

Smart classrooms for students Using technology to enhance learning



Page Pierre, a longstanding donor, during his visit to the campus on 9th April 2018, inaugurated a slew of projects including six 'smart' class rooms, Go digital and staff quarters, sponsored the by Page Pierre foundation, during the course of the year.

While visiting the six Smart classrooms, he was impressed by the usage of technology where the students from Primary to Std IX, learn their subjects

through an audio visual format. Large screens display the content for all subjects that are pre-loaded in data storage devices. The teachers are trained to supplement these classes to reinforce the fundamentals to the students. He also visited the 'Skype' classroom where two workstations are dedicated to volunteers who call in from all over the world to take classes for the students.

Sevalaya campus is now completely

networked by Fibre-optic cabling and an EPABX system which has helped in easing communication bottlenecks between far flung units within the campus, as well as securing the campus via CCTVs.

Go-Digital, a flagship software project to synergize the functioning of all the units within Sevalaya, specifically School management, campus management, accounts and admin, HR, and donor and donation management, was part of the sponsorship. The functioning of the software was explained to him with live data during his visit, which was well received. This has streamlined the functioning of all departments, enabled "anytime anywhere" access of data, and has reduced the turnaround time for most of the mundane administrative work.

Staff quarters for two families, measuring 600 sq. ft sponsored by the foundation were inaugurated by Page Pierre.

Our son M A Jeevaprakash, is two years old. Just to see him run around in the new staff quarters is a joy. In the evenings, he is able to drive his tricycle in the paved pathway. The staff quarters has a lot of inbuilt amenities which is very helpful for our family."

S S Kavitha, wife of M T Anandan, Headmaster, Primary School



Page Pierre, inaugurating the staff quarters during his visit to the campus



Joy of giving: *the way of life*

Dear Friends,

Summer holidays are here! Every family plans their vacation, the children are very happy to be away from school for a long holiday and the families together can go out to interesting places, visit home towns, meet relatives and friends, and spend time. This is the time to enjoy, despite the very hot weather. But, what about children in homes like Sevalaya? Their Schools are also closed, but where is their home town, and who are their relatives? How do they keep themselves engaged?

For the children who have completed 10th and 12th grade, we arrange special spoken english and computer awareness programs, so that they prepare for their higher education. But this can't be full time like school, so we try to keep it just for few hours in a day and rest of the time we arrange for some sports and games activities. Our sports department is very eager to make use of this holiday

time and arrange sports camps from six in the morning! Lot of Yoga, exercises and meditation are taught along with practice in basketball, volley ball, handball as well as track and field events. A summer schedule is prepared in the hostel which includes music, dance, bhajans, and watching videos.

We try to take them out – some friends arrange one day fun trips, sometimes we go on a three day camp, go out to a movie and the like. The idea is to keep them engaged and also use the time productively. The children should not feel left out when rest of the kids in their age group are busy enjoying holidays with their parents.

But our staff also needs a break. They also have a family and they have to go back to their own families and attend to their own kids. So, how do we balance the two ends? How do we manage with less number of staff and at the same time, keep our children properly engaged? This

is where we need your help.

You can plan a trip to Sevalaya with your family during this holiday season. Come and spend time with the kids in our hostels – this will be a meaningful outing for your kids at the same time, you can volunteer the day for our kids. Or you can plan joint outings with Sevalaya kids and your kids – this will be an eye opener for the kids living in the city. You can just come and take part in the various camps and activities our staff are planning – to manage the kids, any number of hands will be useful for our staff.

This will be a good mix of volunteering, enjoying your holiday and also spending time usefully for the underprivileged kids.

Sevalaya campus is waiting to receive you with your family.

Thanks and Regards

Sevalaya Murali

Montessori exhibition: Showcasing children's talents

On 29th March 2018, the Montessori section of Sevalaya wore a festive look with colourful displays of the kids creations. The hall was teeming with parents and children from other schools. Jhansi Rani, Thillaiadi Valliammai, Mother Theresa, as well as Hindu saints of yore were seen walking around. The occasion was the annual Montessori exhibition.

The Chief Guest, Swathanthra Sakthivel, Secretary, Bala Mandir Schools, in her address said, "I am delighted to see the services offered by Sevalaya, all directed towards the uplift of the rural poor. These exhibitions help children and students from other schools learn about our history as well as excite their minds."

