

Punarnava Family Newsletter

June, 2017 | Volume 5, Issue 1

Our Vision:

Live Simple
Live Well
Live Healthy
Live Happy

Trust Activities from April 2017 – June 2017

Launching the new website of Punarnava Healing Community



punarnava
healing community

In May 2017 www.punarnavacommunity.org came into being. For this huge accomplishment, we offer our heartfelt thanks to our Vaidyagrama family members, R G Subramanianji (fondly known to us as RG) and Ms Birgit Kernji. Together, their tireless devotion to this task enabled the launching of Punarnava Healing Community to coincide with Dr Ramkumar's visit to the U.S. We hope this innovation will help us inform more people worldwide about our activities.

We invite you to check out the new site www.punarnavacommunity.org. Please help us to improve it by passing on any ideas or suggestions you may have. We sincerely hope you will join us, as an equal and valued partner, on the journey of building this unique community. Your input is a vital ingredient and we assure you we will go through all your contributions and do our best to implement them wherever possible!

Balagrama



Since June 1, 2017 Balagrama, our home for boys, has been fully functional. Presently we are housing 12 boys. All of them are from the nearby villages and belong to very poor families. Some are from single parent households, some have both parents at home but are unable to receive proper education for a variety of reasons.

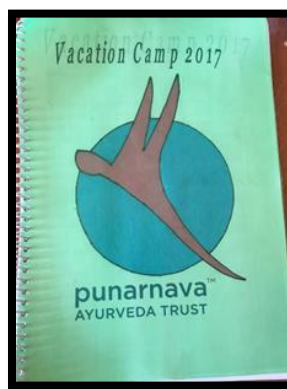
At Balagrama their daily routine other than going to the local school include Yoga, prayer, games, natural farming as well as studies/home work. The boys also help in our community activities. They play cricket, football, badminton etc at Balagrama every day in the evening between 5 and 6pm.

At Balagrama, each room has an attached bathroom and there are two bunk beds which 4 boys share. The children stay at Balagrama all week. The parents come to visit them on Saturdays, and sometimes they go home on Saturdays and return on Sunday evening before prayer time at 6 pm.

Two of the boys, Shaktivel and Aruchamy, who study in class IX at Kummatipathi High School, are leading Yoga practice (Suryanamaskar) in their school. One of the boys, Ashwin, secured second price in the inter-school oratory competition and the same was relayed from the local radio station. The boys also participate in community events and are very enthusiastic. It is our heartfelt hope that they will become the pillars of our self sustaining community.

For the care of Balagrama we have a Manager, a house mother and a cook, all of whom stay at Balagrama to look after the children. The Trust is raising money for managing Balagrama. As ever, we seek your support in sponsoring the Balagrama boys. The cost of sponsoring expenses of one child is USD 50 (INR 3000) per month. Your support will sustain this amazing level of achievement for the future of not only the boys, but the village community as a whole.

Summer camp at Balagrama



This year, the 4th annual summer camp of Punarnava Ayurveda Trust was conducted at the Balagrama facility. From May 1st – 10th, 65 children from the nearby villages participated in the camp. The children were introduced to Yoga, Prayer, Values for Living, Art, Craft and Natural Farming, as well as other skills such as team building and leadership qualities.

The children were taken by bus to Aliyar, near Pollachi, which is around 70 kilometres from Vaidyagrama, to visit the Temple of Consciousness, and the Aliyar Dam and Park.

Aliyar Dam is located at the foothills of Valparai Hills. The dam was constructed during the years 1959-69, primarily for the purposes of irrigation. The terrain is very scenic, with mountains surrounding three quarters of the reservoir.



On the final day of the camp, the children presented a 2 hour entertainment program, which featured prayers of all religions including, Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Jain, Buddhist and Sikh. A yoga dance was choreographed by our volunteer, Katrin Karneth, who spent precious time with the children helping the children to learn Hatha yoga. The children did a role play depicting the perils of the present day society and presented a reformed society of the future. The program included a lamp dance by little Rithuparna, daughter of Dr Ramadas! This was followed by the rest of the team singing songs and performing dances, winning the hearts of the audience comprising of patients, staff and the parents of the children. All were charmed by the children and their accomplishments. A magazine was 'released' which included articles written by children during the camp, pictures of the children during the various activities, mud sculptures, envelopes and art and craft work made by the children during art and craft class.

