



# LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

April 2015

## Woori Bank's Rs 10 lacs education endowment It will see 12 children through their entire schooling



*Jeong Pil Heo, MD, Woori Bank and colleagues along with V. Muralidharan, Founder and Managing Trustee of Sevalaya*

A team of employees of Woori Bank, led by Jeong Pil Heo, MD and CEO, visited Sevalaya on 21st March 2015 and spent a few hours in various activities. On behalf of the bank, Heo handed over a cheque for Rs. 10,05,500 towards education and food endowment. The education endowment would benefit 12 children for their entire school education upto class XII. Speaking on the occasion Heo said that this is only a beginning and Woori

Bank will continue to support Sevalaya in all the ways they can. Heo and the entire Woori bank team served lunch for Sevalaya children. They also planted trees in line with Sevalaya's green initiatives. The decision to partner Sevalaya followed an evaluation and screening process that followed a meeting with the then Sevalaya City Office Head M.R.Jambunaathan had with the Bank officials. Head quartered in South Korea,

Woori Bank established its first branch in India in 2012. "Woori Bank takes seriously its social roles and responsibilities in finance that emphasize humanity, happiness, and hopefulness which are the three major missions under the vision of sharing love, Having a Dream, and raising hope.", explains D. Suresh Kumar, HR Head, Woori Bank "The practices we conduct are not standalone incidents and they are performed in conjunction with the entire staff at Woori Bank, as well as their families". He explains the choice of Sevalaya: "We chose Sevalaya for the service rendered to poor rural children. Really, its been a great experience for us with Sevalaya".



## PPG Asian Paints Rs 25 lacs sponsorship 62 alumni can pursue higher education

A.R. Ariraj, Manager - Plant HR of PPG Asian Paints Private Limited handed over a Cheque of Rs. 25 lacs to Sevalaya as part of their CSR. This fund was given to support the higher education of 62 students who passed out of Std XII, the last academic year. Of these 62 students, 22 have taken up engineering while the other 40 are pursuing varied graduate course in different colleges. He says, "We do not want Higher education of students to be stopped for want of money and that is why we have sponsored Higher education for students who have passed out of Sevalaya". Sevalaya was selected after rigorous due diligence process by Give2Asia, who then recommended Sevalaya to our principal organization.



*A. R. Ariraj, Manager- Plant HR of PPG Asian Paints and his team handing over the cheque to the alumni students of Sevalaya*

# Joy of giving: *the way of life*

Every year on 26th January, along with the Republic day celebrations, we arrange a send off party for the outgoing students. Normally in the first week of February, the practical exams will start, hence mostly the classes will wind up by end January. We have a get-together and the children talk about their experiences in the school and the teachers also share their views and every year the program will be highly emotionally charged as some children start crying that they have to leave this school, part with their friends etc. Snacks are provided to the children. All the students and staff and the Management team present light candles, symbolically showing that just as it doesn't cost anything to light a hundred candles from one candle, the light of knowledge can also be spread free of any cost.

After this program some students of 12th grade "D" section, the agricultural section, were grouping together and discussing some plan. Their class teacher and higher secondary head teacher, Vijaya could understand that the students were upto something and joined the discussion. They were actually planning to have a separate party, just among their section students, may be buy a cake and celebrate the next day. "It is a nice idea. But this is what children in all the schools do. Sevalaya children have to be different. So try to think differently" she made them think and come up with better ideas. One student, Sridhar, said "We are all from very poor families. My father is a coolie (daily wage earner) so is my mother. We

have very little money. We can buy a cake and share it, but we will get very small piece each. We will eat it in no time! Our party will be over. Can we do something, which will not get over so fast? Can we have the cake and eat it too?" They all discussed again, but what can be done of a permanent nature, with a very small purse?



Sridhar talked to his group again "We have read so much about helping others in this school. We have seen it with our own eyes. So many thousands of students have studied here without spending anything. So can we have our celebration which will match the culture of this school? Why should we buy cake and eat it – it is spending money on ourselves – maybe it is a very small amount – but still it can be spent on others. Can we do something for the next batch of children? Can we buy cake for them?" Then another student intervened and said "what is the point? They will also eat it and it is gone. What are we aiming at? Something useful, but

of permanent nature. We want a bright future for the next batch. How about making the class room brighter? Can we buy paint, just enough to paint our class room? We can also join and paint it after our exams".

