



LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

JULY 2016

World Environment Day: 200 children adopt saplings, 300 take cycle rally, 360 LED bulbs fitted, 100 fruit trees planted



Planting seeds in empty coconut shells.

World Environment Day saw an array of activities at the Sevalaya campus, in association with enthusiastic volunteers from some Corporates who have been regular supporters of Sevalaya.

A novel initiative was spontaneously thought up by the SCOPE International volunteers. They found a new shape for tree plantation. Empty coconut shells were filled with soil and a seed planted in it each. Watering and maintenance will be the responsibility of students whose name is painted on the coconut shell. The growth of the seed will be observed for 3 months. SCOPE International will

monitor the growth and efficacy of the experiment, at periodic intervals.

“It is time to act; save the planet earth” was the slogan the 400 volunteers and 300 students from Sevalaya carried, as they cycled around the villages to raise awareness about the devastating effects of global warming. It resonated very well among the villagers who had witnessed the fury of floods which caused extensive damage just a few months ago. The rally covered more than 10 villages. The event was flagged off by Dinesh Shenoy, Head, Support Services, SCOPE International.



Cycling for awareness

400 SCOPE International volunteers and 300 students cycled around 10 villages to spread awareness on ill effects of pollution.

In an innovative experiment, they planted seeds with soil inside coconut shells. Children 'own' and tend to the saplings.

Planting 100 fruit bearing trees

12 volunteers from PwC planted 100 fruit bearing trees including pomegranate, custard apple, sapota, lime, citron and papaya.

LED lights up Sevalaya, saving energy

Entire Sevalaya campus transitions from CFL to LED sponsored by Renault Nissan Co.

The eco friendly Kasua campus added one more green feature in its lighting system, thanks to the donation of 360 LED bulbs by Renault Nissan.

Speaking on the occasion, D Ponnusamy, Sr. manager, Plant Engineering, Renault Nissan Ltd., appreciated the green initiatives of Sevalaya and donated 350 LED Bulbs, which will replace all the CFL bulbs in the Campus and make the entire campus greener.



Radha Srinivasan, VP - Donor Relations, Sevalaya receiving LED bulbs from Rangoli Mathur, Engineer, Energy Management Renault Nissan Co

Continued on page 2

Joy of giving: *the way of life*

Dear Friends,

Recently Switzerland went for a referendum asking people if the government can introduce a guaranteed basic income for all. This means the government will pay each adult in the country 2500 Swiss francs (2555 USD or 1,71,185 INR) and per child 625 Swiss francs (42,200 INR), per month. So a family with two kids will get around 4,27,000 INR, per month, without doing any work ! Of course cost of living is very high compared to India, so a direct translation into INR may not be the right thing, but still it is lot of free money.

Final results from June 5th, 2016, referendum showed that nearly 77% opposed the plan, with only 23% backing it. On top of this, no political party or political leader backed this referendum. It is just the system in that country which mandates referendum if 100,000 people

back a proposal.

It is heartening to note that people asked the questions, "If we get all the money without doing work, who will do the work? If no work gets done, how can we survive? If there is no production, what will we eat?" Good to see the political parties also took a stand against this referendum. They did not woo the voters by saying that everything will be given to them free. People of Switzerland have clearly understood that getting "free lunch" is not a long term solution.

There is so much written and spoken about hard work in our country. If not hard work, at least there must be some work! Without work and production, the economy is not going to improve. Whatever we see around us, is all conceived by someone, made by someone and sold by someone. They all did it – at least one of the motivating

factors for doing so is the money the person earns after he did the work. If this link is removed, we may have to go back to Stone Age.

By nature humans have to keep doing something. They can't stay without work. As long as there is positive work, linked with production, which in turn linked with profit, which results in happy living, the human race is safe. If the income is taken care of without work, then the "idle mind is devil's workshop" theory will come into play and we know no one on earth will be safe! The human resource has enormous amount of mental and physical energy, which has to be put into proper use.

One of my teachers in school use to say, "Success comes before work, only in dictionaries".

