



LOTUS CHILDREN CENTER

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AM CHILDREN'S HOME - Good News



Thanks to **AMURT ITALY** for financial support. Through their kind sponsors we have been able to provide a healthy environment, nutritious food and proper education for our girls at the children's home. On August holidays we travelled to attend a conference on yoga at **Burkina Faso**. The children had the opportunity to play in the green fields and interact with French speaking people. We also went to camp on a beautiful beach during the holidays.



Pictures of the girls enjoying holidays on the beach

AMURT ITALY launched a worldwide competition on art for which Shobha' Devi, one of our girls, got 2nd prize in her category. **AMURT ITALY** wanted the money given for the prize to be used on the betterment of the home. Among the betterments we bought a washing machine. It has been very useful for the Home. In October it was **Shobha's birthday** - a very happy day to all of us as she received many gifts from the Ghanaian margiis who love her so much. We brought the washing machine wrapped on that day so Shobha' was surprised with a big package for her birthday! She was jumping in excitement the whole day... *Here in the picture you see Shobha' standing with her prize. Thanks **AMURT!***



AN UPDATE ON THE CHILDREN



SHOBHA' DEVI SARKAR is doing well in health and studies. She is growing fast and is very bright as well as talkative. She has a special personality attracting everyone who comes to visit the school! She has no fear to interact with people and wants to get the love of everyone. Although she can be very mature for her age Shobha' is quite dependent on others as well as very attached to didi Gayatri. Shobha' says she wants be a didi when she grows up.



Picture of Shobha' at her birthday celebration

A'PATIKII DEVI SARKAR is our youngest baby turning 5 years-old in December. She is a happy girl, full of energy. A'patikii is well behaved at school and good with reading and dictation as well with counting and math. She also likes to paint and draws very creatively. Always laughing and running through the house, A'patikii often has small "accidents," but bounces back quickly. Her health is good and she is growing beautifully. She can climb trees or go to the sea without fear but she is still timid and fearful around a lot of people.



Picture of A'patikii with an orphaned chick



ANUMATII DEVI SARKAR is turning 9 years-old in January. She is very intelligent and had very good marks in the last school year. Anumatii is very caring, looking after younger children like a mother. She understands deep thoughts and usually adults like her as a good friend. Anumatii has a sense of responsibility unexpected at her age. She dreams of travel by airplane. Anumatii wants to be a police officer to fight against injustice.



ARS (All Round Service)



1. Orientation on Nutrition and Mass Feeding in a Poor Community

Pictures of Service at Volta Region

About 320 people benefitted from the Mass Feeding exercise on 21st October in a small village in the Volta Region of Ghana, on the occasion of Mahaprayan Divas.



The service was done in that particular place because there is serious malnourishment in the community as they used to sell all the vegetables they cultivated. Instead, they only consumed starches such as maize and cassava with pepper as daily meal. We highlighted to the community the importance of eating vegetables and fruits. Although there is poverty in the community, they still have the choice of consuming their free local vegetables such as moringa leaves, contembre, Baobab' leaves and many others.

First we met with village elders and mothers to talk seriously about their role in the health of their children. The whole community should take responsibility for the children and see that they are taken care of properly. We asked them to mention some of their local vegetables which can be used daily to provide good nutrition to the children. They mentioned many local vegetables and fruits but admitted they do not serve them often. During our talk they understood one of their priorities should be to make a balanced meal with maximum use of their local vegetables. After that we served them a vegetarian meal cooked with the local vegetables and sources of proteins such as wagachi cheese in order to reinforce what they learnt from us that day.



Later we visited the school children in the JHS who are able to prepare their own meal. We instructed them about the benefits of eating more vegetables and fruits. The teachers and children were very interested and receptive. They understood they needed to change their habits from eating only starches in order to improve their health. The classes were very interactive and all the students participated. I was glad to see that even in this small village the children were

learning well and were able to respond to my questions. We also introduced them to vegetarianism.

After the classes on nutrition and health we cooked for the whole school with the help of the mothers. We distributed food for all of the kids, from the KG to the High school.



2. AMPS Ghana does service at Hospital



In October several members of AMPS Ghana visited the children who are in treatment at the Hospital Korlebu. The children received toys and fruit juices. It was very vibrant and the children and mothers were delighted by listening to our songs. We too felt very grateful.