There was a general agreement on this idea and they dropped the cake party and

started collecting money and ended up collecting Rs 2500 (around 40 USD), but that was enough to buy paints for their class room.

The proud group, next day in the assembly, came up to the dais, with paint boxes and brushes. With big smiles on their faces, they handed over their gift, with thunderous applause from all the 2000 kids, 150 staff members. I am sure you will also join in applauding them.

Thanks and Regards

Murali

## Small pockets, but big hearts

When family friend Sue Humphreys told 9 year old Sam Blowers and his 6 year old brother Matthew that she was going to India to help take care of children at the Sevalaya orphanage they were excited and wanted to help. Sue explained that Sevalaya look after the children and give them education and a place to live. The boys live with their parents Abby and Neil and are a very close family so the concept of children not having a mother and father was unusual to them.

Sam enjoys rugby and loves to draw and art work is one of his favourite things to do, whilst Matthew really enjoys solving puzzles. Both boys love books and decided that they would give some



of their favourite books to the children of Sevalaya school so that they too could enjoy traditional English stories such as "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe"; and "Mrs. Pepperpot".

Each week the boys receive pocket money and Sam had the idea of using some of their money to buy packets of coloured pens and colouring books for the children. The boys realise how lucky and fortunate they are to have parents who are waiting for them after school each day.

Now the children are waiting for Sue to return to hear all about the life of the children and about Sevalaya.



# Proud to be a Sevalaya alumni

**S.Manoharan**

Field Officer, Syngenta Tegra



S. Manoharan, working as field officer with SYNGENTA TEGRA, is proud to be an alumni of Sevalaya. Staff at Sevalaya are also happy to see the confidence he exudes compared to his earlier shy nature. Manoharan and his siblings a brother and a sister, residents of Kasuva village, studied in Sevalaya's Mahakavi Bharathiyar Higher Secondary School. Both his parents work as daily wage earners in the fields and life had not been easy during his growing years. Like the other young boys of the village he had thought only a computer education or engineering would lead him to greener pastures.

But life had other plans for him. From being an average student he worked hard to get 60% in Std X and wanted to take up Computer Science group but his sister advised him to opt for the vocational

Agriculture group which she felt would help him score more and open better avenues. He is happy that he followed her advice and the then Agriculture teacher Senthilnathan's practical oriented style of teaching interspersed with humorous anecdotes of life at the Agriculture College and the variety of subjects taught there, kindled a desire in him to do BSc Agriculture.

When he went for counseling after scoring 1045 in std XII he was taken aback to find city students who had studied pure science in English medium, vying for a seat in Agriculture University. There were only 8 Tamil medium Vocational group students in the class of more than 100 students from Science group. This was an eye opener as he realized the value of this professional course. When classes started, his strong practical

background made it very easy for him to answer all the questions in class but expression in English was difficult. He resolved to work hard to pass with good grades and get a good placement. After passing out in 2013 from the College of Agriculture in Tirunelveli he worked as a junior research fellow with Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Sevvapet before joining the Swiss MNC he is with at present.

When asked what Sevalaya meant to him he pauses for a moment – "How do I put it in words" he says, "So many things. I went from a totally different culture- Bharathi, Gandhi, Vivekananda and students at the agricultural college were impressed to hear me talk about all this. I showed Kasuva village to them through Sevalaya's website. I had unconsciously learnt to think differently /laterally by participating in the competitions and exhibitions at Sevalaya and contributing for the monthly Vidiyal."

Manoharan's performance in the non-stage extracurricular activities in the college made him stand out and slowly transformed the awkward village youngster into a quiet but self confident individual who dreams of doing a Masters in Agriculture from Coimbatore later. For now he wants to talk and motivate the Higher Secondary students studying at Sevalaya about the various options that are there in this field of agriculture - forestry, fishery, horticulture etc. and help interested students by hand holding them through the various stages of admission.

## Exposure on the temples of South India



Around 100 children of Std IX had a nice exposure on the temples of South India. The temples of South India with their intricate sculptures, carvings, layout etc stand as a testimony to the excellence of our ancestors in architecture.

