



LPF ACADEMY

Newsletter—Third Term 2009/2010



Aunty Bernie & LPF hit World Media

⌘ Those of you who are habitual viewers of BBC's World Service and *Hard Talk* must have caught all or some of the recently telecast programmes on Sri Lanka hosted by Stephen Sackur. As part of a series shot in various parts of the Island, focusing primarily on the aftermath of war and the national reconciliation & rehabilitation effort, a segment was filmed at Hindu College, Ratmalana, the rehabilitation centre where close to 300 young surrendees lived from October 2009 to May 2010.

One of the main segments of that programme just happened to be an interview with none other than our very own Aunty Bernie! In a completely unscheduled, unrehearsed conversation, our Founder & Directress spoke from the heart about those former child soldiers and the rehabilitation work undertaken by the LPF schools under the Bridge 2Peace banner to hold out the open hand of peace to help our young brothers and sisters to go back to

a life as near normalcy as can be achieved. Sources in journalistic circles present at the time enthused about how well Aunty Bernie had handled that interview, and how the team of journalists responded: "*She had them dazzled like rabbits in her headlights!*"

⌘ An independent American production company, *Vice*, also visited LPFA and interviewed 3 of the staff in the rehabilitation programme with the view of including a segment on the former child soldiers in a documentary on Asia. Writer/Producer Sarath Fernando, who freelances for CNN, and who was the link to our schools, is the son of Mrs. Chandra Fernando, American trainer & consultant on the Montessori method. You'll remember that she visited LPFA earlier on this year to talk about the Montessori Elementary system.

Our French connections - c'est chouette!

The 21st of June saw the 25 students of French chirping away about skylarks and seasons, manipulating power-point presentations on lap-tops, trying out unfamiliar musical instruments and tossing crêpes as they celebrated their first *Fête de la musique* (aka World Music Day) with a mini concert & exhibition.

The whole school participated in some way, as did the parents of the twenty-five, who saw posters, presentations, photos, a music room and more. Students had French crepes, performed 2 French songs, prepared information on French culture and civilization and wore the 3 colours of the French flag (Staff did, too!).

One of the most exciting elements of the French Day was the visit by the Délégué Général of the *Alliance française de Paris*, who is also the Director of the new *Alli-*

ance française de Kotte, Monsieur Bertrand Dufieux, who we are flattered to learn, rarely accepts such invitations. We are fully cognizant of the honour of being able to host him and grateful for his promised assistance in our future endeavours and invitation to visit the Alliance. We were happy to showcase the talents of students as well as our own staff maestros, Nelun Perera and Tony Hopman, on piano and guitar. *Vive la musique!*



EDITORIAL

LPF Academy is now preparing to conclude the academic year 2009/2010 for the Primary and Secondary schools. A hectic term it has been, too. Apart from the usual academic work, educational trips and focus study sessions, many other events have featured on our student and staff calendars.

One of the most significant on a national scale was the conclusion in May of the project to help rehabilitate the former child soldiers housed at Hindu College, Ratmalana. The LPF-B2P initiative, to teach English, not just in classrooms but also through art & craft, drama, dance, educational games and very practical sessions, as well as to introduce leadership training through the Girl Guides and Scouts Associations, was an integral part of the national rehabilitation effort. After 7+ months of visits, we are very proud and down-

right thrilled to have been able to touch those lives and help make changes we know are for the better in and for many of those young men and women. Some of them will continue at Hindu College in order to complete their secondary education. Those who went back after enrolment as Scouts or girl Guides have been put in touch with the Commissioners of the areas so that they may have a network to help them as they begin life in their own communities. Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

A significant concern in the past weeks for parents and schools alike in the larger community has been health, what with waves of viral flu, Hand Foot & Mouth and dengue hitting many areas, and the most vulnerable, the children, succumbing in worrying numbers. We appreciate all the efforts of parents to inform us of pertinent factors, help with preventive measures and keep us in the know of students' problems.

On the part of the school, the responses to the situation included intensifying the focus on cleanliness and hygiene, using anti-mosquito sprays regularly as well as getting a reputed pest-control company to fumigate the premises, trying to create a heightened awareness among our adults, and requesting the services of a DMO to assess the premises and advise us of best practices.

Finally, the decision for newsletters to be made available on the Web Site is an environmentally-friendly option. It is part of the re-designing of our Web space, and our modes of communication. It has the advantage of reaching a far wider readership than just our parents. Please do give us your feedback. ☘

News from the Montessori

☘The Wesak Lantern display was held on the 26th of May. Children enjoyed making the lanterns and cards. we thank all the parents as their participation helped make the evening a success.

☘The visit in June to the Gal Vihara temple nearby as part of the Poson celebrations was very informative. Children were highly taken up with the new experience of visiting a temple. They took flowers and offerings and the day ended with a special *dhanaya*.

☘The conferences and observations for the Second years were successfully held in the month of June.

☘The field trip to the Puppet Museum took place on 29th June. After touring the museum, students watched dances and folklore presented by the puppet masters, some of whom travel all the way from Ambalangoda for such shows.

☘A word of sincere appreciation to the parents for the generous support given to us at all times.

☘Extended Day in Brief: *Themes:* Wesak, Modes of Transport, Asia—political, The Solar System. *Cookery Projects:* Pancakes, Lime Juice, Fruit Salad, Club Sandwiches. *Needlework:* Tacking, Hem stitching

☘We conclude our second term with a graduation ceremony for those who leave for international schools, and begin 3rd term on 7th September.



VACANCIES EXIST FOR STUDENTS OF GRADES 1-7

2010/2011 YEAR BEGINS
SEPTEMBER 7TH.

