

JULY 2021

THE RED VELVET

Quarterly Newsletter of the Ladies' College Old Girls' Association



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DOING OUR PART TO FIGHT THE PANDEMIC

As the world enters its second year of grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic, Sri Lanka has been girding its loins to fight the third wave of the virus to hit its shores. Gone, this time, is the novelty of making homemade bread and hosting Zoom parties with family and friends. We are all negotiating protracted lockdowns and the consequent challenges of juggling working from home and other responsibilities with online lessons, as well as the toll of a life that is more isolated and unpredictable.

The LC OGA has been working tirelessly during the past few months to fight the pandemic on numerous fronts - from assisting fellow Sri Lankans affected by the virus by raising funds to help equip a new ward dedicated to COVID-19 patients at the District General Hospital, Negombo, to offering a range of new online initiatives to keep our membership connected and engaged despite the restrictions on movement and gatherings.

Read on for more details.

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COVID-19 FUNDRAISER FOR DGH NEGOMBO

In the wake of the third wave of the pandemic in Sri Lanka, the need for more equipment and resources in our hospitals has risen exponentially. The LC OGA ran a fundraising drive in May and June 2021 to raise funds to help to equip a new High Dependency Unit ("HDU") at the District General Hospital, Negombo ("DGH Negombo").

Past LC-ites from around the globe came together in a concerted effort to fight the devastating impact that COVID-19 is having on our country, with donations flowing in from the United Kingdom and Australia (coordinated by affiliate branches of the LC OGA in London and Victoria) as well as Sri Lanka. Thanks to the generosity of Old Girls and other donors, the LC OGA was able to make a significant contribution to the new HDU at the DGH Negombo, donating, amongst other items, two CPAP/BPAP Machines, a High Flow Nasal Oxygen Therapy Machine, Syringe Pumps, Infusion Pumps, Nebulisers and Multipara Monitors.



The equipment was selected based on the requirements of the DGH Negombo and was delivered directly to the Director of the DGH Negombo.

At the time of writing, 25 of the 32 beds in the HDU have been occupied. We are heartened by the results of our fundraising drive and the enthusiastic response of the extended Ladies' College family. We hope that this project will encourage others to give generously to help our fellow Sri Lankans in this time of true need.



KANDY BRANCH DONATION

The Kandy Branch of the LC OGA made a meaningful contribution of LKR20,000 towards the purchase of a much-needed oxygen concentrator for the Peradeniya Teaching Hospital on the initiation of member Danu Madugalle.

The donation was handed over to Danu by the Treasurer of the LC OGA's Kandy Branch, Ummu Hassan.



VIRTUAL FESTIVALS

In the spirit of encouraging the attitudes of tolerance, acceptance and unity in diversity instilled in us by Ladies' College, and with the aim of enlightening our membership as to the significance of some of the many cultural and religious festivals usually celebrated in Sri Lanka, the Executive Committee conceived the idea for and coordinated the production of three videos to mark the Sinhala and Tamil New Year, the festival of Eid Ul-Fitr and Poson Poya.

Sinhala and Tamil New Year

On 14 April 2021, the LC OGA streamed a celebratory video via YouTube to mark this year's Sinhala and Tamil New Year.

The program opened with an introduction to the significance of the New Year and an explanation of the various rituals, customs and ceremonies observed by the Sinhalese and Tamil peoples in Sri Lanka all of which symbolize unity amongst all without boundaries and invoke good health and prosperity.

This was followed by the rhythmic playing of the "*banku rabana*" and joyful singing of "*raban pada*" without which no New Year festival would be complete. The program continued with a series of oriental music, song and folk dance items from both the Sinhala and Tamil cultures.

The finale was a combined folk dance which intertwined elements of both Sinhala and Tamil dances.

Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr



The LC OGA streamed a celebratory video on 9 May 2021 via YouTube, to mark the Holy Month of Ramadan ahead of the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr.

The program began with an explanation of the importance of fasting for Muslims during the Holy Month of Ramadan who use this time to achieve spiritual communion with God, inculcate a sense of discipline, foster unity and harmony amongst all and bring solace to the poor and needy.

This was followed by a celebration of Iftar with three generations of LC-ites from the Cassim family, who graciously invited us into their home to demonstrate the traditional breaking of fast after the Islamic call to prayer at sunset, and to enlighten us on their family's traditions in the lead up to the festival of Eid-ul-Fitr.



Poson Poya

A video released in late June 2021 explained the history and significance of Poson Poya in Sri Lanka and explored the ways in which it is celebrated around the country. The history and significance of the Buddhist flag was also explained and the program concluded with a beautiful rendition of *Dhanno Budunge* by a group of young Old Girls.

All videos remain available for viewing on the LC OGA's YouTube channel.

We thank the LC-ites who gave of their time, effort and talent to produce these beautiful, insightful programs to bring together our members from all parts of the globe, regardless of race or creed.

WEBINARS

Given that we have been living with the reality of a pandemic for well over a year now, the LC OGA organised two webinars via Zoom in May and June 2021 which explored two related aspects of the topic of mental health.

Mental Health in the Time of COVID-19

The first webinar, held on 22 May 2021, was hosted by past LC-ites Dr. Suhashini Ratnatunga (a Consultant Psychiatrist at the National Hospital of Sri Lanka) and Dr. Rashika Perera (a psychologist in private practice based in Melbourne, Australia).