R. Gopu, an expert in heritage visited Sevalaya on 14th March 2015 and explained the children through various pictures about the important temples

of South India, the expert architects behind these great temples. He felt that practical exposure to the important temples will be of more benefit to the students. Hence the students were taken to Bhakthavatsala Perumal temple and Irudayaleeswarar temple in Thiruninravur. These two temples were built during the period of Cholas and Pallavas. The students learnt about Azhwars and Nayanmars during their visit and also saw the various carvings, idols in the temple.

The overseas volunteers at Sevalaya, who attended Gopu's lecture, accompanied the students to these temples and were fascinated. When R. Nishanth spoke about this he said "I had never been to these temples and for the first time I learnt to observe and appreciate the carvings and the architectural beauty of temples."



Victor Mignot, a volunteer from Switzerland who was attracted by the character of Lord Rama after reading Ramayana said that the temple of Lord Rama located in Thiruninravur with an 8ft statue of Rama is very attractive and that the temples have good architecture.

# Women's Day Celebrations



About 20 Women from VA Tech Wabag Ltd, visited Sevalaya on 7th March 2015 to celebrate International Womens Day with the students of Sevalaya School and Community College. Divya from Wabag spoke to the girls about being Self Confident and Self Reliant and motivated the Community College students to take up a career after they complete their course. Rohini Khanapur, Head HR International Business, Andrena, Secretary to Chairman and the other ladies shared flowers and snacks with the students. They also conducted games and gave away prizes. A contribution from the group was presented to Sevalaya as donation.

## Visit to Haworth India

Sevalaya's Head Corporate Relations, Radha Srinivasan, was invited as Guest to Haworth India Pvt Ltd to address the Women staff of Haworth. Radha spoke about "Women At Work", the challenges faced, innate abilities of women to handle the challenges, about women role models and some tips for women to achieve Work Life Balance and how to be successful professionally in the work place. Santosh, Head HR, Haworth presented useful information about Legal Rights of Women staff. The function ended with Akila, Business Development Manager sharing a few thoughts. Haworth is CSR partner of Sevalaya and supports Sevalaya's Community College with Professional Training and Jobs to the needy and deserving candidates from the vocational streams. Haworth and Sevalaya would be signing an MOU for Training and Placement of students on a continual basis.

## At Lionbridge

Lionbridge Technologies organized "Womens Day Celebration" at their premises on 6th March 2015 between 10.30 am and 6.30 pm.

As part of their program, they had invited students of beautician course of Sevalaya's Community College and provided opportunity for them to do



mehendi,manicure and eye massage for the lady staff members. Sangeetha Perumal, Executive – Human Resources, Lionbridge Technologies coordinated the program along with Mumtha, PR – Manager, Sevalaya.



## Founder greets Gypsy welfare trust



V. Muralidharan, Founder and Managing Trustee of Sevalaya was one of the Chief Guests at the inauguration of the office building of Jaya Narikuravargal Social Education Trust at Avadi on 22 March 2015. The Trust works for the welfare of the gypsy community in Jaya Nagar Avadi.

## Sevalaya chosen for National Achievement Survey

School Education Department of India is conducting a National Achievement Survey ( NAS) in selected schools in the country through State Educational departments.The main idea behind this survey is to find out the status of education in Government schools, Self financing schools and aided schools. Questionnaires are distributed to the selected schools which has to be completed by the school students. In Thiruvallur district, Tamil Nadu Sevalaya is the only school selected by the Education Department under the self financing category. On 26th February 2015, Sevalaya conducted this survey among the students of Std X and the completed questionnaires were submitted to the department.

## Guest Lecture



S. Ravishankar, who heads Design of Power Plants in a leading Energy company, gave a Guest Lecture to the AC Refrigeration and Electrician Students of Sevalaya's Community College on 14th March 2015. He gave simple tips to the students on how to fare well in their placement interview and encouraged them to take up a career.



# Asian Paints in third CSR project Donates Rs 11.8 lacs for kitchen equipment

Sevalaya's kitchen will be better equipped with Chapathi maker and other essential kitchen equipments and the hygiene of the kitchen will be improved with mesh for the windows, through the repeat CSR project of Asian Paints to the tune of Rs.11.8 lakhs. The long cherished dream of the children to have hot chapathis would be fulfilled now.