The summer camp was sponsored by many great supporters of Vaidyagrama. This year, we ran a Crowd Funding program (GoFundMe USA) which was created by two of our well wishers, Ricardo Barito and his wife Hera. Ricardo, a student of Ayurveda, attended a course at Vaidyagrama several years ago. This year, when he came to study Ayurveda, he volunteered to help us with his computer skills. His wife Hera volunteered to teach Hatha Yoga to staff and patients. The Crowd Funding helped us to conduct the summer camp well.

Consecration anniversary of the temple



The Dhanwantari Temple at Vaidyagrama celebrated the second anniversary of the consecration, from May 3rd to May 9th, 2017. A seven day chanting of Bhagavatam was arranged, recited by Ms Usha and her team of five ladies from Kalpathi, Palakkad. Swami Gurupriyanandaji performed Dhanwantari homam every day. The Diety was decorated by him in the different avatars of Lord Vishnu. A special Panchavadyam (music) recital was arranged at the temple.

Panchavadyam is an orchestra which is popular in the Hindu Temples of Kerala. A group of musicians play different instruments including Timila, Maddalam, Ilathalam, Idakka and Kombu in harmony, creating a symphony of music which is quite unusual and very special. Of the five instruments, four ([timila](#), [maddalam](#), [ilathalam](#) and [idakka](#)) belong to the percussion group, while the fifth, [kombu](#), is a wind instrument.



Annadanam (community lunch) was arranged for all the villagers from May 3rd to May 7th. Every day, more than 500 people joined in the lunch at the temple. The last day a special abhishekam was dedicated to Lord Dhanwantari, the God of Healing.

The beneficiaries of Annam (a mid day meal project feeding 100 elderly and needy villagers belonging to 12 nearby villages) were brought to the Temple in the jeep every day to participate in the festival and the lunch. The villagers were happy to have been invited for the temple festival as the caste system is still prevalent in their own villages, and they are not allowed to enter the temples because they belong to the lower caste.



Support from OKA for Punarnava Trust



OKA, or One Kind Act (<https://onekindact.org/>) is an organisation based in UK. From June 2016 (continuing this year also), the group has been supporting our programs, providing care for the medical needs of the older villagers living in the vicinity of Vaidyagrama. With OKA's support, we are able to hire a vehicle to transport the villagers to and from the medical camp once a month, and to maintain their medical records. We are also able to provide medical support outside the camps where needed. Vaidyagrama's doctors visit the homes of the invalid patients and attend to their needs.

Assisi Snehalaya is a home for the HIV positive patients situated at Rottigoundanur village, about 2 kilometres from Vaidyagrama. There are 35 patients presently and one of our Vaidyagrama doctors (Dr Mubash) visits Snehalaya regularly, consulting with the patients and dispensing medicines free of cost. We are only able to do this with the support of OKA.

Under Project Annam, we provide meals to 100 old and needy villagers in Thirumalayampalayam panchayat every day. OKA lends its support for Project Annam.. The older villagers are able to live in peace, knowing that their food and medical needs are taken care of for life. We take this opportunity to thank the Trustees and members of OKA for their continuing support. It is, and remains, vital to the wellbeing of the surrounding communities.

**Eye Camp at Kummatipathi -JUNE 2017-sponsored by Banyan Botanicals, USA-
Ms Erin Douglas and team.**



In collaboration with Aravind Eye Hospital, the Eye Camp held on June 25th was sponsored by Banyan Botanicals. Erin Douglas, a friend of Vaidyagrama, a conference delegate and a great supporter of our community work, arranged for the sponsorship from Banyan Botanicals. Over 120 patients were treated at the camp and 20 patients underwent cataract surgery.

