

CHINMAYA PRADĪPIKĀ

CMSD QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



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After seven long years, Pujya Swami Shantananda returned to *Chinmaya Jyoti* to offer discourses on *Dakṣiṇāmūrti Stotram* and *Upadeśa Sāram*. The festivals of *Navarātrī*, *Dīpāvalī*, *Śrī Tapovana* and *Gītā Jayanti* were celebrated during this quarter, including a workshop on “*Strī Śakti – The Power Feminine*”.



THE MASTER SPEAKS

“Man is the roof and crown of creation. He may be tossed about by uncertain storms of life, but the solution to it lies in his own efforts in finding an ideal, and then raising his personality, from the level of petty emotions, to the loftier heights of the chosen ideal.”



Navarātrī Celebrations

Śrīmadbhagavadgītā Pārāyaṇa

The beginning of *Navarātrī*, one of the most auspicious festivals in *Sanātana Dharma*, is a glorious celebration to awaken the *Durgā* within ourselves to remove our negative tendencies, invoke Goddess *Lakṣmī* to bless us with spiritual wealth thereby preparing our minds to receive the highest knowledge from *Mātā Sarasvatī*.

As per CMSD's tradition, two *adhyaṅgas* of the *Gītā* were chanted on all nine nights, from **October 3 to October 11, 2024**. This is a wonderful opportunity for all members to come together in the true spirit of *Navarātrī*.

Bhajan Sandhyā



The *bhajan sandhyā* at the *āśrama*, on **October 4, 2024**, provided a perfect atmosphere to set forth on this year's *Navarātrī* celebrations with each melody glorifying the various aspects of *Devī*. Chinmaya Dhvani started by invoking *Jagadoddhāriṇī Mātā Durgā* and proceeded to invite her into our hearts with the Bengali Song *O Mā Tumi Yeśo* and finally singing her glory with *Trailokya Sundarī*. Thereafter, Chinmaya Swaranjali offered various classic *devī bhajans*.

- Ashwin Mohan

Devī Mahātmyam



On the third day of *Navarātrī*, **October 5, 2024**, *Praṇava Nilayam* reverberated with the powerful chanting of the *Devī Mahātmyam*, which was followed by *ārati* and *prasādam*.

Navarātrī Celebrations

The Legend of *Mahiṣāsurasardinī*



If you ask youngsters what *Navarātrī* is, most will talk about 'Dāndia' and 'Garbā'; however here at CMSD, we learn something significant from Bala Vihar children.

On Sunday **October 6, 2024**, **Bala Vihar Grade 5** presented the play depicting *Mahiṣāsurasardinī*. The story of *Durgā devī* and how she got all her divine powers

and divine weapons from all the *Devās*, and how she killed the demon *Mahiṣāsura*. The children enacted beautifully with elaborate costumes and enthusiasm, keeping the audience engaged.

Symbolism of *Navarātrī*



Following this play, **Grade 10** students presented the symbolism of *Navarātrī*, explaining in detail what happens during these nine nights and how we can also strive to achieve the highest goal on *Vijayadaśamī*.

In a nutshell, the Bala Vihar students explained for first three nights we worship *Durgā devī* to remove our negative tendencies. The killing of *Mahiṣāsura*, the buffalo demon, represents getting rid of laziness and ignorance within us, and the destruction of six sharks (*kāma*, *krodha*, *lobha*, *moha*, *mada* and *mātsarya*) in our mind. The next three nights we worship *Lakṣmī Devī*, the goddess of wealth. After the negative tendencies are removed, we must gain noble values, which really is the 'true wealth'. These values are calmness of mind, self-control, self-withdrawal, forbearance, faith and single pointedness.

This makes us ready for the highest knowledge. During the last three nights we worship Goddess *Sarasvatī*, to gain spiritual knowledge. The 10th day is *Vijayadaśamī*, the final day of celebration which represents victory over our mind.

- Uma Aggarwal

Navarātrī Celebrations

Workshop on *Strī Śakti*



The *Strī Śakti* Workshop conducted on **October 6, 2024** by **Lakshmi Aunty** was an interactive session, which enabled all to see how we can manifest the divine feminine energy in our own lives for empowering and bringing about personal transformation, irrespective of gender.

Śakti, which symbolizes the divine feminine energy in our *Sanātana Dharma*, is manifested in three different forms: *Jñāna Śakti* represented by Goddess *Sarasvatī*, *Ichhā Śakti* represented by Goddess *Lakṣmī* and *Kriyā Śakti* represented by Goddess *Durgā*.

- **Shridevi Hongal**

Member Reflections:

“It was a moment of revelation to listen to the strength of the “power feminine” and to realize that it is in us. The embodiment of this “power feminine”, can be appreciated in the power of mother’s love, which is indescribable. However, to know that I can also nurture and channel this strength, and be the *Śaktimān* for this *Śakti*, was a very important lesson.”

