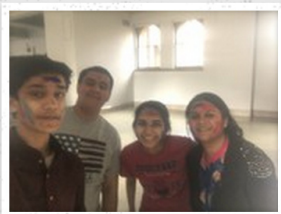


THE VIDYALAYA TIMES

— BHARATIYA VIDYALAYA NEWSLETTER: MARCH & APRIL 2017 —

HELLO INDIA!: AT PENN MUSEUM

For the past 7 years, Bharatiya Vidyalaya (BV) has taken part in "Hello India!", a program at Penn Museum that sought to educate the people of the rich culture and heritage of India. This year, the program took place on March 11th and BV had almost 40 volunteers (including parents and students) who participated in the event and helped run the tables set up by Bharatiya Vidyalaya. Some of the main themes we covered this year were: Navaratri, Rangoli, Holi, Onam, and Indian Weddings. Almost 20 students participated in Garba choreographed by Sonal Makwana, and Priya Ganesh danced an invocation piece (Bharatanatyam). This year, we also celebrated Holi in the museum. There was colored powder for everyone to use and by the time it was over everyone was unrecognizable.



ANNUAL CULTURE DAY

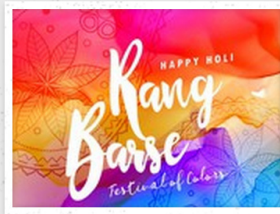
By: Shaguna Badhan

On Annual Culture Day I made a presentation about an important person named Saint Swami Rama Krishna who went to Kali Temple because he was a priest who was very religious and had many beliefs. I learned that Saint Swami Rama Krishna spent many years in worship and had his divine experiences at the Kali Temple. We all sang a prayer about Lord Shiva until the end of the performance. We also did a Garba dance devoted to Lord Krishna. I really enjoyed and learned a lot from the Annual Culture Day.



HOLI CELEBRATION

The Holi celebrations at our Bharatiya Temple during the beginning of the spring season are something everyone does not want to miss. Outside the temple is a giant tent where everyone dances to music and throws colors at each other. People come with their entire families and have a spectacular time there. As the day goes by and everyone continues having fun with their friends and family, they take a break and take part in Holika Dahan, the bonfire which signifies good over evil. They put offerings into the fire as they take turns circling around the platform singing prayers. Once night arrives, the program ends, but the bonfire stays lit and people continue to come to the temple to give offerings and pray and see the fire. Overall, Holi at the Bharatiya Temple is a wonderful celebration of the festival of colors that everyone enjoys attending and looks forward to going to.



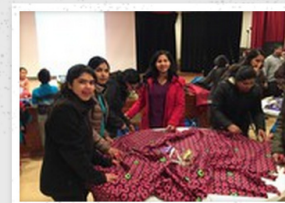
BHAGAVAD GITA - STUDY GROUP

By: Poornima Potti

Even though I have food, clothing and shelter why am I not satisfied? Why am I unhappy and lacking peace of mind and contentment? Why is it that with increasing comforts I have decreasing happiness? Questions like this can be answered by the study of the Bhagavad Gita – the divine song of Lord Krishna to the warrior prince Arjuna. Even though the Bhagavad Gita is an ancient text its teachings hold value even today and studying it can greatly enhance one's life. Lord Krishna outlines Karma yoga (action), Upasana yoga (meditation), Gnana yoga (knowledge) and Bhakti yoga (devotion) as means of attaining Moksha (or peace of mind) in this life. Shri Krishna does not change the situation for Arjuna but changes Arjuna's mental attitude towards the situation. The Bhagavad Gita is the essence of our scriptures and a thorough study enriches not only the devotee's life but also everyone around that person. Under the able guidance of Vidyasankarji the Bhagavad Gita study group meets every Sunday morning from 10 AM to 12 PM during the regular balavihar classes. Please join us to experience this transformation from a human being to a God-human.

