



## From My Heart...

My Dear daughters, Friends and Well-wishers,

This is yet another opportunity to talk to you all. Almost half of 2012 has gone by. Time is flying and so is LPF. Several programs have taken place as also many new initiatives. The selection of our new family members has taken off in full swing. Already 56 Lila Girls have joined in from the engineering and science streams. The selection of Lila Juniors is over and almost 120 new angels will soon join our family, in this category. Process for Lila Fellows has commenced and will end in July. Like last year, two award functions have been scheduled; one exclusively for our Lila Juniors and another function for Lila Fellow and Lila Girls.

In my last communication, I had shared my dream of extending the scholarships to other disciplines. Well, I am happy to inform you, that God has answered our prayers. We have managed to harness enough funds from our donors/partners to introduce 4 new categories of scholarships to support Graduation in Nursing, Physiotherapy, Diploma in Education (D.Ed. English) and Diploma in Engineering. We intend to give away nearly 150 scholarships in these fields. I know, this means a lot of work for the Trustees and the office staff. However, we have increased our strength on both these fronts. Five new trustees have joined the undergraduate selection and support board and I welcome them. Two of them are our senior Lila Fellows, Ms. Pradnya Harkare/Kashikar (LF-2001) and Ms. Vandana Jha/Betlikar (LF-2002) and three subject experts from different fields, namely Dr. Pravada Telang, Ms. Shaila Sabnis and Ms. Pratibha Bhende. All these individuals will be introduced to the readers in forthcoming issues of Inspira.

Our staff has been reinforced by yet another Lila Fellow Jyoti Otageri (LF-1998), who has joined the office as General Manager (Operations) and Ms. Leena Bhumra, who comes from the corporate world and has nearly 20 years of experience in public relations, marketing, branding and above all special training in counselling. I am confident that with these additions and the experience they bring with them, the Foundation will work much more efficiently, focused on wholesome education of girls, with a touch of love and understanding for their needs.

I am also very happy to share that one of our key supporters in our School Project "2morrow2gether", has agreed to financially aid the construction of toilet blocks in two of the village schools and carry out major repairs in the toilets of the four city schools, where we are supporting Lila Juniors

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(LJs) for their education. This sure is a big crucial step ahead, because without good hygiene and cleanliness, education is not complete. We intend to conduct health awareness programmes for our Lila Juniors and their mothers. These workshops will be held starting July this year. The team of doctors will spend five days in each school conducting these programs, which comprise of five modules: Introduction to health and hygiene, nutrition, anaemia campaign, common health problems, introduction to sexual health and contraception.

Our Foundation is growing very fast and taking so many new initiatives, together with our various sponsors and supporters that there is an urgent need of dynamic communication. Our web site has become outdated, both, in terms of the technology and contents. We are in process of giving it a complete revamp making it contemporary, interactive and user-friendly at par with other social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Simultaneously, we are also remaking our promotional film, as the last version produced a few years back somehow feels redundant.

As always, we organized many workshops and training programmes. We also had some fun. We started the year with the first program by our own LF (2005) Sneha Nikum/Bhoi. She has a Masters in Computer Application and has almost 5 years of work experience in the corporate world. Currently, she is working as a Research Fellow in the Computer Science Department at the University of Pune. She guided the young LFs in what it takes to move from the college to the corporate world.

Jyoti Otageri (LF-1998) conducted the next awareness program on Global Warming. Jyoti has completed her Masters' in Microbiology and is currently pursuing her Ph.D. in Immunomodulators in the treatment of Leishmaniasis disease at the University of Pune. She has undergone a special training program in Global Warming from an environment activist and now a Rajya Sabha member, Mrs. Vandana Chavan.

We had a 64-hour program held on seven consecutive Sundays by Mrs. Devika Nadig and Vijay Gupta. Devika has been the Director of a school in Pune and Vijay (an IIT, Kanpur and IIM, Bangalore alumnus) has worked with Wipro for more than 15 years. They gave the 40 participants an in-depth understanding of how to enhance their 'employability'. It addressed the following issues: 'How to make good decisions?', 'How

to make plans and achieve agreed goals?', 'How to solve problems in a structured way and communicate ideas effectively?', 'How to critique a given idea thoroughly and identify relevant information, access it and make sense of it? You can read more about this program in this issue.

We had yet another very intense and unique 6-day 'Catalyst Program' conducted by Mr. Tim Munden, Director of the Foundation for Transformational Leadership, UK. He has been involved in developing and training this approach to leadership for the last 20 years. He also works as the Vice President of Human Resources for Unilever, based in UK. He was accompanied by Ilana Wetzler, who is a professional in Leadership Training, Coaching and Facilitation. She has been working with this approach of Transformational Leadership for the last 5 years. The program was designed to accelerate the leadership development of the participants and to equip them to bring about the same development in others ('Train the Trainer'). Fourteen senior Lila Fellows participated in this Leadership in Action workshop, which enabled each participant to find her 'ability to bring about change for the good of all' in a given situation. Read more about the program in a separate article in this issue.

To familiarise our young Lila Girls with new technologies, a workshop on 'Operating Systems and Cloud Computing' was organized at KPIT Cummins, Hinjewadi. Three experts namely, Mr. Prasad Pawar, Mr. Rajesh Yadav and Mr. Ashish Chavan from KPIT Cummins Infosystems conducted this full day workshop on their office campus. Ms. Aparnaa Venkatakrishnan, also from KPIT Cummins organized the program and gave a very educative tour of the campus to the girls.

We had our annual day celebration by inviting parents of our LFs and LGs for a cultural event performed by the LFs who went to UK for training as Peace Ambassadors. They made an excellent demonstration (to all the parents) of their learning and how this 21 days wholesome leadership training program had influenced and transformed them and made them realize their own potential.

