



The next step...

Ashwini Charitable Trust Newsletter

Welcome to Ashwini Charitable Trust... For those of you who are reading this Newsletter for the first time - we are a non-governmental organization that educates and empowers underprivileged children in Ulsoor, Bangalore. We are a 6-year-old organization and have grown from 9 children in 2000 to 76 children in 2006. Along with the help of individuals and corporate houses we try our best to give every child the maximum exposure that will enable a seamless transition into mainstream society. What follows is a brief summary of the year's activities.

Some of our regular activities

VOLUNTEERS' AND CHILDREN'S MEETINGS

Volunteers' Meetings are held every quarter to help the volunteers to get to know each other and to streamline the work done by each of them. Sometimes a child has more than two volunteers so we try to get their opinion about the child and whether the child is able to cope with studies. The input of the volunteers has been crucial in selecting children for the NIOS at Spastics Society of Karnataka and to mould shy and timid children. We are grateful to our volunteers for their yeoman service. We truly appreciate their genuine concern towards the welfare of children.

Children's Meetings: Besides being a home away from home the children are expected to meet at least once a week for regular meetings where we ask them to address problems and come up with solutions. In these sessions what we try to build in our children is active life skills.

PROTEIN MIX FOR THE CHILDREN

Protein Mix is prepared at the center by a group of mothers. This homemade mix has vital ingredients like ragi, wheat, soya beans, pulses, etc. since the mix also contains sugar and cardamom this becomes a wholesome breakfast cereal for the children. This year Paromita Sen Harshan has volunteered to pay for the cost of the protein mix.

HOME VISITS AND MOTHERS' MEETS

We interact with the family, usually the children's mothers. Sometimes we also take with us interested volunteers. Since the psychology students of Christ College were keen to observe our work they accompanied us to the homes of some of our children. Two MBA students, Ritwik Jha and Anupama Hubli from XMIE also joined us. The mothers of our children meet regularly at the RC where we help them improve their parenting skills. We also counsel them as and when the need arises.

AND OTHERS

Savings Bank Accounts were opened for children who joined the trust in 2005 and 2006.

Vaccines (Hepatitis B, MMR, Typhoid) were given to the new children by Dr. Khatib of Lakeside Hospital.

Birthday Celebrations are celebrated on the last Saturday of every month with the help of the **LML group** who sponsor a huge cake for the children to cut at the centre. The Trust also provides every "birthday" child with a cake to take home and celebrate their special day with family.

2006 the year that was ...

VISIT TO THE MUSEUM

On Jan 21st we took the children to the **Vishwesharaya Technical Institute**. The children were taken around all the different experiments and displays. They were fascinated by a huge animated dinosaur, balls that went round convoluted pipes and landed back at their feet, magic taps, and the process of telecommunication through telephones, radars and the optical illusion where Savita's head suddenly appeared on a platter with the rest of her clearly missing!

VISIT TO NANDINI DAIRY FARM

On April 27th we kicked off the summer's fun events with a visit to the Nandini Dairy Farm at Dairy Circle. Under this Government initiative visitors are taken on a two hour trip inside the Dairy Farm to see how milk is tested for quality, stored in huge silos, processed and homogenized to make it safe and then packed in individual half and one liter sachets. Goldman Sachs provided us with a sumptuous meal at Cubbon park.

SPORTS DAY

On May 11th an exclusive sports day for the children of the Trust was organized by Goldman Sachs at the RBANMS grounds. This was a fantastic experience for the children and the GS team had done a professional job of drawing tracks for the various events. The track events included running race, Lemon and Spoon Race, Three-legged Race; besides these we also had team events like throw ball. Every child got a participation certificate and medal from GS. We wound up the sports activities by 1 pm and returned to the RC where lunch and tea had both been arranged.

VISIT TO KPJ ARTS CENTRE

On May 17th we visited the **KPJ Arts Centre** at Bidadi. This was the 3rd treat from Goldman Sachs this summer. The arts centre is a CANARA Bank initiative and runs a one-and-a half-year in-house training program for underprivileged boys in pottery, sculpture and metal craft. This excursion was indeed an eye opener to all of us, especially to the children since they were not aware of careers in art.

