



The winning team with guests of honor including Mr. Daniel, Principal Law, and Dr. George.

Bad Girls Go Crazy!

Studying was over. After a short snack break, the children of Shanti Bhavan chattered with excitement. The first of September was a special day because there was a basketball match scheduled for that evening. The crowd headed over to the arena where the match was to be held.

The two girls' basketball teams were the 'Krazy Girls' and the 'Bad Girls.' The players of both teams looked nervous and excited. They had been practicing and were well prepared. The captain of the Krazy Girls was Divya from the ninth grade. She was confident of her team. Her team members looked smart in their bright white shirts. Her classmate, Nivya, was the captain of the Bad Girls. Her team members wore purple shirts.

As soon as the game began, everyone from the audience started cheering. The

chief guest was Dr. George. This was his last day at Shanti Bhavan before leaving for the United States. I was among the cheerleaders with Catherine, Kishori, and the other girls from the eighth grade. I cheered for the Krazy Girls because my friends played for that team.

In the beginning, the Bad Girls were really good. They kept scoring, leaving their opponents with zero points. I was sad, but not for long, because the Krazy Girls gained confidence and never lost faith in themselves. In the second half they caught up with the other team and both remained ferocious until the end. At last, the Krazy Girls won with 22 points to 18 points. I could not express the extent of my happiness for the Krazy Girls. I was so happy that the team I had been

Dear Friends,

This newsletter has been compiled from pieces written by the students of Shanti Bhavan. We hope you enjoy reading it. We would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. We want to express our sincere thanks to everyone whose guidance and support helped the 11th graders successfully pass their Board Exams.

-The Voice of Shanti Bhavan

cheering for had won!

In the end, all of the spectators ran to congratulate the winning team and the rest of them too, because they had entertained us with a great match. The next day the Krazy Girls were given beautiful stickers as prizes. The girls were really crazy and cool. Nobody had expected their team to suddenly buck up, making eleven baskets. There was no 'Woman of the Match' because everyone played equally well. This was the best basketball match at Shanti Bhavan, ever.

-Vinceya, Grade 8

Science News: An Onion

Miss Irene took an onion from Mr. Daniel and put it in a bottle of water, not too deep. After a little while, it grew a shoot. We put it in a pot near the assembly hall. We poured water on it, so it grew big. One day we pulled it out. The old part had become rotten. We don't know if it's alive or dead.

-Devaraj, Grade 3

Bingo and Pingo: Soccer Showdown

Shanti Bhavan held a soccer match on September 10, 2008. It was a really busy day. The match had been postponed a couple of times due to the rain. Mr. Daniel, the referee, with the help of the players, drew the markings on the field. We made lines near the goalposts clear enough to be seen, and a circle with a line, in the center of the field.

It rained very lightly and we feared that Mr. Daniel was going to postpone the game again. But we knew too that the wind was blowing hard. The dark clouds were blown away and the sun shone brightly on our faces. We brought chairs and placed them on both sides of the field.

Everyone cheered as the two captains, Girish from the eighth grade and Shaktivel from the ninth grade, walked onto the field. The team names, Bingo and Pingo, respectively, were brilliantly selected. When everyone cheered either team, both teams thought the crowd was cheering for them because Bingo and Pingo sound alike.

In the first half, Thomas from Pingo shot the ball right at the edge of the goal post. Alas, for me because I'm on the other team, the ball went in. I played goalkeeper on Bingo. Pingo had an advantage in scoring because I'm short and can't reach the top of the pole. The score was now one (Pingo) to zero (Bingo.) Thomas was really awesome!

After a short break, the second half began. Before I knew it, the referee announced that there were only five minutes left. In that mere speck of time, Vinay from Bingo shot a goal, and then it was time up. Vinay had kicked the ball right over the goalkeeper's hands and it went in through the top corner of the goal post. I was really happy and almost cried with joy. The score was one to one! The match was a tie.

Each team now had five chances to shoot a penalty kick. We shifted goalkeepers. I had butterflies in my stomach.

The whistle blew. The other team

scored a goal. All other attempts to score were blocked. The score was two to one and Pingo won! I cried in the end because we lost. But one team had to win ultimately! A cheerful scream for the Pingo team filled the air.

The participants of the game:

Pingo: Shaktivel, Thomas, Rajni, Prakash, Ramesh, Keshavan, Praveen, Gowtham, Shashi, Prashanth, Nickil and Vijay Gomes.

Bingo: Girish, Anith, Vijay, Vinay, Arun.R, Kumar, Francis, Manikantan, Mani, Poovarasana, and myself- Prem.

Substitutes: Thangaraj, Babu and Abilash.

-Prem, Grade 8

I Am From

I am Puneeth Kumar from
the eyes of my mother,
my grandfather selling cucumber,
the scoldings of my sister,
the corn in the backyard,
the oily smell of pooris.
I am from the injured thumb of my
grandpa,
the burnt body of my father,
the cut on my mother's hand.
I am from the smell of flowers in Shanti
Bhavan,
the speeches of my school's founder,
and the advice of my housemothers.
I am from the blood of my dead father,
the sight of the burning clothes of my
mother,
and from the teachings of my teachers.

