

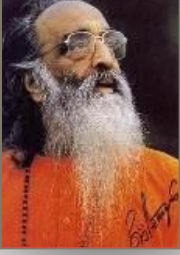


Chinmaya Pradipika

CMSD Quarterly Newsletter



October 2015 Vol. 16



The Master Speaks:

"Seva is action dedicated towards higher ideal. Through Seva, the Sevak benefits the most by growing internally with pure and quiet mind. The entire Universe functions on the principle of Seva. May we all dedicate our life for the same."

-Swami Chinmayananda

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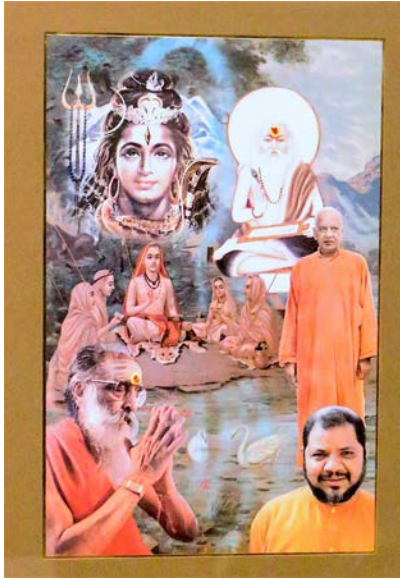
In this issue of *Chinmaya Pradipika*

Featured in this issue are *Guru Pūrṇimā* Celebrations, the 22nd Chinmaya *Mahāsamādhi Ārādhana* Day, the Twelfth Annual Summer Youth Camp, special *satsaṅga* with Dr. S.N Subbarao, Grand Bharata Mela, Swami Ramakrishnanada's yajña and Samskrta workshops.

The highlight of this issue is the grand opening of *Chinmaya Blossoms* -State-licensed Preschool- for children 2.5-5 years of age at our very own āśrama- *Chinmaya Jyoti*.

Samskrta Vihar certificate course blessed by Pujya Guruji and CIF was inaugurated by Swami Ramakrishnanada on *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭami* day.

Guru Pūrṇimā Celebrations



Guru Pūrṇimā, a sacred day for all spiritual seekers, fell on July 31st this year. It is a day to remember and express gratitude towards one's *Guru*, or teacher, for the blessings and knowledge one has received. *Guru-Pādukā Pūjā* was performed by Rajasekar Vaidyanathan.

Śrī *Guru-stotram*, *Guru-śiṣya-paramparā Stotram* and Śrī *Guru-Pādukā-Stotram* were chanted. The evening concluded with singing of *bhajans* and *arati* led by the Chinmaya Dhvani team, followed by *prasādam*.

The 22nd Chinmaya Mahāsamādhi Ārāadhanā Day



Chinmaya Ārāadhanā day was observed with a *Pādukā pūjā* by members of CMSD with great *śraddhā*. All were dressed in traditional kerala style.

San Diego is a very important place for CM devotees worldwide as our beloved Pujya Gurudev left his *Jyoti* here twenty two years ago on Aug 3, 1993 at 5.45 PM.

The Chinmaya Jyoti lamp was lit at 5:45 PM, the exact time of *Pujya Gurudev's Mahāsamādhi* in San Diego 22 years ago. Following this, 108 *jyoti-s* with Gurudev's OM signature were lit by the *sevikā-s* dressed in Kerala sarees and it was a very profound experience. The *Guru Pādukā pūjā* was performed with the chanting of the *aṣṭottara nāmāvali*. The celebration culminated with a sumptuous *mahā prasādam*, prepared by all the *sevikā-s*.

Chinmaya Blossoms Preschool opens at *Chinmaya Jyoti*



By the grace of God and with the blessings of Pujya Gurudev and Pujya Guruji, *Chinmaya Blossoms* opened on August 20, 2015. To date, five children of ages 3-4 years attend the preschool.

CMSD Samskṛta Vihar Classes – Certificates by CIF

With the blessings of Pujya Guruji, Swami Advayananda and Swami Ramakrishnananda of Chinmaya International Foundation (CIF), CMSD became the first campus in the US to start a certificate program in Sanskrit language (Samskṛta Vihar) for children (grades 4-12) and adults. The program was blessed by Swami Ramakrishnananda on Sept. 5- *Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭami*.

CMSD currently has 35 students enrolled in this program including nine Bala Vihar children and two CHYK-s.