3. ARS Clothes Distribution

Clothes, bags and shoes were distributed to more than 300 people at **Akwakwa village - Central Region**. Jayaliila donated new clothes and other items. Auntie Julie also donated clothes.

Thanks everyone who contributed and for making all this possible.



Ananda Marga School, LOTUS CHILDREN CENTER

OPEN DAY:

Students work from the last term was displayed on the tables and each teacher talked with the parents about their child's progress. It was a colourful sight as many of the art works were created from recycled materials including old bottles, papers and boxes.



It was a good opportunity to speak with parents about attendance, tardiness and support on homework. Didi and the teachers had small group sessions with parents about the importance of paying school fees to keep the school open and functioning properly. Our school, now totalling 57 students, offers very low fees and several full scholarships.



Picture: Distribution of prizes for the children who were the most disciplined, had best attendance and had best participation in class.

Children's Presentation



The different classes performed a variety of songs (crèche and N1) for their parents, poetry with physical expression (N2), local song with dance (KG1) and a very interesting drama (KG2). The parents were so happy with the performances they were throwing money onto the stage as well placing money onto the heads of the children performing. This is a way to express high appreciation in the Ghanaian culture.



Graduation

This year we celebrated the graduation of the KG2. The KG2 children gave a well done reading with the year's good news. The audience was very impressed shouting and making happy sounds during the reading, as well placing money on their pockets. Our graduating class was small but their standard was high with most being admitted directly into Class 2 at other schools. Our dream is to establish a primary school so children may continue their studies with our school.



New School building

We are looking forward to building a new school facility on our newly secured land at Kasoa. We are appealing to sponsors to help us begin by building two rooms, a classroom and office, so we can open.



Vegetarianism to the Parents

In Ghana, people have just recently begun to understand vegetarianism and its benefits. We invited the Public Relations Secretary from the Vegetarian Association of Ghana, Mr. Edwin, to give a talk on Nutrition for the parents of our students. The room was filled parents were very attentive. Since the talk we have noticed children are bringing more fruits for snacks.



Message from Kulapati (Chancellor) of Ananda Marga Gurukula:

We received the following message from the Chancellor of the AM education branch "Gurukul:" "It is my pleasure to announce that Ananda Marga Gurukula (AMGK) will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary in 2015 around the world...We encourage each unit to hold inspiring

educative public programs in order to spread the message of NHE and Highlight the role of AMGK in building a moral and peaceful society.”

We are preparing many lectures on Neo Humanism and Education for the next year.

AM School gave 6 days of NH TEACHER TRAINING



They were 6 teachers from different religions (Muslims and Christians) attending the training. For me the greatest output of the training is now the teachers work whole heartedly and sacrifice more for a better school.

On 24th Aug – **DAY 1**- Movie on “Ananda Marga: “A Journey in Joy” which shows different aspects of AM such as PROUT; NHE, vegetarianism, fasting, yoga, meditation and social services projects around the world. **Outcome: The teachers got inspired after seeing the selfless work of the organization ANANDA MARGA around the globe.**



25th Aug – **DAY 2** – “Expansion and Expression of the young child” by didi Gayatri.

Didi explained the importance of the sensory experiences to development of the brain of the child. To use fun playful methods for teaching in order to guide the children to express themselves through creative arts, singing, dance, playing, games, sports and others. The class was very interactive as Didi introduced different concepts and asked teachers how they could be applied in the school. The main idea is to prepare the child from early childhood to be receptive to new ideas.

The consciousness of the child is longing for expression and expansion. From the time of conception, the 5 layers of the mind are motivated by the consciousness to “program” the brain for functional use spiritually, intuitively, creatively, cognitively and physically. To take good food and do proper physical exercises helps in the physical expansion; morality as a base for psychic expansion; intuition to be developed through fine arts and to pursue the goal of life through meditation. Only when the person’s desire for the infinite is stronger than other desires then yoga- unification- happens just like a river merging in the ocean. **Outcome: Teachers worked on their curriculum for the year so that they could apply what they learnt.**