Thanks and Regards

Sevalaya Murali

Continued from page 1

100 fruit bearing trees planted



11th June 2016 saw 12 volunteers from PwC Chennai visit our campus and plant 100 fruit bearing saplings like pomegranate, sapota, custard apple, lime, citron (*Narthangai*) and papaya. The saplings were planted in front of the kitchen. They visited the organic

farming field as well. The campus staff are taking loving care of the saplings, with protection and watering. PwC staff also visited the Puliur settlement where they have sponsored the construction of 20 homes.



Rally & oath – against child labour

50 students took out a rally from district collectorate at Thiruvallur on 13th June 2016 to oppose child labour and create awareness in the society. The rally in which Sevalaya and two other NGOs participated, was organized by Syed Rawoof, child welfare community officer, and inaugurated by Thiruvallur district collector, E Sundaravalli IAS. The students took an oath and promised to eradicate child labour. Says S Nithesh, XI "In my life I will surely advice the children to study well, and not go to work."

After the rally the collector invited Sevalaya children to her room and discussed about how Government can help Sevalaya. The children were delighted to get personal time from the district collector.



E Sundaravalli, District collector, Thiruvallur, administering oath against child labour to Sevalaya students

Three families say “Home Sweet Home”



Alice with her children and mother at new home

After the blistering heat, lasting more than a month, 6th June 2016 dawned a very pleasant day, with cloud cover and a gentle breeze. Excitement and chatter filled the air at each of the three newly built homes in Pakkam village. These were the new homes of Sevvanthi, Poongavanam and Alice, teachers at Sevalaya. The three huts in which they were living earlier, were in a pitiable condition after the floods, and their spirits completely shattered by the devastation. Singapore-based donor, V S Sivakumar came forward to sponsor the entire cost of building their new homes, from ground up. The project was implemented by Sevalaya.

The setting was one of joy, and, the festivities were joined in by neighbors and relatives, as the priests from the temple and the father from the local church blessed the new homes on 6th June 2016. The home owners hosted a breakfast and lunch party for all. Each home has a living room, a kitchen and a separate toilet, in keeping with the Prime Minister’s Swachh Bharat Initiative.

International Yoga Day at Campus

A group of volunteers headed by Sadasivam, from Isha Foundation, Thiruninravur, conducted a session on yoga and meditation for our children on 15th June 2016. Some of the topics covered were, Nadisuththi (breath control), Suryanamaskaram, and meditation. The volunteers made powerpoint presentations and played videos to guide the students. They motivated our students to meditate regularly.

“This practice will help me in concentration and enable me to remember what I studied, said B Lokeshwari, VI A.



Poongavanam with her family at new home



For the three families who were living in huts before the floods washed them away, living in concrete homes is going to be a new experience, and the families are



Sevvanthi, with her family

looking forward to leading normal lives again.

“It’s a joy to see my children so happily playing inside the house. Five months ago, my life was bleak, and I did not have any hope. I was clueless as to how I was going to take care of my children, as we had no roof over our heads. I am ever grateful to Sevalaya, who have taken care of my family” said a teary eyed Alice.

“What can I say? It still seems like a dream. My parents and my family are very happy to move into a concrete building. We wish to convey our heartfelt thanks to Sevalaya who rushed to our assistance, as soon as they heard about the damage to our home” said Sevvanthi in a voice choked with emotion.

“The transformation in the eyes of my children says it all. The fear in their eyes, after the floods, has changed to mischief and playfulness. I am deeply indebted to Sevalaya without whose assistance, I could not even imagine reconstructing our damaged hut, let alone, a concrete structure like this” was Poongavanam’s reaction.

and keep hisbody andmind in good shape.



2000 students of Sevalaya participating in Yoga event



Girls performing asanas

Empowering Rural Youth with spoken English, entrepreneurship skills

English language is a major block for the rural children who wish to pursue higher education. It has been our experience that the children who do well in other subjects like Science, Social Studies and Maths in school flounder when they join college and have to study the subjects in English. We have been constantly exploring avenues to remove this fear of English and make learning English fun for our children.

It was at this juncture Kris Srikanth, the dashing batsman of yesteryears, approached us in his new avatar as Director of AA Edutech Pvt limited. AA Edutech imparts English through a unique medium – cricket, as a joint venture project with British Council.

