



Baandhavya ಬಾಂಧವ್ಯ

Veerashaiva Samaja of North America

FALL 2010

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Editors:

Chaitra Kishore
Kusuma Aralere
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Gowri mathu Ganesha Habbada Shubaashayagalu



Editors' Note

Dear VSNA Members:

Hope you all enjoyed the Summer - the time to take vacations with family and friends, time to relax by the pool or at the beach.

As you celebrated the Swarna Gowri and Ganesha Chaturthi on September 11, we the Editorial Committee would like to wish you all HAPPY GOWRI & GANESHA. May both mom and son (Gowri & Ganesha) bring you and your family the happiness and prosperity for the rest of the year! Also, we hope you all enjoyed the Modak or Kadabu on this occasion.

The festival is observed in the Hindu calendar month of Bhaadrapada, starting on the shukla chaturthi (fourth day of the waxing moon period). The date usually falls between 20 August and 15 September. The festival lasts for 10 days, ending on Anant Chaturdashi (fourteenth day of the waxing moon period).

Ganesha is widely worshiped across India as the remover of obstacles. This festival is most elaborate in Maharashtra, Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. Outside India, it is celebrated widely in Nepal and by Tamil Hindus in Sri Lanka and by the immigrant Hindus in other countries.

This edition is full of news, chapter updates and articles on various topics, and a special section with college application tips and other topics of interest for high school students. Thanks to all the writers who sent in their articles for this edition. The views expressed in these articles solely belong to the authors and are independent from the opinions of the executive committee and the editorial committee.

If you would like to send us the articles for future editions please follow the following format requirements:

- Articles can be English (MS Word or Rich Text - Arial font size 11) or Kannada (Baraha font); and the length of an article to be no more than 2 pages.
- Send your articles and suggestions to vsnanewsletter@yahoo.com.

As always, we would love to hear from you - any news to share, comments, thoughts or suggestions.

Thank you,

Editorial Committee

President's Note



Veerashaiva Samaja of North America



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USA 501(c)**

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**BOD Members:
(Executive)**

**Kishore Channabasavaih
Kusuma Aralere
Prabhu Patil
Sundaresh Siddiah
Suri Suresh**

**Presidents of
Local Chapters:**

**Alabama
California - Central
California - North
California - South
Florida
Georgia
Chicago - Illinois
Maryland
Detroit - Michigan
New England
New York
North Carolina
Ohio
Pittsburg - Pennsylvania
Texas
Toronto - Canada
DC & Virginia
West Virginia**

ಹೊನ್ನು ಮಾಯೆಯೆಂಬರು ಹೊನ್ನು ಮಾಯೆಯಲ್ಲ.
ಹೆಣ್ಣು ಮಾಯೆಯೆಂಬರು ಹೆಣ್ಣು ಮಾಯೆಯಲ್ಲ.
ಮೆಣ್ಣು ಮಾಯೆಯೆಂಬರು ಮೆಣ್ಣು ಮಾಯೆಯಲ್ಲ.
ಮನದ ಮುಂದಣ ಆಶೆಯೇ ಮಾಯೆ ಕಾಣಾ ಗುಹೇಶ್ವರ !

Sharanu,

I am proud to announce that the fall edition of VSNA Newsletter, Bhandavya, will be released on September 27, 2010. I am pleased to mention that Editors Mrs. Kusuma Aralere, Ms. Chaitra Kishore, Mr. Tejas Aralere and Mr. Shankar Sagare have done an excellent job in bringing yet another splendid Newsletter this year. I sincerely thank all the writers for their invaluable contributions to our Newsletter.

As mentioned before the goal of the Newsletter, Baandhavya is to communicate and connect our community members with cultural and religious aspects of Veerashaivism, Basava philosophy and spread the message of great Sharanas. I plead all members to read the Newsletter to learn more about our members, their activities and participation in VSNA. Baandhavya Newsletter also facilitates members to understand Basava Philosophy. This will help us to teach our children and practice many wonderful ideas of Basavanna like "Work is Worship", Gender Equality, Non-violence, compassion towards all religions, and Dasoha, the community service which are still practical and applicable in the modern world.

VSNA encourage members to take this opportunity to write their experience in the newsletter. VSNA officers request all members especially our youngsters to write articles to express their views and lift VSNA to the higher level in thoughts and action.

I'm glad to mention that the Toronto Convention 2010 was a grand success. Most of the members attended the cultural, religious, health and business forums and enjoyed these programs. Keynote speakers like Mr. Ramzan Darga and Mr. Ravi Reddy, Dr. Munavalli and Shree Shivamurthy Muruga Sharanu Swamiji of Chitradurga matt delivered an excellent and thought provoking speech. I admire all the organizers especially Chair Yuvaraj Patil, Co Chair Vijay Aivalli, Local Chapter President Jagadeesh Mandi for their wonderful work. I appreciate all the families of the Convention Team for their time, dedication, sacrifice, and hard work. Also, I am grateful to all the Donors for their generous contribution and made this convention possible. Good job Toronto Convention 2010 team!!

The following distinguished people were awarded by VSNA for outstanding achievements in their special fields (the award committee went through the nominations of many excellent candidates; however, the committee has to select the best candidate among them). These special candidates were honored by VSNA and blessed by swamiji Dr. Shivamurthy Muruga Sharanu during the 'Awards ceremony' at the convention.

1. 2010 VSNA Professional Achievement Award: Dr. Shashi Kori.
2. 2010 VSNA Outstanding Service Award: Mr. Prabhu Patil
3. 2010 VSNA Women Award: Mrs. Komala Prabhakar.
4. 2010 VSNA Youth Award: No nominations received.
5. 2010 VSNA Student Scholarship: (There were Limited nominations received).
 - a. Sarayu Kumar
 - b. Chandan Kittur .
6. The past Chair of the convention, Mrs. Bhavani Moodbagil and past president Mr. Sundaresh Siddiah were given an award of appreciation for their hard work and dedication. Also Outgoing VSNA officers received the token of appreciation.

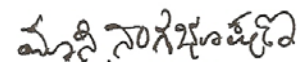
I am delighted to announce once again that New England Chapter has come forward to host next VSNA convention 2011 at Boston. Chair of the Convention Mr. Basavaraj Mudenur and Co Chair Mr. Shiv Kumar with Youth leaders Mr. Preeth Gowdar and Mr. Prastanth Uppin gave a beautiful presentation at the Convention. At recent AKKA convention, New England Team has opened a booth to spread the message of Dasoha and to invite people to attend their exciting Convention. I am happy to announce that Mr. Vijaya Kotrappa (Chair of BOR) and Mr. Sadanand Hebbal (past Chapter president of California North) have come forward to organize International Basava Conference in conjunction with New England Convention 2011. The New England convention 2011 team has welcomed this idea and promised to accommodate this International Basava Conference, on Day one, in addition to their wonderful idea of practical Dasoha day during the convention.

I am glad to announce the new Central VSNA officers for the next term Jan 2011 to Jan 2013.

Dr. Somashekar Pallegar, President-Elect; Mr. Vijay Kumar, Vice President-Elect;
Mr. Thej Karthal, Secretary-Elect and Mr. Nanjunadappa B.S., Treasurer-Elect.

Once again, I request you to send your articles to the editors of the Newsletter for the publication in the next edition.

*Thank you
With Sharanarathi,*


*Dr. Nagabhushana Malakkla
President VSNA.*

I am proud of Guru Basavanna.



Sharanu VSNA Chapter Presidents, and ALL members,

I am glad to announce that there are **Three BOD positions** available for the term of 2 years starting from 1st of January 2011. See Nomination forms attached with this letter and these forms are also posted in the VSNA website and Newsletter. As before, VSNA Election committee consisting of Dr. Munavalli, Mr. Doddamani, and Mr. Deepak Bevinamara will help in this Election process.

Name of the Post: Executive BOD members -Three positions

Duration of Post: 2 years. Starting from 1st of January 2011

Eligibility: The candidates should be Life members or paid members with good standing character having interest, intention, and time to improve VSNA.

