



LOVE ALL SERVE ALL

JULY 2017

Sevalaya's free breakfast scheme for govt school students



Nutritious Breakfast for Panchayat Union School children at Thanjavur

From L to R K Muthuramakrishnan, Advisor,, A Mageswaran, Trustee, V Muralidharan, Managing Trustee, Sevalaya, Headmistress & Staff, Panchayat Union Elementary School, Thalavaipalayam, Thanjavur

At the beginning of the academic year on 7th June 2017, 100 students from 2 Panchayat Union Elementary Schools at Thanjavur were pleasantly surprised when they were treated to a hot nutritious breakfast, thanks to a new Sevalaya initiative. The breakfast scheme will be

implemented throughout the academic year.

Providing food to the needy has been an underlying mission of Sevalaya's activities since its inception and this service has now been extended to the 2 schools in Thanjavur.



K Muthuramakrishnan, Advisor, Sevalaya, handing over stationery items to children

“All the students are hut dwellers who are mostly compelled to skip breakfast due to poverty, which leads to chronic absenteeism in the School. This scheme will help in children concentrating in the class and also more students to come to school”, says Geetha, Headmistress, Thalavaipalayam Panchayat Union School.

“The school is attracting only dalit children living in huts and hence others hesitate to come to this school. As now breakfast is provided free many other poor children will also come”, says Latha, Headmistress, Keezha vastha chavadi elementary school.

Sevalaya ushers in the 30th year



On 29th May 2017 Sevalaya stepped into the 30th year. It is often said that 30 years its mark a generation. Sevalaya was always one step ahead and entered GenNext probably a decade ago.

Ever since its inception, this day, in 1988, Sevalaya has been growing from year to year. Particularly in the current decade Sevalaya has come a long way from the time it rented a building and housed 5 boys who attended a nearby school. Next came a patch of land, purchased

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Left : Delicious Cake made by Sevalaya's Bakery unit, Kasuva



Nagalakshmi Yeswanth, Standard Chartered Global Services at Sevalaya's 30th year celebrations at Kasuva centre

Joy of giving: *the way of life*

Dear Friends,

I got an opportunity to go to a Tamil play recently. This play has many unique points. First, it is performed by Mahalakshmi Ladies Drama Group trust, and as the name suggests, all characters are performed by ladies. It is a 100% ladies drama troupe and all departments are "manned" by ladies only. They select spiritual topics – mostly life histories of spiritual leaders – we don't have a shortage of them in India – such subjects are not very popular but very much the need of the hour.

Most importantly, they all work for free. It is a pure voluntary service to spread the message of spiritual leaders of India. The troupe leader Bombay Gnamam says that she finds it very hard to get sponsors – the moment they hear about the topic, the sponsors vanish into thin air! The drama troupe also doesn't believe in selling tickets. They keep the entry free and open for all, so that many can come and get the benefit. But there is a lot of expense in terms of costumes,

stage arrangements, hall rent, publicity etc. How do they manage? At the end of the show they appeal to the audience to drop money into the hundi, how much ever they like. "Even if you are not able to contribute, it is okay, but do tell your friends about this show and make more people come", announces Gnamam. I saw many people dropping coins, small notes and some big notes into the hundi and many others just walking away. I was surprised how this troupe makes both ends meet.

We see plays and cinemas depicting violence and sex and when asked why they produce such plays, the immediate answer is "The audience like only this". They market it very well and finally the people involved make lot money. The only cause they serve is making money. Nothing else is on their agenda. But the Mahalakshmi Ladies Drama Group trust wants the next generation to know about our spiritual greatness, appreciate the values our country stood for, fully knowing this is not going to sell like hot

cakes and they will burn their fingers in the end. They don't mind as they are happy that their cause is served. It is very hard to see people who are not driven by money making urge but clearly work for the higher cause they have taken up.

I saw their plays on Adhi Shankara, Jayadevar, Bhodendral and Bajagovindam. We brought children from our school and also the senior citizens to watch the plays which are all classics. Unless they spend lot of money, they will not be able to get such stage settings. Also it was very difficult to recognize that all actors are ladies – even the roles of Adhi Shankara, Jayadevar etc., are played by ladies. The makeup is so perfect that you can't make out it was a lady acting.

Such efforts need public support. The troupe is not happy to see half the seats empty in the auditorium. The least we can do is, just go and watch these plays.