The product “English strokes” brings together English and Cricket in an online



course, so that one can turn their love of cricket into success with English - word by word, stroke by stroke! The product will help the students to improve their vocabulary, grammar, spoken English, pronunciation and listening skills, as well as develop their confidence, accuracy and communication ability.



AA Edutech has installed English software in the PCs at school and community college. The students are thrilled at this novel way of learning English and the motivation levels are very high.

340 of the 661 students who enrolled for this programme are girls, and they have taken to learning English enthusiastically.

R Mohan Std XII pointedly mentions, “When I entered this class, I thought this class would be like other classes. But this class is fun. We make sentences with our own words and I learnt many new words. Each of us is given an individual PC to work on. It is also good that I am learning English through my favourite game – cricket!!!”

R Anandan of Std X is animated when he says “I learnt many things from this class like how to speak with others in English. I feel very happy and I attend the class eagerly. This class removed my fear. I am learning how to conduct myself when others are present in the room. I learnt about resume, interview, and self-introduction.”

Says T Anuja of Std XII “This class is very useful to us. We thought English is a tough language to learn, but now we feel that it is easy to learn if we try. We are learning how to speak with someone whom we meet at first time. They are teaching us to type an application letter and to reply.”

Our Headmistress Vijaya opines “It is a good opportunity to our students. The programme has been designed with a modern bent on teaching. Classes are conducted with a good plan and great involvement. Individual attention is given to each of the students. Role playing could really enhance students’ oral skills. Visual medium of education is quite easy to understand. Students learn English through pictures. They were also shown slides with many examples related to cricket, which enhanced their interest.”

“We understand the Indian psyche, and are using the one thing that is close to almost every Indian heart – Cricket, to help them learn English. Empowering school children and youth is very important, as it motivates them to go for higher studies or seek employment, as well as climb the ladder for a successful career in life.” says Kris Srikanth.

am particularly impressed by the way, they have taken up empowerment of rural children and youth in Tamilnadu. Through Career Strokes, I want to have a long association with Sevalaya and impart other skills like retails sales skills, entrepreneurship skills, soft skills and personality and career development skills.”

When asked why he chose Sevalaya to implement this project, Srikanth said, “I’ve been following Sevalaya’s range of activities for a long time and



Kris Srikanth
Cricketer



Sevalaya Murali at Shell family day function along with Sundeep Bedi - General Manager, Vinay Lajmi - Centre Finance Lead, Karthik Selvaraj - HRM RE, Security & Health



D Rajasekaran, General secretary, Tamilnadu Senior Citizen's association honouring Sevalaya Murali



Sevalaya Murali distributing free note books to students in the new academic year

At our Gaushala, the cows have already come home!

A tour of Sevalaya's Kasuva campus usually ends at the Vinobhaji gaushala, where the visitors can see cows (many of them dry) with their calves calmly chewing their feed, gazing at the curious visitors or dozing contentedly.

Animal lovers the world over believe in the divinity of all life forms. It is but natural that Sevalaya's vision of serving the underprivileged should automatically include dry cows which are either sent to slaughter houses or driven out of houses and left to fend for themselves once they can no longer serve their owners.

At Sevalaya's Vinobhaji Gaushala, spread over an acre, nearly 60 cows are accommodated in convenient enclosures with easy access for feed and water. Green fodder for these cows is cultivated in the surrounding three acres. Along with dry cows this Gaushala also has milch cows that provide milk for the residents of the homes. These cows serve Sevalaya in their own bountiful ways. Cow dung and urine are used as manure for our organic farm, and as raw materials in



production of vermicompost, vermiwash, panchagavya, briquettes, vibhuti, biogas and organic pesticides at Sevalaya.

Bio-gas and briquettes help to reduce the fuel costs. Nearly 100 briquettes are supplied daily to the kitchen. 500 kg of vermicompost and 100 litres each of vermiwash and organic pesticides are

prepared every month along with 20 litres of panchagavya and sacred vibhuti.

The natural manures and pesticides used in Sevalaya's organic field help in improving the nutrient content of the soil and produce healthy organic vegetables, which go back to the hostel kitchen. A classic example of the 'circle of life'.