We had an orientation program for the new batch of LGs, whose selection is complete and their scholarships awarded. The objective of this program was to familiarize the new family members with the working of the Foundation, its' values, the additional programs that the girls could benefit from, the



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possibilities of getting counseling and of course to meet all trustees and make new friends. They also used this opportunity to celebrate Dad's (Firoz) birthday well in advance by cutting a big cake and singing many songs.

On 14<sup>th</sup> April we celebrated Dad's 75<sup>th</sup> Birthday with LFs, LGs, their spouses and children. It was a great celebration of ONE BIG FAMILY. LFs had put together a fantastic program of song and dance and everyone was involved. The dinner was enjoyed and relished by all.

The Lila Junior's also got their opportunity to celebrate Dad's birthday. We conducted an Art and Craft workshop for all the 120 LJs and they learned to make many new creations. Our own LF-2006 Rashmi Borole and her husband, Jitin conducted this workshop. Rashmi has completed her Masters of Arts in Animation in the USA and has worked there for a couple of years, producing over 30 animated television commercials for many multinationals. She and her work have been covered in details in the 32<sup>nd</sup> issue of Inspira. The workshop ended with the cake cutting ceremony followed by delicious lunch. Many LFs performed and sang songs, dedicating them to Dad Firoz.

Talking about celebration, we had a thanks-giving party for the LFs and volunteers who participated in the Annual Parents' Day Programme. They all had excellent dinner and went home with nice gifts from Dad.

Ahead of us is the Herculean task of selecting the Peace Ambassadors for the 5<sup>th</sup> batch which will leave for the UK on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September and be away for three weeks. Our PG selection starts now and then will start the selection of UG for the new categories as well as the next batch of engineering and science. Due to the admission process of these categories we will have yet another award function in October, especially for Lila Girls. Reading all this, you may agree that LPF is growing fast and reaching out to many more deserving girls, especially those from rural areas.

The Trustees have been and are still very busy and taxed with commitments towards LPF. I take this opportunity to thank them for all the time and efforts they are putting in, to select the rightfully deserving girls as members of our ever-growing family. Their dedication and commitment make it possible to fathom such tough goals.

Good luck and best wishes. Happy Reading...

Mom to Lila Fellows and Lila Girls,

Friend to All

*Lila*

Lila Poonawalla

## DEEPEST CONDOLENCES



The Lila Poonawalla Foundation is extremely sad to communicate to our readers the sad demise of its very old and dear friend, Mrs. Ratna Khemani. She died of heart attack in Singapore on the 4th of July 2012.

Mrs. Ratna Khemani is better known as a forthcoming, enthusiastic, innovative and zealous resource person, to the Lila Scholars. Almost every girl has been welcomed into the Foundation Family with Mrs. Khemani's complete personality development workshop, "Stepping into the new world", ever since LPF has come into existence. She was a great source of Inspiration to the young Lila Fellows and Lila Girls. She led by example and the girls loved to be in her graceful company, with a desire to rub some basics of etiquettes and grooming off her. Whenever the Foundation used to

assess the usefulness of the various programmes it organised, Mrs. Khemani always scored the best.

Lila Poonawalla Foundation has lost a great supporter and friend. Our sincere and deepest condolences go out to Sahib and her family. May God be with them in this hour of grief and give you all the peace, hope and strength in their time of loss and sadness. May Ratna's soul rest in peace!





# News Flash

I have been working my heart off at Carnegie Mellon University for my degree in Public Policy & Management, also participating in various competitions and winning them! *On April 26<sup>th</sup> 2012, my team from Carnegie Mellon, comprising me and three others from Pennsylvania, was announced the Global Champions (Education) at the Global Finals of the "2012 Hult Global Case Challenge at New York City".*

The Hult Global Case Challenge seeks ideas and solutions from the world's best and brightest future business leaders that will cause a step-change in the vicious global poverty cycle. The 2012 Hult Global Case Challenge was themed around Global Poverty under which three social challenge areas, namely education, energy and housing, were to be tackled by the competitors.

The international case study challenge, we were given was OLPC (One Laptop Per Child), the organization for Education (we had chosen to address the social issue- "Education"). The best and brightest MBA teams from over 130 countries competed (including the US Ivy leagues like HBS, Yale, Columbia, MIT Sloan, Wharton, etc as well as most of the IIMs, ISB, IITs, etc ... and so on from around the world). The goal was to build a sustainable solution for OLPC to scale their current model, to bring technology to education by the use of laptops to 10 million children worldwide in 5 years.



*The proud team of Carnegie Mellon with President Bill Clinton*

My team proposed to utilize the seed capital to implement the idea - starting with the Pittsburgh public schools and then moving on to other Public and inner-city schools in the US, and then approaching India (as well as Rwanda, Kenya, etc) as we better our model. My mom has been a teacher for over 16 years. I wish to connect through her network to bring our solution to the poorest children in India. We believe that countries like the USA can



*An elated Ketaki Desai shows off her trophy*

afford to pay the market price for the OLPC laptops, so that we can subsidize their costs in communities that cannot afford it. We will also build an ecosystem of infrastructure around the laptops to make them sustainable, including the educational software, teacher's training and connecting children.

The competition started with over 4000 applications, of which 90 teams were selected for each of the 5 cities - Boston, San Francisco, London, Dubai & Shanghai. In each city, one team was selected to move to the Global Finals in New York City. A team was also selected by an online competition based on audience voting. In New York, the 6 teams were judged first by the OLPC C-level team in a 45min presentation. Two teams were then called to present to another panel of judges which included the Nobel Peace Prize winner and Founder of Grameen Bank, Dr. Muhammad Yunus, Governor Mario Cuomo, and the Chairman of Unilever Michael Treschow, among others. Finally, President Bill Clinton announced our win.

I was dying to multiply my joys by sharing this big achievement with you all! Thank you!

