

SNEHA VAANI

Voice of Children, Suehagram, Sueha charitable trust

Director's Note



The beauty of loving the unloved is the ability to see the value and worth in someone who may have been overlooked or rejected by others. It is about embracing and accepting individuals for who they are, rather than judging them based on societal norms or standards.

This type of love is selfless and unconditional, and it has the power to change lives and bring joy and fulfillment to both the giver and the receiver. It is a reminder that everyone deserves to be loved and valued, regardless of their perceived flaws or imperfections. Loving the unloved is a way to spread kindness and compassion in the world and make a positive impact on the lives of others.

"I have had the privilege of witnessing the beauty and value of friendship through my interactions with children. Their innocence and pure hearts serve as a reminder of the importance of connections and support in our lives."

Friendship can also play an important role in our personal growth and development. They can help us to learn and grow from different perspectives, challenge us to be better versions of ourselves, and help us to achieve our goals and dreams.

"When there is love and friendship present, children are equipped to navigate the challenges of the world with resilience. They have a deep-seated need for love and connection, and by providing it, we can foster strong and meaningful friendships. These friendships serve as a source of support and encouragement, creating a sense of community and belonging. In times of need, a true friend is all that is necessary to overcome any obstacle."

FR. SUNIL JOSEPH MI



Diwali

"Deepawali", also known as the festival of lights, is one of the most widely celebrated festivals among Hindus. It is celebrated with great enthusiasm and joy throughout India and in other parts of the world. The festival is steeped in rich cultural lore and legends, and it symbolizes the victory of good over evil, as it marks the triumph of Lord Rama over the demon king Ravana and the return of Lord Rama to his kingdom after 14 years of exile.

At Snehagram, we celebrated the festival in a grand and festive manner. The campus was adorned with a beautiful array of lights, diyas, candles, and tube lights. I was a part of the decorating team and was deeply involved in the preparations.



The trainees of Magic Bus also lent their support, making the celebration even more colorful and memorable. Everyone had the opportunity to light one lamp, which was a unique and special moment. Unfortunately, we didn't get to blast firecrackers, as the community members didn't desire to pollute the environment.

While I was happy to be a part of something that protected nature, I was also disappointed that the traditional aspect of the festival was missing. However, I learned a valuable lesson on this Diwali, that true celebration is not just about individual enjoyment, but about coming together as one family and celebrating as a community.

AMBIKA

TISB Students @ SNGM

When I learned that a group of students from TISB would be visiting Snehagram, I was ecstatic. I knew that this was a unique opportunity for me to expand my knowledge and gain new perspectives. On the day of the visit, the TISB students arrived at 7:45 am, and we all gathered in the dining hall for a nourishing breakfast. Afterward, we were divided into five teams, each comprising of Snehagram and TISB students. We embarked on a tour of the campus and later in the day, we all worked together to plant vegetables and flowers.



For many of the TISB students, this was their first time working in a garden, but they were all eager to learn and willing to lend a hand. Together, we completed the planting in just one hour. The TISB students also provided individual lessons on various topics that we had been struggling to grasp. This was incredibly beneficial, as I was able to clear many of my doubts and feel more confident in my understanding. We ended the day with a cultural program, during which we shared a meal and had fun recreational activities. This helped us to form bonds and build strong connections. In the evening, we even had a friendly football match with the TISB students. Though we were strangers at the beginning of the day, by the end of it we had formed strong friendships. The entire experience was a valuable learning opportunity that broadened my perspectives and taught me the importance of cultural exchange and building connections.

GANGAMMA

Learning Companions Fellowship

On October 26th, we were honored to have Mr. Ganesh, from the Learning Companion fellowship in Nagpur, visit Snehagram. I had a fantastic experience learning about their fellowship, and we had the opportunity to share information about our own fellowship, the I'mPossible Fellowship. During our collaborative discussion, we discussed the challenges we face in implementing and sustaining our fellowship programs and exchanged ideas on how to overcome those challenges.



One valuable lesson I learned from the Learning Companion team is the importance of giving selflessly, with no expectation of receiving anything in return. They shared with us their goal to help children in Nagpur receive a proper education and prevent their parents from having to migrate and search for schooling elsewhere. Their fellowship has been instrumental in providing many children with the foundational education they need. This interaction has laid a strong foundation for a positive relationship between our two teams, and we look forward to future collaborations.