With this Asian Paints are supporting 6 Projects under CSR viz., Toilet construction for Girls Home & Primary School, Solar Project , Water Purifiers for School and the Homes, Endowment for Health and Hygiene of the children of the Homes and now, Kitchen Equipments Project. Successful implementation of the



*V. Muralidharan and Radha Srinivasan at the cheque presentation function*

projects has encouraged Asian Paints to select Sevalaya as their major CSR Partner.

## Four in a row, overall championship



The students of Sevalaya were the overall winners for the 4th consecutive year in the Vivega Competitions held at Anna University on 1st March 2015.

This year 10 NGOs participated in the competition and Sevalaya team were the winners.

## Medical Camps for residents and community

On 1st March 2015, a general medical camp was organized for the hostel children by Sevalaya in association with Rotary Club of Thiruvallur. This camp focussed on the general health issues and ENT problem of children. Dr. Dinesh, ENT specialist examined the children thoroughly and suggested further follow up for few children.

villagers were screened at the camp.

A cancer detection camp was jointly organised by Gangaur, Rajasthani Jain Trust of the Women's Wing of Rajasthani Association, Tamil Nadu and Sevalaya on 24th March 2015. 65 women were screened at the camp.

On 2nd March 2015, Sevalaya organized a Kidney Screening Camp in association with Tamil Nadu Kidney Research Foundation(TANKER). The camp was held at Sevalaya's Mahatma Gandhi Medical Centre. Doctor and nurses did Albumin test, Urine sugar test for the people and further follow up was suggested for those who needed it. 170 people including the



## One day with the kids



The management and 250 employees of SPi Global celebrated CSR Day at Sevalaya on 7th March 2015. They spent the whole day conducting various games for the kids and spent time with the senior citizens. They had lunch with the children and senior citizens. The Vice President Vijay and his team handed over a cheque for Rs. 10,000 as their contribution to Sevalaya. Vijay assured that their team will visit Sevalaya frequently.

## Visit to circus

Excitement was in the air on 8th March 2015.150 students of the hostel had a gala time at the Bombay circus near central railway station. This trip was sponsored by Food bank who also sponsored their breakfast, snacks and dinner.

# Working in Sevalaya

## Some employee voices on their Sevalaya experiences



A service organization dealing with vulnerable destitute elders and children as also school children from poor families need a committed and motivated employee team to deliver its mission. Sevalaya realized this early in its 27 year old history and has created an atmosphere and systems that aid self development and team work, at the same time offering a competitive remuneration and benefit package, going beyond the mandatory provisions.

Even in a performance oriented system, Sevalaya seeks to ensure career-growth through skilling and continuous training, work-life balance and the comfort of a 'family atmosphere' and matching support system.

As an example of the participative culture in Sevalaya, inputs are taken from all the stakeholders, including all staff, for the annual plan. These are then converted to goals and action items for the various teams and their members, thus bringing in high level ownership from the staff. That sets the framework for an objective self appraisal.

Sevalaya, with its uncompromising ethical practices, fairness and transparency, is considered a rare career proposition by the staff, for people who seek professionalism combined with the passion to serve the needy. One example of this is the number of referrals that we get from the existing staff.

### Money matters

Employee benefits

Benefit	Details	Legal requirement
Gratuity	50% of last drawn basic salary for the entire service period, for employees, completing 5 years of service	✓
Pension	Interest from two thirds of PF accumulation, for employees with more than 1 year of service	No
Life Insurance	Life cover of 15 days of salary for every year of anticipated service	No
Pay Scale	Government salary matched for employees with 5 years of service or more	No
Maternity Leave Paternity Leave	Maternity leave of 1 month with Salary and paternity leave of 3 days with Salary	✓ No



# Montessori exhibition: Tiny tot's talents on view



Sevalaya management in keeping with its vision of upliftment of poor, has always aimed to improve the standards of education by implementing new methods and technologies. Based on the suggestions of well wishers the management decided to introduce Montessori education in the primary level as it would have greater impact on developing motor coordination skills, deeper understanding of concepts in maths and language and motivate students towards self learning. Initially there had been objections that it may not be suitable for tamil medium rural children as the method needed well

trained teachers and costly kits. But Sri Ramacharan trust stepped in to help by giving basic training to early 5 teachers of primary and well wishers generously donated kits and from 2009 this system has grown in strength year by year. The first batch of students, now in Std IV display a greater level of confidence and have good linguistic and numerical skills dispelling the myth that this method is not suitable for a rural set up. The number of students in Montessori has grown from 30- 35 to a whopping 250 with a section equipped with EPL(Exercise of Practical Life) and Sensorial kits.

