

# News from Shishu Mandir



Vol. XV, July to September 2016

**Welcome** to Shishu Mandir! We are pleased to share with you our latest developments and programmes in the quarter from July to September 2016.

## Special Needs Children

Along with babies with normal health, we also receive babies with health issues who require special treatment. To our surprise we find adoptive parents even for such babies. For instance a baby with a heart problem was adopted by a nurse working in Manipal Hospital, Bangalore. Another child with a congenital pyloric stenosis had to undergo an emergency operation to be saved. He is sure to find parents. There is Christbin, a boy of almost 2 years, with a congenital kidney problem. He had an operation and is going to be adopted by a couple from Malta. Another child who weighed 4800 g at the age of one year, gained weight 'by the hour', once it had reached our home. This child found a loving home very soon. 2.6 year-old Gowri went to her adoptive parents in Kerala. All these children had temporary or also lasting health issues, but our Baby Kushi, twin sister of Ayush, was at the verge of dying and was saved with an enormous medical effort. Unfortunately she remained with a lasting brain damage causing retardation and epileptic fits. She gets all care and medical treatment, yet her future is unknown.

## Mega Blood Donation Camp

In August a 'Mega Blood Donation Camp' was planned. It took shape thanks to the Manipal Blood Bank which accepted the invitation of the main organiser, the Rotary Club Whitefield Central. Our Shishu Mandir Rotaractors spread the word through social media, and additionally the staff of our Community College went around convents, seminaries and educational institutions to motivate the youngsters for the event.



Much to our joy more than 100 people came, but due to underweight or other physical conditions most of them could not be considered. Still 43 units of blood were collected, out of which 16 were from our own trainees and the staff. It was our first attempt of this kind, so we were pleased with the result.

## Women Awareness Programs

In view of the appalling family situations which we see in our children's families, we consider it a great need to tap on the women potential to bring about a socio-economic change in our country. We feel that enterprise development holds the key to resolve such problems. Consequently Shishu Mandir organized an entrepreneur awareness program, in which 150 women of our Self Help Groups (SHG) participated. Surprisingly 59 of them registered for a further 10-month training program taking place on two days per week. They seem to be electrified by such new and for them revolutionary prospects for their lives.

## Gaining new Skills ...

A workshop was soon arranged, always with the aim of detecting their inborn potential. To make it even more attractive the training was done with soft skills. The women experienced group discussions, slide shows, role plays, and a puppet show. And the women came out of their shell and responded! Many of them participated in the discussions, women who would never have dared to open their mouth and utter an own opinion. It was heart

-ening to see their development and self-liberation and more so, as a few husbands, who happened to be present, declared to support their wives' endeavours in whatever way possible.

### Which Product can I make?



To expose the women of our awareness program to different small-scale production units, we provided a visit to the 'Organic Greenhouse', the nursery at Lalbagh, and a factory, where bags were being manufactured from tetra packs. Everywhere the main skill, which was necessary for the particular product, was explained in detail so that the women received a lot of information. Much attention was given to the tetra pack utilisation, because of the welcome side effect of decreasing waste products by turning them into useful articles. Further the women learnt about making compost and starting a nursery at home. This exposure should yield good results.

### Impacts of Street Plays

As part of the feedback from a street play on corruption, the parents spontaneously promised to refuse accepting money from political parties, but vote for candidates who do not offer money. While we are appreciative of their resolution, we have all difficulties in believing that it will ever come true!

Another street play, this time enacted by the women of the villages around, had an equally unusual effect – the fathers also wanted to be trained in street play acting!

### Technical Touch

As we felt the need to acquaint our children with basic technical skills we made the students of class 7 and 8

attend training classes in our automobile and electrical departments. This should not only serve as a welcome advantage for their limited means, but also instill in them the feeling of respect towards technical trades. We deeply deplore that our children take undue pride over people of technical trades, because of their capacity to speak English.

### Bonding with Geometry

Geometry, one of Mama's favourite subjects, was due to be taught in std. 8, 9, and 10. Hearing this Mama jumped in to utilise the opportunity of dealing again with triangles, angle sums and the like. She is convinced that it is in the hands of the teachers to make students beam with joy and ask for more learning. With that conviction she went to work and – no wonder – even got the teachers interested and involved in her beloved subject Geometry.

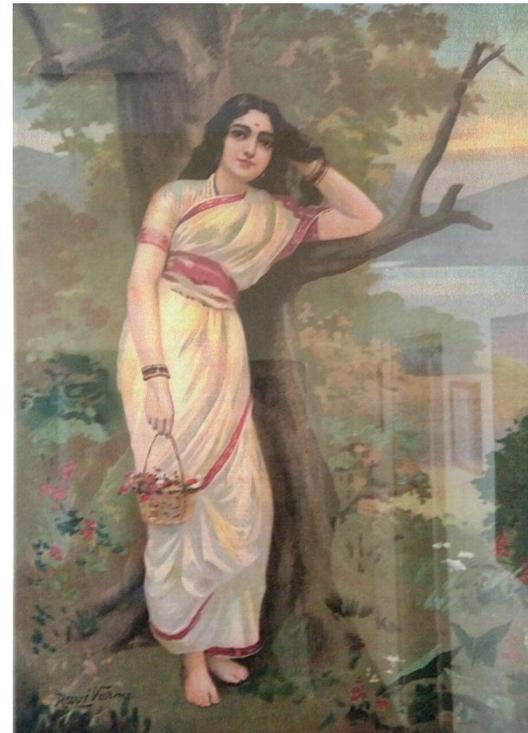


### KPMG Support

No student can get a more intense education than our Aspire Girls thanks to KPMG. This time they arranged for a career guidance session which is indeed highly needed for our children at the time of leaving school. KPMG takes big efforts in strengthening their academic performance, particularly in the Science stream, but also commerce and accounts were brought to them by a program on finance, banking, accounts, stocks, bonds and mutual funds. Periodically their CSR team members visit our school to get a feedback on all their programs.