SUDEEP

World AIDS Day

AIDS, also known as acquired immunodeficiency syndrome, is a chronic and life-threatening disease caused by the HIV virus. It can severely damage the immune system, making it difficult for the body to fight off infections and diseases. In India, over 1 million people are diagnosed with AIDS each year. Globally, 38 million people are currently living with HIV or AIDS. This disease has no cure and requires lifelong medication. Every year, World AIDS Day focuses on a specific theme. This year, the theme is "Equalize" which aims to call attention to the inequalities faced by individuals living with AIDS and work to end discrimination and bias.



This day serves as a reminder to address the inequalities that are hindering progress in ending AIDS. It is also a day to create awareness and encourage people to get tested and take steps to prevent HIV.

At Snehagram, where all the children are infected with HIV, this day holds a significant importance in their lives. We spent time learning more about the disease and working to deepen our understanding of it. It was also an opportunity to inspire the children that HIV does not have to hold them back from achieving their dreams and being successful in life.

GANGAMMA



Semester Exams

As soon as the first bell rang, I immediately began tackling the questions. I started with the easier ones, and then moved on to the more challenging ones. With only half an hour remaining, I finished my paper and thoroughly reviewed my answers. During the revision process, I corrected any mistakes I had made and made sure all extra sheets were properly attached to my main answer book. Finally, the last bell sounded, signaling the end of the examination. The superintendent of the hall announced that no further writing was allowed. I was feeling exhausted by the end of the exam, but proud of the effort I put in. This experience taught me the importance of being well-prepared and organized during an exam, and it will be a memory I will always cherish.

ABHIJITH



Building Connections

SELCO Solar Light Pvt. Ltd. is a socially-conscious enterprise based in Bangalore, India, that has made a significant impact on the quality of life for poor households in rural areas, particularly in the state of Karnataka, through their implementation of solar energy and low smoke cookstoves. The team visited Snehagram to assess our electricity needs and offer support. Due to unforeseen weather conditions, we often experience power outages, which can be disruptive to our computer classes and studies.



Barbeque

In the morning, I received word that we would be having a barbeque party in the evening. My friends and I divided the tasks among ourselves to ensure that everything would run smoothly. Some of us were in charge of preparing the barbeque, others were in charge of snacks, and some were responsible for making soup with vegetables. We collected as much wood as we could find and cleaned the grill. We all gathered around the barbeque, relishing in the smell and helping to roast the chicken. In the evening, we all came together to start the barbeque. There was music playing, and we danced to the tunes. I particularly enjoyed the delicious salad made of cabbage and carrot. It was a pleasure to cook the meal without using gas and we prepared noodles, popcorn, soup, and chicken. We all ate together, having a wonderful time and bonding as a family. This annual barbeque is a great way to promote friendship and create a pleasant atmosphere together.

CHANDRU



A solar-powered electrical system would provide a reliable source of power, allowing us to continue our activities without interruption and save money on electricity bills. The interaction with the SELCO team was extremely productive and they were more than willing to assist us in setting up a solar power system. This is a major step forward in addressing one of our key challenges and we look forward to their continued support.

MADHU



Bringing Joy

Christmas is a joyous and festive occasion that requires a great deal of planning and preparation. As it is a public holiday, we are fortunate to have a Christmas break to fully celebrate it. At Snehagram, preparations for Christmas began well in advance so that we could fully immerse ourselves in the celebrations on Christmas Eve. We decked out our campus with festive lights and of course, a beautifully decorated Christmas tree. The tree was adorned with wrapped gift boxes, waiting to be opened by all of us. We were also given a "Christmas friend" as a fun and special part of the celebration.

The church was also beautifully decorated to add to the festive atmosphere. We practiced singing Christmas songs and carols, preparing to fill the air with joyous melodies. We also made greeting cards for our well-wishers and shared them across various mediums. All of these preparations only added to our excitement and anticipation for the celebration of this special event.

Gardening



I have a passion for gardening as it allows me to consume more fresh fruits and vegetables. To promote growth and protect plants from insects, we have chosen to use organic fertilizers and pesticides. There is a great sense of satisfaction that comes from harvesting fruits and vegetables that have ripened in the garden, as they contain more nutrients than store-bought vegetables that are picked before they are fully ripe. Additionally, gardening not only saves money but also allows me to have control over the source of my food. It is empowering to know how to grow my own food and be self-sufficient.