## Healing Therapy

Saroja and Shiva, volunteers of Art of Living Group of Thiruninravur gave healing therapy to about 412 students studying in std IX , X and XII. 60 staff from the primary and higher secondary school also participated in the therapy session. The volunteers then gave a small talk on the importance of living in the present without dwelling too much in the past or dreaming about the future.

## Sri Rama Navami celebrations

Sri Rama Navami was celebrated on 27th March 2015. The Chief Guest for the function K. Srinivasan, spoke on the virtues of Lord Rama. He was all praises for Sevalaya's emphasis on value education.



Priyan, Senior Journalist, Kalki group at the exhibition

The Montessori exhibition is a culmination of year long activities done by the children of the kindergarten classes. The children exhibit their talents through the various type of activities they do in their classes.

Inaugurating the exhibition Priyan, Senior Journalist of Kalki Group appreciated the services provided by Sevalaya to improve the quality of education. A long standing supporter of Sevalaya, Priyan has donated many valuable books to the school library.



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# Shyness, his shield and buckler

Imagine yourself addressing a gathering. You want to make an impressive beginning by narrating a humorous anecdote. But, after just starting the joke, your mind becomes blank. The punch-line is not coming. Instead of laughing at the joke, people will laugh at you!

Something like this happened to Gandhiji during his farewell in England. Normally he was afraid of making speeches. He got over this fear only during his South Africa advent..

It happened like this. He wanted to make his speech very short and sweet. He had planned to start with narrating a humorous anecdote and complete with a few words thereafter.

He had read of Addison that he made his maiden speech in the House of Commons repeating, "I conceive" three times and when he could proceed no further, a wag stood up and said, "the gentleman conceived thrice and brought forth nothing" He began narrating the anecdote and got stuck there as his mind went blank. There was uproarious laughter, but for the wrong reason.

He had some reflections on his shyness. He writes:

"My constitutional shyness has all been to my advantage. My hesitancy in speech, which was once an annoyance, is now a pleasure. Its greatest benefit is that it has taught me the economy of words. I have naturally formed the

habit of restraining my thoughts. And I can now give myself the certificate that a thoughtless word hardly escapes my tongue or pen. I do not recollect ever having to regret anything in my speech or writing. I have thus been spared many a mishap and waste of time. Experience has taught me that silence is part of the spiritual discipline of a votary of truth. Proneness to exaggerate, to suppress or modify the truth, wittingly or unwittingly, is a natural weakness of man, and silence is necessary in order to surmount it. A man of few words will rarely be thoughtless in his speech; he will measure every word. My shyness has been in reality my shield and buckler. It has allowed me to grow. It has helped me in my discernment of truth."

## A bus trip to Pondicherry



On 7th March 2015, 17 senior citizens and 22 hostel children were taken to Pondicherry for one day picnic. The picnic was organized by Nandhakumar from Chennai, who is a long standing donor of Sevalaya. They were taken to temple, beach and flower shows.

"For the residents of Sevalaya temple visit is a regular one, but a long trip like this is a memorable one for us" says G. Maragatham, an elder of Sevalaya. This trip has made them to interact more with children and it was much like a family trip for them.

## Readers Right

For the past 4 to 5 months, I am regularly receiving 'Love All Serve All' with thanks. The issues are very much interesting and impressive. I add my hope that our Bharat Culture – Joy of Giving – will be there for ever, till such people like you are here.

Particularly the issue for the month of February 2015, was most interesting. Whenever I see advertisement in the TV like Lotte choco, Asian Paints, Infosys etc., I have so far been seeing them as only just advertisements. But hereafter, I will look at these ads as Society Saving Advertisements, because they are doing their duty to the society also.

The story of Gajendran was very touching. Of course, each line in the issue was very useful and meaningful.

For your information, I am already serving in Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari and Thirunelveli branches.

Hats off for your selfless services.

**C.Muthusamy, Palayamkottai - 627002**

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