Who can nominate: Any VSNA members can nominate suitable candidates. **Interested Life members can nominate himself/herself as per VSNA Bylaw.**

Nomination forms: Please use the nomination forms that are posted in the VSNA web site and Newsletter to nominate the candidates.

Election Schedule: Following is the tentative dates for the election.

6th September 2010: Opening date for filing nominations.

16th October 2010: Closing date for filing nominations.

30th October 2010: Last date for withdrawing nominations.

The Election committee will contact the Nominated candidates for their confirmation for the post.

If there are more than Three candidates for these posts there will be an election.

Thank you

With Sharanarathi ,

ಮಾಧವಿ ನಾಗಭುಷಣ

Dr.Nagabhushana Malakela

President VSNA.

I am proud of Guru Basavanna.



NOMINATION FORM for VSNA BOD POSITION

Pursuant to the VSNA By-laws, nominations are solicited for various positions. To become eligible candidates should be Life members or paid Central VSNA members for three years.

Please write the Candidate's Name clearly in front of the post for which they are nominated with their Telephone number and Address. Candidates can nominate themselves if they are Life members. If they are paid VSNA members their nomination should be supported by a proposing VSNA Bona fida member and a Bona fida Seconding Member.

If there are more than two candidates for one post, then there will be an election for that post. If elected, the candidate should be willing to serve the VSNA for stipulated period.

Nomination form should be scanned and e mailed to:

vsna_election_comm@yahoo.com

Or Mail (mention reasons why you can't send by email):

Dr. Munavalli, 49135 Gladiolus Street, Indian Land/Ft. Mill . SC 29707.

The deadline for submission of the nomination is **October 16, 2010.**

Positions for Contest: (By-law: Article VI Section 2)

BOD Member -Executive Three positions (By-law: Article VI Section 2)

Name _____

Address _____

Email _____

Tel No: _____

Proposing member's Name _____

Candidate can Self-nominate if he/she is a Life member.

Signature _____

Address _____

Email _____

Tel No: _____

Seconding member's Name _____

If the candidate is not a Life member, need support from Seconding member.

Signature _____

Address _____

Email _____

Tel No: _____

Seeker and the God

- Guruswamy Ayya, VA

*Kurivindu kabbina uliva thotava hokku
Theranariyade, thenirasada
Horagana eleyane meledavu!
Nimmanariva madakariyallade
Kuri ballude Koodalasangama Deva – Basavanna*

Flock of sheep that enters a sugar cane grove
Nibbles only the leaves around
Hence, they miss taste of sweet juice of cane
It is only the elephant in rut that knows thee
How can these sheep know thee
O, Koodalasangama Deva ?

The flock of sheep that enters a sugar cane grove, eats only the leaves around the cane, not tasting the sweet part, because they do not know the sweet essence of the plant. An elephant, on the other hand, knows how to enjoy the sweetness. As seekers of spiritual experience, we should avoid distractions and maintain our focus on the essence.

We aspire to develop a loving and protective relationship with God. We believe that God is everywhere, but to reach him is a mystery. In the hope of getting closer to God, we create situations, such as, attending places of worship and listening to religious lectures. Even then, unless we know the essence of spirituality, our efforts will not be fruitful.

When we go to the temple, we are satisfied to see rituals performed by others to propitiate God. Sometimes, we may not even see the idol, because of the restrictions placed by the temple management. But, knowing and seeing spiritual activities is not the same as experiencing spirituality. We can experience the divinity of God only through our own spiritual conduct. It is our spiritual conduct which enhances our conscience to connect divinity in us to divinity in others. Thus, in touching the total divinity, we touch God.

Then again, we are eager to listen to good speeches on religion. We are particular that the speaker, at a spiritual talk, must be a well known scholar. However, we will miss the essence of a good speech unless we know the subject matter. Thus, certain preparation is necessary, by both the speaker and the listener, in order to make the speech effective. An effective speech will motivate the listener to undertake appropriate action resulting in self development. Feel good speeches will only result in momentary entertainment.

Let us be mindful that we do not end up, like the sheep, eating only leaves and missing the sweetness in sugar cane.

Source: Book titled “Vachanas for Modern Man”, 2009, by Guruswamy Ayya

ಕಾಯಕನಾ? ಅಥವಾ ಭಕ್ತಿಭಾವವಿಲ್ಲದ ಪೂಜೆನಾ?.....

- ವಿವಿಜೊ



"ಕಾಯಕವೇ ಕೈಲಾಸ", "ಆಚಾರವೇ ಸ್ವರ್ಗ"... "ದೇಹವೇ ದೇಗುಲ".... ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ನಮ್ಮ ಶರಣ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯ, ವಚನಗಳ ರೂಪದಲ್ಲಿ ನೀಡಿರುವ ನುಡಿಮುತ್ತುಗಳು. ನಮ್ಮ ವಚನಕಾರರು, ಶರಣರು ಪ್ರಪಂಚಕ್ಕೆ ಕೊಟ್ಟ ಕೊಡುಗೆಗಳು. ಇಂತಹ ನುಡಿಗಳನ್ನು ಅರಿತು, ಮನದಟ್ಟು ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡು ದೈನಂದಿನ ಬದುಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಆಚರಣೆಗೊಳಿಸುವುದು ಬಹಳ ಮುಖ್ಯ. ವಿಷಯವೆಂದರೆ ಬಹಳ ಮಂದಿ ವಚನಗಳನ್ನು ಬಾಯಿಪಾಠ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡು, ಚೆನ್ನಾಗಿ ಉರು ಹೊಡೆದು, ಉದ್ದಿನ ಬಾಷಣವನ್ನು ನೀಡುವುದರಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಪುಣರು. ಆದರೆ ಆಚರಿಸುವುದರಲ್ಲಿ ಸೊನ್ನೆ. ಭಕ್ತಿಯಿಲ್ಲದ ನೀರಸ ಪೂಜಾಸಲ್ಲುಕೆ ನಿರರ್ಥಕ. ಕಾಯಕದ ಹಾದಿಯನ್ನು ಅನುಸರಿಸಬೇಕೆಂಬ ವಿಚಾರದ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ನನ್ನ ಕೆಲವು ಆಲೋಚನೆಗಳನ್ನು ಈ ಪುಟ್ಟ ಲೇಖನದಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ಪಡೆಸುತ್ತಿದ್ದೇನೆ.

ಇಂದಿನ ವಿಜ್ಞಾನಯುಗದಲ್ಲಿ, ದಿನ ನಿತ್ಯದ ಬದುಕಿನ ಜಟಿಲಾಬಾಂಡಿಯನ್ನು ಅತಿ ವೇಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಸಾಗಿಸುತ್ತಿರುವ ಜನರು, ಸಭ್ಯತೆ-ಸಂಸ್ಕೃತಿ ಮರೆತಿರುವ ಮಂದಿ, ಅನುಕರಣೆ-ಪೈಪೋಟಿಯೆಂಬ ದೈಯವಿಟ್ಟುಕೊಂಡು, ಒಣ ಆಡಂಬರಕ್ಕಾಗಿಯೂ, ಪಾಪಕರ್ಮಗಳನ್ನು ತೊಳೆದು ಕೊಂಡು ಶುದ್ಧಿಯಾಗಲೋ ಏನೋ ಪೂಜಾಕ್ರಿಯೆಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡುತ್ತಿರುವವರು, ಮಂತ್ರಗಳ ಸತ್ಯವನ್ನು ಅರಿಯದೆ ಉಚ್ಚರಿಸುವವರು, ಅನ್ಯರಿಗೆ ನೀತಿ ಪಾಠಗಳನ್ನು ಹೇಳುತ್ತಾ ಕಾಲಕಳೆಯುವವರು ಯಾವ ಕಾರ್ಯನಿಧಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ತೊಡಗಿದ್ದಾರೆಯೋ ನಾನರಿಯೆ.