Christmas Celebration

Christmas is a time to celebrate the spirit of giving and sharing with loved ones. It reminds us of the significance of the birth of Jesus and the opportunity to reflect on our purpose and the beauty of nature. At Snehagram, Christmas is celebrated with great excitement and enthusiasm. The students are particularly excited about the celebration.

After the main activities were completed, everyone danced to the beat and continued dancing for over an hour. It was one of the best Christmases we have had, as many senior students came from Bangalore to join the celebration, even taking time off from work.

The church is beautifully decorated with garlands, lights, ribbons, and balloons, and the Christmas tree is adorned with stars, balloons, and lights by the students. The celebration began with a Eucharist service, followed by cutting and sharing cake. Then, we had the Christmas friend ceremony where each student revealed their secret Christmas friend, for whom they had been praying and getting a gift for. There were loud claps and cheers as each student revealed their friend, it was so much fun.



Coconut plantation

At Snehagram, we identified a piece of land that had been left unused and decided to transform it into a coconut plantation. The coconut tree, scientifically known as *Cocos nucifera*, is of great importance to the agricultural economy of India. Our goal is to make the most of this valuable resource and contribute to the growth and development of the region.

The benefits of coconut are numerous, from the copra and coconut oil used in the production of soaps, hair oil, cosmetics and other industrial products, to the husk which is a source of fiber for a large coir industry. It takes up to seven years for a coconut palm to produce fruit. The coconut can be used for food in the forms of fiber, fruit (or meat), milk, oil, and water. Because of its versatility, coconut palms are also known as the Tree of Life.

Ranipet Marathon

The Ranipet Marathon ULTRA Run 2022, organized by the Jollyboys team, is an event that promotes the integration of running into one's lifestyle and encourages individuals to explore the world on foot. Not only is running a great form of exercise, it also serves as a platform for socialization and stress relief. The ease and enjoyment of running make it accessible to all, regardless of prior experience.

Personally, I have always had a passion for running, starting from my childhood where I would participate in short runs and outdoor sports. As I grew older, my love for running only intensified and I challenged myself to run longer distances. I trained for and successfully completed 10km runs at various events for over five years. This year, I set my sights on a new goal and trained for a half marathon, which I completed at the Bangalore Marathon. This experience instilled in me the confidence to push myself further and participate in the 25km Ultra Run at the Ranipet Marathon.



With the help of labor, we began to clear the land using a JCB and removing all weeds, thorns, and large bushes. It was a challenging task to remove hard stones and big thorny trees that had overrun the land. After the clearance, we dug pits and planted 135 coconut saplings. We then ploughed the land and installed a drip irrigation system for easy watering. We were fortunate that as soon as we finished planting, it rained continuously for three days, which was beneficial for the new plants. The students are constantly working hard and tending to the plantation, and we are eagerly awaiting the first harvest.

AMAR

On the day of the event, I set off with determination and confidence. At the halfway point, I found myself struggling to find a pacing partner but pushed on. I encountered another runner who was having a difficult time and I slowed my pace to assist him. Unfortunately, he had to drop out due to cramping, but I continued on. As I approached the 22km mark, I began to feel the strain in my heels and thighs but the thought of quitting never crossed my mind. I took a short break, replenished myself with glucose water and pushed through the last 2km. The finish line was in sight and I sprinted to cross it.

The Ranipet Marathon ULTRA Run 2022 was a challenging yet rewarding experience that taught me the importance of perseverance and the camaraderie of fellow runners. The most important thing is to aim to finish and not to quit.



BABU

Visit of Thomas

A philosopher from India stated that education is a lifelong process and not just limited to reading books and passing examinations. The Snehagram training center, funded by the Learn for Life Foundation, aims to provide real-life lessons and teach values that can guide one's life. With the guidance of Mr. Thomas, the founder of the Learn for Life Foundation, the training center has been able to help many people build life-long values and sustain their lives. During a recent visit, Mr. Thomas and the Snehagram team discussed future goals and plans to expand the program to reach even more people.



Visit of Vikas

Music has the power to heal and improve our emotional and mental well-being. It can be used as a form of meditation to help one release stress, worries, and pain. The school was fortunate to have Mr. Vikas and his student come from Bangalore to perform a collection of Christmas folk songs for the students. The music was beautiful and filled the hearts of all present with joy and peace. The audience was entranced and did not want the performance to end. It was a wonderful way to begin the Christmas celebrations and bring peace to all.



Credits

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