-Puneeth Kumar, Grade 7



Kumar (9th Grade) of Bingo steps up for a crucial trap.

Dancing to Success

Bharatanatyam is derived from the three most important elements of Indian dance: Bhava- expression, Raga-melody, and Thala-rhythm. It is the most popular classical dance form of India. Bharatanatyam in its current form is over two hundred years old, and was formerly performed by temple dancers. It is a strenuous dance, calling for complete mastery of the body and mind, with discipline and devotion.

I am Bina of the eleventh grade. I have been learning Bharatanatyam for the past eight months. During the month of May, I attended a dance school in Bangalore. I learned the basics of classical dance and aimed to master a dance about the Hindu god, Krishna. On September 30th, I had my first public performance at the school recital. At first I was really nervous but when it was my turn came to perform, I imagined the whole of the Shanti Bhavan family sitting in the audience. I forced myself to concentrate on the dance and within minutes it was over. I did not want the program to end. I felt like dancing again.

There were many other performers. Some did yoga, some danced Kathak, and others played the tabla. At the end of the program, all of the participants received a gold medal in honor of their hard work. Everyone appreciated me because I had come all the way from Shanti Bhavan to perform, and because I had danced well. I was happy and realized that nothing is easy until we work hard and concentrate on what we are doing.

I thank my school's founder Dr. George, and Principal Mrs. Law for giving me the opportunity to learn dance. I also thank Ms. Vijayanti, the seventh grade class teacher, who enrolled me in the dance school and helped me accomplish my goals, step by step.

-Bina, Grade 11

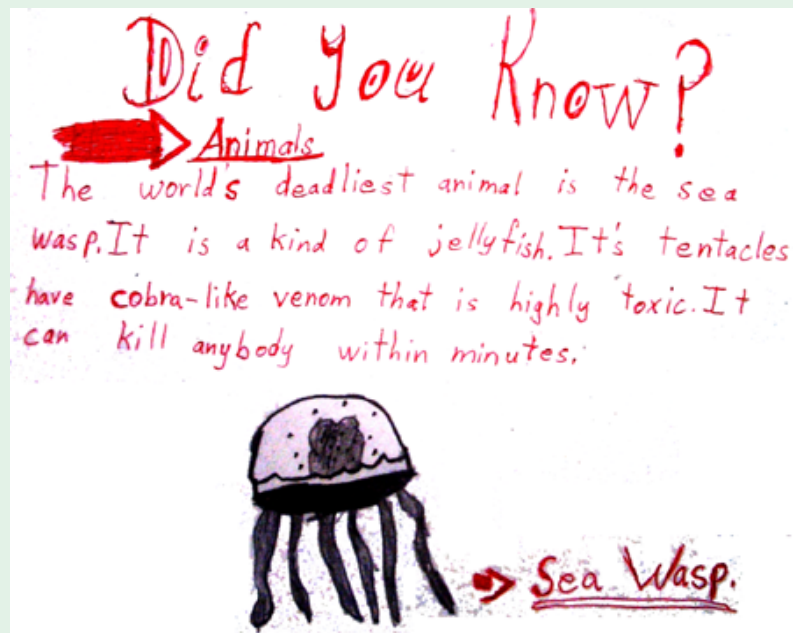


Ms. Vijayanthi helps Bina get ready for her Bharatanatyam performance .

Deep Sea Dive

I got up in my bed.
I was under the sea.
I was a starfish.
I was as yellow as a banana, and
living in the sea!
I saw sting rays and sharks,
Chasing me around and around.
I was a terrible thing moving up
And down. There was an octopus crashing into a rock.
I picked it up, and it swung me.
It threw me away, and nobody could see me again.

-Roselyn, Grade 4



-Aaron, Grade 6

Working on the Farm

One Saturday, Dr. George came to our eleventh grade class to ask us if we could spend a few hours helping on the grape farm. We were excited and all of us agreed to start work at once. The next day we spent four hours working on the farm. Since we are selling part of the farm, our job was to clear the land of pipes that supported the grape vines. We also had to remove the pipes that were used for drip irrigation. Then we had to collect these pipes in a bundle, load them in a tractor, move them, and finally, unload them in the shed. The farm is thirty-five acres and each day we had to finish four to five plots.

On the first day of work, we were all excited and got a lot done. We volunteered to work for an hour on the other days. By now, most of the work is done. We only have a few sectors of a plot to finish.

Our work on the farm is tiring, but we enjoy it. We occasionally get tractor rides with Uncle Gangadhar to pick up and deposit bundles of pipes.

Sometimes our hard work is rewarded with ripe purple grapes that are sweet and refreshing. Dr. George comes by to see us and always has a word of advice to help us improve the quality of our work.

By working on the farm, I have learned that there is dignity in labor. Working together, we finish work faster, and with good strategies, we work efficiently. Sometimes I feel tired but I know I want to achieve the set target. My classmates and I are happy to help Dr. George and our school in this small way. Working on the field is a new experience that we are all enjoying.