Satsaṅga with veteran Gandhian Dr. S.N Subbarao



We also had a very Special *satsaṅga* with veteran Gandhian Dr. S.N Subba Rao on July 26th. Dr. S.N. Subba Rao, a fellow of Gandhi Peace Foundation and founder of National Youth Project. He inspires and lifts up the spirit of youth in the world for building a new society based on Love, Peace, Harmony and Social Justice. Every one affectionately calls him 'Bhai Ji,' meaning 'Elder Brother' and he reciprocates their love with equal abandon.

Sukumarji introduced Dr. Subbarao to the people gathered. He said that he and Lakshmi have been associated with Dr. Subbarao since the early 90's through the Gandhi camps that he conducted in the Bay Area, which Maya Sukumar used to attend. Subbaraoji has visited San Diego a few years back. Sukumarji welcomed him to our midst again and appreciated him taking time out to visit us.

Dr. Subbarao gave a talk on how he got started following Mahatma Gandhi's principles when was in his teens with the "Quit India" movement and since India's independence has been involved in youth projects through out the world. He talked about his involvement with the decoits of Chambal Valley in Madhya Pradesh in the 70's. Through love and devotion expressed in his songs and talks, the robbers who plundering anyone who came their way, laid down their arms and surrendered to the Govt. of India. Since then they have been rehabilitated and are leading normal lives.

By popular request, Dr. Subbarao gave a wonderful rendition of "Bharat Ke Santan", a song that he sings in more than a dozen Indian languages. He also led the group into some simple games such as "How many, how many ..." in which several children and adults participated enthusiastically.

The evening came to a conclusion with a wonderful dinner prepared lovingly by our member families. Everyone wished that Subbaraoji would come back soon and be amongst us.

CMSD 12th annual Youth Camp - "The Game of Life"



This year in summer camp out Bala Vihar campers had a unique opportunity to learn how spirituality plays an important part in "the game of life." Using games as a teaching tool, analogies were made to show how something as simple as a board game can help us understand how to play the real game of life. Making concepts like dharma more understandable. Campers were also guided through each step of *Guru pādukā pūjā* and the significance of each of the steps. Several campers were also able to memorize the 108 names of Gurudev. Summer camp is always fun and full of learning. [...more](#)

CMSD Summer Satsaṅga - "Gītā in Daily Life"



This summer, special *satsaṅga*-s were organized to share the applications of the *Gītā* in daily life. The *satsaṅga*-s led by Lakshmiiji included *Gītā*'s guidance in Parenting, Work Habits, Leadership Skills and Desire Management. These sessions were well attended by 30-40 people every week who enjoyed the lecture that Lakshmiiji presented to explain the message from *Gītā*. This was followed by a discussion when the attendees split into two groups and discussed how this applied to their daily lives. The group came back together again to participate in a Q & A session where some of the questions raised during the discussion were clarified.

CMSD Grand Bharat Mela



Indian Independence Day in Chinmaya Birth Centenary Celebration year provided CMSD a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Mother India, her glorious heritage and her illustrious son Swami Chinmayananda. CMSD celebrated this event as a Grand Bharat Mela in a grand way and opened the program to the entire community. This program was attended by many of the CMSD members and also many non-members from the community.

Mela is an occasion to have fun. A setting in the ashram is the best way to have fun and spiritual nourishment. There were many games that kindled the *sāttvik* thinking amongst people. [...more](#)

Swami Ramakrishnananda's second visit to San Diego

Between September 3 – 11, CMSD members were blessed to host Swami Ramakrishnananda, Acharya of CM Nagapattinam. Swami Ramakrishnananda is an excellent orator and has a very unique and jovial way of teaching. CMSD members were blessed to hear Swamiji speak on the **Śrīmad Bhāgavatam**. Swamiji shared stories that depicted “**Krishna as a CEO**” and inspired the “Full House” of attendees with key messages from each story. [...more](#)

CMSD Bala Vihar - Back to Bala Vihar - Parent Orientation Sept. 20th

The Back to Bala Vihar Parent Orientation was held on Sept 20th.

Parents were given a clear presentation on the philosophy, motto and teaching approaches in Bala Vihar. Parents also had the opportunity to ask questions and benefit from the small group interaction by grade level with their child's teachers and in a broader setting with Lakshmi Aunty.

The Bala Vihar Motto is “**To help children learn with Fun; To delight like the Moon and shine like the Sun.**” [...more](#)

Ghar Ghar mein Gurudev; Ghar Ghar mein Jyoti

During this quarter, Pujya Gurudev's *pādukā*-s blessed the homes of the Panchal family, Tunuguntla Family, Rajasekar family, Manickam family and the Pandya family. Chinmaya Jyoti was lit in these homes after a ceremonious *pādukā pūjā* and bhajans.



National Gita chanting competition-"Chant Gita, Enchant Krishna!"