- **Radhachandran Padmanaban**

“My main takeaway from the workshop is that the divine feminine energy is present in each one of us and my *sādhanā* should be in developing the *viveka* to know which aspect of the energy to use for a situation at hand.”

- **Akhila Koneri**

Śrī Sarasvatī Pūjā

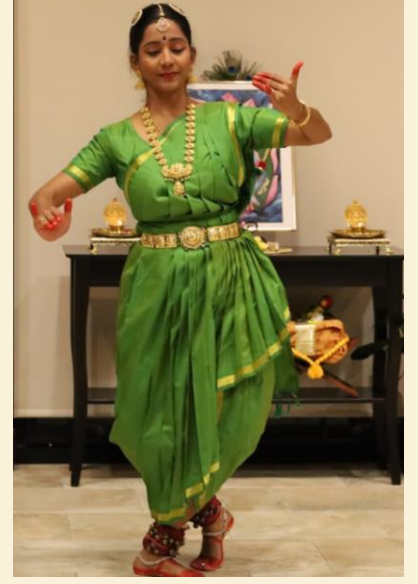


On **October 11, 2024**, an idol of Mother *Sarasvatī* was worshiped with the offering of *aṣṭottaraśatanāmāvali* along with the chanting of *Śrī Sarasvatī-Stotram* and *Śāradā-stotram*.

The *pūjā* concluded with a beautiful song offered by our Shishu Vihar child, **Shakti Ram**.

Navarātrī Celebrations

Bharatanāṭyam Sevā



On **October 11, 2024**, divine *Bharatanāṭyam sevā* in praise of *devī* was offered by **Subhashinee Venkatesh** and **Srimeenakshi Srinivasan**. Srimeenakshi presented *nācata nācata āyi sarasvatī* in *yaman rāgam* and *ādi tālam*. She mesmerized all with her *devī nīya thunai* in *kīravani rāgam* and *ādi tālam*. Subhashinee Venkatesh transported us with *devī stuti* in *kedāragaula rāgam* and *ādi tālam*. The song composed by Mrs. K Lalitha, in praise of goddess *Śakti*, beautifully expressed the destruction of *Mahiṣāsura* in order to protect the *devās*. It was a beautiful way to end the *Navarātrī* celebrations at CMSD.



The evening concluded with *bhajan* offerings by CMSD Swaranjali followed by *ārati*.

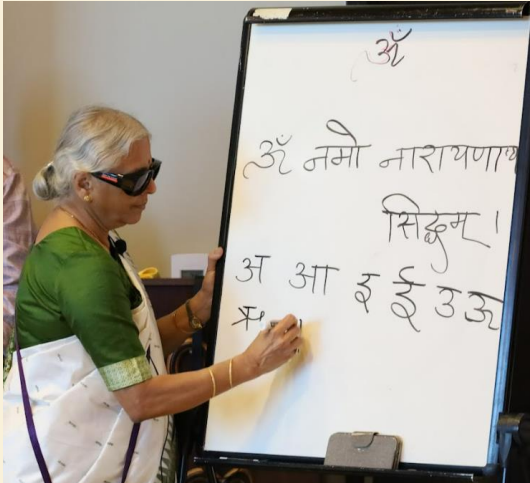
Navarātrī Celebrations

Vijayadaśamī



Vijayadaśamī marks the ceremonious beginning of learning-*Vidyārambha*. CMSD celebrated *Vijayadaśamī* on **October 12, 2024**, with *Śrī Sarasvatī pūjā* followed by the chanting of *Śāradā-stotram*.

Special chants were offered by *Saṃskṛta* Vihar students. Chinmaya Kala Jyoti tabla students presented different compositions to mark the auspicious *Vidyārambha*. Many families took part in the *Akṣarabhyāsam* for their young toddlers at CMSD on this auspicious day.



Navarātrī Celebrations



Member Reflections:

“We are very thankful to the Chinmaya Mission team in organizing *Akṣarabhyāsam* for Shriya and Shreya on the auspicious day of *Vijayadaśamī*. We thoroughly enjoyed the festivities.”

- Raghu & Anusha

“We are very grateful to Lakshmi Aunty for bringing the *Akṣarabhyāsam* ritual to Chinmaya Mission in San Diego allowing both parents and children to perform this meaningful tradition. Her efforts have created a beautiful opportunity to celebrate the importance of education and spirituality, fostering a sense of community and cultural continuity for families living here.”

- Anjana Prasad



Jñāna Yajña by Pujya Swami Shantananda



Pujya Swami Shantananda, President of Chinmaya Mission West and Resident Swami at Chinmaya Mission Tri-State Center, graced our *āśrama* with a week-long discourses on *Upadeśa Sāram* (morning) and *Dakṣiṇāmūrti Stotram* (evening) from **October 21- 25, 2024**.