■ - Ketaki Desai (LF-2002)

*(Ketaki holds a Bachelor's in Mechanical Engineering from MIT, Pune, India. She was awarded the Lila Poonawalla scholarship to do her MS in Biomedical Engineering from the Texas A&M University, USA where she went on to complete her Ph.D.*





*Gulshan Gidwani*

Dr. Gulshan Gidwani is the Principal of St. Mira's College since the past 15 years and has been teaching there for almost 35 years now. Under her leadership, St. Mira's College became the first college in Pune to be accredited by NAAC, in 2002, with a 5-star rating. This earned her college the "Best College Award" from the University of Pune. In 2007, it also became the first autonomous college in Maharashtra.

She is also associated with NGOs such as 'Connect T', 'Apayashaatun Yashaakade' (From failure towards success) and 'Eklavya Group', all of which deal with upliftment of children. She believes that the chief quality that needs to be inculcated for success in any field is to say 'We' instead of 'I', as success cannot be achieved alone and the joy of one should become the ecstasy of the other.

**Association with LPF:** Once Mrs. Poonawalla invited me as a Chief Guest at a shopping frenzy organized for Lila Fellows by LPF at Shopper's Stop. That is when she got to know me closely. Eventually, in October 2011, she called me and invited me to join LPF's Board of Trustees. I agreed, because I feel one can always find time for what one loves to do.

I believe in reverence for the child and that is what I found in the LPF. When I see what Mrs. Poonawalla is doing for all Lila Fellows, Lila Girls, etc., I feel what I'm doing is microscopic compared to what she's doing. She has a life-time commitment with all of them. She's like the Sun and she continues to shine in their lives.

I feel, I am receiving much more than I can give to the Foundation. I am receiving so much from my association with LPF. Like a sponge, I am absorbing whatever I'm seeing, and I'm amazed at whatever I see happening with LPF! I've been giving small suggestions to Mrs. Poonawalla as and when I've felt the need to, during my short association with LPF. She's taken my advice on the Foundation to extend scholarships to nursing colleges and MBA institutes.

**Difference between Lila Fellows and other Girls:** When I saw each Peace Ambassador come and speak on the Parents' Day, extempore, I was amazed. I realised that even the flaws, which I saw in the Parents' Day program this year were so beautiful and natural. I learnt from these Lila Fellows that errors actually

create a sense of tolerance in others and allow room for improvement and scope of growth.

I find all Lila Fellows to be superlative. Whatever LPF does, brings about transformation in the Lila fellows. I don't find Lila Fellows and Girls competing against each other; rather they compliment each other. I can see the difference in LPF girls and my college girls. All girls of LPF are pushed to speak out, become confident. I also find that LPF girls are loyal to the Foundation. They acknowledge the transformation brought about by LPF, which I don't see elsewhere, even in my college. The practice of giving credit to your mentors is being cultivated in LPF girls. I see that the brand of LPF is being built, which is very important. We must learn to say 'thank you' to the hand that feeds us, which I see happening here and this quality is lacking in the world today.

**Vision for the Foundation:** I want to get involved in anything and everything that the Foundation does. I take up whatever I am offered, because I find so much value addition happening. It's like an extension of my own personality. I have already suggested that those who've trained as Transformational Leaders should also train our college students.

**Message to the Lila scholars:** You are celebrating womanhood; women are special. This essence of womanhood should remain, even when we compete with men. Retain the uniqueness and gentleness of a woman.

*contd...*

# New Trustees...



Roda Mehta

*Ms. Roda Mehta comes from the academic disciplines of Economics and Business Management. The first 27 years of her career were devoted to the field of advertising. Of those, she spent 16 years on the Board of Ogilvy & Mather, India - a multinational marketing communication company. She represented her company on industry and government committees from the early age of 23 years!*

*Experienced in building relationships and motivating Government bureaucracy at the Center, State, District and Block levels on various*

*social marketing programs like adult literacy and the national postal service, she opted out of advertising in 1998 after qualifying from the Advanced Management Program at Harvard Business School (USA) in 1996. She committed herself to consulting in the not-for-profit sector in areas such as manual irrigation for millions of marginal and small farmers in India and Bangladesh (where she now also serves on the Board of the company), marketing of Kerala's cashew exports in the US, helping Indian NGOs access foreign funds through the internet, etc.*

*A frequent speaker at national and international forums and training programs, Roda Mehta has among much recognition been inducted into the Hall of Fame by the Advertising Club of Calcutta in 2000 and awarded the first Lifetime Achievement Award by the Advertising Club of Bombay in 2003.*

Association with LPF: I had read about Lila Poonawalla when she was the Managing Director of Alfa Laval. Then when I settled in Pune, I would meet her socially. I had also attended a couple of LPF's annual functions at the Taj. One day in August 2011, Lila wrote inviting me to join the LPF Main Board. I asked what it entailed, read about the organization and then readily agreed. While there are 3 independent members on the main Board, there are Lila Fellows as well who rotate. This impresses me the most as it builds capacity and ensures sustainability for this Foundation.

LPF is an exemplary organization. I admire the way Lila and Firoz mentor and keep the scholars engaged with the Foundation, both, during and after their scholarship, through various activities that help in widening their capacities. Their transformational display of confidence and self-esteem is truly remarkable. Lila and Firoz's energy and dedication towards these girls is the root cause for their progress.

In the capacity of a Board Member at LPF, I've attended a couple of Board meetings and have, through June, been involved in the annual evaluations and interviews for girls applying as Lila Fellows for postgraduate studies in India and abroad for the next academic year.

While demanding, it has been a very happy and worthwhile experience. I have to say Firoz helps both liven and lighten the workload; while Lila ensures a very professional yet compassionate approach to the process. I believe that education is a great leveller and therefore, I have great hope for the girls that the Foundation supports.