Thanks and Regards

Sevalaya Murali

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by passing around a hat to a group of TCS employees. After many trials and tribulations, Sevalaya was housed in a thatched shed and later shifted to a small construction which doubled as a class room in the day and shelter in the night. The teaching methodology was just 'Chalk and Talk.' The planning was confined to a few dedicated individuals huddled in a room discussing things-passionately and ambitiously. Closure of accounts was often a nightmare with one person calling out figures and the other 'ticking'.

Sevalaya is now housed in a sprawling complex with a plethora of activities benefiting the poor and the deprived, beyond boundaries, with trainers from all over the globe teaching through Video Conferencing; presence in other parts of Tamilnadu, and even internationally, with expert advisors and trustees actively involving themselves even at the grass root level.

Sevalayans remember the beginning and will not waver from the mission that triggered its birth.



Sevalaya's 30th year celebrations at Vadanallur centre

300 Alumni kick start 30th year celebrations



Alumni sharing his experience

Alumni of Sevalaya turned up in good numbers to kick start the 30th year celebrations of Sevalaya. They nostalgically reminisced their days at Sevalaya. Many of them who were hostel residents and beneficiaries of the tender loving care during their formative year turned emotional.

"I am always proud to be a 'Sevalayan'. The growth of Sevalaya, speaks volumes about the work done by the management and staff, over the years."

G Ilayaraja, Alumni Trustee, Sevalaya

Free School Bags and educational kits to 2050 Sevalayans by BNY Mellon

On 12th June 2017, Jyoti Chopra, Head of Global citizenship and sustainability, distributed new school bags and stationery to students, from KG to Std XII. A week earlier, 85 volunteers from BNY Mellon came to the campus and meticulously filled in each of the BNY Mellon emblazoned bag, with stationery and accessories, as well as helped arrange them neatly for distribution. It speaks volumes of BNY Mellon's commitment in bringing about a change to the lives and education of the underprivileged students. The accessories included a dictionary, craft paper, crayons, painting sets, geometry sets, pouches (for pens, pencils, erasers and rulers), lunch bags and water bottles.

While speaking at the function, Jyoti Chopra reminisced about her school days and asked the children to dream big and pursue their dreams. She also advised them to study well and bring fame for themselves and to Sevalaya. Leandra Mendonsa, Regional Head- Diversity, Inclusion and Community Affairs was also present during the function.



The smiling faces said it all!

Top : Jyoti Chopra, Head of Global Citizenship and Sustainability, BNY Mellon handing over school bag and educational kit. Also in the picture Leandra Stephanie Mendonsa, Regional Head - Diversity, Inclusion and Community Affairs

Left : Volunteers from BNY Mellon preparing the educational kits for distribution



All Sevalaya children gifted uniforms and notebooks



Distribution of free uniforms to underprivileged children

From L to R : Amarchand Jain, Advisor, V Muralidharan, Managing Trustee, Shujath Ali, Joint Director, Doordharshan Kendra, Chennai, Pradeep Jain, CEO, M L Enterprises, R Mohan, Proprietor, K G R Apparels

2050 students received new uniforms and notebooks on 14th June 2017, thanks to the main sponsors Guru Krupa foundation, USA, R Mohan, Proprietor KGR Apparels, and others.

Speaking at the function, Shujath Ali, IIS, Joint Director and Head of Regional News Unit, Doordharshan Kendra, Chennai said that he was extremely happy to note that Sevalaya has imbibed the words of



School toppers taking their 'prized' possession gifted by ML Enterprises

Gandhiji who said that the heart of India lives in its villages and the dreams of Bharathiyar, that of providing education to the underprivileged have come true. He also exhorted the children to focus on their studies and said that it will bear fruit.

R Mohan lauded the efforts of each and everyone who have worked steadfast to achieve this success.

Pradeep Jain, CEO, M L Enterprises, donated cycles to the school toppers from Class III to XII. He also announced that he will sponsor cycles for school toppers and those who secured second place from next year.

Tiny tots learn and play in the new spacious hall

The sparkling new Montessori Hall was inaugurated on 1st June 2017 by Page Pierre, Page Pierre Foundation, just in time for the beginning of the new academic year. Pierre, a supporter of Sevalaya, mentioned that he was fascinated by the improvements in the campus when he visits each year. While talking about the Tamil Montessori method of education at Sevalaya, for the underprivileged students, he said that Montessori education is no longer the preserve of the rich, but must be made available to all.