ಯುಗಯುಗಾಂತರದಿಂದಲೂ ಜ್ಞಾನಿಗಳು, ಮೇಧಾವಿಗಳು, ಗುರು-ಹಿರಿಯರು, ಶಿಕ್ಷಕರು ಉಪದೇಶಿಸುತ್ತಾ ಬಂದಿರುವುದು: "ಕೆಲಸವೇ ದೇವರಿಗೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಪೂಜೆ". ಶ್ರೀ ಕೃಷ್ಣನು ಮಹಾಭರತದಲ್ಲಿ, ಅರ್ಜುನನ ಕುರಿತು - "ಕರ್ಮಕ್ಕೆ ಮಹತ್ವ ನೀಡು, ನಿನ್ನ ಕರ್ತವ್ಯವನ್ನು ನೀನು ಪರಿಪಾಲಿಸು"ಯೆಂದು ಗೀತೋಪದೇಶದ ಸಂಧರ್ಭದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳಿರುವುದು ನಮ್ಮೆಲ್ಲರಿಗೂ ತಿಳಿದಂತಹ ಸಂಗತಿ. ಮಾನವನು ಕರ್ತವ್ಯವನ್ನು ನಿರ್ಲಕ್ಷಿಸಿ, ಮಹಾಪೂಜೆ, ಯಜ್ಞ-ಯಾಗಾದಿಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿ, ದೇವರ ಮುಂದೆ ತನ್ನ ಅಪೇಕ್ಷೆಗಳ ಪಟ್ಟಿಯನ್ನು ಇಡುವುದನ್ನು ನೋಡಿರುವೆವು. ಬೇಡಿಕೆಗಳನ್ನು ಈಡೇರಿಸೆಂದು, ಆಸೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪೂರೈಸೆಂದು ಮೊರೆ ಹೋಗುವುದನ್ನು ಕಂಡಿದ್ದೇವೆ.

ರಬೀಂದ್ರನಾಥ ಠಾಕೂರರು ತಮ್ಮ ಒಂದು ಪದ್ಯದಲ್ಲಿ "ದೇವರನ್ನು ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕನ ಕೆಲಸದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಣು..." ಎಂದು ಅಧ್ಬುತವಾಗಿ ವರ್ಣನೆ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಹನ್ನೆರಡನೇ ಶತಮಾನದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಸವಣ್ಣನವರು "ಕಾಯಕವೇ ಕೈಲಾಸ"ವೆಂದು ವಚನದಲ್ಲಿ ಹೇಳಿ ಸಾಮಾನ್ಯರಿಗೂ ಅರ್ಥವಾಗುವಂತೆ ಕಾಯಕದ ಮಹತ್ವವನ್ನು ಸಾರಿರುವುದು ಇಂದಿನ ಇಪ್ಪತ್ತೊಂದನೇ ಶತಮಾನದಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ. ಎಂದೆಂದಿಗೂ

ಬೆಳಕು ತೋರುವ ನುಡಿ ದೀವಿಗೆ. ಎಲ್ಲರೂ ತಮ್ಮ ತಮ್ಮ ಕೆಲಸಕಾರ್ಯಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಂದುವರೆದು, ನಿಪುಣತೆಯನ್ನು ಸಾಧಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಯತ್ನ ನಡೆಸಬೇಕು. ಅದೇ ಆ ದೇವರಿಗೆ ನಾವು ಮಾಡುವ ನಿತ್ಯ ಆರಾಧನೆ. ಕಾಯಕವು ಕೇವಲ ಕಾಂಚಾಣಗಿಳಿಸುವ ಹಾದಿಯಾಗದೆ, ಶ್ರದ್ಧಾ-ಭಕ್ತಿಯ ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ಷೇತ್ರವಾಗಬೇಕು, ವ್ಯಕ್ತಿತ್ವ ವಿಕಸನದ ನೆಲೆಯಾಗ ಬೇಕು, ಆತ್ಮವಿಶ್ವಾಸ ನೀಡುವ ನಮ್ಮ ಜೀವನದ ಅವಿಭಾಜ್ಯ ಅಂಗವಾಗಬೇಕು.

ಕಾಯಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಶ್ರದ್ಧೆ ಭಕ್ತಿ ತೋರಿದವನಿಗೆ, ಶ್ರಮವಹಿಸಿ ಸಾಧನೆ ಮಾಡುವವನಿಗೆ ಎಂದಿಗೂ ಸೋಲಿಲ್ಲ. ಬಾಳಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಸಂತ್ರಿಪ್ತಿಯನ್ನು, ಶ್ರೇಯಸ್ಸನ್ನು, ನೆಮ್ಮದಿಯನ್ನು ಹಂಬಲಿಸುವ ಮಾನವ ಮೊದಲು ತನ್ನ ವೃತ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ಮನಃಪೂರ್ವಕವಾಗಿ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿ, ಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ಷಮತೆಯಲ್ಲಿ, ಕಾರ್ಯವೈಖರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅನುಭವ ಪಡೆದುಕೊಳ್ಳಬೇಕು. ಆಗ ಆತನ ಜೀವನ ಸಾಕ್ಷಾತ್ಕಾರವಾಗುತ್ತದೆ.

ಅಚ್ಚರಿ ಮೂಡಿಸುವ ವಿಷಯವೆಂದರೆ ಒಣ ಆಡಂಬರ, ಡಂಭಾಚಾರ, ಪೈಪೋಟಿ ಪ್ರದರ್ಶಿಸುವ ಜನಸಂಖ್ಯೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿರುವ ಈ ಕಾಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಭಕ್ತಿಯನ್ನು ಅರ್ಥೈಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳದೆ, ಘಂಟೆಗಟ್ಟಲೆ ದೇವರ ಪೂಜಾಕಾರ್ಯಕ್ರಮಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡಿ, ಶ್ಲೋಕಗಳನ್ನು ಉಚ್ಚರಿಸಿ, ಕಟ್ಟುಪಾಡುಗಳನ್ನು ಅಂಧತ್ವದಿಂದ ಪಾಲಿಸುವವರಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ದಿನಾಲು ಬಹಳ ಹೊತ್ತು ಪೂಜೆ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿದರೆ ಪಾಪನಾಶವಾಗುತ್ತದೆಂಬ ನಂಬಿಕೆ. ನಾವು ಏನೇ ತಪ್ಪುಮಾಡಿದ್ದರೂ, ಅನಾಚಾರವನ್ನು ಎಸಗಿದ್ದರೂ, ಅನ್ಯರ ಮನ ನೋಯಿಸಿದ್ದರೂ ದೇವರ ಪೂಜೆ ಮಾಡಿಬಿಟ್ಟರೆ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಮುಚ್ಚಿಹೋಗುತ್ತದೆ ಎಂಬ ಭಾವನೆ, ಅಘಾಡವಾದ ನಂಬಿಕೆ. ದೇವರ ಹುಂಡಿಗೆ ದುಡ್ಡನ್ನು ಹಾಕಿದರೆ ಪಾಪಕರ್ಮಗಳೆಲ್ಲಾ ಕ್ಷೀಣಿಸಿ, ದೇವರನ್ನು ಒಲಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದೆಂಬ ಅಜ್ಞಾನ ಮನದಲ್ಲಿ ಕವಿದಿರುತ್ತದೆ. ವಿಚಾರವಂತರು, ಸಜ್ಜನರು, ಸಮಯವನ್ನು ಅಮೂಲ್ಯವೆಂದು ಪರಿಗಣಿಸುವ ಪ್ರಜ್ಞಾವಂತರು, ಕಾಯಕವೇ ಕೈಲಾಸವೆಂದು ನಂಬಿ, ಆಚರಿಸಿ, ತಮ್ಮ ಜೀವನವನ್ನು ಕಾಯಕಕ್ಕಾಗಿ, ಸಮಾಜದ, ದೇಶದ ಪ್ರಗತಿಗಾಗಿ, ಉನ್ನತಿಗಾಗಿ ಮುಡಿಪಿಟ್ಟು, ತಮ್ಮ ಬದುಕನ್ನು ಸಾರ್ಥಕಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳುತ್ತಾರೆ.