Message to the Lila scholars: You have got this wonderful opportunity through LPF. It is not just for you to be grateful, but for you, in turn, to give back to those who follow you. Seek time and opportunity to give back as much as you can to this organization. Of the 365 days in a year, commit at least 3-4 days to the Foundation. Get exposed to their activities and programmes for they will continue to benefit you. Make the most of the programs arranged by the Foundation, whatever the difficulties you may have to face to do so. I often see the same set of girls repeat their participation in the programs. Please participate even after you outgrow your year of scholarship.

Furthermore, as Lila Fellows you must yourselves organize and initiate activities and events beneficial for your younger fellows. This way, the joy and fulfillment of giving will far outweigh the joy of receiving. Willing service of others is the only true purpose of life.

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# New Trustees...



Nirmala Pandit

*Dr. Nirmala Pandit pursued her post-graduation in Law (LLM) after which she did her Ph.D. in Human rights from the University of Pune. She went on to teach Human Rights and International Law in the post-graduate department of Law, for about 12 years. She was then appointed as the Executive Director of the National Centre for Advocacy Studies (NCAS), Pune, which was involved in organising trainings for several NGOs. She was appointed as the Legal Officer for Asia Pacific at the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Geneva, which is an NGO of Lawyers and Judges. Thereafter, she was appointed as a Special Advisor to the High Commissioner of Human Rights (HCHR) on trafficking, while working at the UN body in Switzerland, to prepare a combined, comprehensive, policy*

*document on UN initiatives against international human trafficking. She has held positions with a number of committees engaged in the drafting of laws relating to women and children.*

*After returning from Geneva, she started an NGO, 'Navam' (The Nav Maharashtra Community Foundation) in 2002, to help small organizations in rural Maharashtra in the development of rural communities and to raise funds for these communities, where even small amounts of funds brought about reasonable change.*

Association with LPF: Lila and Firoz Poonawalla have been my friends for a long time. Once, Lila had been invited to a meeting organised by Navam for NGOs involved in scholarships, for collaborative initiatives. Soon after, Lila invited me to join the main board of trustees of the LPF. I joined the Foundation last year.

I am extremely impressed with the way in which LPF functions. It is very well organised and the best part is that the Lila Fellows and Lila Girls initiate, participate and conduct activities organised by the Foundation. Now LPF has reached a stage where even Lila Fellows are on the board, which ensures the continuation of the Foundation, which according to me is the core strength of LPF. The Foundation is definitely bringing about change in the lives of many girls.

Last year, as the Chief Guest at the Parent's Day Function, I interacted with the Peace Ambassadors who had just returned from UK. It was remarkable to see their transformation. This year, as a Trustee, I had the opportunity of interviewing girls for scholarships. It was exhilarating to look at the superb talent girls have and at times depressing to see the background from which these girls have come. But, it feels heartened these girls are taking the initiative to get ahead in life. LPF takes up various initiatives to prepare and help girls to make their careers and lives better and develops in them the confidence to say, "Yes, I can do it", and the best part is that the girls do it.

Vision for the Foundation: What impresses me most is that LPF manages to keep its girls together and attached to itself, unlike other organisations which give scholarships or interest-free loans. Along with the many activities we conduct for the girls, I strongly see the need for exclusive sessions on writing CVs (although it has been done as part of other sessions), to help the Lila Fellows project what they really know.

It would be nice to see girls approaching the Foundation with requests for sessions that they need. Meanwhile senior girls should offer such sessions to the other girls. Now that the Foundation is grooming much younger girls since their schooling, I sense these girls would feel a stronger affinity for the Foundation due to their longer association with it, further strengthening it. We should also spread our reach to other cities in Maharashtra for the scholarships for undergraduate courses.

Message to the Lila scholars: The core principle that LPF started with, was giving back to society. The Foundation not only supports the girls financially, but also helps groom their personalities. The girls should have this realisation and bear a sense of commitment towards the Foundation. It does exist, but it should be widespread. The Lila scholars should also help others who are in need. They should reciprocate to the Foundation with their time, skills, funds and various other ways in their capacity. I see this slowly happening and I hope it continues, so as to strengthen the Foundation and make it independent.



## Enhance Your Employability

Enhance Your Employability (EyourE) is a program which intends to build work-life skills in participants. These are those skills, which employers look for, in a potential employee, besides technical skills and English communication. The program was conducted by Ms. Devika Nadig and Mr. Vijay Gupta for around 35 Lila Fellows and Lila Girls in the months of February-April, 2012 on 7 consecutive Sundays between 10 am to 5 pm at Hotel Deccan Rendezvous.

On the very first Sunday, a session on 'self-motivation' was conducted by their beloved 'Lila Mom' herself, which came as a pleasant surprise to all the participants. Mrs. Poonawalla gave them a guru mantra: "If you are not proud of yourself no one else will be proud of you". She asked the girls to think about following questions: 1. What is the inspiration in your life? 2. What is the goal of your life? 3. Which is proudest moment of your life? 4. When did you take a decision of your own interest against others? Every one started thinking. Some of them got an opportunity to express their feelings. In the end, they realized the importance of being self-aware.

The next Sunday onwards, Mrs. Nadig and Mr. Gupta took over the reins of the workshop. The work-life skills they dealt with are – self-awareness, effective communication, problem solving, decision making, planning, data accessing, data interpretation and numeracy. Apart from these work-life skills, the participants were also taken through the basic understanding and general awareness of economics, politics, demography, natural environment, technology, legal framework, socio-cultural environment and broad overview of Indian history.

The participants were made to explore all these domains and skills by posing real life situations in an interactive environment. Therefore, their learning was rooted in practicality. The last session on how to handle interviews and group discussions proved to be the icing on the cake. The practical demonstration and participation gave the participants a lot of useful tips and ideas.