The following children represented CMSD in Chicago for the national level competition. Congratulations!!



Ketki Chakradeo, Swami Sharanananda, Aniket Chakradeo, Solana Garcia, Ankita Katarkar, Amogh Kaushik

Gaṇeśa Caturthī Celebrations- September 17th



A *ṣoḍaśopacāra puṇā* was performed to Lord Śrī Jyoti Vināyaka on the occasion of Gaṇeśa caturthī, this year on Sep 17th. 108 modakams were offered in naivedya. Many of our members participated and partook of the blessings of the Lord on this auspicious day.

Sundarakāṇḍa pāṛāyaṇa



The *Sundarakāṇḍa pāṛāyaṇa* is an ongoing monthly event at CMSD. *Hanumān pūjā* is performed followed by *Sundarakāṇḍa pāṛāyaṇa*, *Hanumān Cālisa*, *ārati* and *prasādam*.

**"Whenever you are ready to do anything,
help will come from all directions,
and the road that seemed long will become short.
If you look for shortcuts you may get into trouble."**

-Pujya Guruji Swami Tejomayananda



CMSD 12th annual Youth Camp - "The Game of Life"

This summer, Bala Vihar campers had a unique opportunity to learn how spirituality



plays an important part in "the game of life." Using games as a teaching tool, children were

shown how something as simple as a board game can help us understand how to play the real game of life. The game of Cricket played a central role in making *dharma* more understandable.

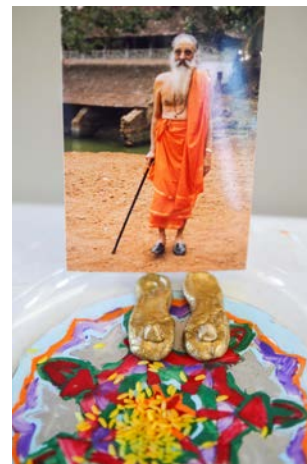
This year, summer camp was from July 13th to July 25th. Lakshmiiji taught children grades 3 and above and Hema Pandya taught the lower grades. They were well assisted by Padma Bhat, Smita Bhatia, Faith Prasad, Sujata Kulkarni and Swaroopa Kalva.

Every morning, the children started with prayers, followed by performing *Guru-Pādukā Pūjā* in handmade rangoli plates with clay *Pādukā*. Campers were also guided through each step of *Guru Pādukā Pūjā* and the significance of each of the 16 steps. Several campers were also able to memorize the 108 names of Pujya Gurudev.

After the children ate breakfast, learning time began in the courtyard. Before lunch, there was yoga followed by the chanting of Chapter

15 of the *Bhagavad Gītā*. In the afternoon, the children did art projects and played many different types of games including Chess, Chutes and Ladders, Mancala, and Parcheesi. There was even a day dedicated to Cricket. All the children came on Saturday morning and played a Cricket match along with many parents. The children also enjoyed games like OM! Alone and Wheel of Virtues. They learned *Toṭakāṣṭakam*, Chinmaya Balavihar song and the 'He Muralī Śrīdhara' bhajan. Every day they were given homework to memorize twelve names of Gurudev from the *śrī Chinmaya Aṣṭottara Nāmāvali*.

Each activity was filled with learning opportunities and connected with the main theme. For instance, during learning time, the discussion topic was the concept that 'only when the mind is quiet, can we connect with Nature and to God'. After that, the children would walk around the Ashram quietly observing the surroundings. Another special moment was when the children were playing a made-up game. In this game, Lakshmiiji had a basket of objects and each child was called up and shown an object. Then the child had to speak for one minute without hesitating ('um' or 'ah'). They learned that when their thoughts are clear their speech would also be precise.



A collage of five children's drawings depicting various natural scenes. The drawings include a landscape with a sun, a river, and a boat; a landscape with a large rock and a river; a landscape with a large rock and a river; a landscape with a large rock and a river; and a landscape with a large rock and a river.

[illegible][illegible]

LIFE IS AN UNFINISHED STORY, FINISH IT

I said that life is unfinished
 Story because of our background
 like our personality, weaknesses
 family background, these are
 things you cannot change.
 That is why I call it a
 unfinished story. But your
 future, that is uncertain.
 Your future is all up to
 you and it all depends
 on how you follow
 or if you don't follow
 it or not.

In the community: CMSD Grand Bharat Mela



Indian Independence Day in Chinmaya Birth Centenary Celebration year provided us a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Mother India, her glorious heritage and her illustrious son Swami Chinmayananda. The event was celebrated in the form of CMSD Grand Bharat



Mela. Many of our members and many non-members from the community attended the program.