ನಾವೆಲ್ಲರೂ ಅವರ ಹಾದಿಯನ್ನು ಅನುಸರಿಸೋಣ ಬನ್ನಿ, ಜ್ಞಾನ ದೇಗುಲದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಲಿತ ಪಾಠಗಳನ್ನು, ನೀತಿ ತತ್ವಗಳನ್ನು ಜೀವನ ರೂಪಿಸಿಕೊಳ್ಳಲು ಉಪಯೋಗಿಸಿ, ದೈನಂದಿನ ಬದುಕಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನೀತಿಯನ್ನು ಪಾಲಿಸಿ, ಉತ್ತಮ ಗುಣಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿ, ಕಾಯಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಉತ್ತಮರಾಗುವ ಪ್ರಯತ್ನ ಮಾಡಬೇಕು. ಒಂದು ದೊಡ್ಡ ಪೂಜೆಯ ಕೋಣೆಯನ್ನು ಕಟ್ಟಿಸಿ, ತೋರಿಕೆಗಾಗಿ, ಸಮಾಜದಲ್ಲಿ ಅಂತಸ್ತಿಗಾಗಿ ಹೆಣಗಾಡಿ, ವಿವಿಧ ಬಗೆಯ ಪೂಜೆಯನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿ, ಮನದಲ್ಲಿ ಕಾಂಚಾಣಗಿಳಿಸುವ ಉಪಾಯಗಳನ್ನು ಮಾಡುತ್ತಾ, ಲೆಕ್ಕಾಚಾರವಾಕುತ್ಯಾ, ಮಹದಾಕಾಂಕ್ಷೆಗಳನ್ನು ಹೊತ್ತು, ಸನ್ಮಾರ್ಗವನ್ನು ಮರೆತು, ಸಮಯವನ್ನು ಸವಿನಿಯೋಗಗೊಳಿಸದೆ ಕುಳಿತಿರುವ, ಅಂಧಕಾರದಲ್ಲಿ ಮುಳುಗಿರುವ ಜನರಿಗೆ "ಕಾಯಕವೇ ಕೈಲಾಸ" ಎಂಬ ಜ್ಞಾನ ದೀವಿಗೆಯು ಬೆಳಕಿನೆಡೆಗೆ ಕರೆದೊಯ್ಯುತ್ತದೆಂದು ಆಶಿಸುತ್ತೇನೆ.

ಹಗಲಿರುಳು ಬೇಡಿದನು....
ಸಂಗಾತಿಯ ಸುಖವನ್ನು....

ಆನುದಿನವು ಅರ್ಪಿಸಿದನು
ಪ್ರೀತಿಯ ಸವಿಜೇನನ್ನು....

ಪತಿಯೇ ದೈವವೆಂದು ಭಾವಿಸಿದನು
ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿದನು ಪೂಜೆಯನ್ನು...

ದಿನನಿತ್ಯ ಚರಣಗಳ ಸ್ಪರ್ಶಿಸಿದನು
ಬೆಳಗಂದು ಬಾಳನ್ನು...

ಕವನಗಳನ್ನು ಬರೆದಿಹೆನು
ಜಪಿಸುತ್ತ ಇನಿಯನ ನಾಮವನ್ನು

ಜೀವನವ ಪ್ರೀತಿಗಾಗಿ ಮುಡಿಪಿಟ್ಟೆನು
ಈಜುತಿರುವೆನು ಪ್ರೇಮದಕಡಲನ್ನು

- ವಿಪಜೊ

ಈ ಕವನವು "ಸುಂದರೇಶ್ ಉಮಶಂಕರ್" ರಿಗೆ ಅರ್ಪಣೆ.

("ವಿಪಜೊ"...ವಿಮಲಪರಂಜ್ಯೋತಿ ಉಮಾಶಂಕರ್ ಮೂಲತಃ ಆಂಗ್ಲ ಭಾಷೆಯ ಬರಹಗಾರ್ತಿ. ಅವರ ಕವನಸಂಕಲನಗಳು "ಭೌನ್ವಿಯಸ್ ಲೈಫ್" ಮತ್ತು "ರಿಫ್ಲೆಕ್ಟ್ಸ್" ಭಾರತ ಹಾಗೂ ಲಂಡನ್ನಿನಲ್ಲಿ ಅನೇಕ ಓದುಗರ ಪ್ರಶಂಸೆಗೆ ಪಾತ್ರವಾಗಿವೆ. ಹಿಂದಿ ಭಾಷೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಅನೇಕ ಕವನಗಳನ್ನು ರಚಿಸಿ ಸಾಹಿತ್ಯಕ್ಷೇತ್ರಕ್ಕೆ ಕೊಡುಗೆ ನೀಡಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಕೆಲವು ಕವನಸಂಕಲನಗಳು - "ಯೆಹಸಾಸ್", "ಮೇರಿ ಜಹಾನ್", ಮತ್ತು "ಪ್ಯಾರ್". ಮೂಲತಃ ಮೈಸೂರಿನವರಾದ ಈ ಬರಹಗಾರ್ತಿ ಬೆಳೆದಿದ್ದು ಬೆಂಗಳೂರಿನಲ್ಲಿ. ತಂತ್ರಜ್ಞಾನದ ಆಸಕ್ತಿಯಿಂದ "ಯೆಲೆಕ್ಟ್ರಾನಿಕ್ಸ್" ವಿದ್ಯಾಭ್ಯಾಸ ನಡೆಸಿ, ಸೊಫ್ಟ್ವೇರ್ ಕಂಪನಿಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ವೃತ್ತಿ ಜೀವನ ನಿರ್ವಹಿಸಿದ್ದಾರೆ. ಮದುವೆಯ ನಂತರ ಅಮೇರಿಕದಲ್ಲಿ ಬಂದು ನೆಲೆಸಿ ಈಗ ಚಿತ್ರಕಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರತರಾಗಿದ್ದಾರೆ.)

ವರುಣನ ಅಬ್ಬರ

ಕಾರ್ಮೋಡ ಕೆರಳಿ
ನೆಲಕ್ಕೆ ಅಪ್ಪಳಿಸಿ
ಭಯಂಕರ-ನಿರಂತರ ಮಳೆ
ಹೊಳೆ, ಕೆರೆ, ಕಟ್ಟೆ ಹೊಡೆದು
ನದಿ ಉಕ್ಕಿ, ಸೇತುವೆ ಸೀಳಿ
ಅರ್ಭಟಿಸಿ ಹೊರಟ ಭೀಕರ
ಗಂಗಾ ಪ್ರವಾಹ, ನೀರಿನ ನೆಡೆ ವಿಕಾರ
ನೆಲ-ಮನೆ
ಬೆಳೆ-ಕಳೆ
ನಾಯಿ-ಕುರಿ
ಕರು-ಕೂಸು
ಮಗು-ಮಡದಿ
ಕೊಚ್ಚಿ ಹೋಗಿ
ನೂರಾರು ಮೈಲಿ ನೀರು ಹರಡಿ
ಊರು ಸಾಗರವಾಗಿ, ಬೆಳಕು ಕತ್ತಲಾಗಿ
ನೆಲ-ದಾರಿ
ಧನ-ಧಾನ್ಯ ಜಲಸಮಾಧಿ
ಜನ ಅನಾಥ ಜಲಬಂಧಿ
ಚಳಿಗಾಳಿ ಬಡಿದು
ಬಟ್ಟೆ ಹರಿದು
ಹೊಟ್ಟೆ ಹಸಿದು
ಹಣ-ಹೆಣ ತೇಲಿ
ನೀರ ನಡುವೆ ನಿಂತಜನ ಭಿಕಾರಿ
ಅರ್ಧ ನೀರಿನಲ್ಲಿ ನಿಂತು
ಅರೆ ಕಣ್ಣೀರು ಸುರಿದು
ಜನ-ಜೀವನ ದಿಗಂಬರ
ಇದು ವರುಣನ ವರ - ಅಬ್ಬರ!