As the girls left, their body-language exuded newfound courage and wisdom, as if they were prepared to take on the world. Here is what a few of them had to say:

- Prajakta Nikam (LF-2011): *Other LGs must attend this programme. It teaches us how to manage our emotions, (especially anger, anxiety, and / or depression) which is very important, not only at our workplaces, but also in our personal lives to succeed and achieve our goals.*
- Pramila Shende (LF-2011): *This programme so*



*easily introduced and explained to us the most important concepts that control our employability and we are generally so ignorant of - Economics, Politics, Social Environment and so much more!*

- Delizia D'Silva (LF-2011): *It was a very pleasant journey of seven Sundays. It should be named enhance your life instead of enhance your enjoyability, because we learned so many things that are important not only for getting employed but throughout life. Thank you Mom, for arranging this workshop for us!*
- Julit John (LG-2010): *'Enhance your Employability', an extremely useful and crisp workshop that acquainted us with terms used in everyday life, giving us a glimpse of the demanding world beyond our safe cocoons. 'EyourE programme' (this is what Vijay Sir called the programme) is a must, for all those wanting to have an edge in getting employed.*
- Nargis Parvaneh (LF-2011): *I sum it up like this, 7 Sundays, 2 trainers, 30 friends and a parting message- "Go build your career and have a bright future"*
- Snehal Patil (LF-2010): *I appeal to all LGs and LFs to attend this workshop next time they get a chance. It is much beyond our employability. This session provides us the open platform to talk, share and express our views and helps us overcome our stage fear as we get an opportunity to talk in front of everyone. The best part is the chance to meet fantastic personalities who implement in their lives the precious moral values they possess.*
- Trupti Jambhale (LF-2011): *It has helped enhance my personality as well as attitude. It is definitely going to help me face interviews. The 7-Sunday Programme has greatly influenced my thinking ability and writing about what we have learned is difficult to express in words.*

■ -Compiled by Dr. Rajani Panchang-Dhumal



*LPF celebrated 4<sup>th</sup> March 2012 as Parent's Day. This event became a mega-celebration by the sheer meeting of Trustees, employees, Lila Scholars, their parents and spouses.... vis. the entire Lila Family and exchanged thoughts and feelings for and about the Foundation.*

The curtains at the grand Symbiosis Vishwabhawan auditorium rose to the Foundation's inspiring anthem. The event was hosted in two languages, English & the local language Marathi (especially for parents), keeping in mind the mélange in the audience. The 4<sup>th</sup> batch of Peace Ambassadors (PAs) were scheduled to show-off some of their skills they were naturally endowed with and yet



*Mrs. Poonawalla felicitating the Chief Guest Dr. Jayshree Firodia*

some others they had newly acquired in the UK.

Padmshree Mrs. Lila Poonawalla welcomed the audience and updated them with the progress of the Foundation. She announced the introduction of the new scholarship categories. She said, *"We have bigger dreams... dreams of reaching out to more girls in newer disciplines of education. This year, we would be able to increase our family by about 400 more girls. Whilst we at LPF promote education, we also preach overall emotional growth of our daughters. I appeal to parents to remember that no doubt marriage is a part of our life, like education, health, entertainment, etc. BUT do not truncate your daughter's education for the sake of marriage. Education gives them confidence, respect, independence, global competence and the power to support their families in times of need."*

At this point, Ms. Joyti Otageri stepped on dais in capacity of the Asst. Editor of Inspira. She



*'Marathmoli Lavani'*

spoke about Inspira, its functions and how its' global readership was on the rise, day-by-day!

The masters of the ceremony, Jyoti and Ritaa started the scheduled programme by speaking about the "Peace Ambassador Mission" of LPF. They informed the audience that the 4th batch of Lila Fellows have returned from the wholesome leadership training programme in the UK as the Ambassadors of Peace. These Lila Fellows have undergone an extensive training that has not only improved the quality of their own lives and knowledge, but has also equipped them to bring about peace and happiness in the society they live in. They have become

confident and responsible young leaders. This programme is a collaborative effort between LPF and the Asha Center, based in Gloucestershire, United Kingdom.

Trustee & LF Prerna Khole introduced the chief guest. The eminent pediatrician Dr. Mrs. Jayshree Firodia (wife of noted industrialist Arun Firodia), graced the event and expressed her pleasure at being invited to participate in the Foundation's celebration. She addressed the audience stressing upon the empowerment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century women and its importance. She said, *"If we want to empower women, education is most important. Education is a continuous process, a progressive discovery of our own ignorance. It is praiseworthy that the Foundation is taking the lead on this front. But the beneficiaries of this help, the Lila scholars should remember not to forget their responsibilities towards society, when they attain a decent position."*



*Spanish-cum-Bollywood Parody*

*contd...*



# Special Feature...



*Enactment of 'The triumph of dramatic Art'*

*Your own Mom, Lila Poonawalla is the best example of this. She is a true leader because I believe, 'if your action inspires others, to dreams more, to do more, to bear more, to learn more, then you are a leader'. But as I wind up my talk, I would like to remind you all of another social responsibility, that you all should commit yourselves to. You all should contribute to stop global warming; save energy; preserve and help enrich environment; take on some project to save our environment."*

Mrs. Poonawalla then felicitated the chief guest and other well-wishers (Patrons, Donors & Special Invitees) of the Foundation, who were present in large numbers.

This was followed by a series of performances by the 4<sup>th</sup> batch of PAs. These included power-point presentations



*Enacting the four temperaments*

about their interactions and various learning's at the Asha Center. The presentations covered - How Asha Centre Changed Us for Good, Wheel of Life and Swapping Cultures, Nature Conservancy – Biodynamic Gardening, Inspiration through Interaction – The Grange Experience, Tea Party – Maharashtrian & British *Jugalbandi*, Weaving Colourful Days – Basket Making & Painting, Four Temperaments, Wholeness through Meditation, Leadership In Action – The Change, London Enchants – Tourist Places and Romancing Historical Places in UK. The event climaxed with the dance and drama performances, namely the '*Marathmoli Lawani*', Shakespeare's '*Fairies* –

The Triumph of Dramatic Art' (Fairy World) and a Solo Dance – Parody (Spanish & Bollywood). Madhura Kanade ended the performances by presenting their 'Learning Curve', which gave an account of the various social projects the girls had taken up after their return to India. Whilst some of these projects have already started, they all would reach out not just to the other Lila Fellows but also others from the underprivileged strata in society.