GRT doubles sponsorship



R Giridharan, Manager - Purchase, GRT Jewellers handing over cheque to N Ravichandran, DR Officer, Sevalaya towards sponsoring 132 children's education

Organic farming



Thanks to PwC India's organic farming initiatives at Sevalaya, we are reaping a bountiful harvest. Last month, we harvested 200 kgs of cucumbers and 120 kgs of ridge gourd (*Peer kangai*). Apart from this we also get greens, okra, pumpkin, bottle gourd (*Sorakkai*).

D Munirathnam, Agriculture staff, Sevalaya caring for the cucumbers with tenderness

Motivation sessions by GAF



On 17th June 2016, Usha from Global Adjustments Foundation (GAF), spoke about motivation. She asked the students to overcome their fears and diffidence and ask her any questions. This set the tone for an involved session for the students from Std IX to XII.

The main objective of the session was to motivate children in education activities, by showing the lives of a few successful people, and explaining about their hard work. Students took home valuable lessons on good habits to inculcate and practice. The 380 students from IX to XII attended the session.

N Hari IX A : "I felt very happy to attend the programme. I'm usually very shy and don't participate in any interactive session at school. But, today I realized I can speak and participate in any event without fear. This programme helped me to think positive and gave me a lot of courage."

"Following my Guruji's path led me to Sevalaya"

Dr M S Rajan

Dr M S Rajan has joined Sevalaya as the new resident doctor.

Dr Rajan, a native of Vaideeswaran Koil, did his schooling in Chennai. He went on to finish his MBBS from Kilpauk Medical College. He is the only doctor in India who holds more than ten degrees! He has served in various organizations like Madras Medical College, Madurai Medical College, Mount Vernon Hospital, UK, Victoria hospital, UK, Ripas hospital, Brunei, National University hospital, Singapore, Anna University and MSSRF – Vedaranyam.

He has won many awards like Glory of India Gold Medal, Best Citizen of India Award, Ethicon Travelling Fellowship of India award, Dr U Mohan Rao Prize for M S General Surgery awards.

Dr Rajan lost his wife, who was also a general practitioner, when young. He has one son who is settled in Canada. He says



he has spent most of his life travelling. He had just arrived in Brunei from India, when he got the news of his wife's passing away. He couldn't even come for his wife's final obsequies. He says since his profession is a noble one, he gave preference to his profession rather than his wife's death.

Says Dr Rajan, "I want to set up Accident and Emergency services in newly emerging hospitals and medical centres, teach general surgery and plastic surgery to undergraduates, post graduates,

nurses and students of physiotherapy. I am also interested in teaching Art of Living programmes and yoga to students and setting up a holistic medical farm."

Dr Rajan wanted to move beyond teaching applied anatomy. He heard about Sevalaya from Dr Malavika, Advisory Committee member of Sevalaya. He is encouraged by Sevalaya and its activities and wants to spend the rest of his life here. He is ever thankful to his Guruji Dr Nanjundarao, who guided him to serve the people in need.

"Sevalaya is a home away from house"

Sevalaya is a home away house for Meganathan (78), a resident of Sevalaya's Ramakrishna Paramahansa Old Age home.

Y N Meganathan has been in Sevalaya for the past 2 years. He was brought here by a good samaritan when she found him unconscious in the streets. He had lost his wife Vimala Bai when he was in mid 40s. Although he has two sons, they are caught up in their world and have no time for him.

He worked as a casual labour in Hindustan Motors and earned well. His children have usurped his property and left him to fend for himself. His two grandsons are the only support to him who come and see him, frequently.

Meganathan is a good natured person and is very amiable. He takes care of himself and does not trouble anyone. All his roommates have only nice things to say about him.

He keeps his place neat and clean. His cupboard is always neatly arranged and his clothes seem as though they are ironed. But they are his 'handiwork'. He



patiently goes about doing his work. He has minor issues while walking, but he overcomes it by sheer will power and the streak of independence, of not wanting to trouble others.

L N Anupriya, Senior Manager Operations, Sevalaya says: "He is an adorable person and I will always think of him as my father. Whenever he thinks about his sons and family, he comes and talks to me. He tells me that he has a daughter in me and is confident that I will take care of him. Whenever I am in office after 6 pm, he comes to my room and offers me biscuits. He asks me to take care of my health and family."