The school year begins on 7th June 2017 and the new Montessori students are going to enjoy the new environs. More than 1000 students from Primary Schools will be benefitted by this program.



Learning while playing- a kid with a Montessori item

Grama Arogyam project - an initiative to provide rural health care



Inauguration of the new Mobile medical unit at Vadanallur. L to R: Bhuvanewari Muralidharan, Hony correspondent, Sevalaya Murali, Kavalai T M Srinivasachari, grandson of brother of Kavalai Kannan, P Sujatha, Company Secretary, Cholamandalam Investment and Finance company Ltd

Cholamandalam Investments and Finance company Ltd and Sevalaya teamed up to provide medical care at doorsteps in the villages in and around Vadanallur.

On 5th June 2017, P Sujatha, Company Secretary, Cholamandalam Investment and Finance company Ltd, flagged off the mobile medical van, which will serve the rural poor in and around Vadanallur, Uthiramerur Taluk, Kancheepuram District. She averred that identifying an

organization was more important while contributing CSR funds and Sevalaya was chosen in view of their consistent services to the rural poor for over 29 years.

The mobile medical unit will be a big boon to the nearby villages. It will be equipped with a doctor, two nurses and driver. Medicines will be provided free of cost to all the patients.

Sudhir Rao, Head- Marketing & CSR, Hemantha Kumar, CSR Consultant and

Kavalai T M Srinivasachari, grandson of the brother of Kavalai Kannan (Mahakavi Bharathiyar's contemporary and aid) and Dr K A Varadan, IAS (Retd) former Chief Secretary, Sikkim State, also from the family of Kavalai Kannan participated.

T M Kavalai Srinivasachari thanked Sevalaya for locating him, and inviting him for the function. He recalled his grandfather's association with Mahakavi Bharathiyar to the delight of audience.

In his brief speech, K A Varadan, IAS (Retd) thanked Sevalaya for inviting him to the event. He said that he was immensely pleased to learn about Sevalaya's dedicated engagement in rural transformation.

The project has been aptly named, "Grama Arogyam Project", the van bears the name: "Kavalai Kannan Memorial Mobile Medical Van."



About Kavalai Kannan: A contemporary and aide of Mahakavi Bharathiyar, associated with Sri Parthasarathy Swamy Temple, had high regard for the Mahakavi. He chose to be with him throughout. One day when Bharathiyar was lifted high and thrown to ground by the elephant at Sri Parthasarathy Temple, it was Kavalai Kannan who

rushed, unmindful of the risk involved, to retrieve Bharathiyar who was lying at the feet of the mad elephant and rushed him to Government Hospital, Royapettah. All along he was physically with him till his (Bharathiyar's) end. In the back ground of this emotional event, Sevalaya has decided to name the vans, taken to the villages for medical care,

after him. Sevalaya undertook efforts to trace the descendants of Kavalai Kannan and found out that they still lived in Triplicane. It was an emotional moment when Kavalai T M Srinivasachari, Kavalai Kannan's brother's grandson, himself an octogenarian and his brother named after the legendary Kavalai Kannan graced the occasion by their presence.

6 E-publishing students net jobs

6 students who interned at Jouve India were offered full time jobs. This was made possible thanks in large part to Sevalaya's teaching staff and the guest lectures arranged by them for the students. The guest lectures helped the students in understanding the e-Publishing world. The E-publishing program is sponsored by L&T Infotech and Jouve India is the technology partner for the program.



"I am very much happy for getting trained in this course. I have also been placed at Jouve India. I saw a pamphlet near my home and joined the course, just out of curiosity. I was unemployed, after completing my degree. I am thankful to Sevalaya for this opportunity and will help in spreading the word about Sevalaya."

**V Sanghavi,
Trainee,
Composer**



"I am very happy that I chose to join this course. I had heard about the opportunities in the E-publishing industry but never imagined that I will get a job so soon. I was working in a manufacturing unit and decided to switch careers. I want to thank my teachers and staff for their excellent coaching."

**V Delli Ganesh
Trainee,
Composer**



Industrial Visit to Suprajith Engineering Ltd



An industrial visit in Suprajith Engineering Ltd, Vallam, Sriperumbudur was organized on 22nd April 2017, for the second batch of our computer students of Mahakavi Bharathiyar Community college, Mambakkam.

The program started with motivational speech given by M Dinesh, HR Manager who explained about the 5S policies adopted at work. The students also learnt about work culture and ethics.