Swami Shantananda was formally received during the morning hours of **October 21, 2024** at *Chinmaya Jyoti* with a *pūrṇa kumbha* and chanting of vedic mantras. Thereafter, as he made his way to *Praṇava Nilayam*, Sukumar Uncle introduced Swamiji and recalled how he was instrumental in establishing CMSD with his *saṅkalpa* at Pujya Gurudev's bedside in San Diego in 1993. With an unparalleled devotion to Lord *Kṛṣṇa* and Pujya Gurudev, Swamiji has served Pujya Gurudev as a traveling secretary. He has devotees in every part of the world and is an authority on scriptures.



Jñāna Yajña by Pujya Swami Shantananda



Swamiji's exceptional clarity and insight made the profound teachings of these sacred texts accessible, deeply relevant and transformative, bringing ancient wisdom into our daily lives. In *Upadeśa Sāram*, Swamiji vividly illuminated Bhagawan Ramana Maharshi's teachings, guiding us through paths of *karma*, *bhakti*, *aṣṭāṅga* and *jñāna yoga*. His compassionate and patient approach made the journey to Self-realization feel achievable and inspiring.

Śrī Dakṣiṇāmūrti swami arrived at *Chinmaya Jyoti āśrama* as a blessing to CMSD devotees in July 2022, a generous gift from Dr. Prasad and Vinoda Kaipa, Bay Area. Since then, CMSD devotees were eagerly awaiting Swami Shantananda's arrival to grace the *āśrama* and offer discourse on *Dakṣiṇāmūrti Stotram*, making this *jñāna yajña* truly an ode to Śrī Dakṣiṇāmūrti swami and fulfillment of Pujya Gurudev's *saṅkalpa*.

Swamiji's interpretation of *Ādi Śaṅkarācāryaḥ*'s verses revealed profound wisdom on the non-dual nature of Reality, casting new light on Lord *Dakṣiṇāmūrti* as the silent, ever-present *Guru*. His presence and depth of Vedantic knowledge made each session a sanctuary for reflection, learning and self-discovery.

-Subha Balaji and Manasi Popat

Jñāna Yajña by Pujya Swami Shantananda

Member Reflections:

“What a joyful week-long *satsaṅga*. Swamiji’s simple explanation mixed with jokes and examples made it very easy for me and connected me to the topic of *Jīva-Jagat-aikyam*....”

- Gira Pandya

“Swamiji exhorted us that while we have to play our part ‘lightly’ in this world of names and forms, we should NOT FORGET our true nature – I am *Dakṣiṇāmūrti!*”

- Nikhil Varaiya

“By Divine Grace, I had the opportunity to attend Pujya Swami Shantananda’s lectures on *Upadeśa Sāram* by Shri Ramana Maharshi. It was an absolute delight listening to Swamiji’s discourse on the ultimate goal of realization that “Existence is Consciousness, and Consciousness I am”. The various examples and humorous anecdotes recited by Swamiji to drive home the underlying lessons ensured that the teachings were actionable for all. I feel incredibly blessed for gaining this experience, and am sure to continue deriving more life lessons from the same.”

- Sudha Kumar

“It was enlightening to learn about *Dakṣiṇāmūrti stotram* by *Ādi Śaṅkarācāryaḥ* in Pujya Swami Shantanandaji's discourse. I was amazed to learn about philosophical depth in the verses and connected with many of the examples Swamiji used to facilitate my understanding. It was a wonderful experience to listen to Swamiji and I am looking forward to more such opportunities in the future.”

- Chetan Anantharaman

“*Upadeśa Sāram* summarizes the profound teachings of Vedanta and the four paths (*karma, bhakti, aṣṭāṅga* and *jñāna yoga*) to realize the ultimate Truth in just thirty beautiful *ślokās*. Listening to Lakshmi Aunty’s rendering of each of the *ślokā* in a beautiful tune followed by Swamiji’s explanation of the same with such clarity was indeed a divine experience....one thought by Swamiji stuck with me - the comparison of the *jñāna mārga* to taking a flight to realization. And hearing that we are taking this flight to realization was inspiring for me. It was a great text to listen to for a beginner in Vedanta studies but also had intricate nuances to reflect upon for the advanced students. Each morning lecture was followed by the opportunity to have *satsaṅga* with Swamiji while eating *sātvik* lunch. Overall, for all of us attending, this was an extremely rewarding experience.”

- Kamya Ananth



Jñāna Yajña by Pujya Swami Shantananda

Bhikṣā during Swamiji's Visit

Serving *Bhikṣā* enabled *sevaks* and children some personal time with Swamiji, to bask in his loving and warm presence!



Dīpāvalī Celebrations



Dīpāvalī was celebrated in a grand way with *Lakṣmī pūjā* conducted by Lakshmi Aunty on **October 31, 2024**. The *aṣṭalakṣmīs* performed the *kumkumarcana* as the CMSD families chanted the 108 names of Śrī Mahālakṣmī Devī followed by beautiful offering of songs to Mother Lakṣmī.



