

News from Shishu Mandir



Vol. XVII, June to September 2017

Welcome to Shishu Mandir! We are pleased to share with you the developments and programmes in the time from June to September 2017.

Enchanting Summer at Shishu

Shishu Mandir's students and their siblings were enthralled with the activities conducted at the summer camp held in May 2017, with a myriad of activities spanning across unicycling, theatre workshops, table tennis, swimming, art and craft, and watching movies. But the highlight of it all became Mr. David Foi's training sessions on the unicycle. He is one of our patrons and visits us every year coming from the US. He continues to teach and improve their unicycling and now even skating and juggling efforts. This time he devised the idea of fixing bars along the sides of the driveway for practice, which has proven to be a big boost in improving our children's unicycling and skating skills.



Visit of Scouts & Guides from Chennai

The students also had the opportunity to interact with the Scouts and Guides of Karunalya, Chennai, who were our guests and conducted their Annual Scout Camp at our campus. Special summer sessions of games, competi-

tions, cultural events and quizzes were also held for our students by a skeletal staff, which led students on a journey of self-discovery, helping them realize their hidden talents.

A Scientific Journey on Science



As the new academic year begins, the students had the opportunity to learn and interact with some eloquent and erudite individuals and groups. KPMG volunteers organized a visit for our students to Kengeri, when the Science express train arrived in Bangalore from New Delhi, to see the display of numerous charts and models on various branches of Science. Our students spent three hours there and brought back many posters on different topics.

Session on Drug Abuse

Given that drug abuse is a growing problem among youngsters, Mr. Gururaj, the Taluk health inspector, helped us in organising a session to

educate our kids on this issue. Dr. Ragunath, MBBS, an ex-army medical superintendent, was invited to share his personal experience. He explained how he never gave in to drinking, even when his seniors insisted. He remained loyal to the message of saying 'NO' to alcohol under all circumstances. An animated educational short movie on avoiding drugs further instilled the message in the students' minds. Even the Circle Inspector, Mr. Manjunath, gave an inspirational speech citing his own experience, making this session student-friendly, interactive and informative.



Learning and Fun at the Museum

20 KPMG volunteers took our class 4 and 5 students for an educational tour to the Vishweshwariah Museum and helped them understand the museum exhibits. A game was also organized to

analyse their learning. This trip enhanced the purpose of the visit, as our students had fun, gained some knowledge and simultaneously engaged in developing communication skills by their interaction with the volunteers. There is, however, a long journey towards enhancing their thinking capacity.

Industrial Exposure



Seven trainees from the Fitter trade visited Micro Drill Bits factory, which gave them an educational exposure to the various sizes and uses of the drill bits. This is of immense relevance to them due to its pivotal role in completing multiple tasks. Our new batch of Fitter students, accompanied by their trainers, visited the Veena Industries factory for precision components, proving to be a unique experience for them. Similarly, our mechanical students visited a Royal Enfield showroom and workshop as well as the production and sales units. This helped them gauge their prospects in a company like Royal Enfield and identify possible roles they could choose in the future. Furthermore, a combined study opportunity was provided to our Tally and Desktop publishing students with the students of Auxilium Community College, where they had interactive sessions and motivational and educative party games, which helped all the students add value to their learning; this reflected in their confidence.

Our Home Children’s Ooty Trip



Ooty calling! It was a memorable experience for the home children, as they took a trip to the green meadows of the Nilgiri Hills where they were enraptured by the colourful scenic beauty of the flora and fauna. For some children it was an entirely new experience, as it was their maiden train journey. In addition to the boat house, flower show and other sight seeing points, the children visited the Electricity Power Generation Centre and the Ooty Radio Telescope which had a high educational value.

Rotaract Club



Some of our past students, who are members of the Rotaract Club, conducted a summer camp for our children. They went camping for three days at Kolar to engage in social work like cleaning the village, teaching English and planting 100 Silver Oak trees. Shishu Mandir Rotaract Club received the Best Project Award of the Year, from among other clubs of this district, for their unique project ‘Each One Teach One’. 10 Rotaract Club members of Shishu Mandir took special tuitions for the weakest students of the Shishu Mandir School for one month. As a result of this, all 10 students were promoted to the next class.

Festivities at Shishu Mandir

Shishu Mandir celebrates all major religious festivals most meaningfully, explaining their significance to the students. The holy Islamic festival of Id was celebrated with a prayer meeting at Dr. Hella Mundhra Jubilee Hall followed by a sumptuous lunch. The international Yoga Day also was one of the special events, as the entire country was engaged in propagating Yoga to the world. In our humble way we organised a special Yoga session for the students of class 5 to 10.



The 71st Independence Day celebrations revolved around the theme ‘freedom and unity’ where Mr. Seshagiri hoisted the national flag and delivered the Independence Day message. Mrs. Hella was the chief guest and she gave a short, thought-provoking message highlighting our Indian culture. The children of Prep B, and classes 2, 4, 6, 8 and 10 performed various cultural programmes. The junior girls’ Bharathnatyam dance was the best performance of the day. The Independence Day celebrations were concluded with a video clip of ‘Rally for Rivers’. We all took a resolution that we will remove the garbage around the Bhattrahalli lake and plant many saplings.

Final Day at the Child Care Centre

The Child Care Centre organized their Annual Day and bade farewell to 20 students who are eligible to join Class 1 (6 years old). These out-going children gave a one-hour programme based on what they had learnt. Everyone enjoyed their yoga and brain gym demonstrations. They are known



for singing rhymes in 5 languages. 12 of these students were fortunate to get admission in our school, while the others were helped to get admission in other private schools under RTE, where they are not required to pay any fee.