At the shop floor, V Venkatesh, Plant head, had an interactive session on the manufacturing and work flow.

"It was a great opportunity for us to learn about how the industry actually operates. It gave us a technical insight."

A Geevitha, Staff, Sevalaya

Practical accounting session for Tally students



Sevalaya staff presenting a memento to N Gurusamy, General Manager of MIL Industries

The first batch of 12 Tally students from Sevalaya's Mahakavi Bharathiyar Community College at Ambattur went for an Industrial visit to MIL Industries, Ambattur, the technology partner for Tally course on 29th April 2017.

On reaching the premises, V Rajasekar, Accounts staff, explained the details of accounts and showed them all the different types of vouchers. It helped them gain practical knowledge in filing different types of vouchers. The students also learned the process and activities

relating to production department with real time scenarios and its relation to accounts, from C K Basheer, Production Manager.

"This Industrial visit helped us gain practical knowledge of different types of journal entries, vouchers, and Ledger accounts. Also, we learnt the integration of production process with accounts department."

P Sofiya Arutselvi, a Sevalaya student

"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

Well wisher

Archana 'jumps long' to claim Silver



On 4th June 2017, R Archana, claimed the Silver medal in the Long Jump event (4.33 mts) at the Chennai Athletics league, held at Nehru Stadium. More than 600 students from Chennai and Thiruvallur districts participated in the event.

Tree planting at Villages on World Environment Day by PwC

Three locations were chosen by Sevalaya and PwC India to plant 150 trees, on 9th June 2017, to celebrate World Environment Day. 80 shadow trees were planted in Thiruninravur, 20 in Pakkam new colony and 50 in Puliur village.

Soumitra Kumar Chakraborty, Director, Transfer Pricing, PwC India, engaged the students by asking them questions on environment and distributed prizes for the winners of the slogan writing contest.

Volunteers from PwC India and students planted the tree saplings in the village with organic manure and shielded each trees with a tree guard. The villagers have promised to water the saplings and nurture the same.



Tree planting by Soumitra Kumar Chakraborty, Director, Transfer Pricing, PwC India



J Vishal receiving the prize for the slogan writing contest from the Chief Guest

Teachers gear up for the new academic year

A two-day training was conducted for Sevalaya teachers in Maths and Science teachers on 8 and 9th May 2017. Prof S Swaminathan, former IIT Professor and a longstanding volunteer, who reinforced teaching methodology in Geometry and Physics.

T Rajeshwari, retired Mathematics professor, Stella Maris College conducted a training session for 7 Maths teachers of Sevalaya. She made it clear that the

teachers should be thorough in their subject, and be a role model for the students to follow. She also opined that puzzles and quiz competitions will make the classroom interesting.

"We learnt new techniques in preparing PowerPoint slides, to keep the students engaged during class. As teachers, we have to be ready with answers for questions that students ask."

S Sumathi, Maths teacher

On 22nd May 2017, K Shylaja, former Chemistry tutor, Brilliant Coaching Center conducted a session for 13 teachers. She suggested that teachers should keep innovating on new techniques of teaching, always exude positivity, and expand knowledge beyond text books.

"I learnt classroom management and guidance in this training. I will add more practical sessions for my class and use creative methods to teach my students."

R Ezhilarasan, Science teacher



Training session by Prof S Swaminathan, former IIT Professor, for Maths and Science teachers in progress



Training session for Maths teachers by Prof T Rajeshwari (Retd), Stella Maris College, Chennai



Training for Chemistry teachers by K Shylaja, former Chemistry tutor, Brilliant coaching centre

Adapting to local culture

Ruby Swadell

Ruby Swadell from England has been volunteering at Sevalaya since September 2016. Dressed casually in a churidar kurta she shared her impressions of her life at Sevalaya. She recollected how she had been overwhelmed by everything when she first stepped into the Kasuva campus. India with its rich colours and hues, lots of people all around, the noisy traffic everything had seemed so different.

Stepping into the lush green quiet campus set in a rural background had been a wholly new experience for Ruby who has grown up in a city. She had felt very homesick and the climate, food everything was so new. But the staff and residents of the homes went all out to make them feel comfortable. The children at the hostel welcomed Ruby and her friend Alisha into their fold affectionately addressing them as sisters



and slowly Ruby found herself getting used to the new place. Initially it was difficult communicating with people who did not understand her speech easily but as they got used to each other all barriers were broken.