Throughout the function, Parents and spouses of Lila Fellows took turns to come to the dais and express their experience with LPF. Minal Marne's mother Urmila Marne said, *"This Foundation has not only given financial help, but also mental and moral support to all. I wish to get*



*Mrs. Urmila Marne*

*more involved in the Foundation's activities". Ravindra Bagde, husband of Shweta Bagde said, "Shweta has totally transformed into a magically confident lady after her return from the PA program in the UK." Madhura Kanade's mother, "My daughter is the first one in our family to have gone abroad and she got this opportunity solely because of LPF". Prajakta Kuyate's husband,*



*Mr. Ravindra Bagde*





*Dad with the batch of PAs-2011*

Abhishek Choudhary said, "Today our Mother India needs leaders, innovators and entrepreneurs. This initiative by the Lila Poonawalla Foundation is definitely a big step towards grooming our countries huge reservoir of Woman-Power". I sincerely request all the parents and husbands to support this big initiative by encouraging your girls to volunteer for the PA training programme".

The audience seemed so captivated by the presentations and performances that they were unaware of how a full



*A cross-section of the audience*

120 minutes had passed by! A large part of the credit goes to the explicit compeering done by Jyoti and Ritaa combining English and the local languages (Hindi & Marathi). The vote of thanks was followed by the National Anthem.... the thunderous applause the end was unbelievable and resounded nothing but patriotism!

■ - Ritaa Shetiya

## Lila Poonawalla Foundation Scholarship Announcements 2012 New Categories


Category	Degree & Subject	Last date of issue of forms to applicants	Last date for receiving completed forms
D	B.E. (Engineering)	1st Aug. to 6th Sept. 2012	11th Sept. 2012
E	B.Sc. (Maths, Physics, Statistics, Computer Science, Computer Applications, Chemistry, Biochemistry, Microbiology, Animation, Electronics, B. Pharm.)	14th July to 14th Aug. 2012	23rd Aug. 2012
F	D.Ed. (English)	1st Aug. to 14th Sept. 2012	17th Sept. 2012
G	Bachelor's in Physiotherapy	1st July to 4th Aug. 2012	6th Aug. 2012
H	B.Sc. Nursing	30th June to 10th Aug. 2012	15th Aug. 2012
I	Diploma in Engineering	14th July to 14th Aug. 2012	18th Aug. 2012
J	Architecture (B. Arch.)	1st Aug. to 6th Sept. 2012	11th Sept. 2012

Contact No.: 8605861657/8 & 27509431/2



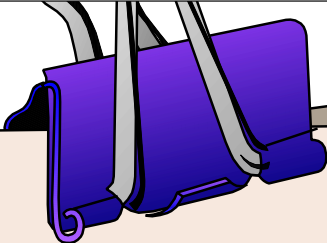
# Impressions

As parents and spouses were leaving the auditorium after the Parents' Day performances, we randomly picked out some and asked them what they thought about LPF and its work. Here is what some of them had to say:




**L**PF is unique because it has rightly identified that talented girls, especially from the rural backgrounds, have been lagging behind in education and personal/social development only due to lack of factors financial support, adequate knowledge, appropriate guidance, encouragement and inspiration. The Foundation's support has covered up for these lacunae and has helped my daughter's career and personality grow. I wish the Foundation the very best for their further extraordinary journey.

- Mr. Sopan Bombe  
(Father of Shilpa Bombe, LF-2010)




After retirement, I could not afford my daughter's higher education. Today, because of LPF my daughter is pursuing her MBA from TASMAC, Vimannagar. The Foundation has not only given aspiring girls financial support but also moral support. My daughter is no doubt a more confident girl today!

-Mr. Suresh Thite  
(Father of Shruti Thite, LF-2010)



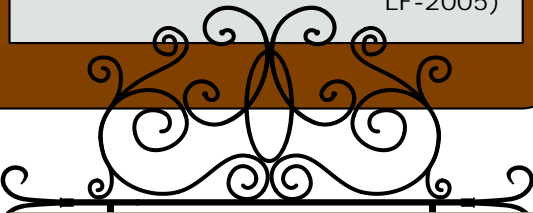
We are blessed to have daughters who have gifted us this strong family in terms of the Lila Poonawalla Foundation, which is enriching everyone's life. The Foundation has strengthened the wings of our daughters, so that they could fly high in today's competitive and fast moving world. We are grateful to this Foundation, which has not only developed our daughters, but their entire families.

-Mrs. Charulata Satwekar  
(Mother of Supriya Satwekar, LF-2010)



The unique feature about the LPF is that not only do they meet for academic or extra-curricular events, but they also meet and celebrate festivals like Navratri together! When the girls meet at such events they interact with each other and their knowledge expands. Through the UK Peace Ambassador Leadership Project, I notice that the girls don't only get an opportunity to visit a different country and know their culture but also take up social service projects upon their return, which makes them good human-beings and our society a better place to live in.

-Mrs. Sundar Krishnamurthi  
(Mother of Deepa Krishnamurthi, LF-2005)



My daughter is pursuing M.Sc. in Pharmacy from London University. Getting foreign education is not easy for any middle class family. This scholarship thus is an honoured achievement in itself for my daughter. I am proud she is a part of the LPF. This scholarship encourages her to study hard and pursue higher education. Lila Mom and Firoz Dad are not only her mentors but that of our family too. I am confident my daughter's career will take shape as a promising researcher under the guidance of Mom and Dad.