We took this opportunity to spread awareness about the dreadful disease Dengue Fever, distributing Nilavembu Kashayam, a preventive medicine

An awareness program for the villagers was conducted, encouraging them to use cloth bags instead of plastic bags. Our young volunteers, their hands laden with cloth bags, visited each and every house in Kummattipathi village, and spoke to them about the harmful effects of plastic waste in our eco system. Our youngest Balagrama member, Najeeb (7 years) was among them, explaining how the plastic bags are not degraded as waste and remain in the soil, hindering in the growth of plants in nature.

Gardening on Punarnava lands



Punarnava lands are getting plenty of rain this year and we are taking advantage of it by bringing more and more land under cultivation. We have seeded the lands with vegetables and green grass for the cows. The vegetable seeds that were sowed this year include radish, ridge gourd, spinach, beans, tomato, ash gourd, red pumpkin, and beetroot.

Iftar at Vaidyagrama



Vaidyagrama believes in the empowerment of the spirit. The staff of Vaidyagrama include Hindus, Muslims and Christians and each one of them celebrate the festivals of the other. During the holy month of Ramzan, a number of our staff members were fasting for the whole month. In solidarity with the fasting brothers, on June 23rd an Iftar (a meal served at the end of the day during the month of Ramzan) was hosted by the kitchen staff of Vaidyagrama. After sunset, a prayer from the Holy Quran was recited by the Muslim brothers, calling for the happiness and welfare of mankind. This was followed by the sumptuous dinner, which everyone enjoyed by all of us equally.

Lakshmigrama at Vaidyagrama



The 30 cows and bulls in Lakshmigrama are being looked after by the Goshala team, Meeran, Kazira and Chenniappan. The milk from the cows is used primarily to feed the calves; only the surplus is used for making buttermilk and natural ghee for consumption of the patients at Vaidyagrama.

New dogs at Balagrama



At Vaidayagrama, we aim to live in harmony with nature, which includes plants, animals and humans. April and Bunny are new puppies at our kennel near Balagrama. Our puppy, April is presently 3 months old and Bunny is 4 months old. Both dogs are rescued dogs from shelter. They are quite happy in their new home. The Balagrama children love the dogs and play with them and care for them in equal measures.

Narayaneeyam at Vaidyagrama

Narayaneeyam is recited every month by the pious ladies of Annapoorneswari Temple, led by Ms Uma. Their team include 11 ladies and 1 male member who perform the puja during the recital.



One of Lord Krishna's many forms was decorated for the Puja on April 29th. On this day, it was the Kalia mardhanam (Killing of Kalia the snake) form, when Krishna overcomes Kalia, the dreaded, multi-hooded snake, in the River Yamuna and dances on its several hoods. On June 21, the Diety was adorned as Krishna holding up the Govardhan mountain to shelter the villagers of Braj from the rain.

About red rice- The staple food at Vaidyagrama.

In India, since time immemorial, different varieties of red rice have occupied a special position. Rich in fibre, red rice is filled with antioxidants, phytonutrients, phytochemicals, Vitamin E, protein, iron, and other nutrients useful for maintaining a healthy body.

Different types of red rice:

pic courtesy-Preeti Singh, Assistant Manager, Food and Nutrition,



'Uma' par boiled red rice



Gandha Saale



Raja mudi



Mapillai Samba Raw



Kerala Matta Rice

In Kerala, rice is the staple food, and kanji is a common meal eaten by Keralites. Kanji is made of whole red rice or broken red rice. It is easily available is not expensive and is therefore consumed by rich and poor alike. The different varieties of red rice which are a bit more expensive, like the Mappilai samba (grown in Tamilnadu), Uma par boiled rice (grown in Kerala), Gandha sale and Raja mudi (grown in Karnataka) are being revived in the modern day due to their high nutritional value.

Cookery Corner:

Kanji with mung dal, coconut dip, boiled gooseberry



A simple meal of Uma rice kanji with mung dal, coconut dip, and boiled gooseberry. Uma variety of red rice is grown in Kerala and is used in its par-boiled or raw form. It is an improved variety and is very popular due to its cooking and eating quality; it is very soft and delicious according to Devi Lakshmikutty, a crusader of organic produce and founder of Bio Basics, the organic store.