ಮಾಸ್ತಿ ಸಾಗಣಾಂಶ

(ಉತ್ತರ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕದ ಪ್ರವಾಹದ ಚಿತ್ರ)



SAMPADANE OF KASHMIR KING AND QUEEN

- Linga Raju, Plainview, NY

In the 12th century AD there was a great religious movement at Kalyana, now known as Basava Kalyana, in Karnataka that attracted seekers and scholars from all parts of India. So great was the attraction that Kashmiri king Mahadevaraya and his wife Mahadevi renounced their kingdom and all their wealth to the life of saranas at Kalyana. They were convinced that that was the only way to the Absolute, and that the search for the Divine, its realization and practice, outweighed all the hardship. [Please note that most of what is written in this article is taken from volume IV of Sunyasampadane, published by the Karnatak University, Dharwar, India.]

Kashmir is in the north-north-western part of India. King Balalochana, father of Mahadevaraya ruled the Kashmir kingdom from the capital city of Mandavyapura. Balalochana has been credited for providing to his son an excellent education that embodied many virtues – modesty, generosity and valor. Mahadevaraya became extremely pious; when coming of age, married Mahadevi; and after his father's death assumed the rule of the kingdom. He ruled for many years. He continued his worship of Linga, and fed six to twelve thousand Jangamas every day.

The religious movement at Kalyana and Basavanna's greatness attracted the Jangamas. When Basavanna 'stole them away' to Kalyana, the king at first became infuriated and unsuccessfully tried to get them back. When the King's brother, Guru, returned from Kalyana, as a token of his devotion, the king offered him presents which were not accepted – only the things earned by one's own labor (kayaka) would be acceptable. To overcome this, the king disguising himself, worked at a blacksmith's workshop, and from what he had earned, obtained an item made out of iron, and offered it. It was accepted. All this made the king realize that the Sarana way of life is the only way to the Absolute – Sunya. He renounced his kingdom in favor of his son Lingarati, and as he prepared to depart for Kalyana, requested his wife to stay behind, but she refused – her place is at the husband's side. She accompanied him to Kalyana. This older couple braved all the hardships of the long journey that took many months to complete.

At Kalyana, the king changed his name to Marayya, and his wife was known as Mahadeviyamma. He had not brought any of his belongings. He started his work as a firewood gatherer and merchant. Every morning he would go to the forest, gather the wood sticks, tie them up into a bundle, carry the bundle on his head, and sell it for a price in strict accordance with the spirit of true and honest labor. He spent his earnings for the service of Bhaktas and Jangamas. For this he came to be known as Moligeya Marayya, or simply, Moligayya. Occasionally he would go to the Anubhava Mantapa and participate in the discussions; he became a prominent figure in the Sarana Assembly. His wife was to him the perfect helpmate and companion; they would hold discussions pertaining to the Life Divine at home in the evenings. The Jangamas after feasting at Basavanna's place would sometimes visit their house where Mahadeviyamma would serve them porridge made of rice or jawar. This simple dish apparently tasted better than what they had at Basavanna's. As word spreads, the number of guests increased. Basavanna was deeply moved when he came to know this – a true Dasohi in this former king who is now a simple laborer.

One day, Basavanna disguised as an ordinary bhakta, visits their house. Bowing in reverence, he requests Mahadeviyamma to give him his meal as he is very hungry. Amma complies by arranging for his Lingapuja, and after that, serving him her famous porridge. Basavanna was overjoyed by the gift of Grace – Prasada. Unknowing to Mahadeviyamma, he leaves two containers with gold coins, behind the basin over which

Istalinga is washed. Marayya comes home after work, and as usual takes a shower and starts his Linga worship. He sees the gold coins, and from his wife, comes to know of a bhakta's visit. He becomes enraged that their sense of kayaka and dasoha was offended by this bhakta, whom he instantly realizes to be none other than Basavanna. After informing his wife, he goes to Basavanna's place, brings the Jangamas to his house for a meal; Mahadeviyamma feeds them the porridge; Marayya gives all the gold to Jangamas, and sends them back to Basavanna. Basavanna realizes his folly in daring to commiserate with the great saranas' poverty. It is a mistake to think that saranas could suffer from poverty when they are living in tune with the Infinite and doing their Kayaka – they are masters of Infinite wealth. This puts Basavanna's bhakti to a severe trial by Marayya. Thus repenting, Basavanna comes to Marayya's house with Channabasavanna (his intellectual and spiritually enlightened nephew), the great sivayogi Siddarama, Hadapada Appanna (great sarana and associate serving betel-nut and leaf) and others, and fully prostrating himself in humility, makes his submission and asks for forgiveness from Marayya. Marayya would not be easily conciliated. He wonders how a bhakta of Basavanna's stature could forget himself and make such a mistake. He makes it clear that **bhakti should never be done for applause or admiration**. Channabasavanna comes to Basavanna's rescue – he condemns the action taken by Basavanna, and states that Basavanna is aware of the infinite powers latent in kayaka, and that Marayya is no ordinary sarana and Marayya's kayaka is done in the utmost sincerity. Siddarama also comes to rescue, and praises Marayya. There is complete reconciliation. Marayya, although he does not approve of Basavanna's action, shows overflowing love and admiration for Basavanna.

Marayya and Mahadeviyamma continue to lead the rigorous life of saranas. After the saranas leave Kalyana following the revolution, Marayya and his wife continue to live at Kalyana. They spend their time in high spiritual discussions; their cottage becomes a mini Anubhava Mantapa. They live to quite a ripe old age. After the great saranas have already gone before them, Marayya wonders 'How long shall I keep up for You this mission of a mortal man? Make me a state of unity with Thee'. Mahadeviyamma is surprised to hear such words from her husband. She brings him up to the Reality, to the utter **Oneness where there is none to ask and none to reply**. To ask to be united with Reality implies duality, and so long as the duality persists, union is not possible. The ultimate union with the Reality is '**unionless union**'. When one comes to the real knowledge and finds that one's actions flow from the Divine housed in one's body, and that the individual self is nothing but the Divine Self, then one experience the profound Truth and one's consciousness melts into Divine Consciousness. She continues to describe the various stages a seeker has to pass through to finally attain the Absolute One. First, one has to recognize the real teacher, a Guru, in one's spiritual path; Guru reveals to the one, the Divine enshrined in one's heart, and puts Istalinga the representation of the inner Divine on to one's palm. Second, when one comes to the realization of the Linga the Divine - which can occur only after eliminating any hatred, enmity and violence, and purging all the evil desires and inclinations such as lust, anger, greed, infatuation, ego and jealousy - one has to express that Divine in practice; **the Divine expressions are Love, Knowledge, Power, Bliss and Peace**. Third, when the Divine is firmly established in both knowledge and action, one attains the Supreme Knowledge that is Jangama. Then the six-fold hierarchy, the **Satsthala**, is a matter of living experience; the time comes when all the varied love, knowledge, discipline and action consummate into realization of the Absolute.

Mahadeviyamma plays a magnificent role in shaping the spiritual life of Marayya. He acknowledges the wisdom of his wife, and becomes one with his own Self; and then Mahadeviyamma too, with him and the Absolute. It is generally believed that they breathed their last at Kalyana itself. Some indicate that it could be a place about 10 miles from Kalyana, and some others say it could be at Ulavi where Channabasavanna spent his last days. About 809 vachanas of Marayya and 69 of Mahadeviyamma have been found; the vachana signatures are Nihkalankamallikarjuna and Ennayapriya Immadi Nihkalakamallikarjuna respectively.

In Search of Our Roots

-Jayadev Pleasanton, CA

In search of our roots, we can go to *genealogy.com* and search. But, if I am looking for the origins of our tradition – Veerashivism or Lingayatism, I am out of luck. So, I had to go up to University of California library and search. To my delight, there were a few references, just enough to satisfy my curiosity. Here is a short story on an institution in the pre-Basavanna days, which can make us proud. The story is about *Kodi Matha* attached to Kedareshwara temple at Belligave in Shivamogga district.

Around 10th and 11th centuries, Shaivism was spreading all over South India. One of the emergent Shaiva groups in that dynamic political and religious environment was *Kalamukha*. This sect served as a precursor to Basavanna's Veerashaivism.

