYA

Many months after I purchased a “Fistful of Rice” I finally got round to reading it. Of the many people who contributed much to make Mahamaya College what it is today, the one person who made the biggest impression on me is Lady Sarah Zoysa (Nee Peiris), the founder of Mahamaya. Although I had never met her, her sheer determination to establish a Buddhist girls school against all odds when Sri Lanka was under the British Raj, and the sacrifices she made to see her dream come to fruition is worthy of admiration.

Hailing from Aluthgama (A village situated between Beruwela and Bentota)and greatly influenced by the Sinhala Buddhist revivalist movement through her family association with the likes of Anagarika Dharmapala, Col.Olcott and Countess Miranda de Souza Cavavarro, Lady Soysa came to Kandy after her marriage to Sir Bennet Soysa. Sir Bennet Soysa was originally from Panadura and had come to Kandy with his father who was an entrepreneur and was educated at Dharmaraja College in Kandy. Subsequently he made his home in Kandy and continued to expand his business interests in Kandy, amassing a considerable fortune which they utilized for their philanthropic work. Later on he became the mayor of Kandy.

The Soysas lost their only child in his childhood and dedicated their lives to philanthropy. Lady Zoysa, despite her ill health walked from house to house in parts of Colombo collecting funds for the establishment of Mahamaya, they contributed their own funds in thousands of rupees on many occasions, she nursed the sick kids in the hostel, brought food from her home for the students at the hostel, engaged prominent figures in Kandy for the “Mahamaya cause” and most of all when personality clashes with members of the School Board arose and her resignation was called for, despite all her efforts, her contributions and the sacrifices she had made, Lady Soysa abided by the majority’s decision and stepped down. In later years she continued to assist Mahamaya, her dream child in more ways than one which I think makes her the Mother of Mahamaya. She loved Mahamaya unconditionally, expecting no return, bore its growing pains and stood available whenever she was beckoned for help so the likes of you and I could enjoy a privileged Buddhist education. What better time to remember Lady Sarah Zoysa than this year when we commemorate 75 years of Mahamaya.

Let us wish Lady Sarah Zoysa and Sir Bennet Zoysa a smooth passage through samsara!

Sent By Chathuri Nugawela Munasinghe

Source: Fistful Of Rice By Indrani Meegama

Book corner.....

The Friendships Of Women By Dee Brestin

A Special Education: One family's journey through the maze of learning disabilities By Dana Buchman

Vital Friends: The people you can't afford to live without By Tom Rath

Tails Of Devotion : A look at the bond between people and their pets By Emily Scott Pottruck

If Only They Could Speak By Nicholas Dodman

Hope you will enjoy these books as much as I did...

Priyanka Jayakody

FRIENDSHIPS.....

Friendship have the same power and influence over your life as family relationships, sometimes even more. Close friendships have an intimacy about them that allow each person to share their lives and secrets. We learn and grow from friendships just as we do from relationships within families and those with lovers.

We learn about friendships in childhood, to trust, to love, to share, to care. If you can maintain good friendships at that point in your life, you will generally follow the same patterns throughout your life, as our issues keep us consistent in how we behave.

Some people seems to have many friends, while others tell me that no one wants to be their friend, for no apparent reason, which of course goes to issues. People who can't make friends, or find people annoying in general, have pets instead.

Karmic Friendships

Sometimes you meet someone and there is a special connection from the onset. It is often a recognition on the soul level. Your frequencies match, you feel a link or special bond, and you want to spend more time together. This does not necessarily reflect a romantic relationship, though one could develop in time, if it is meant to be part of the experience. With romance, it can't be one sided. Either both people want it, or it won't work. Karmic friendships are the people who come into our lives for learning lessons. They may be lifelong friendships or short term. The lessons can be positive or negative, depending on what one's soul is searching for at that time. It is all about the experience.

Karmic friendships often have a chemistry about them, a special unspoken dynamic, though not necessarily romantic.

As we study metaphysics we understand that these friendships come from lifetimes where soul are experiencing together in many realities - parallel, past, or future, depending on how you view the movement of time.

Karmic relationships are never limited by race, age, and sexual barriers. They have a purpose, that will be played out.

Metaphysical friends enter your life, share for a time, then generally leave. Sometimes they return; often they do not. They are sometimes people you would not have chosen as friends, had you not been on the path to healing and self-awareness. Metaphysical friends are free spirits and searchers such as yourself, and do not have the where-with-all to make you feel complete.

