

OCTOBER 2009

Newsletter



Editor: *Priya de Silva*

FEATURE: READING MAKETH THE COMPLETE WOMAN

Remember when Lucy slips through the back of the wardrobe into the land of Narnia, in C S Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*? And discovers a whole new world? That is exactly what happens when one discovers the joys of reading.

"To learn to read is to light a fire, every syllable that is spelled out is a spark" said Victor Hugo, French poet, novelist and dramatist. And once that spark is lit, it will become a consuming fire that will be hard to extinguish. For once initiated into the 'habit' of reading, one actually does discover *a whole new world*.

A whole new world where one can stay at home, yet swim with the sharks, climb mountains, discover other cultures, learn new languages, go into space, get lost in the sea, go back in time, go forward into an unknown future... anything is possible when one has a book in hand! No wonder then that W Somerset Maugham, English playwright and novelist said that, *"To acquire the habit of reading is to construct for your self a refuge from almost all the miseries of life."*

A favourite book becomes a best friend that one turns to for comfort, especially during hard times. A favourite character in a book becomes a role model, a person to emulate. One comes to know intimately not only the lives of others through the pages of a book, but their thoughts and feelings - that is how the characters of a story become real to the reader. Their trials and tribulations become yours, and once lost in a book one tends to forget that the hero, or the heroine, is actually not you!

"Access to knowledge is the superb, the supreme

OGA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2009-2010

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Vice Presidents *Priya de Silva*

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Staff *Prabodha Arambage*

Over 60 yrs of age

Srini Karunaratne

Kumari Wickramasuriya

Over 40 & below 60 yrs

Sharmali Kodagoda

Samidhi Dewapura

Ramani Gomes

Yasinta Abeywickrema

Samanthi Premaratna

Ramya Wanniarachchi

Sharmini de Almeida

Nilmini Wickramarachchi

Dinusha de Zoysa

Samitha Samaranyake

Over 30 & below 40 yrs

Darshi Neelawatura Bandara

Sujeenie Gunasekera

Mihiri Gunawardena

Anushka Jayasinghe

Nadeera Rubaroe

Anju Ukwatte

Lankika Fernando

Nimesha Vilasini

Savithri Withanage

Nilusha Heenetigala

Somini Ponnampereuma

Manoja Pieris

Kalhari Samarasinghe

Nishadi Atukorale

30 yrs & below

Taranga Panditharatna

Nadee Perera

Erandhi Nanayakkara

Continued from page 1

act of truly great civilizations” said Tony

Morrison first black Nobel Laureate in Literature. And, the best way to access knowledge is to read. Reading encourages thought and reflection. Cultivating the habit of reading is to develop language skills, a longer attention span and logical thinking. To read the great classics by the world’s greatest authors is to enter a world of sophisticated thinking; there is simply no other way to gain access to these great minds.

Sadly, these days more and more people are giving up reading replacing the written word for the instantaneous world of the World Wide Web or the visual imagery of Television. The current generations, from babies to teens are now glued, either to the Idiot Box or accessing the Internet on the Computer! They process information in a much more different way than the previous generations. Their attention spans are much shorter, leading to an ‘instant’ mindset which becomes easily impatient with any information which requires in-depth processing. Having now become used to ‘instant gratification’ these youngsters demand constant, entertaining stimulation that hinders any capacity for delayed gratification! Studying habits, requiring a longer attention span to sit and absorb become non-existent in this scenario, which is a dangerous development, to say the least!

So, how does one cultivate the reading habit? How does one become ‘a reader? Having parents who read are a good start. Having parents who read to you as a child is even better! The very young start looking at picture books. A very interesting read, such as the phenomena of the ‘Harry Potter’ series gets even the laziest child to read big fat books, cover to cover! This proves the theory that the right book at the right time can ignite a lifelong reading habit.

“Reading maketh a full man”, said Sir Francis Bacon, English author and philosopher. I concur. Reading also maketh a complete woman.