A spontaneous dance offering in the praise of Mahālakṣmī Devī by **Smt. Subhashinee Venkatesh** exhibited the vivid beauty of Mother Lakṣmī and enhanced the Dīpāvalī festivities.

Many children came dressed up in different *Rāmāyaṇa* characters to celebrate Halloween, the Chinmaya Mission way. Some girls dressed up as *Sītā* while others were Mother *Kausalyā*, *Kaikeyi* and *Sumitrā*.



Dīpāvalī Celebrations



Everyone also enjoyed *garbā* in the courtyard before *ārati* and *prasādam*.



The celebrations continued on Sunday, **November 3, 2024**, with Grade 7 Bala Vihar students presenting the significance of *Dīpāvalī* through the Legend of *Kṛṣṇa* and *Narakāsura*.

Dīpāvalī Celebrations



Śrī Sītā-Rāma Kalyāṇam was performed by BV Grade 3 on this day which enhanced the festivities of Dīpāvalī for all, as Lakshmi Aunty offered the wedding anniversary song composed by Pujya Guruji.

The tradition of a delicious potluck lunch followed where continuing CMSD families served lunch to new member families to welcome them into the CMSD family.

- Hetal Babla

New Member Families share their reflections:

“The event truly fostered a sense of family. My son Arjun, who started pre-K this year, was thrilled to learn about and experience the joy of Dīpāvalī. It was a memorable occasion for us!”

-Shruti Siravuri

“I am grateful to have found this opportunity to invest in my personal growth and provide myself the tools to be a better parent for my child under the broader umbrella of our culture. It is not very easy to inculcate these habits into our children in a foreign land where the outside fantasies are too enchanting. It warms my heart to see the values inculcated in our younger generation and hope they will be future role models. Today’s Dīpāvalī celebration was a testimony to what Chinmaya Mission preaches about being one family. We hope to be part of the welcoming family next year.”

- Sowmya Acharya (Mother of Saharsh Acharya, Kindergarten)

“The presentations via skits like *Narakāsura* help kids and new members understand our festivals, culture and their significance.”

- Pavan Gajula

Biographical Movie on Pujya Gurudev 'On A Quest'



On November 16, 2024, CMSD hosted a screening of 'On A Quest' - a biopic on the life of Pujya Gurudev.



Reflections from BV Grade 6 children:

"I really enjoyed the movie. The key message that I have learned is to detach from the world and attach to God. I never knew that Pujya Gurudev was a journalist, a freedom fighter, and once an atheist. He started his life's journey as someone different from what he became later on. I also discovered during the screening that *Chinmaya Jyoti* has *jyoti* in its name because Pujya Gurudev left his *jyoti* here in San Diego!"

- Tanvi Patidar

"Watching this movie reminds me of a famous quote, "Do not go where the path may lead; go instead where there is no path and leave a trail". For example, spreading the wisdom of the scriptures in English was once nearly unheard of and often looked down upon. However, Gurudev took this language and used it as a tool to disseminate sacred knowledge, making it accessible to everyone. This teaches me to be brave and not afraid of being in the minority!"

- Arnavi Bathija

Śrī Tapovana Jayanti and Gītā Jayanti



CMSD members gathered in *Praṇava Nilayam* on the evening of Wednesday, **December 11, 2024**, to celebrate *Śrī Tapovana Jayanti* and *Gītā Jayanti*. This day is doubly significant, since Swami Tapovanam's lofty life and teachings inspired our own Pujya Gurudev because of whom we gather today in Chinmaya Mission centers worldwide. And in addition, the teachings of the *Bhagavadgītā* form the core of what is taught at all Chinmaya Mission centers, guiding the growth of each seeker and all of humanity.



With recitation of the *Tapovana aṣṭottara* and *Tapovana Ṣaṭkam*, the great sage was worshipped, venerated as "*Himavat Vibhūti*". The worship was followed by *parayaṇa* of the entire *Bhagavadgītā*, *bhajans*, *ārati* and *prasādam*.

Śrī Tapovana Jayanti and Gītā Jayanti



Parayāna of the *Gītā* has its special charm. Every verse in the *Gītā* is holy; but in the moment, each person is focused solely on reciting that verse faithfully, its message subdued. Every so often, however, a familiar verse resounds in the room; its meaning and message clear and resonant. A momentary, unspoken prayer - reaching out through those words, and seeking His help to live up to them.

- Rajasekar Vaidyanathan



On December 15, 2024, BV Grade 8 presented *Gītā Dhyānam* during the Sunday assembly, praising the greatness of Mother *Gītā*.