-Sindhu, Grade 11



10th and 11th grade boys finish up their Sunday community service project- cleaning out a portion of the school's storm drains with volunteer Derek Etkin.

Peepers and Penny

I love Peepers and Penny because they guard us. They protect us. I saw you, Peepers and Penny, when I came to Shanti Bhavan. I saw you both fighting. I thought that I would be a tomboy. You fight nicely. You are so courageous. Your fur is like the color of chocolate. If I was you, I would be cozy. You are so big. You are so cute. I love you both!

-Reena, Grade 3

Tasting a Strawberry

I borrowed a strawberry from Naveen. It was red in color. It was a circle. I tasted it.

"Oh my gracious!" It was bitter like a bittergourd. I spat it out and ran to the toilet.

I started washing my tongue, but still my tongue had the taste.

So I gave up.

-Yesu, Grade 6



Our school dogs: Penny and Peepers!

The Dreams of “Bharath Obama”



An uncanny resemblance

An interview with Bharath of the fourth grade, the U.S. president-elect Barack Obama’s doppelganger:

How does it feel to look like Barack Obama?
It feels awful. I need to do so much of work and I need to change so much after six years...

You do realize that you’re not actually him?
...and I know that I’m not him. I need to have long boring meetings.

Would you like to be president of India?
Yes, but not of America. I like the people of India and I want to take care of my parents. Diwali and all the best festivals are in India. And I can eat chicken.

Are you happy for Barack Obama?
Nope.

Why not?
Because others are scolding him. He turned his back on some people. I don’t know who, but we heard on the news today.

So you only listened to half of the news?
Yes.



After a busy academic year, the children and staff of Shanti Bhavan are eagerly looking forward to their winter vacations which will start on the 21st of December. “I am waiting to return to my village for the holidays. I hope that it has improved from the last time I saw it”, says Manjukumar of the 7th grade.

-Artwork by Rahul, Grade 5

What do I want to be when I grow up?

An interview with the kindergartners:

When I grow up, I want to become a nurse because only girls can become nurses. I will help the doctor and give injections to those who are sick. I don’t have a daddy and if my mummy dies I will give some money to my sister. I will buy eatables for Raji mummy [*her housemother*] and if I get more money, I will give to some people and I will buy a bus and a car.

-Thainmauri, KG

When I grow up, I want to become a doctor. I want to become a doctor because every time my mother’s stomach is paining. I will give injection to my mummy and to all the people who are sick. When I get a lot of money, I will buy sarees, vegetables and story books to read, for myself. I will give some money to my mummy and with the rest of the money I will build a house.

-Patrick Stephen, KG



Future nurse



Aspiring doctor

A Pianist

When I grow up I want to do many things. I have the opportunity, in Shanti Bhavan, to be whatever I want to be. I want to become a pianist.

Many volunteers from Broadway influenced me. I started to learn the piano from the age of twelve. Dr. George's niece, Mallika, was very kind and generous to help me out with piano lessons. At first it was very easy but as days passed it became difficult. But still I never give up.

The piano is an instrument that takes away my sorrows and gives me happiness. It is fun playing on the piano. I also love seeing Broadway stars and other pianists play the piano.

When I grow up, I want to be the best piano player I can be. I will never misuse this opportunity. Learning the piano is one of my best opportunities and is something that I enjoy and treasure. I love the piano.

-Naveen Kumar, Grade 6



The pianist himself

Cooking a Dosa

Last year, when I went home for vacation, I learned how to cook a dosa. First, my father started teaching me with a dosa. He said to me, "Pour the dosa now in a round shape. After that, it is fried." My father told me to "tilt it the other way." I took the vessel, took out the dosa, and gave it to my mother. I asked her, "Is it nice?" "Yes," said my mother. I was too happy. The next time I tried, it was the worst dosa because I tilted it quickly and it broke and fell in the oil. I took it out and boiled it so much that it became very yummy. I gave it to my father and he said that it was the best dosa in my house. I felt so happy.

-Akash, Grade 5



Art by Satish, Grade 2.

Letter to my Favorite Animal

Dear Eagle,

If I could be any animal, I would be you. How do you like the birds? I love eagles because you help me from snakes. You take me around the world. When you come to take me, I feel as if I am falling from a waterfall.

- Venu, Grade 3



Fun with fireworks on Diwali .

If I Was a Superhero

One day I woke up in the morning. I went to wear my eyeglasses. When I wore them, I couldn't see anything. I was very surprised. When I took them off, I could see everything. Then I realized something was going wrong. I had a hurt on my arm, and I touched it. It healed. Then I came to know that I had the power of healing.

I was so excited. I didn't want to tell anyone. I went happily for breakfast. I was ready to go to school. The school bus was waiting outside. At the end of school I went to the ground to play soccer with the girls. Someone kicked the ball very hard, and it hit someone else. I felt sad for them. Then I remembered I had the healing power and touched the girl on her hurt for some time. I looked, and then the hurt healed. Then everybody was surprised. I became very famous. And I was a superhero!

-Tanuja, Grade 5

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