Shyamalee Tudawe

Was known as Chintha Premawardhana whilst at Visakha Vidyalaya (A/L batch of 1977) & remains a bookworm and a bibliophile.

*BSc (Hons) in Civil Engineering, University of Moratuwa, MBA, University of Sydney
The writer is the Editor of the Hi!! Magazine,
the first and premier Society Magazine in SL*

CONVENERS OF SUBCOMMITTEES

Social activities	<i>Anushka Jayasinghe</i>
Fund raising	<i>Samiddhi Dewapura</i>
Religious	<i>Mihiri Gunawardena</i>
Education	<i>Srini Karunaratne</i>
Cafeteria	<i>Savithri Withanage</i>
Archives	<i>Ramya Wanniarachchi</i>
Web page	<i>Darshi Neelawatura Bandara</i>
Membership	<i>Lankika Fernando</i>
OGA Data Base	<i>Anushi Senaratne</i>
Finance	<i>Chandima Karunatileke</i>
Newsletter	<i>Priya de Silva</i>
Equipment	<i>Dinusha de Zoysa</i>
Secretariat	<i>Yasinta Abeywickrema</i>
Foreign Branches	<i>TarangaPanditharatna</i>
75 th Ann Celebrations	<i>Nadeera Rubaroe</i>
VV Dinner Dance	<i>Indira Malwatte</i>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR 2009 – 2010

- November 21st** 75th Anniversary celebrations of VVOGA at the Galle Face Hotel
*Inquiries: Nadeera R ubaroe 0777377121
ma_pakse@sltnet.lk*
- January 16th** Bodhi Pooja - Commemoration of the founding of the School
Inquiries: Mihiri Gunawardena 0773912089
- January 23rd** Variety Show (Fund Raiser)
*Inquiries: Samiddhi Dewapura 0722427303
dewapura@sti.lk*
- March 25th** Founder’s day Pirith & Dane
Inquiries: Mihiri Gunawardena 0777377121
- April 3rd** Avurudhu Pola
*Inquiries: Samiddhi Dewapura 0722427303
dewapura@sti.lk*
- May** Vesak Project- Donation to Cancer Hospital, Maharagama
Inquiries: Mihiri Gunawardena 0777377121
- June** VVOGA AGM
- July 23rd** Susan George Pulimood Oration
- July 25th** Esala Sil Program
Inquiries: Mihiri Gunawardena 0777377121
- August 13th** Visakha Dinner Dance 2010 at the Cinnamon Grand Colombo
*Inquiries: Indira Malwatte 0777914180
indiramal@gmail.com*



VVOGA Executive Committee 2009/2010

Seated L-R: Prabodha Arambage, Srini Karunaratne, Chandima Karunatileka, Sabitha Gunatilake, Indira Malwatte, Mrs S Aviruppola (Principal), Priya de Silva, Anushi Senaratna, Manori Sooriyabandara & Kumari Wickramasuriya

Standing 1st Row: Nilusha Heenetigala, Mihiri Gunawardena, Nishadi Atukorale, Nilmini Wickramarachchi, Darshi Neelawatura Bandara, Samitha Samaranyake, Sharmini de Almeida, Ramani Gomes, Samiddhi Dewapura, Erandi Nanayakkara & Somini Ponnampereuma

Standing back row: Lankika Fernando, Dinusha de Zoysa, Ramya Wanniarachchi, Samanthi Premaratne, Nadeera Rubaroe, Kalhari Samarasinghe, Manoja Pieris, Anushka Jayasinghe, Yasintha Abeywickrema, Nadee Perera & Savithri Withanage

Ansbsent: Sharmali Kodagoda, Sujeenie Gunasekera, Anju Ukwatte, Nimesha Vilasini & Taranga Panditharatne



The Annual Vesak project saw the VVOGA donating much needed valuable drugs to the Paediatric wards of the Cancer Hospital, Maharagama. Listening to a Dhamma sermon & the chanting of pirith for the children & their families was a fulfilling experience for all those who participated



'Chandimal Live in Concert' organized by the VVOGA was held on the 26th July at the BMICH. A packed hall was entertained to a 3 hour entertainment of the best of pop music from the 60s & the 70s. A profit of almost Rs 2 million was collected for the OGA coffers.