CMSD Ongoing Events



Sunday Assembly Adult Class, Text: *Bhagavadgītā*



Sunday Assembly, Birthday Celebration



Sunday Assembly, Food For Thought



Monday Study Class, Text: *Manah Shodhanam*



Monday Study Class, Text: *Self-Unfoldment*

CMSD Ongoing Events

Monthly *Sundarakāṇḍa Pārāyaṇā*



October 19, 2024

November 16, 2024



December 21, 2024

CMSD Ongoing Events

Samskṛti Pālakās meet



During this quarter, the *Samskṛti Pālakās*' meetings were conducted on **October 27** and **December 15, 2024**. A range of practical and philosophical topics concerning food, *sevā*, *dharmā*, *bhakti*, etc. were covered. Particular focus was on how to discipline children and empower them with right knowledge to navigate the dual culture environment, especially while interacting with friends/families from different faiths. A strong foundation in Hindu culture along with a safe space for open communication enable our teenagers to face these challenges without deviating from their own faith.

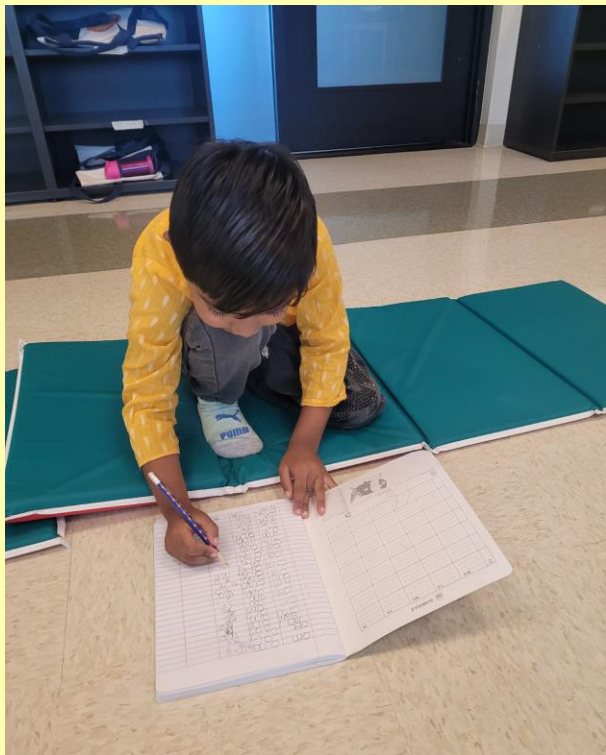
Shishu Vihar Corner



Shishu Vihar Corner



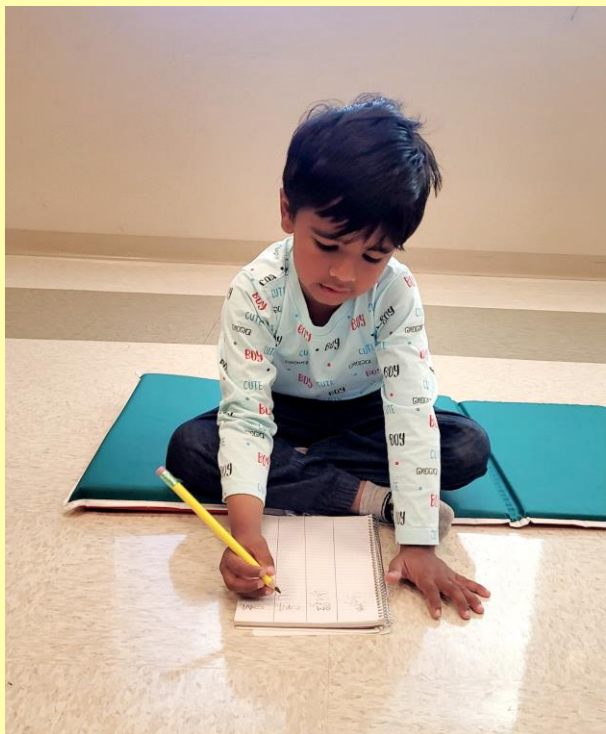
Bala Vihar Corner



PreK children focused on writing *likhita japa*



PreK children make rangoli on occasion of *Dīpāvalī*