- Mr. Sadanand Belsare  
(Father of Prajakta Belsare, LF-2010)





# I mpressions

*My daughter, Ms. Aparna Bhandar got her LPF Scholarship in 1998 for doing MCM. Since then I have attended every scholarship award ceremony and parent's meet and closely followed their aims and objectives. Supporting and developing needy and talented girls to complete their education is an extremely noble mission. I like the process of selection of the awardees.*

*I read 'Inspira' regularly. The reports, articles and news items therein, on variety of activities keeps me informed on how the Foundation is moving consistently ahead to achieve its goals. I appreciate the Foundation for not only giving financial support to girl students but also providing them many opportunities for personal development. The Foundation takes initiatives in constantly staying in touch with all Lila Fellows and*

*involves them in various activities. Lila Fellows are encouraged to become trainers, faculty and resource persons in various projects initiated by the Foundation. Some LFs are now trustees of the Foundation. This is such a visionary approach! This approach ensures that the Lila Fellows bond together in a big family, now ready to contribute in a big way to the society.*

*I am also impressed by their latest venture of supporting students right from their high-schooling. This approach, am sure will yield better results. I feel there is a need to expand the work in rural area. I am so glad, to get this opportunity to share my thoughts with the readers of 'Inspira' and wish the Foundation all the very best.*

*-Mr. Dattatraya Bhandar  
(Father of Aparna Bhandar, LF-1998)*

*A few years ago when I was pursuing my Ph.D., I came to know about LPF and enquired if I could avail a fellowship for my education. That is when I learned that LPF gives scholarships only to girls and boys were not eligible. Believe me, I was badly disappointed. Then came a time when I got engaged to a Lila Fellow, Harshada! After that I got many opportunities to know the Foundation closely, especially at those events where spouses are permitted! It was then that I realised the need for women's empowerment through education for the upliftment of society. Through my association with the Foundation I learned the need for an impetus in society to eradicate female foeticide and promote their education even in this modern epoch. I believe, the Foundation is the perfect mentor of society, which has the will and the power to change the attitude of this society.*

*My interpretation of 'LILA' is 'Lovely Intelligent Loyal Admirable'.... This is what the fellows are being groomed into becoming at the Foundation and no wonder they will follow the footsteps of Mrs. Lila Poonawalla. I wish this Foundation lots of success in its future.*

*-Dr. Anand Babrekar  
(Spouse of Dr. Harshada Babrekar, LF-2001)*

*Since my wife, Prajakta, has returned from the Leadership Training Programme at Asha Centre, UK, I have experienced her transformation. She has moved on from just listening and understanding, to actually realising and implementing. This unique initiative of the Lila Poonawalla Foundation is definitely a big step towards grooming our nation's women into leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs, just like Lila Ma'am herself. I would sincerely like to request all the parents and spouses to please support this big initiative of the Foundation by encouraging your daughters and wives to volunteer for the PA training programme.*

*-Mr. Abhishek Chaudhary  
(Husband of Prajakta Kuyate,  
LF-2008)*

■ - Compiled by Rita Shetiya



# News Flash

## Footwear initiative...The first "baby step"

While working for the "Joys through Toys" initiative (Sept-December 2012) by my beloved Lila Poonawalla Foundation, I noticed that everywhere we went to donate toys, the children were bare feet! This newfound knowledge saddened me beyond measure. I also realised that not many of us part with our shoes unless they are completely worn-off. Thus, though the kids do receive clothes, food (and now even toys, courtesy LPF), perhaps very rarely must be receiving footwear; also because donating old worn-out shoes/slippers does not really serve the purpose. Buying new ones would require considering several factors (pricing, size, type, etc.)! It took me almost three months to fathom what exactly I wanted to do!



As a LF-2001, I have watched over a decade Lila Mom's and Firoz Dad's ability of giving unconditionally! Plus, various workshops conducted by the Foundation have made me a confident individual ready to take on any challenge with robust planning, logical preparation and appropriate execution. Thus, one day in April 2012, I called up the Chairperson of Aadhar Pratishthan, Mr. Vaibhav to know if his organization would permit me to donate new footwear to labourers' children studying in its' *aanganwadi* being run at a construction site at Kharadi, Pune. I chose this particular site was because I had already visited the site during the toy donation drive and knew that it catered to about 30 school kids (a headcount I was prepared to fend for).

Vaibhav welcomed the idea and narrated a touching story of a 12-year old boy at the *aanganwadi*. One day Vaibhav had caught the boy working at a tea-stall instead of attending school! Of course shocked, Vaibhav asked the

boy why was he not at school. The boy answered that he had bunked school just for that day and would work at the tea-stall for ~10 hours so that at the end of the day he would earn Rs. 30/- so that he could buy footwear for himself.

At that point I knew there was no way anything could stop me now...all hesitation suddenly vanished and all that was left was resolve. I requested Vaibhav to provide me with the footprints of children on paper with their names, genders and ages on them. Vaibhav obliged. One Saturday, I headed to the whole-sale shoe market. The owner and the employees of Royal Shoe Shop were tremendously kind in helping me pick the right footwear for every footprint I had. I proudly left the shop with 32 pairs of shoes, neatly packed

and labeled! On that same afternoon, I went to the *aanganwadi* and distributed the slippers to the kids, who were visibly happy. Their smiles rejuvenated me! The beautiful quote by Maya Angelou "*I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver*" echoed my sentiments at that moment. I will, of course continue to provide more kids with footwear; it is a life-long commitment I have made to myself....and like Winston Churchill said "*Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning*".