If the karmic relationship becomes romantic, then separates, there is often a tendency to remain attached at some level, "Can't we still be friends?" There is a feeling of being incomplete without the person in your life, which sadly goes to co-dependency and often emotional problems.

The world is in an escalating state of flux and change, reflected in our friendships, and time available to be spent with others. It is often not easy to maintain full time friendships with people. Technology helps us bridge the time gap, if only to say, "Hello."

Do you attract a karmic friendship the same way you attract a karmic lover? Yes it is the same - and often the same soul.

Balance - To be in a positive friendship, is to be in a functional positive space and know the parameters of the friend in question. You can't have a functional friendship with someone who is dysfunctional and has endless issues and vices, which drag you down with that person. People stuck in issues who will not get help, must be let go of, no matter what the karma. The same is true of family members. In this day and age, with seek friends for fun, compassion, and to help us heal.

Sent By Priyanka Jayakody
www.crystalinks.com

Reflection: Embrace Reality

When you deny the reality of life, you appreciate it less. Meditate on the Buddha's Five Remembrances, and rediscover the magic of life just as it is. The Five Remembrances is what the Buddha offers to awaken you from denial, to cultivate gratitude and appreciation for the life you've been given, and to teach you about nonattachment and equanimity.

Here is one version of the Buddha's Five Remembrances, offered by Thich Nhat Hanh in *The Plum Village Chanting Book* (Parallax Press, 1991). "I am of the nature to grow old. There is no way to escape growing old."

"I am of the nature to have ill health. There is no way to escape ill health."

"I am of the nature to die. There is no way to escape death."

"All that is dear to me and everyone I love are of the nature to change. There is no way to escape being separated from them."

"My actions are my only true belongings. I cannot escape the consequences of my actions. My actions are the ground upon which I stand! Once you accept the reality of impermanence, you begin to realize that grasping and clinging are suffering, as well as the causes of suffering, and with that realization you can let go and celebrate life. The problem is not that things change, but that you try to live as if they don't."

Contributed By Thishya Perera

Source & Author: Unknown



Invitation to the Third Annual General Meeting

Dear Maya Alumna:

You are cordially invited to the Third Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the members of Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America (MGCAANA). The meeting will be held on:

Saturday, June 2, 2007 at 2.00 p.m. (PST) at

The Summerlin Library

1771 Inner Circle Drive

Las Vegas, Nevada 89134

Dinner after the Annual General Meeting:

Following the Annual General Meeting, we will be hosting a dinner to all the attendees and their family members at Dharshani Nanayakkara's residence. More information will be provided at the meeting.

Mahamaya Girls' College

75th Anniversary Commemoration: Almsgiving

Sunday, June 3, 2007 at 7.00 a.m. (PST) at

The Nevada Buddhist Vihara

2040 Abels Lane

Las Vegas, Nevada 89115

Kindly RSVP as soon as possible by e-mailing us at Mahamaya_alumnae@yahoo.com.

For information, please visit our website at www.mahamayaalumna.org.

We thank you very much for your continuous support and hope to see all of you at the Annual General Meeting.

Sincerely yours,

Board of Directors and the Executive Committee

Mahamaya Girls' College Alumnae Association of North America

Asian Roots, Western World



Upuli Anuradha Dissanayake is a Sixteen year old High School Junior at Oak Hall School in Gainesville, Florida. She is the daughter of Mrs. Sriyani Dissanayake, who is an old Girl of Mahamaya Girls College Kandy, and Professor Senarath Dissanayake.

She has been learning traditional Indian Bharathanatyam since the age of five years. She started her Bharatha Natyam first steps in her birth city of Boston with her first Guru Mrs. Nina Gulati at her school of dance. She was energetic and fascinated by Indian cultural dancing in her young age. She has been reading epic stories about each Natyam represents and about Lord Shiva, the dancing god. She listens to traditional songs while practicing her dancing items. Though she is living in a Western society, she never got tired of attending these classes. Under Nina's guidance she started performing at the school annual concerts held at MIT in Boston. When her family moved to United Arab Emirates, she found another teacher Sujatha to continue her dancing gift. Though she did not perform much during this period, she continued on learning main pieces. Few years later, her family moved to Gainesville, Florida where she is residing now and found an excellent guru again to enhance her classical dancing talent. Under Mrs. Mathura Alladi's rigid training, she follows the foot step of her guru and performs at every opportunity that she gets.