BV Grade 1 storytelling during Bala Vihar class

Bala Vihar Corner



BV Grade 2 enjoy *Bālakṛṣṇa Līlā*



BV Grade 2 celebrate *Dīpāvālī*

Bala Vihar Corner



BV Grade 3 children celebrate Śrī Sītā-Rāma Kalyāṇam

Bala Vihar Corner



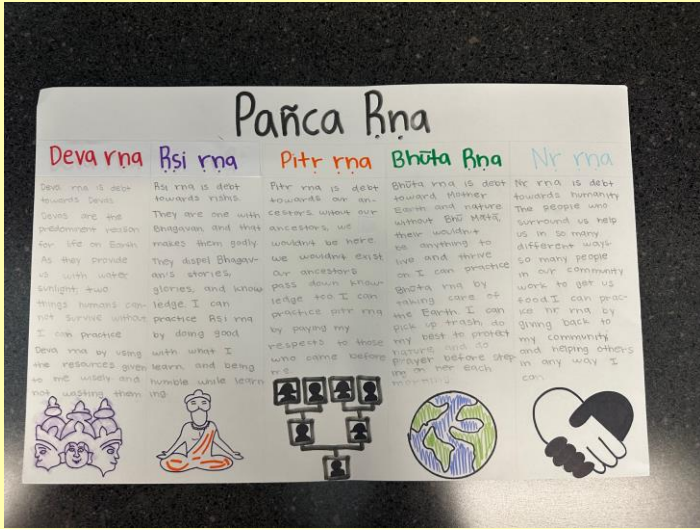
BV Grade 6 children learn the key lessons from *Guru Moon (Avadhūta Gītā)*:

We worked on a project to understand the key learning from the different phases of the moon and mapping its relationship to the different phases of our lives. We were enjoined to create a timeline with pictures from our birth to current age and make notes on some of our favorite memories – friends, things, places, food, etc. Just like how our perspective of the moon continually changes from waning to waxing due to the changing reflection, while the moon remains the same, so too our likes and dislikes change through our life while our real nature remains unchanged. The phases of the moon convey that we should never be too attached to anything --- good or bad --- because it will pass, and we can never hold onto anything of this world forever.

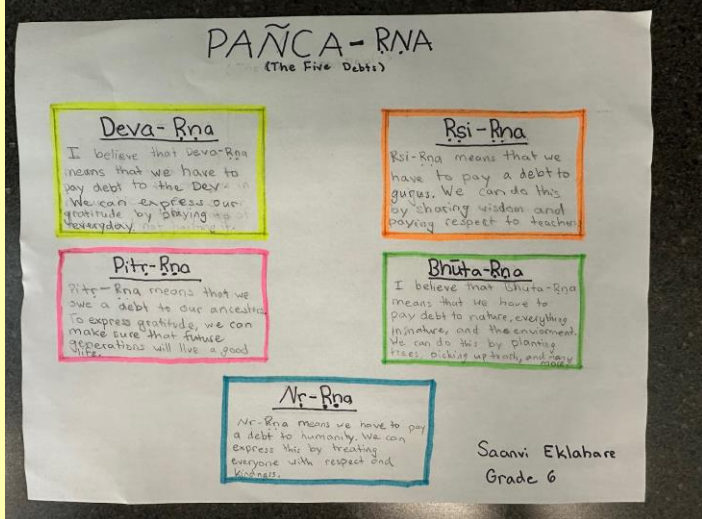
- Navya Vivek

Bala Vihar Corner

BV Grade 6 children express attitude of gratitude through “Pañca-R̥ṇa”