### A Peep into the World of Art

Ravi Varma (1848 – 1906) was a celebrated Indian painter and artist. His works are examples of the fusion of European techniques with a purely Indian sensibility. He was notable for making lithographs of his paintings available to the public, which greatly enhanced his reach and influence as a painter and public figure.



Mr. Bala Chandra and Mr. Raj from Raja Ravi Varma Heritage Foundation wanted to acquaint the common man with Ravi Varma's paintings. They escorted our children to the National Gallery of Modern Art at Bangalore, where a fully new world of art opened to them. They were overwhelmed by the beauty and sensitivity of these paintings.

### A Special Impact of Mama's Visit

Every visit of Mama is a source of inspiration and motivation to the teachers. This time apart from the spontaneous program on Geometry classes she planned to meet the teachers individually to discuss with them the setting of question papers. The teachers responded with great openness. It was taken as a welcome opportunity for improvement. They

also immediately approved of her suggestion to give double promotion to Bhavani, an outstanding girl in standard 4, who was right away sent up to standard 5. Even there she excelled in all the subjects, only in Maths she wanted extra classes which were gladly arranged.



Bhavani

It was a well deserved honour for Bhavani and an inspiration for all the other children.

### Our Weakness – being on Time

As every year the Annual Report keeps us busy up to the last minute. How should it be different this year? It was of course not. Only with Mama's intensive push and Mr. Ericks' burning the midnight oil we managed to complete it on time. No wonder, as it has reached a length of 55 pages in all!

### Also in Administration ...

Finally one more important and indeed long overdue improvement was introduced in our administrative system: It was the preservation of the students' test papers arranged in class-wise folders and in alphabetical order. We are growing slowly, but steadily!

### Learning English with the Computer



The newly installed English lab is a big boost for our students from class 4 onwards. With head phones on they are eagerly working on the given tasks. We hope that this direct contact with native English speakers will further refine their grammar and pronunciation. There is much to be improved!

### Sex Education

In keeping with the needs of the time we invited Enfold Training Centre to provide sex education classes for all our children. For the small ones the topics were "I am special", "Importance of the Body" and "Good and bad Touch". For the senior ones the topics were on personal safety, teasing and bullying, body image, building self-esteem, physical and emotional changes during puberty, body safety rules, resisting and reporting abuse, and also acts related to child abuse. Also a session in Kannada on how to handle children was conducted for the non-teaching staff including the security staff. Altogether we see the great need for such instructions which



our teachers cannot handle with confidence. We will continue for minimum six months engaging specialists on this subject.

### Motivating Experience

Concern India Foundation called our Bharathnatyam children for a reach-out program in favour of differently abled children. It was a unique experience for our children to bring a smile on the faces of differently abled children and their parents through their dance performance. Being confronted with a big group of these children they realised with surprise how fortunate they are to be able-bodied due to no merit of their own.

### Teachers' Day



*Teaching is the profession that teaches every other profession - Tilak, freedom fighter.*

As every year the students of class 9 made the day colourful and special. They had thought of a pleasant cultural program as well as amusing scenes. It was indeed very funny to see the students interviewing their own teachers. Each teacher was presented with a book titled 'Good Teaching' based on the quote of Swami Vivekananda, "We want an education by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, the intellect is expanded by which one can stand on one's own feet".

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## Successful Story

### Punith Kumar



Punith Kumar's father was a building sub-contractor who had well understood the present world's great demands for technically skilled persons. Therefore he was looking for an ITI education for his son Punith to pick up a skill or two. At that time he came to know about Shishu Mandir Community College and the offer of technical courses free of cost. Punith, who had just completed his SSLC, gladly enrolled himself for the electrical course. He was sure that after some years of experience he would be able to manage on his own like his father. But bad luck was in store for him. As he was following his course, he was diagnosed as a patient of a Pituitary Adenoma, a tumour in the brain, for which he was advised to keep bed rest for a year. It was a paralysing

shock for a youngster of 17 years with all life expectations in front of him. He was shattered.

But he recovered. In 2013, Punith was back to his normal self. He was advised not to take up work that would involve physical strain, which was a highly limiting factor. He contacted our community college again to find out what more was in store for him. But to his utter dismay he came to know that according to the policy of the institution, no second chance was given to anyone who had dropped out once. He was distressed. However, knowing Punith's particular medical condition, the Community College made an exception and re-admitted Punith, this time for a Tally Course. With free access to computers, Punith picked up all the basics of computer handling along with his main subject Tally, and with the all-round formation offered at the Community College, he got prepared to take up a job suitable to his health. All what he had gained from the Life Skill and English language classes stood in good stead in his first job as a tele caller in Aegis for a salary of Rs. 6500.

Today as Punith Kumar works at his computer, sitting in an AC cooled chamber in a 3-star hotel, he fondly remembers his Tally days in room No. 215 at Community College. Yes, Punith Kumar is a Computer Operator now at the Evoma Hotel with a salary of Rs. 15,000. It is a second life for him and much more will be in stock thanks to his basic skills gained at the Shishu Mandir Community College.