The OGA reunion trip

Held after a long gap of many years, this turned out to be a truly wonderful day's outing for the 130 or so members & their children.

Organized by the Social Activities sub committee of 2008/2009, and held on 11th February 2009 at the Villa Ocean View, Wadduwa, it was a day crowded with fun & fellowship, long remembered by all those fortunate to have joined it.

Education projects to uplift the standard of English at Visakha

The OGA in January 2009, embarked on an innovative project to encourage and foster English reading & conversation in the Primary grades. This was launched in Grades 1 & 2, initially with a team of volunteers and later with trained instructors, recruited and funded by OGA members.

This project is to be further enhanced by the purchase of Readers to stimulate communicative skills among the students. An order to the value of over Rs 100,000/ has been placed with M D Gunasena & Co Ltd. for this, again from donations from members. This project has received much praise & appreciation from both parents & staff of the Primary.

The OGA also continues to 'head hunt' and fund teachers for the English stream in the A'L Commerce and O'L History, Geography and Civics disciplines. New teachers were recently recruited for the latter and another is soon to be recruited for Revision and Assignments for the former classes.

On an appeal made by the Principal, the OGA organized a workshop in March for students in Grades 9 -12, on English Public Speaking & Debating. Maheshi Premasinghe, a past Visakhian & the Debaters' Council of Colombo conducted the program which proved most productive.

The Hostellers were not forgotten. A band of young volunteers have stepped forward to carry out a program to encourage English conversation and reading amongst the Hostellers. Classes are held every Wednesday evening for Year 6-10 students. The emphasis is on interaction, thus helping to build confidence and personality development.

Several young members have also volunteered to help the O'L Hostellers with their English every Saturday evening. These projects have not just supported the school but brought many a young Visakhian to gather around her school.

75th Anniversary celebrations of the OGA

The 75th anniversary of the OGA would be celebrated with a get together of members at high tea at the Ball Room of the Galle Face Hotel, Colombo from 4 to 6.30 pm on Saturday **21st November 2009**.

Tickets priced at: Rs 1,750/ each would soon be available for purchase at the OGA Secretariat

The highlight of these celebrations would be the felicitation of past Visakhians who have gained recognition & acclaim in the international arena and thus brought honour to the country & to Visakha, by the presentation of **Platinum Awards for Internationally Acclaimed Past Visakhians** in diverse categories. (See next page)

Nominations for these awards are solicited from the general public. An Entry Coupon is given on page 5 and will also be available from the VVOGA Secretariat or downloaded from www.visakhav.org.

Old Girls are advised to keep this date free.
Inquiries: Nadeera Rubaroe 0777377121

Variety Show

A Variety entertainment showcasing talented Visakhians past & present is being organized by the present fund raising sub committee.

Date: **Saturday 23rd January 2010**

Venue: Jeremias Dias Hall, Visakha Vidyalaya

Visakhians with talents in music (vocal/instrumental), stage & drama, dancing (oriental/ballet/contemporary) etc or are pursuing careers in these fields are invited to contact the Conveners to lend their support to making this a success.

Those who wish to help in organizing this event are requested to attend meetings of the organizing committee to be held every Thursday at 5.30 pm at the school premises

Inquiries: Samiddhi Dewapura 0722427303 or Nadeera Rubaroe 0777377121

ANNOUNCEMENTS

VISAKHA VIDYALAYA OLD GIRLS' ASSOCIATION

PLATINUM AWARDS FOR INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED PAST VISAKHIANS

on Saturday 21st November 2009 at the Galle Face Hotel, Colombo
in Commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the VVOGA

Nominations are invited from amongst past Visakhians who have gained International Awards/Acclaim in the categories given below.