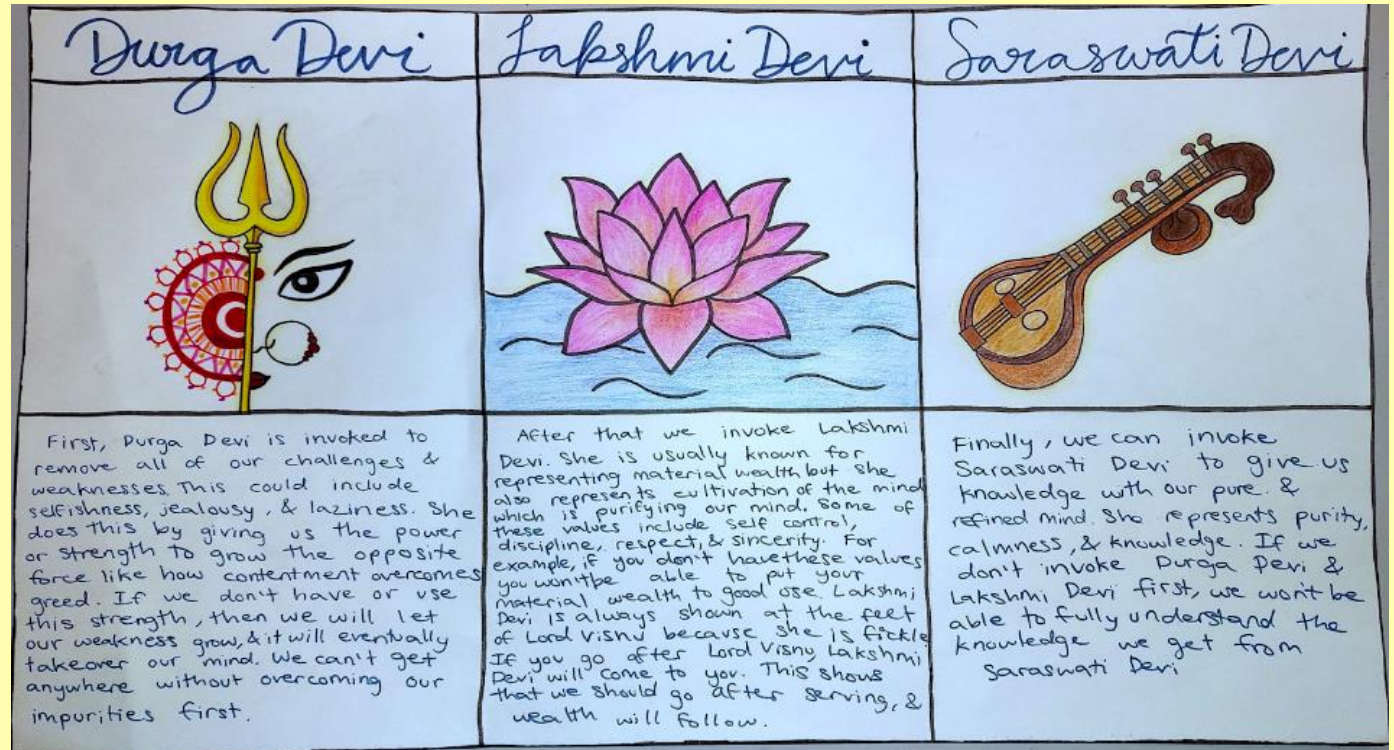


- Navya Vivek



- Saanvi Eklahare


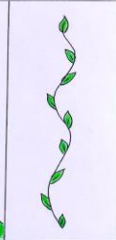
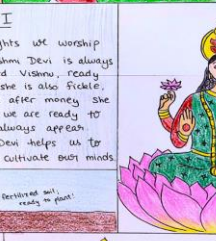


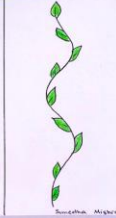
BV Grade 9 children created posters on “Significance of Navarātrī”



- Tarika Singaram

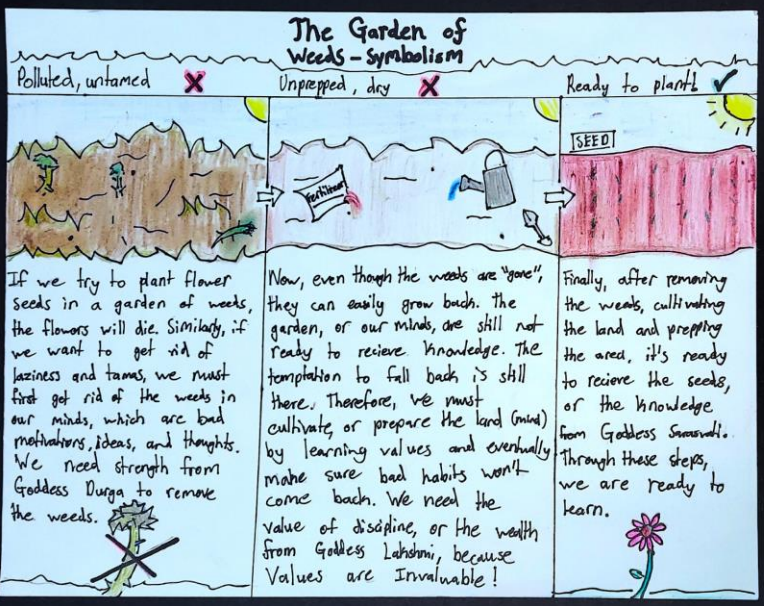
Bala Vihar Corner

Significance of Navaratri

<p>DURGA DEVI</p> <p>On the first three nights of Navaratri we worship Goddess Durga. Durga Devi embodies strength. In the "garden" representing our mind, she gives us the power to remove the "weeds", or the tamasic qualities within us. She gives us the strength to overcome our weaknesses with the opposite force. For example, she will help us overcome greed with contentment.</p>		
<p>LAKSHMI DEVI</p> <p>On the next three nights we worship Goddess Lakshmi. Lakshmi Devi is always at the feet of Lord Vishnu, ready to serve him. However, she is also fickle. So if we always chase after money, she will go away. But, if we are ready to serve, then she will always appear. This is why Lakshmi Devi helps us to "fertilize the soil", or cultivate our minds.</p>		
<p>SARASWATI DEVI</p> <p>On the last three days of Navaratri we worship Goddess Saraswati. Saraswati Devi represents knowledge. Now that the mind is cultivated, Saraswati Devi helps the "flowers" grow, or helps us gain knowledge with our refined mind.</p>		

- Sumedha Mishra

The Garden of Weeds - Symbolism






Panel 1: Polluted, untamed (marked with a red X)
If we try to plant flower seeds in a garden of weeds, the flowers will die. Similarly, if we want to get rid of laziness and tames, we must first get rid of the weeds in our minds, which are bad motivations, ideas, and thoughts. We need strength from Goddess Durga to remove the weeds.