As was the custom those days in India, the religious sect that impressed the king would get his patronage in terms of land and money. Kalamukhas got the attention and support of their ruling king and under his patronage, built many temples for Shiva worship, the most famous one being the Dakshina Kedareshwara temple in Belligave in Shivamogga district. It is linked to Kedarnath temple in Himalayas, which is famous even today as a holy place attracting thousands of pilgrims each year. This linkage is also supported by the fact that even to this day, priests who perform pujas at Kedarnath temple in Himalayas are *jangamas* from Mysore!

Attached to their temples, Kalamukhas built also *mathas*, which are somewhat like monasteries in the Christian tradition, but with many other functions, which I will describe below. Dr. Nandimath, one of the greatest Veerashaiva scholars, if not the greatest, - I had the privilege of knowing him personally - has pointed out that the Kalamuka mathas became Lingayat mathas as Veerashaivism under Basavanna's leadership spread all across Karnataka.

Kalamukhas built a great matha attached to the temple of Kedareshwara in Belligave. They named the matha as '*Kodiya Matha*', because it was located near the *kodi* of a *kere*. *Kere* is a man-made lake built to supply water for irrigation of rice fields and also a general source of water supply. *Kodi* is the outlet at the end of the embankment. Matha is hard to translate, but you can get a feel for it by the functions that I describe below. This *Matha* was located near Kodi and hence named '*Kodi Matha*', an address which is obvious. According to the inscriptions found at the temple which is dated by archeologists as 1162 A.D., Kodi Matha had the following features:

- There was a place for Shiva worship.
- There were quarters attached to the main building for Shiva worshippers to stay.
- There were schools to teach many branches of learning. A place where works on grammar and logic, six systems of philosophy – Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Sankhya, Bauddha etc. are studied, and also Patanjala and other Yogasutras and so on. The fields of study were eclectic and broad, including even rival systems like Buddhism.
- There was a hospital to take care of residents and visitors.
- Food was distributed to **all** – both residents and visitors, irrespective of their caste or religion.

While reading this record from the Belligave inscription, I could not help thinking of Siddagange Matha in Tumkur. The above description of Kodi matha fits almost to the last detail, what Siddagange Matha is today.

There are many other Mathas , just like Siddagange, spread all over Karnataka and in the adjoining regions, which are serving the needs of society - particularly in the field of education. What is impressive is the historical flow of Matha-culture in Veerashaivism, emphasizing education and charity, over a span of more than 10 centuries - from Kalamukha mathas in the 10th century A.D. to the many Veerashaiva mathas of today, in the 21st century. We can be truly proud of our heritage.

News Update

Kudos to Prerana



Prerana Prabhushankar is seven years, daughter of PrabhuShankar and Archana, members of VSNC (North Carolina chapter of VSNA) and previously members of VSNE New England chapter.

Prerana recently made her parents and friends proud when she was selected for finals of Junior Spell Bee competition at Rowan University, New Jersey -organized by NSF. She was among the three finalists who made it from NC Raleigh region where over all around 100 kids from grades one to three participated. She gave her best effort in the initial two rounds of the finals, but could not make it to the third round which narrowed down to 15 members from 162 finalists. Prerana was happy to carry back home this experience and memories of meeting and sharing the experiences of some of the National Spell Bee champions. Prerana thanks all family and friends who supported and wished her on this event.

Prerana is also a good singer and actively contributes to regional VSNC and Kannada cultural activities by singing vachanas and devotional songs. Let's congratulate Prerana on her achievement and wish her bright future.

Sri. Pandit Puttaraj Gawai passes away



Sri. Pandit Puttaraj Gawai of Veereshwara Punyashrama, Gadag passed away on September 17, 2010. He was laid to rest at his ashram with state honors.

Are You Ready for College?

It's fall and for students everywhere, that means back to school! And for a few, it means it is time to start applying to college! Whether you are applying this year or will be soon, we felt that you would like some pointers. So, we asked VSNA kids all across the nation who are either in college right now or recently graduated for their advice. We have for you a sample college essay along with a collection of tips from our youth on how to survive high school, what you should keep in mind when you are applying to college, and even how to get into medical school, if that is your target. We hope this helps!

The Letter L

(A College Application Essay by Chaitra Kishore)

Second Year in College, Bioengineering, Pre-medicine, University of Illinois at Chicago Honors College

Have you ever noticed how life and learn both start with the letter L? The 26 letters of the English language combine to form hundreds of thousands of words. Guaranteed, many words share the same initial letter. However, some words seem so closely linked together that their mutual starting letter seems more than a mere coincidence.

Life and learn are two such words. Life is an incomprehensible black hole of ambiguity. One of the biggest challenges each individual faces is to make sense of his or her life. This is where the word learn comes in. By learning and acquiring new information, one can unscramble the puzzle of life and reach comprehension. Then, it can be said, that the point of life, is to learn. As a young scholar, I strive to make the most of my life and achieve my ambitions by trying to open myself up to every possibility there is to learn something more. One major way I have done this is by signing up for the most challenging courses available in my high school.

Each AP class experience was like a journey through a road filled with both stretches of smooth pavement and periods of treacherous pot holes. Of them all though, my AP Physics adventure was definitely the most laborious. It was a journey through rough terrain constantly filled with stretches of incomprehension and deep ditches of frustration. My eyes would spend hours glued to the Physics text book while my brain frantically worked to memorize concepts and formula functions. I would spend hours on a single homework question and celebrate when I reached the correct answer. Eventually, the solution to every practice problem we were assigned was engrained in my head. However, on the day of the test, my eyes would gape in horror at the test booklet. There, a completely new problem would stare back up at me. Did I study the right chapter? I would wonder anxiously.

After a couple repetitions of this scenario, realization hit me full in the face like a stack of AP Physics text books and I recoiled backward from the momentum. Physics wasn't like any other subject. It wasn't enough to know it; you needed to know it from every angle. I started to rework my schedule a little, adjusting time so I would have a few extra hours each week to work on extra physics problems I greedily searched for in my text book. I started to understand how Physics worked in general, and this was more important than memorizing the individual concepts. This was the golden key to unlock any tricky physics door.

Even then, I didn't escape the pot holes right away. But as the year went on, those additional hours helped smooth all those bumps into straight, even pavement.

The following summer, I was approached by a girl who would be taking that reputedly challenging class when school rejoined. Carlita wished to start tackling the battle early, with my help. I agreed. With my recently acquired comprehension of physics, I spent the entire summer exposing her to topics such as force, electricity, and magnetism and sharing strategies to conquer each one. During the first week of the tutoring session, her face had a baffled expression similar to the one I wore during my first encounter with physics.

As the summer sunshine slowly faded into breezy autumn winds, that expression of hers slowly changed into a smile. Soon with the approach of the end of the first quarter of the next school year, I was delighted to see an email from her in my inbox: Guess what? I got an A in AP Physics!

Carlita taught me the importance of sharing the learning. It might be a long, treacherous journey in order to acquire bits of information. But, once learned and polished by sharing, it is never really lost. That knowledge is in the back of your mind somewhere just waiting to be applied into the real world, or to be shared with someone else.

My desire is to apply what I have learned throughout my high school years and feed this knowledge towards succeeding in my future. Yet, I believe that learning never ends. I must apply what I already know to continue learning and living. After all, the two are closely intertwined: they start with the same letter.

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Tips On Applying to College

-Vinay Hiremath

First year in college, Materials Engineering University of Illinois at Urbana Champagne

There is a reason why I am giving you – a high school student or transfer applicant – advice rather than merely presenting one of my college essays. I do not want you to use a model for a college essay. I want you to write about your life experiences from the perspective you wish to write about it from: the way you’ve always had it panned out in your mind. If I were to simply give you my essay as a model, you may attempt to copy this model, and you would be imitating a writing style that is not your own. The writing style of an essay reveals a lot about the applicant, and the college to which you’re applying will pick up on this. *You want to get in where you will fit in*, and college admissions officers are pretty good at accepting or rejecting you based on this postulation.

Firstly I hope you are applying to colleges you genuinely want to go to. Colleges that you know you will not only have excellent opportunities at, but also be able to have fun. If you aren’t quirky and obsessed with science and math, why are you applying to MIT or CalTech? If you absolutely despise literature and the arts, please do yourself a favor and do not apply to Amherst for a technical degree. Apply where you fit in with the student body and campus culture. Many times you may wish to visit the college to which you are applying. More selective schools seem to keep track of applicants who visit, and it’s a good way to meet students and write about the experience on your application. Once you have compiled a solid list of schools, you’re ready to move onto the application.