PAINTING OF THE RC WALLS

On June 1st and 2nd Goldman Sachs painted the exterior walls of the Resource Center as part of their summer projects with us. They hired an artist, Murali to draw outlines of cartoon animals, which the GS team then colored. We are grateful to GS for not only creating a beautiful exterior to the center but also involving the children in putting their handprints on a huge painting of a green tree which represents ACT. Thanks to GS our wall has become something of a landmark in the locality. The children also decided to pot some plants themselves. We now have a colorful and cheerful ambience for the children to study.

SCHOOL AND COLLEGE ADMISSIONS

May is the month of Admissions to schools and colleges. Once the II PUC and SSLC results were announced we had a challenging time trying to get our senior girls into colleges. The Principal of RBANMS Junior College and Mr. Ananth Narrain, Secretary of the RBANMS Charities helped in a big way to get the girls admitted into I PUC. . We believe that Lakshmi's dream to become a Bank Manager is a step closer. Having successfully completed II PUC, Ashwini and Sowmia had to be admitted into a good Degree college for B.Com. It was a miracle of sorts when despite many odds the Principal, Rev. Fr. Daniel Fernandez granted them admission into I B.Com at St. Joseph's College of Commerce.

PHILIPS ANNUAL DAY.

On Sept 10th the Philips Innovation Campus celebrated its Tenth Anniversary at the Palace Grounds. Philips has been supporting us in many ways for a few years now and our children were

asked to put-up a ten-minute variety entertainment for this show. The children danced to a medley of Bollywood numbers from the '60s to the present. Our children's talent and confidence impressed the audience. The CEO Mr.Alexius Collette and his wife, Mattie, themselves spent time with the children appreciating their efforts.

DIWALI

On October 28th we organized a fireworks display at the RBANMS grounds to celebrate Diwali. Special thanks to the following volunteers who took charge of our children and saw to it that every child got a chance to burst the crackers: Aarti, Chandrashekar Bandi, Chandrashekar Patil, Srishakthi, Shabana, Prasad, Preeti, Ameeta, Priya K, Zachariah, and many of their guests. Finally, Anil Gupta for buying some of the most amazing fireworks that looked like showers of Gold Coins and made the playground look like a fairy tale come alive.

RENOVATION OF THE RC

The new year 2006 brought with it good news that the Resource Centre would be renovated. **Chandru Bolaki and his team from UTStarcom**, raised funds for the same. The renovation started soon after Makra Sankranti, 14th January. This included waterproofing the roof, redoing the ceiling and laying new asbestos sheets, laying pipelines to the toilet and washroom, improving the flooring of the first floor rooms, including the meeting hall that Mrs. Prema Krishnamurthy had recently given us. Major carpentry was also taken care of, specifically: a shoe rack for the children to keep their footwear and built-in storage cupboards, library cupboards, white boards and bulletin boards.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF OPEN SCHOOLING

Some of our sincere children find it difficult to cope with mainstream studies hence we decided to take an educational evaluation of them in anticipation of shifting them to **National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS)** at **Spastic Society of Karnataka**. Based on their evaluation we took a landmark decision in the Trust by transferring 8 children from mainstream school into the Open Bridge Course at the Spastics Society of Karnataka. This is part of the Open Schooling system available all over the country these days for providing basic school level literacy to slow learners. Since vocational training is a mandate of the system the children for starters have weekly sessions of gardening.

OUTING WITH MOBIAPPS

MobiApps started a unique initiative of inviting some of our high school children to their office to demonstrate how their Global positioning System (GPS) works. Our children were told how MobiApps has helped transporters, including the State Transport Corporation, trace the path taken by their vehicles several hundred kilometers away. We now appreciate the value of the GPS especially to trace offenders of the Law and during accident.