Each year, for the Montessori exhibition, the teachers work with the children a few months ahead of time. They plan the type of activities like moulding clay dolls, patterns with coloured sand, Mathematical shapes, besides alphabets in Tamil and rudimentary Science. All the 'creations' are displayed in the Montessori Hall and hallway for public display. The children themselves explain their models.

The children also put on a puppet show, and sang songs in groups.



Students presenting their models

R Selvakannan, Headmaster of the Panchayat Union Primary School, K-Paramathi, Karur Dt visited the campus, as a special invitee to the Montessori exhibition said he was excited to see the budding talent in Arts and Culture and wished many great things ahead for the children.

"I'm very happy to play the role of Queen Jhansi Rani. I am excited to be dressed up like a queen."

K Aarathi, UKG

Students visit Rail Musuem



A group of 49 students visited the Rail Museum in Villivakkam on 13th April 2018 and saw the different types of engines (steam locomotives, diesel and electric) used by Indian Railways over the past 100 years. They visited various areas where they saw the equipment for building passenger coaches. They were fascinated by the size of the wheels and the axles that held the coaches in place. They also took a ride on the joy train that went around the museum.

"The trains reminded me of the old trains that we used to see in the movies. It was a very pleasant experience. I really enjoyed the whole day."

K Vijayaraghavan, Std IX

Kaizen Vs Thirukkural



T M Venkatesan, Chairman and Mentor of Focus 5 and his team, conducted a session on Kaizen Vs Thirukkural on 26th March 2018 under the auspices of National Institute of Quality and Reliability.

Kaizen - meaning change for better was introduced by Masaaki Imai to the West and has been instrumental in improving overall performances of many organizations by carrying out changes over a period of time. Some of these changes, though small, have had wide ranging positive impact.

During the session, Venkatesan quoted several 'Thirukurals' which were similar to the ideas of Masaaki Imai, drawing similarities and leading the participants to wonder at the vision of Poet Thiruvalluvar who had penned these thoughts nearly 2000 years ago. Thirukkural 471 – Knowledge of Power highlights the importance of starting a project after

ascertaining the availability of necessary resources, support and expertise while Thirukkural 517 – Selection and Employment, which talks about the importance of assigning a job to a person with the right skills for better results, had parallels in the principles of Kaizen. The session was an eye opener on the wealth of wisdom buried in our culture and heritage.

The session was followed by an impromptu quiz. A A Kingston, VP Operations and N Annapurna, Trustee, won prizes.

25 persons from various organisations participated in the session.

Outgoing students donate saplings



Std XII students appearing for their Board exams, donated tree saplings, as a parting gift, to their Alma Mater

Water bowls for birds and animals



Free water bowls, for our feathered and furry friends, are being distributed to alleviate their water needs, during the intense summer. Each water bowl can hold up to 5 litres of water. It can be placed at convenient places to benefit the birds and animals. Even if one resident in a street takes the responsibility to place a water bowl, we can prevent stray animals from getting dehydrated.

Placing a water bowl with clean drinking water can go a long way in making the summer months bearable for them.

Hurry! Till stocks last.

Please contact 82200 12111

Working for the welfare of humanity

The birthday of Bhagwan Mahavir Jayanthi is celebrated each year to understand and adhere to his thoughts and the principles he stood for during his lifetime.

On 3rd April 2018, participating as the Chief Guest, Pradeep Kumar Jain, M L Enterprises, an entrepreneur, asked the students to follow the twin principles of nonviolence and truthfulness, for the good of mankind. Bharathkumar Jain, President, SBMDJM Trust, extolled the virtues of providing service to society and work for the welfare of all. P Rajendra Prasad Jain narrated stories from the life of Bhagwan Mahavir.



Er Pradeep Kumar Jain, Entrepreneur, M L Enterprises lighting the lamp. Sevalaya Murali, Amarchand Jain, Advisor, A Rajendran Jain, ACP (Rtd), Chennai, Er K A Bharatkumaran Jain, President SBMDJM trust, Er P Rajendra Prasad Jain, MD, INEL Power group, Chennai, Renu Jain, and Mahaveer Chand Jain (extreme right)

Student awestruck inside INS Kamorta



49 students were wonder struck when they visited the DEFEXPO 2018 on 13th April 2018, and got a chance to go inside INS Kamorta, the first of the four anti-submarine stealth corvettes built by the Indian Navy. These ships protect the territorial integrity of the country. The students were taken into the Captain's room and saw the range of instruments and command systems in place. The

commanding officers patiently explained all the questions raised by the curious students. Many students have evinced interest in joining the Indian Navy.