When you are in the early season of the college application process, knock out all of the biological information sections as quickly as possible! These are tedious, and they squash artistic creativity when it comes to writing essays. You want to give your brain some breathing room for the essays.

When writing your essays, it is imperative to use descriptions. Describe what you're feeling or smelling. Describe the tastes and sounds. Do not write another trite essay about how you learned something from the experience. College admission officers are sick of these boring, last-minute, cookie-cutter essays. Instead, *show* that you learned from the experience. Writing the essay should be like telling a good story. In "Crime and Punishment" by Fyodor Dostoevsky, Dostoevsky did not say: "and he went to jail feeling very sad and learned that it's wrong to kill someone". Dostoevsky described the main character's overbearing guilt and how it was slowly crushing him from the inside out. He described the main character's emotions in great artistic detail and painted a picture of a guilty man turning himself in and going to jail. It's obvious he learned his lesson, but it is *powerful* that Dostoevsky allowed the reader to come to his or her own conclusions. You must direct your essay so that it allows the admissions officer to come to his or her own conclusion, but the essay should be scoped enough so that their conclusion is what you intended.

As I had mentioned before, you want the writing style of your essays to be your own. However, it is a good idea to open strong. An example is the anecdotal opener. This is an opener that places the reader in your shoes. If you do not wish to use this, there are other powerful ways of opening an essay, but the main point is that you want to catch the reader's attention. *Be bold*. After opening the essay, transition to talking about the topic. Just remember to write in your own style and to write what you want to write about. Do not be afraid to throw away a perfectly good essay because you feel there's a better scenario that answers the prompt.

Lastly, read over the essay. Do not completely rip it up to the point where it no longer resembles your style, but catch those grammatical mistakes, and take others' criticism. If another person's criticism is obsessively ripping up your essay, however, ignore them! You want to write your own essay.

After the applications are submitted, the hardest part will be waiting. Just rest assured that you've worked hard to get where you are, and you will be fine wherever you end up going! Opportunities are everywhere. You simply have to make the effort to take them.

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On Enjoying High School

-Vinay Hiremath

First year in college, Materials Engineering University of Illinois at Urbana Champagne.

It has become increasingly apparent that many students are becoming obsessive on getting into very selective schools. Whether this is via self motivation or coercion from parents, it is a good idea to *ignore* everyone. You are in high school, and this is the time to make mistakes and grow from them. If you constantly coupe yourself up in your room studying for the ACTs, you are missing out on hanging out with friends or going to a wild party. Your experiences will not only make your college application more interesting, it will make your life bearable. Please do not be the person who breezes through high school and has nothing to show for it besides an ACT number and now-useless high school GPA (seriously it becomes useless after your first year of college).

On the other hand, you can't neglect your studies. If you do want to get into Harvard or Yale, you must realize what you're up against and make a *personal* commitment to be willing to study a lot. This shouldn't be up to your parents or friends!

Overall, a healthy balance between academics and a social life is up to you, but there should be a balance. You should constantly be asking yourself what it is that you want out of your high school experience and where

you want to end up. It is very possible to get into an extremely selective school and still have had a blast in high school.

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Seven-Super-Suggestions for College applicants

Vaishak Amblee

Second year in college, Biology and Anthropology, Pre-medicine University of Illinois at Chicago Honors College.

1. Finding the right college to apply to is extremely important. Considering your interests, strengths, and even extra-curricular activities can help you make this decision. It is helpful to see what programs and majors the college is reputed for, and talking to students who attend that school (friends, older siblings, etc.) can give you a really good idea of the college.
2. Apply to more than one college! The biggest mistake you can make is applying to one college. If you put all your eggs in one basket, you will end up very disappointed if rejected. There are thousands of colleges in the United States. Spread yourself around to ensure that you find a good situation.
3. Make a basic application checklist for each college: Find out which schools will allow you to fill out a common application and which ones require a special app or a supplement; request that transcripts from your high school be sent directly to the college in which you are applying to; whether the school requires the composite or individual scores from your SAT test; how many essays you are required to write and possible topics; setting up an interview with an admissions officer; and most importantly – deadlines for all the different components of the application.
4. Visit the college if possible. Its really important to get the feel for the school and the campus, and while you're there try to talk to some of the students if you can. Campus tours and visiting centers are always happy to show you around, but you'll frequently have to set up an appointment ahead of time.
5. Go the extra mile. Gaining admittance to college is more competitive today than ever before. For this reason, you need to do something to set yourself apart. So, if an essay is optional you should go ahead and start writing. Or if they want you to send in some kind of supplemental material with your application (portfolio, video, etc.) definitely do.
6. Schedule an interview. Even if it is not required, making an appointment with an admissions officer shows your interest in the school. Moreover, the interview process is your opportunity to show the admissions officer what a great candidate you are; it is a part of the application that you can control. Be yourself, but be prepared.
7. Start requesting your recommendation forms way ahead of time, this part of the application usually takes the longest. The teachers you ask are most likely the teachers a lot of students will ask recommendations from.

Getting in to Medical School **Advice in a Nutshell**

-Vidya Shivakumar
Final Year in Medical School, RUSH Medical School

The key to getting into medical school involves a little planning. Decide on when you will take the MCATS and make sure to take the required courses ahead of time. Work on a research project, preferably at a university of interest- It is a great way to get a letter from within the institution. Take leadership in one or two activities in college and volunteer (doesn't have to be at a hospital). Most importantly, get really good grades and try to build a relationship with one or two professors so you can get good letters of recommendations. Attend their classes and appear interested and hard working! Also, if there is a talent that makes you unique, stick with it. It's always good to stand out in a good way. By doing this you will have built a strong application!

AP Courses Tips Eshwar Murthy

Third year in college, Biology, Pre-medicine University of Illinois at Chicago Honors College.

Once you determine which college is right for you, you should first look into their curriculum. Find out which AP tests you can take in order to get the most credit for your academic career. For example, if I would have taken the AP Biology exam and received credit for it, I would have gained 10 introductory Biology credit hours in my favor. Since a full time student needs to take 13 credit hours per semester and tuition for a full time student is roughly \$5,000 for my school, if I would have taken the AP test I would have been able to save over \$3,000 dollars! Not only could I have saved the money but having a lot of credit going into college allows you to give yourself options such as studying abroad or just graduating earlier in general.

Chapters' Round-Up

VSNA North California Sports Day and Picnic.

-Anuradha Burji, President VSNA North California, 2010

We had the VSNA sports day and picnic on Aug 28, 2010. It was a cool and windy summer day. This was a day that all the VSNA members the little ones as well as the adults were looking forward to.

The weeks of planning and dedicated efforts of our committee comprising of: Anuradha Burji [President], Shanta Vajragiri [Vice President], Deepak Bevinamara [Secretary], Harsha Hanji [Treasurer], Provin Dhawan [Website Support], Shilpashree Hanji and Manu Hiremath [Entertainment Committee], Kalpana Rajendra and Suma Moogi [Food Team], Dhruva Seelin and Karan Kurbur [Youth Secretaries]. Thanks to our volunteers Rajendra Mahadevappa, Satish Moogi, Ravi Hiremath, Virupaksha Vajragiri, Chetan Burji and many more who helped us organize the fun filled day.

Wilson Park looked festive, decorated with colorful balloons and streamers. The ginger tea, chips and biscuits was good fortification for a very windy day. Once the kids were organized into their respective groups our entertainment team conducted all the sports competitions. There was flag tag relay, hopscotch for the younger kids and running, math hopscotch etc for the older kids. We had the best cheerleaders – the parents and the competitions brought out the best in the kids. As we finished the competitions everyone was ready for a good meal. The chatpata chaats stalls beckoned us. The food team had organized a yummy picnic lunch for us consisting of Dhokla, Dahi Papdi Chaat, Vada Pav, Salad, Moosranna, Gulab Jamun. And rounded it off with a cool glass of Mango lassi. With this fortification we were again ready for the next set of picnic games. The kids had water balloon tossing, mummy wrap, etc. The ladies raced in a sack and then the couples participated in a back to back race with lots of cheering from the audience. Since many of our parents and in-laws visit during summer a lemon and spoon race was conducted for them. They raced with their children and grandchildren cheering them on. We took a break to quench our thirst with some sweet and crisp watermelon.