CONTACT US

IMMEDIATELY!

INTERVIEWS NOW ON.

Grades 1 & 2

☘It has been a time of reaching out to friends and community for the students of Grade 2. Equipped with their postal kit, they are regularly writing letters, and Senaya Perera collects these letters, records them and hands them over to the office for posting.

☘Going out this term has been to the Gal Vihara temple for Wesak, and to the Zoo for students of both grades.

Highlights & High Profiles

☞ Sri Lankan author back in his Motherland for a spell, Keerthie Fernando visited LFPA and chatted with the students of Grades 3-6 about his past work, after sharing the story of a future book. He also gave our budding author/journalists a few tips on creative writing.

☞ Environmentalist/adventure-tour guide/artist/YZA lecturer Kamal Edirisinghe was one of our guests at the special meeting to brief parents about our term's focus studies: Biodiversity, for this year is dedicated internationally to protecting our biodiversity. We had chosen to study Sri

Lankan Birds and Snakes. He also told parents about the Young Zoologists' Association, based at the National Zoological Gardens, as we're encouraging our students to be committed to the cause of the environment. Kamal also joined us to commemorate World Environment Day, with a presentation on Sri Lanka's rich endemic flora and fauna, as well as video and poster presentations.

☞ Lawyer/environmentalist Anandalal Nanayakkara also joined us that evening to tell our parents about the advantages of being a member of the Young Zoologists' Association, and

you could have sworn from the things he shared from his own life that Auntie Bernie had told him what to say! It was a text-book answer to all-round education he was sharing. Anandalal also spoke of how he had meshed personal interests and career, like other prominent Sri Lankans, former High Court judge Christy Weeramantry, for instance, to do the work he does in the international arena.

We hope to see Kamal and Anandalal again as these reptiles experts help our students learn about sssnaakesss!

Stars, Bars, Cubs & Friends

Sweltering heat and no electricity! Doesn't sound too promising for a successful afternoon school function, does it? But earnest faces, solemn salutes and proud smiles fixed the attention of all present at the Investiture Ceremony of 9 Cub Scouts and 3 Little Friends as well the awarding of 2 Cub Scout Bronze Stars and the Golden Bar to 4 Little Friends in the LPFA auditorium on the last day of June. The leaders watched their protégés being kitted out for their new status.

Under the guidance of Mrs Wathsala Wijewickrema and Mrs Samantha Wijekoon, themselves pillars of the national Cub Scouts and Girl Guides associations, the Akela and Sylvanna (our very own mother/daughter team of Pushpa & Dilini), assisted by Dilushi, Romaindine, Chelvy, Annesley and other staff members, gracefully carried out the simple yet significant ceremony as the Cub Scouts and Little Friends together celebrated the achievements of their pack members in the presence of proud parents.

YCC JOURNAL

We warmly welcome Kalaani, Mehail, Akeel and Muwaaz to the YCC. Our best wishes to Rahil who celebrated his birthday in June.

A limited number of vacancies are available at present FOR TODDLERS BORN IN 2008—NOVEMBER ONWARD. Apply immediately.



upcoming Events - Revised

JULY AUGUST

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| 3rd: Peace Gang Clean-up | 6th: Montessori Graduation & Recognition Ceremony & Last day of Term for LPFA |
| 16th: Swimming Carnival and deadline to hand in applications for Jan 2011 | 7th: interviews begin for Montessori admissions for January 2011 |
| 19th: Mid-term holiday | |
| 20th, 21st: Montessori Photos | |
| 22nd: Primary Going out | |
| 24th : LPFM Ratmalana Sports day | |
| 30th, 31st: Primary Parents' Conferences | |

Our Religious Cultures



A major step towards understanding each other is to know and appreciate the cultures we each belong to, within the overarching multi-faceted Sri Lankan culture. That's a major step in Peace-building.

We are happy to help our students begin that journey of understanding and acceptance. One of our term's focus studies is to learn the basics of the 4 religions, and how we are influenced by our religious culture in routines, attitudes, values, even clothes or food, not just in beliefs. After a brief overview of the 4 religions, prepared by the religion teachers, the students visited 4 major places of worship: the Gangarama temple, the Dehiwela Jumma Mosque, St Lucia's Cathedral, and the Ponnambalam Ramanathan Devasthanam, the historical *kovil* in Kotahena. They were given guided tours with explanations of rites and rituals, deities, sacred texts and more, by the clergy or prominent members of the administration. These proved to be very informative visits, even for the staff.

Peace Gang

A very memorable morning was spent on the 5th of June at the Army Hospital, Narahenpita by the members. Laden with fruits & stationery, they exchanged experiences of



every nature with the soldiers. It was indeed very touching to listen to one of the soldiers giving advice to the eager listeners on how to be focused & have goals in life with particular stress on hard work and education. The climax was the rendering of *Hela Jathika Abimane* followed by Peace songs & *Bhakthi Gee*.

Discovery & Nature Corners

The Discovery Corner and the Nature Corner are great attractions for the students of the Primary.

Sand, stones, insects, nests, shells, plants, frog-spawn, seeds, coins and notes are brought by students for display, and many specimens have been brought in from foreign shores.

We thank all the students and staff for their valuable contribution to sharing knowledge.

Holidays

This term, Primary students brought in their interesting and informative presentations from April holiday trips.

Omar of Grade 5 spoke on Community Solid Waste Recycling in South Africa. Nawaal of Grade 5 presented the Beautiful Beaches of the Maldiv Islands. A Tour of an Embroidery Factory and the Beaches of Indonesia was presented by Jiya of Grade 2, and classmate Taneesha shared her presentation on her Visit to South India.