Nice 'Throw' by Ramya

R Ramya (Std XI) won the Second prize in Discus throw (19.30 mts), at Nehru Stadium, Chennai, in the Chennai Athletics League. W I Devaram, IPS (Retd), President, Tamilnadu Athletics Association, was the Chief Guest at the function.

This was the first time Ramya went to the city for a competition and she fared very well considering the odds. Says Ramya, "At first, I felt scared to perform with athletes at Chennai level. Then I thought I should give my best. After I won, I was flying like a kite in the sky."



Teachers gear up with Montessori training

When the children come back to school from summer holidays, they are filled with trepidation, about the new class, new friends, and new teachers. Sevalaya teachers, on the other hand, spend the summer holidays, training from various sources, to prepare themselves for the coming academic year, and to make the students feel at ease right from the first day. Asian Paints sponsored the second module of Montessori materials and the training for teachers, this year. The focus of the training was on Primary school (Std 1 – Std V). The training was held in Sevalaya's Mahakavi Bharathiyar Nursery and Primary School from 4th May 2016 to 18th May 2016. This is the first phase of second module training. The first phase was held last year for Balwadi teachers. The training consists of 300 hours and it



is phased in two modules of 150 hours each. 30 teachers from Primary and Nursery school attended this training, which will benefit about 700 students. The main focus of this training was on four subjects. Exercises of practical life (activities that will help the children in motor development), sensorial activities



(colour identification, help in good handwriting), language and arithmetic.

S Lakshmi, Montessori teacher, says "Parents come and meet me to tell that the child is more disciplined at home. It is more because whatever you teach in the class is reflected at home".

Agastya Foundation training the teachers



Sevalaya teachers along with Agastya Foundation trainers

For two days, 23rd and 24th May 2016, twenty-one math and science teachers from Sevalaya attended the training by Agastya Learning of Kattupakkam

branch. V Vijayakumar, V Mohandass, V Kalaiarasu and V Ramalingam were at hand from Agastya to provide training on how to make innovative teaching models, in Physics and Maths.

Physics models included Newton's laws, optics (functioning of concave, convex lenses, image formation etc), concepts of physical and chemical changes, diffusion, osmosis, absorption which were explained through interesting experiments through group activities and also via flash cards.

M Prakash, Science teacher: "I am a

physics teacher but was finding it difficult to practically explain Newton's first law. It's nice to see things practically. This training has provided a new insight in teaching and it will definitely help in improving teaching methodologies."

V Poongothai, Maths teacher: "I learnt more science concepts like mirror models, tree water consumption and chemical changes. I am particularly excited after attending Math training, as I can now be very creative in teaching the children about formulae for various shapes (cylinder, sphere etc)."

Inner urge to excel

Another motivational speaker who inspired the children was V Nandakumar, IRS, Joint Commissioner of Income Tax, who visited our campus on 18th June 2016. His quotations were lapped up by the 400 students between Std. X to Std. XII. He spoke about his life story from a school dropout to IRS officer, securing All India Rank in UPSC examination. He urged the children to set the bar high. "Constantly visualizing the achievement



of the goal will attract support, open up new paths and will help us in achieving it" he declared. Earlier Gopinath, (V Nandakumar's secretary) prepared the students for the session by conducting activities which helped the students to stay alert. N Thamarai Kannan, Director of Kanavu Asiriyar (Dream Teacher), an organisation dedicated to improve the quality of teachers, then did an introductory session which was very interactive and served as an icebreaker.

With best compliments

"Better is to educate an underprivileged child"

-MahaKavi Bharathi

"The soul of India lives in its villages"

-Mahatma Gandhi

"God comes in the form of Roti for a hungry man"

-Swami Vivekananda

A well wisher

When Gandhiji indicted himself...

Though the periodical, The Indian opinion, was practically run by Gandhiji, financial nitty-gritty was attended to by one of his associates. Gandhiji believed that the financial difficulty was a temporary phase and ultimately it would become a profitable proposition. At a particular point of time, he had to draw his associate Shri Madanjit out of the journal, as he had a pressing assignment of taking care of the black plague victims. Gandhiji was now in search of a person to take charge of the journal.