26th Aug – **DAY 3** - “Body – A Biologic Machine” by Didi Ananda Candrasekhara . *In Ghana Yoga is said to be related with black magic so many people are negative about it. Didi explained what yoga is and the benefits of it. Fasting and health; A’sanas (yoga postures) and Kaosikii (yogic dance) benefits.*

Each human being needs to be physically fit, mentally strong and spiritually elevated. There are 7 energy centers in the body. There are 50 propensities – emotions that are expressed through those centers. Religion puts fear in the mind of people. Meditation gives happiness because you concentrate in vastness. **Outcome: Teachers begin participation in a weekly yoga postures and meditation class.**

27th Aug – **DAY 4** - *Didi Ananda Giirija who is a Ghanaian yoga missionary working in 4 schools in Kenya shared her experiences with us. She told us how she became a missionary of AM and the responsibilities and sacrifices of being a teacher.*

To be a teacher is not to get but to give out. What would be the result if you have not shared your knowledge with a child who needs it? It would be like a sin. To be a teacher one should have a strong desire to impart knowledge. If the person is a teacher only to get economic income there will not be proper teaching. In AM schools teachers are members of our family, we embrace them like our own. That is Neo Humanism, which is the call of love. Nowadays immorality is spreading in the world but children who come in contact with our schools should learn the meaning of moral conduct. They learn to be respectful and responsible. In Africa, most parents leave the house early in the morning to work, so they do not even know if their child attended school on that day or not. The teacher should always tell the truth and give good examples to their students. **Outcome: Teachers requested for books so they could learn more about Ananda Marga philosophy.**

SOCIAL SERVICE during the Teachers Training



Since Didi Girijaji told us that to be a teacher is to give, after her class all of us went on a trip to do social service in a poor village in the Central Region of Ghana (about 250km from our school in Accra!). Since many of our teachers are mothers they also brought their children and babies with them. It was not compulsory, but all of them wanted to come. The roads were very bad and transportation was slow. As we arrived about 300 of the local people were very excited to get new clothes, shoes, bags, biscuits and candies; so they crowded over and soon everything was beyond our control, but everyone got at least one article. What the teachers said:

“... I like to do more social services because I was very happy to see that the people were all happy to come for the goods we have for them. I like to do more for the needy one, I wish that one day I can also get things for distribute to those who are in need.” Abigail – KG1 teacher

“...I become happy because I think about others and not myself alone. Doing social service also helps me to love God more because if you love your neighbour it means you love God. It makes you think positively about others.” Kate – Nursery2 teacher

“It was my first time embarking on such activity, travelling from the city which I have lived all my life to a village just to distribute articles to the needy ones. It was distributed without favouritism in the sense that the toddlers, young and old all had something to take home.” Kofi – KG2/Class1 teacher

28th Aug - DAY 5 – Karma Yoga: We had a cleaning up of the school. 1st Sept – DAY 6 - *What did you learn?* The last day we had an exam just to see what the teachers understood. In Ghana most of the people don't read books due to economic hardship and a struggle for survival. We knew it would be difficult for the teachers if the classes were given in a complex intellectual way so we made it simple and interactive. By their evaluation I see they understood the inner spirit of what we wanted to teach them. Some beautiful answers on their exams papers were:

“NHE is about how to create a universal world, where there will be love for all creatures”. Kofi – KG2/Class1

“NHE is teaching to love everything in the world and care for them.” Abigail

“Vegetarianism helps the body to be strong and healthy as well as making the mind become sharp as you can digest well.” Abigail KG1

“Vegetarianism helps you to focus on God because your mind will be stable. It also helps you to live long and stay healthy; it also helps to love the animals created by God.” Kate Nursery2

“Meditation is to sit and to think only about God. It helps the mind to think good things and gives an open mind for the day.” Abigail KG1

“Meditation is interacting and thinking about God with your entire mind, your heart and to devote yourself to serve Him only. We practice meditation because it brings us closer to God...and it helps to be mentally sound and fit.” Kate Nursery

“Meditation is a practice to help one to be near to God, that is, to know God.” Lad, Nursery 1 teacher

“Fasting- when one devotes oneself to not eat but only think about God so one's spirituality can be strengthened.” Kate

We wish you and your family a wonderful New Year, full of opportunities to grow, to learn and to help others!

HAPPY 2015!