BENGALEE ASSOCIATION

On March 8th the Ladies' Wing of the Bengalee Association commemorated International Women's Day. This arm of the Association has always believed in our cause and their generosity was clearly evident in their gift of 70 sturdy school bags for all our children for the new academic year beginning June 2006.

On July 16th the Ladies' Wing of Bengalee Association organized a drawing and painting competition. Some of our children won prizes too.

The younger children of the Trust put up a beautiful ballet "**Mohona**" on the boyhood pranks of Lord Krishna at the RBANMS grounds as part of the **Durga Puja** celebrations of the Bengalee Association. The secretary of the The Ladies' Wing, Paromita Sen Hershan choreographed the whole show

LIONESSE CLUB FUNCTION

Mohona was such a hit that **Kuhu Mandodi** of the Lioness Club invited the children to perform it again as the invocation at the Mass Induction of the Lioness Council, the Lions Clubs, District 324-D6. The lionesses also sponsored biscuits, juice, and stationery items for the children.

BANGALORE MARATHON

At the Bangalore Marathon on 17th September, 40 volunteers from the trust participated in the Celebration Run of 7 kilometers through Cubbon Park and past the Vidhan Souda.

SOROPTOMIST INTERNATIONAL

Soroptomist International of Bangalore celebrated World Peace Day with several activities. There was a drawing and painting competition at the St. Joseph's School where some of our children won prizes. Some of our volunteers represented the Trust at the Candle light march down M.G. Road organized by the Soroptomist International.

GUEST SPEAKER

At the Trust, we often have guest speakers from all walks of life addressing the children about their chosen profession in order to increase their awareness of the service sector in India. This time Radio Jockey, **Cindu** of Radio Indigo spoke to the children about the ups and downs of her profession.

CHRISTMAS

Many organizations celebrated Christmas with our children. The Overseas Women's Club gave every child individually gift wrapped presents. The Rotaract club of Bangalore, Kalyan, distributed blankets, cake, chocolates and gifts for each child and spent time singing and playing with the children.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- **Dr. Sundaram Shetty and Dr. Anupama of Siddhi Eye Care Center** continue to provide free eye check-ups for all the children of the Trust. They also provided free frames for many of the children since they had been gifted the same by a Swedish organization.
- **Balaji**, a friend of volunteer **Vasanth** sponsored dinner for the children on the occasion of his birthday.
- **The President and members of Lioness Club Dakshita** sponsored snacks and a visit to the Musical Fountain. It was enchanting to see fine jets of water dancing to popular film music. Special thanks to **Kuhu Mandodi** for believing in our cause.
- One of our old volunteers, **Pushpa** along with her friends from the Saibaba satsang distributed blankets, steel Tiffin boxes and chocolates to the mothers of our children.
- **Hoori Lekhraj** distributed snacks and fruits to the children on the occasion of her birthday.
- **Shuba Ganesh** distributed Satyanarayana Puja Prasad to the children
- **Chandrashekar Bandi** and his mother remembered his father by distributing snacks for the children. They also gifted us with steel plates, tumblers and spoons.
- Our neighbour, **Divya** celebrated her daughter, **Tusha's** birthday at the RC. Divya and **her mother** spent a whole afternoon with the children. We are also thankful to Divya for cataloguing our reference library meticulously
- **Sajjid** of Philips sponsored lunch from Shanti Sagar for the children on the occasion of his son's first birthday.
- **Arpita and Amitava Datta** gifted a UPS that will provide our center and computers with much needed power back-up especially in the summer months
- **Infineon** donated 2 Computers with monitors, CPU and keyboards.
- **Sagarika Ghoshal, Nandini Gupta, Manisha Bannerjee, Mimi Parthasarathy, and Overseas Women's Club** gave toys, clothes, stationery, books, and board games.
- **Infineon** purchased textbooks and uniforms for 30 children.
- **Rhea Soni**, the same 6-year-old girl who last year generously gifted away all her stuffed toys, gifted away her Winnie-the-pooh set of table and two chairs, and some board games. **Reena Soni**, Rhea's mother also donated notebooks and steel plates to the children.
- **Radha Bora** and her friend distributed water bottles, and biscuit packets.
- **Paromita Sen Harshen** gave us an Aquaguard water filter and donated the money for the production of the protein mix every quarter.
- **Geeta Narang** sponsored the children's snacks at regular intervals.
- **Claire Ewing**, her family and friends have often provided snacks, and ice cream for the children.
- **Mahima and her mother Satya Krishnan** sponsored Diwali sweets and snacks.
- **Hema Hattangadi of CONSERV** sponsored a Godrej four drawer filing cabinet.