Nagesh shared his experience - "Mela is an occasion to have fun. A setting in the ashram is the best way to

have fun and spiritual nourishment. There were many games that kindled the *sāttvika* thinking amongst people."

The program started with Śrī Jyoti Vināyaka *pūjā* and chanting of Śrī *viṣṇu sahasranāmastotram*. The boy scouts led the hoisting of the flags of USA & India.

The *Bhārata Mātā* parade was organized to celebrate the unity in diversity. Lord's creation on this earth has extreme diversity yet all are bound with one common thread, the divine within. A microcosmic vision of this diversity is visible in India with different places having different practices in food, costumes, lifestyles yet united with one goal of *Bhārata Mātā*. This diversity was displayed and celebrated by people from the community during the Parade. With patriotic songs, people from North, East, South and West participated in the parade in their traditional dresses and traditional dances.

Booths were the main attraction for the Mela. Booths were activity based, information based and games based. There were many games for different age groups. These games were fun and were built upon the themes that were learnt in various classes in CMSD. Children had games like "Knock out the Negatives" and adults had games on "Has *Gītā* gone through you", "Kitchen *Vedānta*" etc. Story telling booth was a huge attraction for children. The stories were brought to life by amazing story tellers, our BV *Sevikā*-s, Faith Prasad and Smita Bhatia. Children and adults alike enjoyed listening to these lively stories. "Make your own *japa mālā*" booth was also very popular with children, because they got a chance to build their own *mālā*-s from the beads.



We had a booth on Gurudev's life to show the impact that a great visionary master can have. This booth showed the various activities that Chinmaya Mission is undertaking all around the world: from Ashrams, Schools, to Universities to Senior Living. This booth was managed by the CHYKs.

We had a chance to take a portrait with Gurudev sitting on his chair with serene Tapovan Giri as the backdrop. After walking through the booths, we had grand display of all the books in our Chinmaya Vani Bookstore.

A mela cannot be complete without good food. Delicious food made by CMSD members was available throughout the day served by CMSD's "Anna Lakshmi team."

Overall this Mela was very well received and many members from the community had an opportunity to visit the Mission Center and get familiar with Gurudev's life and the many activities of Chinmaya Mission San Diego.



Swami Ramakrishnananda's visit to San Diego

CMSD Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭami Celebrations

The Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭami celebrations were



held on Sept 5th. Swami Ramakrishnananda performed the Śrī Kṛṣṇa puja and placed little Kṛṣṇa in the cradle. Members of Chinmaya Dhvani sang bhajans. Then Swamiji inaugurated the Samskṛta Vihar course at CMSD to be taught by Lakshmi Sukumar with certificates by CIF.

Samskṛtam workshops

Swami Ramakrishnananda is an excellent orator and has a very unique and jovial way of teaching. He is very popular among the



young and the old alike. He is passionate about Sanskrit and his hallmark is the "Easy Sanskrit Course" which has come as an aid for the bloomers in learning Sanskrit.

Swamiji held two half-day workshops on Samskṛtam on September 6 and 7.

Srimad Bhagavatam Yajna - part II - "Krishna - The CEO"



Srimad Bhagavatam is considered to be the greatest of all the purāṇa-s since it invokes devotion towards Lord Viṣṇu and his various incarnations, primarily focusing on Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the complete incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu. The *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* reveals the means for becoming free from all material bondage, together with the processes of Self-Knowledge, renunciation and devotion to Lord Viṣṇu.

Between September 6-11, CMSD members were blessed to hear Swamiji speak on the *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*. Swamiji shared stories that depicted "Krishna as a CEO" and inspired the "Full House" of attendees with key messages from each story sprinkled with plenty of humor and laughter.



CMSD Bala Vihar - Parent Orientation Sept. 20th

"This is my second BV parent orientation and it was a great opportunity to know more about what the kids learn and their schedule at BV. Particularly the teachers suggestions as to what can be done at home to help the kids internalize the values taught at BV was very useful."

-Kishore Rama Rao, Parent

"I thought it was a wonderful idea to have the parents in the classroom experiencing what the children learn and experiencing the fun that the children have in the classroom."

-Deepa Rungta, Teacher

"I loved it! I liked the fact that this is a spiritual center and the kids are growing up through it."

-Maya Vittal, Parent

"I liked it because I now knew what they were going to teach. They addressed my concerns and gave feedback."

-Sireesha Kollu, Parent

"I thought it went very well, and we got to say to the high school parents what we were teaching."

-Ranga Sampath, Teacher

"It was very informative. I learnt what my kid is learning in the class and it was nice."

-Parent

"It was neat to be upstairs and see the perspective of the kids."

-Bhuvana Garcia, Parent