Panel 2: Unprepped, dry (marked with a red X)
Now, even though the weeds are "gone", they can easily grow back. The garden, or our minds, are still not ready to receive knowledge. The temptation to fall back is still there. Therefore, we must cultivate, or prepare the land (mind) by learning values and eventually make sure bad habits won't come back. We need the value of discipline, or the wealth from Goddess Lakshmi, because Values are Irvaluable!

Panel 3: Ready to plant (marked with a green checkmark)
Finally, after removing the weeds, cultivating the land and prepping the area, it's ready to receive the seeds, or the knowledge from Goddess Saraswati. Through these steps, we are ready to learn.

- Achintya Puttur

Navaratri Symbolism

<p>DURGA DEVI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represents strength • Destroys the tamasic or lazy qualities in us  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In a garden Durga devi is the strength we need to get rid of weeds in the garden. In order for anything to grow we need to remove the needs. In the same way we need to get over our laziness in order to accomplish anything 	<p>LAKSHMI DEVI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represents the cultivated mind • If we pray to Lord Vishnu Mother Lakshmi will come. We should not be greedy, instead we should serve & wealth will follow.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the garden once the weeds have been removed we need to prepare the land for the plants, similarly we need to take in good values like obedience and discipline to be able to get rid of negative thoughts coming back and have a ready mind to receive knowledge 	<p>SARASWATI DEVI</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represents knowledge • clad in white with no weapons  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Once our mind is ready and focused we can take in the knowledge and are ready to learn. This is represented in the garden by the flowers and plants growing. <p>Meghna Pillai</p>
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-Meghna Pillai

High School Mentorship

Field Trip to Earthlab and Town & Country Learning Center (TCLC)

The High School Mentorship (HSM) program at CMSD has been working with the Zero Degree Collaboratory at Stanford University to undertake projects on Climate Change which can demonstrate their direct impact on Global Temperature decrease. We have two teams, one led from Del Norte High School and another from Canyon Crest academy, who have created a Zero Degree lab (High School Club) at their school.

On Monday, **October 28, 2024**, some high schoolers from HSM, Aditi Bharadwaj, Aditi Hariharan, Eshan Patibandla, Arushi Pandey, Swarali Sapkal and Dev Babla, who are part of the Zero Degree Lab at Del Norte High School, had the incredible opportunity to visit EarthLab, dedicated to environmental education and climate action in the Chollas Creek Watershed. The students were accompanied by Sukumar Uncle, Hari Janakiraman and Sanjay Pandya.

Earthlab is managed by a non-profit organization called Groundwork San Diego. This visit offered a personal experience in understanding the multifaceted impacts of climate change and the unique challenges faced by underserved communities. At EarthLab's 4-acre Climate Action Park, the students interacted with passionate leaders who are transforming environmental education. They shared their mission to integrate science, ecology, and cultural traditions through experiential learning. The team learned about the severe effects of climate change on local communities, including rising temperatures, water scarcity, and habitat loss.



In addition to their time at EarthLab, they visited Town & Country Learning Center (TCLC) and met with Ms. Veverly Anderson (Ms. V) who is working to address the reality of living in a food desert—an area with limited access to fresh, nutritious food. They were deeply moved to hear stories of how this lack of availability affects children and families, who often struggle to obtain fruits and vegetables necessary for a healthy diet.

High School Mentorship

One statement from Ms. V resonated with them: “We’re working hard to bring fresh produce and community gardens to our neighborhoods because every child deserves a chance to thrive”. Based on this expressed need, CMSD decided to contribute to the weekly community “farmers’ market” at TCLC on Thursdays. Hari Janakiraman coordinated this effort and took a basketful of fresh vegetables and fruits to TCLC the week after Halloween.



Also, inspired by this experience, the CMSD High School Mentorship (HSM) team is now working on a project that focuses on analyzing vehicle emissions to determine the most environmentally friendly car buying options. By using data and critical analysis, they aim to contribute to the global conversation on reducing carbon footprints. As they move forward, they are determined to keep these communities in mind, integrating solutions that support environmental equity and sustainability. Sukumar Uncle has been working with both these projects for over 15 years, starting from his UCSD days and was able to arrange these visits as a real-life learning experience for our high schoolers.

“This visit was eye-opening. Seeing the direct effects of climate change and food insecurity in these communities motivated me to think about how we can use technology to create impactful solutions.”

- Dev Babla

“The visit made me realize how interconnected environmental and social issues are. It inspired me to think critically about how our everyday choices, like transportation, can directly impact communities and the planet.”

- Swarali Sapkal

“Listening to various people talking about their experiences in underdeveloped communities enlightened me to think of ideas to help them. I think their work, teaching students about the environment can help change our views on the environment.”

- Aditi Hariharan

Chinmaya Pradipika Team

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