Categories:

Law, Education, Medicine/Health, Science & Technology, Engineering, Sports, Industry & Entrepreneurship, Architecture, Performing Arts (Music/Drama/Dance etc), Literature, Community Service & Other (Specify)

<p>Entry Coupon Platinum Awards for Internationally Acclaimed Past Visakhians in commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the VVOGA</p>
Name of Nominee
Postal & email address of Nominee
.....
Period at Visakha Vidyalaya of Nominee
Category selected
International Award/Acclaim received & Year of Award
.....
.....
Name, Postal & email address of Proposer
.....

Rules:

(i) Nominees could be proposed by a member of the public (ii) Late entrees will not be accepted (iii) Decision of the Judges is final.

Please attach a bio-data of the Nominee along with documentary evidence of award/ acclaim received, with the Entry Coupon. Address envelope: Convener, 75th Anniversary Celebrations, VVOGA, 133, Vajira Road, Colombo 4, or email: ma_pakse@sltnet.lk on or before **22nd October 2009**

OBITUARIES

The OGA records with deep sadness the passing away of Mrs Sita Rajasuriya, an old girl and the first Guide Commissioner of Ceylon, who led the 11th Colombo Guide Company. Visakhians remember her with much respect and affection.

REUNION OF THE BATCH OF '90

Batch of 90' would be having their re-union lunch on the **25th October 2009** at Park Street Mews Restaurant. Contact: *Nilupa*-0717163686 / *Ishani*-0777769060

CONTRIBUTIONS FROM MEMBERS

A page from *Sujiva Withana's Cook Book* **EGGLESS FRUIT CAKE**

Ingredients: 1 & 1/2 cups flour
1/3 cup oil/melted margarine
1 cup chopped nuts & raisins
1 tsp bicarb of soda
1 cup sugar
2 tbs white vinegar
1 cup water
2 tsp vanilla

Method:

Mix all dry ingredients in a bowl. Mix all the liquids together. Now pour the liquids into the dry ingredients & beat well. Pour into a well greased & floured tray & bake at 180 degrees for 30 minutes.

APPLE & LEMON PUDDING

Ingredients: 1 Apple
1/2 tsp salt
150 gms flour
150 gms sugar
2 tbs raisins
1 lemon/lime
1/4 tsp cinnamon powder
150 gms margarine
3 eggs
2 tsp baking powder

Method:

Melt margarine & let it cool. Beat eggs. Core & chop the apple. Grate the zest & squeeze the lime/lemon. In a bowl mix the dry ingredients & slowly add the melted margarine first & then the eggs & mix well. Pour into a microwaveable dish & cook on medium heat for 10 mins or bake at 200 degrees for 25 mins. Serve warm with ice cream/golden syrup

Advice from Dr Anula Wijesundera

Chest Pain – What is it?

Is it a heart attack?

- Chest pain is severe, felt in the centre of the chest
- Tightening in nature
- Associated with sweating and vomiting
- Pain radiates across chest to both upper limbs
- If you are not allergic to Aspirin, chew & swallow one tablet of Aspirin or Disprin.
- Go to the nearest hospital for an ECG & further management.

Is it Gastritis?

- The pain is burning in nature
- Felt in the upper middle abdomen
- There may be belching & burping
- This usually settles with an antacid tablet or liquid, milk, yoghurt or curd.
- If in doubt, do an ECG

Is it muscular pain?

- The pain is felt mostly on the side of the chest
- It increases with chest movements
- The muscular chest pain is preceded by some heavy muscular work.
- The pain settles with analgesics/pain killers

Is it Pneumonia?

- There will be fever & cough
- The chest pain will increase with deep breathing
- You must go to your Doctor or nearby hospital for further assessment