At this juncture, he had a chance encounter with one West, who readily agreed to take charge of Indian Opinion, which was running from Durban. Gandhiji was relieved. Though salary was not much of a concern for West, a salary of 10 pounds plus part of the profits was fixed. Gandhi was so sure that the venture would become profitable and assured this to West.

Now let us know what followed.

The very first report from West was alarming. He wrote: "I do not expect the concern to yield the profit that you had thought probable. I am afraid there may even be a loss. The books are not in order. There are heavy arrears to be recovered, but one cannot make head or tail of them. Considerable overhauling will have to be done. But all this need not alarm you. I shall try to put things right as best as I can. I remain on whether there is profit or not"

Gandhiji's reaction was like this:

"West might have left when he discovered that there was no profit, and I could not have blamed him. In fact, he had a right to arraign me for having described the concern as profitable without proper proof. But he never so much as uttered one word of complaint. I have, however an impression that this

discovery led Mr. West to regard me as credulous. I had simply accepted Sjt. Madanjit's estimate without caring to examine it, and told West to expect a profit."

As is his wont, Gandhiji makes a case-study of this episode and records his observation as follows:-,

"I now realize that a public worker should not make statements of which he has not made sure. Above all, a votary of truth must exercise the greatest caution. To allow a man to believe a thing which one has not fully verified is to compromise truth. I am pained to confess that, in spite of this knowledge, I have not quite conquered my credulous habit, for which my ambition to do more work than I can manage is responsible. This ambition has often been a source of worry more to my co-workers than to me."

Training in work culture for staff

S V Mani, Advisory Committee member, Sevalaya, conducted a session on work culture at the city office as well as at the campus on 23rd May and 11th June 2016 respectively. He touched upon a variety of subjects – healthy work culture, time management, work ethics and reporting. He impressed on the need for all employees to be sensitive to the belief of fellow employees, on the need to prioritize work, on the benefits of being a patient listener, and on how to keep notes, collect and report only facts. It was immensely beneficial to all the employees. G P Aishwaryya, Donor Relations - Corporate, Sevalaya said,



"There were a lot of nice takeaways, like keeping a small notebook to jot down and plan work, treating all employees equally, and always collect and state facts in reports."

"Sekkizhar" day



8th June 2016 saw our students win a bunch of medals in the Sekkizhar Annual day competition held in Kundrathur. The Chief Guests were Dr Sakthivel Murugan, Poet Laureate, and S Sundaram, Editor of *Deiva Murasu*.



Tuberculosis screening camp conducted by Indian Council for Medical Research

SRI RAM TRAVELS

(Govt. Authorised Tourist Car Operators)

New No : 125 (Old No.83), 1st Floor,
Avvai Shanmugam Salai (Liolds Road),
Royapettah, Chennai - 600 014.

Off : 044 - 2811 6904/5,
Res : 044 - 2811 6269,
Mob : 98400 60550

e-mail : sriram899@sify.com

Founder : V Ramanathan

With Best Compliments from
M/S. SHANMUGA OIL STORES,
New No : 65, Old No : 25,
South Usman Road, T.Nagar,
Chennai - 600 017.

Phone : 044 - 2433 2376

Published by: Bhuvanewari Muralidharan and owned by/on behalf of Sevalaya and published from F2, Jains Eden Park, 4- Judge Jambulingam Road, Mylapore, Chennai 600 004.

Printed by: S Kannappan @ Gem Offsets, New no. 24, Old no.20, Swami Achari St., Royapettah, Chennai -600 014.

Send your comments to: City Office : Sevalaya, No 54, P S Sivaswamy Road (North), Mylapore, Chennai-600 004, Tamil Nadu, India. Phone: 7299064457, 9444333529, 044-24982204
E.mail : sevalayaprhead@sevalaya.org, sevalayakasuva@sevalaya.org www.sevalaya.org

Editor T S Venkataramani

Correspondents

Anupriya Suresh, Kingston A A,
Manoharan S, Radha Srinivasan,
Rangarajan P, Rekha Perumal, Vijaya R

Design Thomas T Abraham