Training for the new Kids' Mothers

Our social workers organized a three day training programme for the mothers of Prep A and B children. Two people from the Indian Social Institute (run by Jesuit Fathers) spoke on community health issues, child psychology and how mothers need to help their children become responsible citizens. Much emphasis was laid on the importance of spending time with their children and family and on the imperativeness of hygiene.



Medical Camp by Target

A medical camp conducted by Target was attended by more than a 100 villagers besides our school children. Ophthalmologists, pediatricians, orthopedics, ENT specialists, gynecologists and dermatologists were well engaged during the camp. 48 people were identified to have an eye power problem and were provided spectacles free of cost by Target.

KPMG International Day Celebrations

The chairman of KPMG Foundation and his team from Delhi spent an entire day at our campus on the occasion of KPMG International Day Celebrations. There were many activities in which the firm's volunteers and the students of Shishu Mandir School participated. A session conducted on robotics by one of the volunteers from Delhi captivated our students. The day came to an end with the KPMG team meeting the 31 Aspire girls and with Sowmya's concluding words, "Your little sacrifice made my life turn into a beautiful flower," which was highly appreciated.



Building Homes

Tabassum, the head girl and presently a Class 9 student, was lucky to get a house constructed with the support of a donor from Germany. Tabassum's family members put in a lot of interest and own effort, which made it easy for us to complete the work. We also completed the construction of our 47th house for a lady who is a cancer patient and does not have any one to care for her.



Acquired Land



Dr. Hella Mundhra inaugurated the newly acquired 1500 sft. of land which was developed as a play area for prep class children, adjacent to the existing school building. We provided a see-saw and a slide, leaving some area with sand for the children to play.

Shishu School's Scholastic and Non-Scholastic Achievements

Yes! Our children did it again, the Class 10 students passed in the first class with 3 of them securing a distinction. Sowmya did us proud by attaining 93.6%. Our school fared well in languages and Social Science, but in Maths and Science heightened attempts are needed. In the bigger picture considering the entire State of Karnataka, the pass percentage in the SSLC has dropped from 71% last year to 65% this year. Our students also continued to shine in sports. In our newly constructed basketball court at our Shishu Home, the Education Department organized a district level tournament. Our junior boys, junior girls and the senior girls emerged victorious; however the senior boys gracefully bowed out to the New Horizon School team after putting up a tough fight till the end.

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Leelavathi - Making a Mark amidst Adversity



Leelavathi N. is a young rising star in the field of Indian cycling. While people choose sports like badminton, hockey or cricket, she chose to build a sporting career in cycling. It has, however, not been an easy journey to reach where she reached. She is from Bangalore and comes from a family that is facing loss, pain, and poverty. Born into conditions that barely made enough to sustain a livelihood, she had no access to the privileges of the basic necessities of life. Matters worsened when her father went missing, and rumours were abound of him having been murdered. Her mother was compelled to resort to laborious jobs as a stone cutter in a quarry and later as a construction worker to earn a living for the family of now three. It was her mother's relentless efforts that kept Leelavathi shining. She recalls her mother's sacrifices and her daily walk to drop her for training sessions at 4 am. Her younger brother Arun was taken under the Shishu Mandir School's wings, while she went on to join St. Anthony Public School. Seeing her dedication and sacrifice Shishu

Mandir took up to support her in her education along with her brother's and now continues to support her sports career.

Leelavathi's interest in sports had been recognized and nurtured from the age of 10, when her school's Physical Trainer, Mr. Anthony, encouraged her to train herself and participate in various sports such as track and field, kho-kho, throwball, volleyball, etc. In her 7th grade after six months of hockey training, her school won the first place in the district level Hockey Championship, an achievement she treasures a lot. Nonetheless, after several attempts to build a career in hockey she failed to rise in it. As she progressed into the rigorous years of high school, her playing days began to diminish, but nonetheless Mr. Anthony secretly trained her for individual sporting events and took her for those competitions.

It was only in her 1st year of Pre-University College when her Computer Science teacher, Mr. Amarnath, a national level cyclist, recognized her potential and encouraged her to participate in cycling competitions. She won her first medal in cycling by coming third in the PUC State Level competition. Since that day Leelavathi has participated in more than 49 sporting events and has secured 32 medals, while doing her graduation in B.Com. at Bangalore University. Her mentors Mr. Prasana Krishna and Mr. Durai have been guiding and coaching her throughout. In 2016 she relocated to Amritsar to continue her sports career, as the Guru Nanak Dev University offered her a professional cycle and excellent facilities for training. She has grown remarkably under her University Coach, Mr. Rajesh Kaushik. Training everyday, her day starts at 4 am with an 80 to 120 km cycle ride and a two to three-hour ground work training session in the evening for building core strength. She is understandably proud of her first national medal, which is a silver medal that she secured in the 21st Senior, Junior & Sub-junior National Road Cycling Championship, held in Aligarh in November 2015. She is currently aiming at securing a spot on the Indian cycling team to represent the country in the upcoming Commonwealth Games in Australia and is relentlessly training for it. After all this, it is hard to believe that she still does not own a good cycle, but has been borrowing cycles for every event. She says, "Cycling events are won on the basis of two things: First, how well you are trained and second, what cycle you ride." She knows that she has missed winning medals in many competitions with a margin of micro-seconds, and the results could have been different, if she had been riding a better cycle. Shishu Mandir has been supporting her and is proud to be a part of her journey, but has limited possibilities to help.