Now was the time for all the members to relax, catch-up with friends, meet new friends. The kids had fun at the mehendi and face painting with their creative requests and trying to paint too. The men continued their volley ball matches and the ladies with their throw ball matches. At 4.30pm we all happily sat down for tea, hot kachoris and murmura. The sight of all the kids running around, laughing and enjoying their popsicles was the highlight of the day!

It was time for the prize distribution and we all gathered to cheer our winners and above all to cheer our participants.

This was a day we all got out and gathered together to play, eat, relax, catch-up and enjoy a picnic as a group. Thank you everyone for coming and making it a successful event! We are looking forward to the next event to get together and celebrate!

VSNA - Chicago Chapter Update

– Chaitra Kishore, IL

As summer fades away into fall, members of VSNA Chicago Chapter relish sweet memories, including those of the annual VSNA Picnic. This year's picnic was held in Deer Park Forest Preserve. It was a spacious area that gave everyone room to have fun! Young kids explored the terrain on feet and bikes, taking long adventures through the surrounding wooded trails. Older kids and their parents played competitive games of volleyball in the roomy field. When everyone got tired, they gathered under the shelter for delicious items like Bhel Puri and refreshing summer snacks like watermelon. Overall, it was an enjoyable event for everyone. Plus, the weather cooperated very nicely!



As the summer days began to go by, we had an enlightening indoor event - Vachana Gayana Vyakhyana by Prof. B. Somashekar accompanied by his daughter and VSNA member Mrs. Roopa Jayadev. The program was coordinated by Mrs. Indira Reddy.

Now, that the weather is getting a bit cold, but that doesn't matter for our members. We celebrated the start of fall with Ganesha Chaturthi. There were many entertaining programs held by children and adults alike. In addition, an Anubhava Ghosti was held during which youth discussed the concept of God in various religions.



After the kids program and the Anubhava Ghosti, members were treated with an inspiring talk from Tumkur Swamiji, Dr. Shivananda Shivacharaya, who was visiting at the time. The festival concluded with tasty items prepared by the members.

VSNA – Georgia Chapter Update

– Mamatha Hirannaiah

The Georgia chapter had their annual picnic on 28th of August at Tallulah Park organized by Chaitra Anand, Roopa Praveen, Teju Ravi and Harini Rajesh.

The picnic started at noon with Kannada movie songs played in the background and with snacks Vegetable pakoda, chips, salsa, cut fruits and drinks. Games such as balloon tapping, treasure hunt, water balloon, three leg race, spoon lemon race, watermelon eating race were planned for kids and for adults spoon lemon race & watermelon eating race. In parallel there was badminton, Frisbee (flying disc) & basketball. Kids had a blast with the water balloons..



The lunch menu was puri, matter paneer, aloo gobi, dal, spiced green chilies, vegetable pulav & raita. Dessert was gulab jamoon, followed by a walk and snacks. After the snacks dumb chares was played ladies vs gentlemen game for movie names.



It was made sure that all kids to take home the gifts & chocolates after the final game and this fun event concluded at 8 PM.

Moon Deity Cursed By Ganesha

It was on Ganesha Chaturthi day and Ganesha was riding on his little rat when suddenly a snake crossed his path. The rat was terrified and ran off in fright, due to which Ganesha fell down into a thorny bush.

The Moon was looking down at this from the sky and laughed loudly at the funny sight of Ganesha falling down. This act annoyed Ganesha so much that he decided to punish the Moon. Angrily, he broke one of his tusks and threw it at the Moon. As it struck the Moon, the Moon lost its brightness. Then the world became dark. People were scared and they screamed and wept.

All the Gods in heaven were worried by this confusion. They prayed to Ganesha, "Please give back the Moon its brightness." The Moon repented his act very much. He even fell at Ganesha's feet and prayed to be forgiven.

Ganesha relented, but he wanted to teach the Moon a lesson. So he said, "The first fifteen days of every month, you will get bigger and then the next fifteen days, you will become smaller and smaller. At the end of the month, you will look like my tusk. In addition, on the day of Ganesh Chaturthi anybody who looks at the Moon will have an allegation of theft on him. Saying this Ganesha removed his tusk and brightness was restored to the world.

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Ganesha Goes Around His World

Lord Ganesha (Remover of Obstacles) and Lord Subramanya (God of War) are the sons of Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati. One day, the two sons had an argument about which of them was elder. They asked their father Shiva about this.

Lord Shiva declared that, "Whichever one of you travels faster around the world three times will obtain the status of being elder." So Subramanya got on his vehicle the peacock. Encouraging the peacock to move faster, he started racing around the earth.

On the other hand, Ganesha calmly got on his vehicle, the mouse, and went to the river. He bathed and then dressed in fine clothes. Then, getting back on his mouse he went back to where his parents were standing. Taking blessings from his parents' feet, he circled them three times. Just as he finished, Subramanya passed by. He shouted to Ganesha, "I am going on my third round."

Ganesha just smiled and asked his parents "May I have a reward for winning the contest?"

"But, son you have not gone around the world." Shiva said. Ganesha smiled again and said "O Father I have walked around my parents, and to me my parents are my world."

Shiva was very pleased. Parvati gave Ganesha a huge platter of Ganesha's favorite dish, kadabus. At that moment, Subramanya came in and was very confused. Parvati told Subramanya what had happened. After

hearing this, Subramanya bowed his head to Ganesha in respect. This is how Ganesha received the status of being the elder and greater of the two.

Veerashaiva Trivia!

The FIRST three people who send in ALL the correct answers will have their names featured in the next issue! Send your answers to vsnanewsletter@yahoo.com.

1. Who established the Shunya Peeta in the Anubhava Mantapa?
2. Who was Basavanna's first wife and the daughter of Baladeva?
3. Kayakave Kailasa means ____ is worship.
4. What matt is shown in this picture:



5. Who was Basavanna's second wife and the daughter of Siddarasa?

Answers to last issue's questions:

1. Who gave up worldly possessions and clothed herself in her own hair for Lord Shiva? - Akkamahadevi
2. Who was the key savior of the vachanas during the revolution? - Channabasavanna
3. What was Jedara Dasimaiah's kayakava or profession? - Weaver
4. Fill in the Blank

Veerashaivas call Basavanna the Guru, Chennabasavana the Linga, and Allama Prabhu the _____. - Jangama

5. Who was the first female Veerashaiva warrior? – Kittur Rani Channamma

Word Search

Here are the some of the names of Lord Ganesha with its meanings. Try to find these names in the word search puzzle below:-

- BALACHANDRA: One who wears the moon crescent on his head
DHUMRAKETU: The Lord of a smoky color" with two arms riding on a blue horse, Ruler of the Kali Yuga
EKDANTA: One with only one tusk
GAJAKARNA: One with elephant ears
GAJANANA: One with an elephant face
GANADHYAKSHA: The Minister of the Ganas
KAPILA: The Lord of a tawny color
LAMBODARA: One with a big belly
SUMUKHA: One with beautiful face
VIKATA: The Mishapen
VINAYAKA: The leader of protection

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L C I R E V J W G X C U A G T
O N C Q Z I R A G M W K N D U
Q H T A B P J X L T A R A H C
D J B K K A Y V A H S R N U K
A R F Z K A L X S B K R A M A
G A N A D H Y A K S H A J R P
Z I R H F G N A C J U A A A I
F N O M S A H V N H E Q G K L
A N B Y N K I D X I A L M E A
V X J H U K E N S O V N A T A
L Y G M A G K J D D Q G D U Z
D I U T E E K D A N T A G R O
V S A E C A R A D O B M A L A
P F E J C A A H J K L H Q B O
A P A H L V B F O Z M U Z R S
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