

Ashwini Charitable Trust Newsletter

JAN 2004 - JUNE 2004

OVERVIEW

With exams in March-April the activities of the trust are a bit toned down. But we still have had a few activities and our annual day was held in January. We have worked together with other NGOs throughout the past year. They are Soroptimist International, Dream A Dream, Surabhi Charitable Trust, Ashish Ballal-Dhanraj Pillai Academy, Toastmaster's Club, Asha for Education, Vidya Nidhi Trust and The Dhanvantra Charitable Hospital.

3RD ANNUAL DAY CELEBRATED(11TH JAN)

Our 3rd annual day was celebrated at the National Children School. Mr. Bob Hoekstra, CEO Philips Software Centre was the Guest of Honor. The children of the trust were given gifts and 2 children Revathi B and Kumari were given cash prizes. The children also put up a small variety entertainment program.

FUN AT ASHA PAINTING COMPETITION(26TH JAN)

17 kids were eagerly waiting at school to go for the event. The painting competition was organized by ASHA FOR EDUCATION, an action group for basic education at the St. Joseph's Indian High School. Any child below the age of 16 was allowed to participate in this competition and was asked to paint their dreams. The children were given painting material and asked to paint their dream in under 2 hours. They enjoyed expressing themselves on canvas.

HOCKEY TRAINING BY ASHISH BALLAL-DHANRAJ PILLAI FOUNDATION

Hockey training program started last July is progressing well. Guruprasad, Nandkumar, Kumar, Gopi have been going for the hockey training program conducted by Ashish Ballal at KSHA, Langford Town. This is an ongoing programme for a period of 4 years

INTRODUCTION TO VARIOUS PROFESSIONALS (FEBRUARY 2004)

In accordance to our desire to expose and inspire our children, we are organising talks to be given by people from diverse professions. Sub-Inspector, Mary Shailaja, of Ulsoor Police Station was our first guest speaker. She inspired our children with an account of her own personal triumph over economic and educational challenges and invited them to visit the police station.

**MPHISIS BFL LIMITED CONDUCTS COMPUTER LITERACY PROGRAM (17TH
APRIL, 1ST MAY)**

The community initiative programme of Mphasis (a leading software company) headed by Ms. Aparna Sanjay has started a series of computer classes for the children at their head office. 17 children made use of the opportunity and attended the 1st session on 17th April . The 2nd session was held on 1st May.

GHULAM ALI SHOW WAS ORGANISED IN SUPPORT OF THE TRUST (4TH MAY)

Janab Ghulam Ali is one of the best ghazal singers in the Indo Pak Sub continent and is a household name in India. He has to his credit nearly 50 albums. There are many well known, respected ghazal singers, but his style is unique and inimitable. His in-depth knowledge of classical music shows in his singing making his music richer, and those who could enjoy the beauty of ghazals and thumari will find him captivating and his singing style is not song-alike, it's not simple, and it is as graceful as the legend is. On May 4th a musical concert was organized by the Music Circle in support of our trust. The show was a very big hit and well appreciated by the houseful audience.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- Our first teacher, Padma, Radhika's sister was recruited to teach Kannada to the class VII students
- Times of India published an article on the trust with an appeal for a premise for our after-school activities. This is because the current venue which we are using, namely the premises of the National Children School, was no more available to us from March 2004.
- The Gurudwara School at Ulsoor responded very positively. They agreed to give us space for conducting our after-school activities from April 2004
- Another well-known NGO who also work with underprivileged children from government and municipal schools in Bangalore, the Akshara Foundation, has offered to help us with volunteers from their databank, training volunteers to teach children to read and to set up independent Balwadis in the slums
- Five children were sent to the Diagnostic and Research Centre of Spastics Society of India, Karnataka for evaluation of their psychological and psycho-educational capabilities
- Four houses were visited and the parents counseled.

PARENT MEETING (MARCH 16TH 2004)

The attendance was 99%. Only the mothers of the children came for the meeting.

Some of them shared their personal stories. It was very moving to hear of some of the hardships experienced by them in educating the children.

We have advised them with the following proposals:

- To approach the Casualty departments of the St. Martha's or Philomena's Hospitals in cases of emergencies, giving one of our well-wishers, Dr. Ananthram's, name as reference.
- To open a bank a/c for the mothers
- To conduct workshops for the mothers in various skills.
- To address the emotional needs of the children especially adolescents approaching puberty with a view to prepare them for later sessions on sex education
- To interact regularly with us and to bring to our notice any change in their children's behavior

The mothers confessed that till a few years ago they would dread the arrival of June because they would have to think of ways and means to pay the new academic year's fees. They thanked ACT for saving them from that misery.

SOME ACHEIVEMENTS

- One of the children, Shashikala studying in class IX in AJS received 2 awards from the school for procuring the highest marks in her class and regular attendance.
- Ashwini studying in class X in AJS has got an award from the school for procuring highest marks in her class

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Rajiv and Joe, two first year Management students from Christ college did a community service programme with the Trust.
- Park Hotel, Ulsoor has offered to train our children (from the age of 18) in their hotel. They have already given jobs to 2 siblings.
- Ramesh Swamy of Unnati has offered to train our children and their siblings in vocational skills which will also lead to placements.
- The untiring efforts of all our volunteers with special mention of Hoori Lekhraj, Dr. Bhavani Ramesh, Vijita, Anusuya Sircar, Salma, Rekha and Sucheta Kini.
- Ms, Paawna Poonacha of TIMES OF INDIA, Ms Minakshi Shivram of THE HINDU and Mr. Micheal Patro of DECCAN HERALD need special mention for their efforts in highlighting our commitments.

- CUL-AH ,is an annual inter collegiate cultural festival organized by the Mount Carmel College, Bangalore .The students of the managing committee of CUL-AH 2004 have generously donated a sum of Rs.10,000 to the Trust
- Dr.M.Ravi of Specialists Clinic, Indiranagar
- .Dr.Khatib,Dr.Hemalatha and Dr.Chengappa of Lakeside nursing Home
- Swati De for introducing us to Alope and Arundhathi Biswas who were the organisers of the Ghulam Ali show.
- Jabeen Manohar for helping us with the printing of the brochures.
- Dr Ananthram, a well known surgeon in Bangalore for having sponsored the uniforms of all the children for the year 2004-2005.
- Dr.Chandarmouli and Sharada Venkatraman for sponsoring the snacks for the children for 2003-2004.