Upuli says that she is very thankful for her parents for encouraging at such a young age to be in touch with her Asian culture. It was unfortunate that she could not learn Sri Lankan traditional dance here in the United State, but the closest that she can be is by learning Indian classical dancing. She values her heritage and culture very much, and she is grateful for being able to spend all her summer vacations in Sri Lanka. She says it is important not to get lost in this western world but to know who you are and where you come from and to learn how to appreciate it.

She says that in Bharatha Dancing, concentration, mind focusing and balancing of a body all integrate equally, and it needs lot of dedication and practice. It has an art of telling stories by mastering "Mudras" with facial and body expression. Combination of all three harmoniously tells the audience a great meaning and an epic story of Hindu gods. So the performer must be able to deliver that message right into the eyes and into the heart of the audiences. She says when she is on the stage all what comes to her mind is the picture of dancing God Nataraj and with that illumination in her mind performance comes naturally to her.

She is an excellent piano player. She has completed and passed the Royal College of Music exams. Because of that thorough theoretical training, she picked up very quickly both electric guitar and the bass guitar. Academically, she has been inducted to the National Honor Society by invitation, and she is an honor student in her high school. She says music and dancing is her way of facing the stress which comes with the academics. Also, Bharatha Dancing teaches you how to respect your elders and how to honor your great guru. She respects this idea and thinks that helped her in achieving many things in her life and to stay focused.

Home safety tips

You can create a safer home for your family by taking following simple precautions.

Make sure

*Have telephones in easy reach of both your bed and the place you sit most often.

Avoid fires

*Install smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms throughout the house. Test them periodically to make sure they work. Batteries should be changed at least once a year.

*Place fire extinguishers in the kitchen and other rooms. Make sure you know how to use them.

*Never smoke in bed.

*Turn off appliances when they are not in use.

*Run electrical cords along walls, not under rugs.

*Don't overload outlets and extension cords.

*Never store flammable liquids such as cleaning agents and paint supplies near heating units.

*Keep space heaters a safe distance from combustibles. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's guidelines.

*Have more than one escape route from your home. Practice these routes with your family.

A Recipe for Careful Cooking

*Keep flammable objects such as curtains, aprons and dish-towels away from stoves.

*Never wear loose clothing near a stovetop while cooking.

*Never leave cooking unattended. Don't cook if you are drowsy.

*Heat oil slowly. Heating oil too quickly can easily start a fire.

*If a pan catches fire, carefully place a lid over the pan and turn off the heat. Leave the lid on until completely cool.

*Always clean appliances and surfaces after cooking to prevent grease buildup.

*Make sure handles on cookware are secure and always turned toward the center of the stove when cooking.

*Use a step stool instead of a chair to climb to a high shelf.

Avoid bumps, burns, bruises and falls

*Make sure staircases are well lit and have convenient switches and night-lights at the top and bottom.

*Securely fasten all carpeting and make sure all throw rugs or area rugs have non-skid backing.

*Install rubber mats or safety decals in bathtubs and showers.

*Close cabinet doors and drawers when they are not in use.

*Keep staircases and hallways free of clutter.

*Never go up and down stairs carrying things that could block your vision or put you off balance.

(From statefarm.com) Sent By Devi Gunasekara

THE WORLD IS FULL OF SONS AND DAUGHTERS LIKE YOU AND ME.

I had a marvelous mother who loved me, sacrificed for me and helped me in every way possible. In all of my growing up from childhood through college and eventually marriage, my mother was always at my side.

And when I needed help with my little ones, she was there for me.

Today, we buried this wonderful woman.

Can you imagine how I felt when I returned from the services and found a poem in her desk drawer written by my mom.

THE TIME IS NOW

If you are ever going to love
Love me now while I can know
The sweet and tender feelings
Which from true affection flow

Love me now while I am living
Do not wait until I am gone
And then have it chiseled in marble
Sweet words on ice cold stone

If you have tender thoughts of me
Please let me know now
If you wait until I am sleeping
Never will be death between us
And I won't hear you then

So if you love me, even a little bit
Let me know while I am living
So that I can treasure it

Contributed By Nilmini Dorabawila

Author & Source: unknown