PROJECT SAMBAL

Bharatiya Vidyalaya students, parents, and volunteers initiated Project Sambal to help children suffering from devastating diseases. We made more than 30 fleece blankets and donated them to patients of Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) and Shriners Children's Hospital. The goal of the project was to help children in need within our community and teach our students the value of charity and helping others. Bharatiya Vidyalaya would like to thank all participants for their overwhelming response to "Project Sambal."



MY EXPERIENCES

By: Dhwani Bengali

In Balvihar I learn about many new things and meet new friends. I learn culture, religion, and language. At one point in the year we have annual days to show off what we have learned throughout the year. I like these days because teachers come up with many creative ways to represent what we have learned. They can choose from plays to PowerPoints.

Another reason I love balvihar is that you aren't the only person there. You can make so many new friends. There are people in just about every grade level. There is also free lunch and thanks to sponsors who bring it. During the lunch you can socialize with students from any grade level and share your thoughts. I made some of my best friends here.

I have so many more reasons why I love balvihar but for now I think these are enough. :)

REFLECTIONS

By: Pushpa Vij - Religion Teacher

When I count my blessings I think of 'Bharatiya Vidyalaya' and how fortunate I am to have 'Bal Vihar' in my life. For the last ten years I have looked forward to every Sunday morning to come and teach the children in that program! That morning I am full of energy – coming and meeting other volunteers of 'Bal Vihar' recharges me even more with positive vibrations, dedication and service.

My students are intelligent and honest. Although novice, some of them know even more than me! Here is another way to increase my knowledge. Not only me, my students cannot wait to tell me what they did over the week and who is visiting them. Sometimes they even discuss with me about their family – it is amazing how much they trust me.

We have covered quite a few stories of 'Bal Bhagavatam' this year. You may think I read a story from the book, or have every one in the class read a paragraph every Sunday, and that is it. But do not be fooled by young students; the questions they ask me or answers I get from them to my questions are amazing. I have to be prepared to answer all their questions and make sure it is correct and that they are satisfied with it. Seems like there are no average students these days but they are all 'Super Bright.'

These students appear to be ready to face challenges at a very young age and are going to be positive contributors to the Society when they grow up. I appreciate parents trusting me with their loved ones and taking time to bring them to Bharatiya Vidyalaya. I encourage all the parents to volunteer their time to our Temple.

I was also having a very strenuous life both mentally and physically several years ago. One day I was told there are teaching opportunities at the Bharatiya Temple, and teachers' training was in "Chinmaya Mission" in New Jersey. I attended the training for two days and liked the idea of volunteering my time in a positive way.

So, here I am more than ten years later, enjoying my Sundays at 'Bal Vihar.'

ABOUT THE CREATORS



PREM GANESH

Hari Om! I have been a student at Bharatiya Vidyalaya since 2005. I started as a student-volunteer this year. I help Praveen Uncle teach the Junior Sanskrit Class and also help Raju Uncle in the audio room. I've learned so many things since I started, but one thing that I've come to realize, more now because I am teaching, is that kids are the best, and kids that want to learn are even better. Nothing is more rewarding than walking into a class full of the greatest kids ever and spending an hour doing something that they (and I) enjoy



GAURAV BADHAN

I am currently in ninth grade at Penndale Middle School. I have been attending Bharatiya Vidyalaya since I was in the fourth grade. Right now I am taking the Sanskrit language class and the Godavari culture class. I help teach the Krishna religion class and help Raju Uncle in the audio room in the mornings. Coming to Bharatiya Vidyalaya has given me a connection to my heritage along with being able to make friends that share the same common values as I do. With volunteering and teaching a class I was able to learn the different kinds of responsibilities the teachers and other adult volunteers have to fulfill.

MENTORS

- Raja Gali
- Ravi Malaviya
- Aravind Pulipaka
- Mitesh Verma

BHARATIYA VIDYALAYA

Bharatiya Vidyalaya vision is to teach, foster and preserve Indian cultural and spiritual values for the benefit of children.

Our goal is to develop awareness of Indian cultural heritage, traditions and values and develop basic reading, writing and communication skills in various Indian languages.

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