"It was an amazing experience just entering and seeing the Navy ship. We visited the captain's cabin and saw all the instruments."

K Vijayaraghavan, Std IX

Theatre workshop: a peep into acting



On 24th March 2018 and 25th March 2018, two students, S Haridas and D Avinesh from Std IX participated in the Introductory playback Theatre workshop organised by S Cyril Alexander, founder, Sterling Playback Theatre Company, at the ICSA Programme centre, Egmore.

Playback theatre is one where the performers take the story of an audience and enact it in front of them. The students got an opportunity to enact the situations given to them. They got an idea about spot acting through this workshop.

"It was a great experience. We even had to introduce ourselves and our School through games. They asked me to enact an event. I enacted a role from my father's life and won appreciation from the group."

D Avinesh, Std IX

Mutual love: spirit of Easter



Easter is one among several events, organized every year to impart valuable messages from each religion to the students. On 31st March 2018, Reverend Father Santhanasamy, Parish Priest, Good Shepherd Church, Thiruninravur, participated in leading the prayers at the School.

In his special address to the children, the Reverend Father said, "Easter is celebrated to mark the end of Holy Fast. He further added that children should develop the great qualities of mutual love, affection, universal brotherhood." At the end of the session, he mingled with the students and answered their questions with charm and wit.

A cultural programme was conducted by the students that explained the life of Jesus from the day he was laid to rest in the tomb to the day of Resurrection.

Lifetime achievement award



Dr N Nandakumar, District Director, Vocational Services, N Chandramohan, District Governor Designate Rotary District 3232, Prof Dr S V Mani, Advisor, Sevalaya, L Sivakumar, Director, Vocational Services, S Krishnamurthy, President 2017-2018

Rotary Club of Chennai Velachery (RCCV) conferred the life time achievement award to Prof Dr S V Mani based on his various achievements and all round activities in diverse fields. As an Advisor, Prof Dr S V Mani, has given many valuable inputs to Sevalaya.

Accolades for Mambakkam tutor J Karthika

J Karthika, tutor in Mahakavi Bharathiyar Community College at Mambakkam has received compliments from the Panchayat Union Middle School, Mambakkam. The Principal of the School has forwarded a letter of appreciation, to the tuition centre, written by four teachers.

The tuition centre, attached to the Community college has been conducting free tuition for 27 students studying in between Std V – Std VII, in the evening, since the past year.

Sevalaya's Mambakkam centre is sponsored by PPG Asian Paints.

"When our students were getting the usual attention from the teachers, Karthika is giving special attention and tuition, which has helped our children and brought a considerable change in their learning. This has helped in their studying and completing their homework on time. Further, they have remarkably improved and are scoring good marks in the weekly



tests conducted by teachers, in all the subjects.

All this is due to the fact that Karthika is enthusiastic and teaches with involvement, and students have developed interest to come regularly to the tuition centre to study.

On behalf of our teachers, we express our sincere thanks to Sevalaya for

Karthika's services.

We seek your continued services.
(Teachers of Panchayat Union Middle School, Mambakkam)

A Sujatha

A Kavitha Malarvizhi

K Santhaseela

R Deboral

Alumnus gets best achiever award



Pradeep receiving certificate from Dr Muthuvel Ramaswamy, Secretary. Dr R Selvakumaran, Principal (behind Pradeep), and K Stella Baby, Administrative Dean looks on

R Pradeep (2016) continues his good run with Handball for his college, Muthyammal College of Arts and Science, Rasipuram, Namakkal District. His college team won the South Zone Inter University Handball tournament held at Vikas College of Physical Education, Vijayawada. On 14th February 2018, he was conferred the Best Achiever award by his college on the College Sports day.

With this win, his university qualified to participate in the All India Inter University Handball tournament, which was held in Madhya Pradesh.

3 sports stars to get free higher education



V Sujatha, Director of Physical Education, Queen Mary's College, Chennai, D Gayathri, S Gomathi, E Gomathi, A Sankarapandian, Physical Director, Sevalaya

S Gomathi, E Gomathi and D Gayathri, who have appeared for XII Std Board exams have already secured free admission in Queen Mary's College for their higher education. E Gomathi and D Gayathri who have reached divisional level in Kanchipuram division in athletics and district level in Hand Ball in Thiruvallur district will be pursuing B.Sc Physical Education. S Gomathi who has reached in District level in athletics and Handball has got admission for B A English Literature. Lionbridge sponsors Sevalaya's sports programmes.