Ingredients for Uma rice and mung dal kanji

1. Uma red rice - one cup
2. Mung dal - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup
3. Salt to taste
4. Water - 3.5 cups (you can add excess water from boiling gooseberry)

For Tampering

1. Coconut oil - 1 tablespoon
2. Mustard seed - one teaspoon
3. Asafoetida - $\frac{1}{4}$ tea spoon
4. Jeera - 1 teaspoon
5. Curry leaves - 10 leaves (cut into pieces)
6. Coriander leaves - one table spoon (cut to pieces)

Ingredients for boiled gooseberry

1. Gooseberry - 4 or 5
2. Salt to taste
3. Water (one cup- excess water may be used for making kanji)
4. Turmeric powder - $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon

Ingredients for coconut dip

1. Grated Coconut - 1 cup
2. Coriander leaves - one tablespoon
3. Curry leaves - 5 -6 leaves
4. Ginger - 1 cm piece
5. Salt to taste
6. Lemon juice - one teaspoon

Method of preparation

Boil the gooseberry in a vessel with salt, turmeric powder and 2 cups water for 10 minutes, till the gooseberries are tender. When cold remove the goose berries from the vessel. The remaining water is very nutritious and can be used for making kanji. Cut the goose berry after removing the seeds. They are now ready.

'Uma' red rice and mung dal kanji

Wash the rice and mung dal well. In a cooker add the rice, mung dal mixture with 3.5 cups of water (including the gooseberry cooked water), add salt and cook the rice on medium flame for 10 whistles. The kanji is ready.

Tampering

On a medium flame, keep a kadai for tampering. Add coconut oil. When hot, add mustard seeds, jeera, asafoetida, curry leaves. When the mustard seeds splutter, remove from fire and add to the kanji. Add the cut coriander leaves. The Uma red rice and mung dal kanji is ready.

Coconut dip

In a blender container, add grated coconut, curry leaves, coriander leaves, ginger, salt and lime juice. Dry grind the mixture in the blender to a fine paste. The coconut dip is ready.

How you can support us

If you feel you want to be a part of this vision, and would like to contribute to its realisation, here are some ways you can help:-

- **The Daily Annaam**-meals to poor project, Rs 2000/- (USD 40/- or Euro 35/-)
- **Community Natural Farming** by donating USD 100/- providing livelihood for families
- Monthly free **Medical Camp** (and feed an entire village) USD 300/- (Feeding USD 200/-+ Cost of medicines USD 100/-)
- Eye Camp for 150 elderly - Rs 26000/- (USD 450/-) half yearly.
- You can **Donate Your Skills**: graphic designers, content writers, publishers, educators, engaging social media, and publicity are all needed.
- **Spread the Message** to your 10 Best Friends:
- www.punarnavacommunity.org, **Vaidyagrama community group** on Facebook

How to donate (at www.punarnavacommunity.org)

For Indian Donors:-

Our Bank details are

Indian Overseas Bank, Nanjundapuram branch, Coimbatore

Account number 174602000005107 of Punarnava Ayurveda Trust.

IFSC code- IOBA0001746

SWIFT-IOBAINBB020

For International Donors:-

Citi Bank, Tristar Towers, Avinashi Road, Coimbatore India

Account number-0100768429 Punarnava Ayurveda Trust

IFSC code-CITI0000011

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Please state the purpose of donation while donating via banks.

USA Bank details:

Name: TD Bank

web: www.TD.com

Address: 235 Alewife Brook Parkway, Cambridge, MA. USA

A/c Name: **Punarnava Healing Community, Inc**

Routing No: [211370545](http://www.fedwire.com)

A/C No: [8254821090](http://www.fedwire.com)

SWIFT/BIC-T D O M C A T T T O R

Punarnava Healing Community Inc. is a 501C3 corporation registered in the United States.

Punarnava Ayurveda Trust is registered under Section 11 (1) of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA), 2010, and hence is eligible to receive International donations for the said purpose.

Donations to Punarnava Ayurveda Trust by Indian donors are eligible for tax exemption under Section 81 G of the Income Tax act.

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