The session explored common feelings experienced by many during the pandemic including frustration, anxiety, isolation, and disappointment. Dr. Ratnatunga discussed the emergence of old and new mental illnesses over the past year and ways to identify the need to seek professional help. Dr. Perera provided guidance on strategies to manage these issues in the long term, including the types of behavior that can be cultivated to prioritise our mental health.



DR. RASHIKA PERERA



DR. SUHASHINI RATNATUNGA

Parenting During a Pandemic

The second webinar, held on 6 June 2021, focused on the challenges of parenting during a pandemic, and was hosted by LC alumni, Ishanthi Perera and Vanessa Bibile, who are both consultants working with children.

The panelists discussed the numerous challenges faced by children during the past year, from isolation from their friends and lack of social interaction, to restricted outdoor play and extensive screen time due to online schooling. They discussed ways to identify when kids are under stress as well strategies to help children cope with that stress. Parents were also given helpful guidance on managing behavioural changes and ways to prioritise their children's wellbeing during this time.



ISHANTHI PERERA



VANESSA BIBILE

Both webinars ended with insightful Q&A sessions which allowed participants to seek guidance from the panelists on the challenges they are facing.

We are grateful to the panelists for sharing their expertise with our members.

Both webinars are available for viewing on the LC OGA's YouTube channel.

THRIVE WELL BEING SERIES

The LC OGA organised THRIVE, a series of mini-videos which aired on every weekend in June 2021. Each video focused on a different aspect of well-being and featured a past LC-ite.

Food



Jovanka Jayaweera kicked off the series by demonstrating how easy it is to create a wholesome breakfast and prepare healthy snacks for the week.

Mindfulness

The following week, Ravindi Peiris spoke on the importance of mindfulness and staying present in the moment.



Breathing Techniques



Nilangi Kulasinghe then guided us through *pranayama* - focused breathing techniques based in ancient yoga practices.

Fitness

The series was concluded by Sarani Tillekeratne who took us through an effective at-home work out designed to get us moving and boost metabolism.



All the videos in the THRIVE series are available on our Youtube channel.

DATABASE UPDATE PROJECT

One of the key projects of the Executive Committee of the LC OGA for 2021, an update of the LC OGA's membership database, is well underway. Google Forms allowing members to update their contact details have been circulated to most batches between 2016 and 1970. Anyone who has not received a link from their batch representative may use the general form - a link to which may be found in the covering email and which will shortly be available on the LC OGA's website.

The Executive Committee requests all members to complete updating their details using the forms provided as soon as possible to enable the Executive Committee to expedite completion of the database update project, which will, among other things, allow us to streamline our communication with members.

Batch Representatives

The Executive Committee is seeking batch representatives for the following batches - 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and all batches prior to 1969.

Please contact Anjali Karunaratne on +94 777 362 247 if you are interested in being a representative for any of these batches.

New Members

Those who have recently applied or who plan on applying for membership are requested to please bear in mind that there may be some delays with processing your applications as the Executive Committee works through the database update project.

The Governing Body is of the view that due to the present situation in the country caused by the Covid pandemic, resulting in lock downs and other related restrictions, it is prudent to extend the closing date for the applications for the post given below.



C. M. S. LADIES' COLLEGE, COLOMBO 7. VACANCY POST OF PRINCIPAL

C. M. S. Ladies College, Colombo, was established in 1900 by the Church Missionary Society. The school is a Government approved Educational Institution within the Diocese of Colombo, Church of Ceylon.

Minimum requirements:

- preferably over 45 years of age.
- hold a degree together with appropriate Post Graduate qualification from recognized universities.
- have a minimum of 10 years teaching experience in a secondary school.
- experience in administration will be considered favourably.

The ideal candidate should have some or all of the following additional attributes:

- be familiar with the National Curriculum and the latest learning and performance management systems.
- be able to lead and guide the students in extracurricular activities
- proactively communicate, build / maintain good relations within the community.

Emoluments will be commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Applications with names of two non – related referees should reach the following address by email or under registered cover by the 26th of July, 2021. All applications should carry 'Post of Principal' on the top left corner.

Those who responded to the previous advertisement need not re-apply.

The Chairperson,
Governing Body for Educational Institutions founded by C.M.S. in Ceylon,
No. 368 / 3A, Baudhaloka Mawatha,
Colombo 00700,
Sri Lanka.
Email: msgb1960@gmail.com

ADVERTISING IN *THE RED VELVET*

The Executive Committee invites LC-ite entrepreneurs to advertise their businesses in *The Red Velvet*.

Please note that charges will apply and good-quality images/material will need to be provided for inclusion in the newsletter.

Please send an email to: lcogapublicity@gmail.com if you are interested in submitting an advertisement.

The deadline for submission of advertisements for inclusion in the next issue of *The Red Velvet* is 20th October 2021.

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 2021

Annual General Meeting

Due to the prevailing situation in the country, the date and method of conducting the Annual General Meeting for 2021 will be notified in due course.

CONTACT US!

OGA Secretariat

c/o Ladies College
66 Sir Ernest De Silva Mawatha
Colombo 7

Operating Hours

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays
9:00a.m. - 1:00p.m.

Contact Details

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