Ruby who will be leaving next month can be seen walking barefoot in the campus. Ask her about it and she laughs it off. "Oh everyone is walking like that and it feels nice." At first taking classes had been a challenge but now it's easy. She has seen children making efforts to learn English

and using the language outside classes to speak to her. She has become very fond of the girls in the hostel and the students she teaches and plans to keep in touch with the staff and children through mails.

She got opportunities to travel during the holidays. She has learnt a lot about India which will surely stand her in good stead when she goes to the University to study International Relations. The positive vibes of the place, the work ethics have left a deep impression on her and she wants to come back whenever she gets a chance.

A cheerful face that greets visitors

Sebastin Sahaya Mary

A young, smiling girl greets donors who come to the front office of the Kasuva campus, arranges for staff to take them round the campus and makes sure that their visit is a pleasant one. She is Sebastin Sahaya Mary who joined in May 2016. The daughter of a farmer from Trichy, Mary opted for a post-graduation in social work after completing her graduation in business administration. She had a passion for service and felt that a career in a social service sector would be an ideal one for her.

As a part of her course she had to do an internship with a social service organization. While exploring various alternatives she came to know about Sevalaya and came here in February 2016. She helped in the administrative work and also in taking care of the children at the Home, which she thoroughly enjoyed.



Mary returned to Sevalaya as an employee as she liked the work culture at Sevalaya and had grown close to the children at the home staying with them for 3 months. She was posted as girl's home caretaker. However her efficiency in handling administrative work soon led to a change of posting to the front office as admin and accounts in-charge. Her quick grasping skills, immediate implementation of required changes, maintenance of good rapport with all units have made her an indispensable employee at the Front office.

She is liked by all the girls in the home. She finishes her routine work in the office and then sits with the children during the study hours. She also helped the X and XII students who appeared for Board Exams.

Sevalaya is a home away from home for Mary who finds her colleagues very supportive and helpful. She enjoys spending time with the hostel girls motivating them to study well. Days just fly by happily as she has found the right place of her dreams. "Growing with Sevalaya is my aim and I look forward to that", she says happily.

The Wandering Monk

It was during Swamiji's wandering (Parivrajaka) days, his mission and plans for the country were formed and the thought of visiting America got sown as a seed in him.

During his stay at Limbdi, through Thakore Saheb Jaswant Singhji, Swami got the idea of going to the West in order to preach Vedanta. This idea was further confirmed at Porbandar, when the Dewan Pandit Shankar Pandurang, appreciating the breadth and originality of Swamiji's ideas, said to him, "Swamiji, You ought to go to the West where people will understand you and your worth. Surely you can throw great light upon Western culture by preaching the Sanatana Dharma." During this period Swamiji was exceedingly restless. To quote from his biography by his Eastern and Western Disciples,

"Wherever he travelled and at all the courts he visited, the princes and Pandits noticed in him the same "terrible restlessness" to do something for his

country. The idea uppermost in his mind was the spiritual regeneration of India. He saw the limitations of orthodoxy and those of the reformers too. Everywhere he found petty jealousies, animosity, and lack of harmony. He saw India, potentially supreme, glorious beyond words, and rich with its own culture, being degraded by the stupid activities of the so-called "leaders"-demagogues who preached reforms which they were unable to incorporate into their own lives, and who, blinded by the glare of a foreign culture and its ephemeral power, were trying to throw overboard the experience of the race. He confided to those who loved and admired him that the time had come for a new order of things. To the Indian Princes and their Prime Ministers he announced this message. And, they, recognizing that he was a genius, and a man of realization gifted with an irresistible personality, listened to his words. He felt that to enable the civilized world to have a truer estimation of India, he must first preach

the glories of the Sanatana Dharma to the West. The more he studied the Vedas and pondered over the philosophies which the Aryan Rishis have thought out, the surer he was that India was truly the Mother of Religions, the fountain-head of spirituality, and the cradle of civilization. "

Again during a discussion with the Maharaja of Mysore, Swamiji dwelt on the condition of India and his plans. Its great possessions were philosophical and spiritual; its great needs were of modern scientific ideas and a thorough organic reform. It was for India to give the treasure she possessed to the people of the West. He intended going to America to preach the gospel of Vedanta. He wanted that the West should help us in improving our material condition by providing us with the means of educating our people in modern agriculture, industries and other technical services.

These ideas of Swamiji got crystallized during his Kanyakumari Penance.

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