- **Paromita Sen Harshan and Mythili Diwan** choreographed some of our best dance pieces.
- **Community Sevices of Bangalore** have continued their support this year too.
- **Ratnakar Shetty** of R.J. Builders renovated the RC.
- **Mr. Mukherjee** of Flora Decors undertook carpentry work at the RC.
- **Goldman Sachs** sponsored the KYAN community computer.
- **Rotaract Club of Kalyan Nagar** spoke to the children about Independence Day and distributed snacks and sweets
- The managing Director of Infineon Technologies **Ulf Schneider** and his family visited the RC to interact with the children . His wife **Nicole** had personally gift wrapped each child's presents. The family sang for the children and encouraged them to join in the chorus.
- **IL&FS ETS** are supporting the KYAN teacher - student workshops and have contributed generously to our library.
- **Mattee**, wife of **Alexius Collette**, the new CEO of Philips, with **M.P. Prashanth** of the Philips Community service team visited the Resource Center.
- Goldman Sachs conducted a Science workshop for the children at the center. This was arranged as the CSR project for the outgoing head of the organization, **Mr. David Simons**. GS also distributed school shoes to all the children.
- **Surabhi charitable trust** have continued to train our children in computer fundamentals for the last five years
- **Continuous Computing** invited 10 children to their corporate office. The children were asked to share their dreams with the HR Head, **Mr Sabyasachi Mishra**.
- **Raghavendra and Jayesh** with twelve volunteers from **CISCO** spent a few hours at the Resource Center conducting science experiments with the children. The adults and children had a ball with floating ships, balancing balloons etc.
- **Ritwik Jha and Anupama Hubli** from Xavier Institute of Management did a three week stint of volunteering with us. Their work culminated in a documentary of our work.

We welcome our new volunteers

LML group-----

Chandrasekhar Patil of Philips
 Mythili Diwan , Ammeta, Preeti, of Robert Bosch
 Prasad of Seimens
 Zacharia Augustine and Prasad Raghunandan of IBM
 Nikhil Suares of Motorola
 Vasant of Continuous Computing
 Shabana of Dell

Infineon

Anil Gupta, Arpita Datta, Arvind Sharoff, Christober Rayappan

OWC

Dipu Vikram, Jayashree Badarinath, Anjusha Nelluli

Christ college psychology students

Claire Ewing, Annalee, Laura

Xavier Institute of Management

Sahana Mukherjee, Sneha Menon, Tanvi Tandon

Rithwik Jha and Anupama Hubli

Dinesh from Sasken, Saurabh Tiwari, Akshara Verma (R.V college), Shravanti Dasari, Shraavni Ramkumar, Raghavenra Pillai , Radha Bora, Divya , Anjana, Rotract Club of Bangalore (Kalyan)

Cisco, St.Joseph's College of Commerce, Umesha Acharya (from Intuit), Nikhil , Shreyas, Pankaj Singh and Deepa D.

Our heartfelt gratitude to our volunteers who have continued to volunteer their time **unconditionally** year after year: Geeta Narang, Shobha Jaidev. **LML group:** Aarthi (Dell), Priya M (Daimler Chrysler), Chandrasekhar Bandi (HP), Priya K (mphasis), Srisakthi (Lucent), and Kurunji (Motorola) to name just a few.

Best wishes to

Kurunji and G. Kumar
Priya S and Prasanna
for a happy and peaceful married life

Mythili and Prasad both of whom are on overseas assignment

~~~~~ HAPPY 2007 ~~~~~