Sourcing volunteers from abroad



CIOSA Prasanna Gandhi, Founder, Aral Porul addressing the gathering of volunteers, on ways to bring volunteers from abroad

On 4th April 2018, C Aadhimuthu, Volunteer Co-ordinator and P Manovah, Manager, Corporate Relations, attended a seminar organised by Centre for Women's development & research, on sourcing volunteers from abroad, through GINKGO volunteers, France. GINKGO a France based NGO has provided skilled volunteers from France to various NGOs in India. The seminar was useful in understanding the requirements of the foreign volunteers and matching them with the opportunities at Indian NGOs.

Philanthropy is a way of life

- A S Rangaramanujam

A S Rangaramanujam, 83, and his family have been generational donors to Sevalaya from the time of inception. He belongs to Theneriagaram in Kancheepuram district. His wife R Santhalakshmi is a home maker and they've been married for 58 years. They have three children, two sons and a daughter, all well settled in life. Their children make it a point to visit Sevalaya often and shower the children with



gifts. Their grandson, Gokul Kannan and Youth Project USA, taught Robotics and Engineering to Std XI students, at the school.

Rangaramanujam worked in Life Insurance Corporation of India from 1962 till his retirement. The job had taken him to Pondicherry, Thiruvannamalai and

Chennai, among other places.

He has seen the growth of Sevalaya in the last 30 years and fondly recollects many memorable instances along the way. He has been instrumental in channeling all monetary donations and gifts received during any of their family functions, to Sevalaya. In fact, all his relatives and friends know about Sevalaya, as he has explained the activities to them. Most of them are current donors.

In his words, "I like the environment, nationalistic spirit, and the fact that everyone is treated equal. Respect for individual is paramount. I will continue to do all I can for Sevalaya in the years to come."

Rangaramanujam is a very pious person and goes often to the US. During his trips he gives talks to select audiences on India's culture and heritage.

He and his wife are now settled in Thiruninravur.

From demure lady to a self-confident one

- A N Sabira

A N Sabira, the eldest of four siblings, grew up in a strict household. Her father is a welder. She has studied up to Plus Two (+2), and possesses a Diploma in Tailoring. Due to her family circumstances, she had to enter the workforce to support her family. She had to overcome a lot of restrictions to enter the workforce.

In 2011, just as Sevalaya was starting its first Community College in Vadanallur, there was a need for a tailoring trainer. Sabira was chosen among many of the applicants who had applied for the same job. Her confidence in work and an amiable nature landed her the job. Her self-motivation and passion in learning embroidery and stitching garments, as per latest trends, helped enroll many students in the community college. Her aunt who lives nearby supported and trained her in the nuances of stitching.

She has steadily proved her capabilities



and in the last few years, she has been given more responsibilities. She is now the Centre-in-charge of Vadanallur. Her scope of work has expanded and she not only takes care of the tailoring unit, but also takes care of scheduling the visits of Sevalaya's mobile medical van to nearby villages, running the computer centre, and a library. She has proved adept in handling local issues with the help of the local people.

She is ably assisted by her husband, who

works as the driver of the mobile medical van as well as assists in maintaining the vehicle. Her husband has been a great source of inspiration for her. Her elder son is studying I year Diploma in ECE and daughter is studying in Std IX. Her mother-in-law lives with her and her family.

Sabira says, "In these seven years, I have grown in confidence only because of the guidance and support I have received from everyone. It's been a fantastic experience for me."

Counteracting drug abuse



Lilly Sharmila, Girls Home Warden, Sevalaya receiving certificate from Bama raja, Vice President, Madurai Institute of Social Sciences. Also in the picture Dr (Capt) D V P Raja, Dr Prof S Murugesan and M Nisanth

A Lilly Sharmila, caretaker, Sevalaya's Mother Theresa girls' home, attended a three day training programme organized by Madurai Institute of Social Sciences between 26 – 28th March 2018, on the special care and support needed to

counteract the disruptive effects of drug abuse. 25 volunteers from various NGOs attended the session.

The video sessions gave a clear understanding of the various ways children get addicted to drugs, the various types of drugs used by children and the symptoms and behavioural changes that can help one to identify victims. The sessions also dealt with the various methods of counselling and the practices followed in drug addiction centres to treat the severely affected.

"It was a highly informative programme. I have a very clear understanding about this problem and am confident that should the need arise I will be able to tackle the issue."

Lilly Sharmila, Girls Home Warden

Fun trip organised by Food bank



11 children from Sevalaya's homes along with a caretaker were among the 80 lucky children sponsored by Food bank for a day's trip to Bangalore on 24th March 2018. The most exciting part of the trip was the to and fro journey by flight. It was a dream come true for all the children and every moment from boarding to landing was a joyous adventure. They were taken to two theme parks Snow world and Fun world where they enjoyed wonderful rides and spent a happy day with many new friends. The children had been chosen based on their sports and academic achievements through the year.

"This was the most exciting day of my life. It was my first experience by flight."

A Aadithya, Std VI

In search of eternal divinity



Each Saturday, S Kanchana, Assistant Headmistress, Primary School, takes *Thiruvartupa* classes for the staff. The sessions are aimed at understanding the problems facing mankind and finding solutions through good health and clean mind. The sessions thus far have dealt with good eating habits, fairness, and keeping the mind under control. Future sessions will deal with ego, self pride, jealousy, instability, anger, fear, and calmness. *Thiruvartupa* was written by Vallalar in the late 19th century.

"The sessions are so interesting that in due course of time it will help me to understand more clearly about people, handling people and how a healthy relationship can be developed with people. I have also downloaded the PDF of *Thiruvartupa* in my mobile and I am reading it regularly."

B Nirmala, Headmistress

Importance of goal setting



On 27th March 2018, G Raghavendran, Vice President, Standard Chartered-Global Business Services Limited, took a session on goal setting for students studying in Std VI to Std IX. He said that each student should keep the goal in mind and aim towards achieving it. He suggested that each person have a role model and work hard like them to achieve their goals. He also gave the students some helpful tips on facing exams, and wished them a bright future. In all 594 students attended the session.

"He asked us to be passionate about studies and face the exams without fear. He also told us to keep one goal in mind, and work towards it constantly."

K Yuvashree, Std VII

Dialogue on challenges of care homes



On 7th April 2018, L N Anupriya and M Manimaran attended a half a day interactive session on Challenges in Care homes organized by Aram Porul in Nungambakkam in which 15 representatives from various Homes participated. .

"Aram Dialogue" is an initiative of Aram Porul to create space for NGOs, activists, volunteers, and donors to discuss, share and reflect on challenges, opportunities they face. It is a unique program to foster better understanding, cooperation and working relationship among various NGOs.

Chauri Chaura

The first time Gandhiji was incarcerated in an Indian prison was on 10th March 1922. He was lodged in Yerawada Jail.

In 1922, British Government let loose a reign of terror in the country. All the leaders were arrested. Freedom of the press, freedom of speech and freedom of association were in peril. There was a draconian administrative control on the Press.

In such circumstances, civil disobedience became a sacred duty. But Gandhiji's conviction was that it should be guarded by all conceivable restrictions. Every possible provision should be made against an outbreak of violence or general lawlessness. In the then unprepared state of the country, it was decided to confine the agitation to one little pocket.

People of Bardoli taluk in Surat District of Bombay Presidency volunteered to launch the struggle in their area. They were fully motivated and had fully understood the

spirit of Satyagraha and the importance of truth and non-violence. The nation was in high spirits.

But on 8th February 1922, there were reports of disturbances in Chauri Chaura village in Gorakhpur Dt UP. After a procession had passed at Chauri Chaura stragglers were intercepted and abused by the constables. Trouble started when the constables opened fire, and retired to the Thana, after exhausting their ammunition. The mob set fire to the Thana where 22 constables were burnt alive. Gandhiji was profoundly shocked. On the spur of the moment he decided to scrap the plan of mass campaign. Gandhiji also went on a self-imposed 5 day fast on 12th February 1922. He wrote: "There is not as yet in India non-violent and truthful atmosphere which alone can justify mass disobedience, which can be at all described as civil, which means gentle, truthful, humble, knowing, willful yet loving never criminal and hateful. It is

claimed that no non-violent volunteer had a hand in the brutality, no provocation can possibly justify the brutal murder of men who have been rendered defenseless and who had virtually thrown themselves on the mercy of the mob. And when India claims to be non-violent and hopes to mount the throne of liberty through non-violent means, mob violence even in answer to grave provocation is a bad augury."

His decision was decried by many close followers including Jawaharlal Nehru. They argued that Chauri Chaura cannot affect Bardoli. Gandhiji answered them, "Just as the addiction of a grain of arsenic to a pot of milk renders it unfit as food, so will the civility of Bardoli prove unacceptable by the addition of deadly poison from Chauri Chaura. The latter represents India as much as Chauri Chaura."

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