■ - Dr. Rupali N. Soni (LF-2001)

(Rupali holds a Ph.D. in Biotechnology and currently works as a Research Analyst at Crest Premedia Solutions Pvt. Ltd, a subsidiary of Springer Publication House, Magarpatta City, Pune)



## Donations...

Mrs. Shruti Suresh Thite  
(LF-2010)

Mrs. Anisha Ameya  
Kelkar (Kurane) (LF- 2007)  
Rs. 10000/-





# Empowered LILA Fellows...

'Shala' (School) has won the National Award for the Best Marathi Film 2011. The movie has also won the Best Screenplay Writer. Our own LF-2000 Devika Daftardar has played a powerful character role in the movie, that of a stern teacher, Bendre Bai. Ritaa and Jyoti caught up with her to know how it felt like being part of a National Award winning movie....

How did you bag this interesting role in *Shala*?

I received a call from the casting director of the movie. Since I had already read and liked the novel *Shala* by Milind Bokil, on which the movie is based, I instantly agreed to take up the role. The debutant director Sujay Dahake has handled the movie very sensitively.

By nature, you are quite tolerant and undemanding, whereas you have enacted the role of the strict and demanding Bendre Bai in the movie. How was this experience?

That is very true. Till date, I have enacted roles very close to my true nature. But, I took up role as a challenge. In order to do justice to any role, I believe one needs to read through the script 5-10 times, study and get into the skin of character with all the idiosyncrasies it demands.

How do you go about selecting any movie role? I prefer not to act in commercial cinema. I usually accept roles in movies that have some message to convey, or are based on well-read novels by critically acclaimed authors and offer me a challenging role.

Speaking about *Shala*... some films have a moral message for the audience and then there are those with which you relate. *Shala* is the experiential type of a movie where each one of us feels we are reliving moments of our school days. I will quote what the protagonist says sitting on the banks of a lake towards the end of the movie....

*"That day I realised, what is the best part of being in school.....*

*There we find classrooms, benches, girls and boys, and teachers,*

*There is mathematics, geography, and even civics...*

*But we have nothing to do with all this .....*

*We are like that white bird that hitches rides on the backs of cows..... free and liberated!*

*Even though physically we are enclosed in the four walls of such a school,*

*A completely different school assembles in our minds, comprising solely of just us....*

*This school has no classrooms, no walls, no blackboards, and no teachers,*

*But its learnings are wonderful !"*



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4. "emi m`hm{Mln0>g\$Kê`XUamAnhoH\$H\$?

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Annē`nVrc àE`b\$OUnZoemi V AgVnzmhogd`AZw`dcoAnho  
"emi m`{Mln0>Vrc ed0A`mAni`r I n H\$hr gnU`OnVnV:

E`m{Xder`cmH\$H\$ncq emi Mr`OmH\$enV AnhoVo..

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J{UV Anho ^jnc Anho AJXr ZnU`aH\$em`i guXmAnho..



Devika as 'Bendre Bai'





# Empowered LILA Fellows...

How does it feel being a part of a National Award winning movie, 'Shala'?

This is not my first movie receiving National awards.... *Nirup* and *Devrai* won national awards too, whilst some of my other movies have received other prestigious recognitions. However, as I said 'Shala' has been handled very sensitively and made very beautifully in a way that everybody identifies with the story, because of which praise for this movie has spread like forest-fire. Award winning or not, it has been great being part of such a movie which touched the heart of every audience!

What are your forthcoming ventures?

Two of my movies, *Ha Bharat Mazha* and *Samhita*, are soon to be released for public viewing. Most importantly, the movie 'Ha Bharat Mazha' is based on the 'India Against Corruption' campaign launched by Anna Hazare. When this movement was launched, each of us had wished to participate in some way for the cause. This was also my intention behind accepting the movie. What is unique about this movie is that the entire crew of the movie, from the director to the actors and from the camera-man to the makeup man, all have done their jobs without any remuneration.

Is there any particular reason that you have stuck to regional movies and not delved into national arena of Hindi stage /cinema?

That's not true. I have enacted the lead role in the Hindi play, *Bed Ke Neeche*. Last year, I also played a prominent character in the Hindi movie, *Baaro Maas*, which has been directed by Sadanand Deshmukh. This movie show-cases the story of a financially debt-stricken farmer and his attempts to rise above his dreary situation. If I am offered such powerful roles in similar movies, I would not mind doing more Hindi cinema.

Whom would you like to attribute your success to?

It is said, 'Behind every successful man, there is a woman.' But I would ascribe my success to the unremitting moral support of my husband, Virendra Valsangkar. In fact, whenever I am out on shoots, he single-handedly manages our home and related responsibilities. He is also my most honest and ruthless critic. This ensures that I give my best to each character I portray. He himself has directed many documentaries and films. We hope to work together in some project in the future.

You have always performed at and supported LPF in its fundraisers. Is there anything else that you would like to do for the Foundation and the Lila Fellows?

Yes, of course. Film is one of the best media for social enlightenment. Many of my films have received national honours and spread social messages. It would be a great idea to screen such films for the Lila Fellows, in the presence of film directors, actors and actresses to orchestrate fruitful discussions about the underlying themes in such films. This will bring out other relevant social issues that need to be publicised through the medium of film in the future.

■ -Compiled by Ritaa Shetiya  
(Translated by Jyoti Otageri)

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7. VİÀ`m`emMol ò VyHñUmcñXVg?

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Rita and Jyoti pose  
with our leading lady,  
Devika

■ eāXññŠZ/\_ñŠUr :-  
{aVm eñf`m, {cbm Všcm - 2005





# Events...

*The Lila Poonawalla Foundation organised a six days training programme (31<sup>st</sup> March to 5<sup>th</sup> April 2012; 9 am to 7 pm) on Transformational Leadership (TL) called "Catalyst- Train the trainers". It was conducted at the perfect venue of the Residency Club, Pune, by the Foundation for Transformational Leadership, UK and the mentors were the Director of the Foundation for TL himself, Mr. Tim Munden and Ms. Ilana Wetzler, Asst. Programme Director (Catalyst).*

Tim, the Director of the Foundation for Transformational Leadership, has been working in Leadership and Human Resource Management for over 20 years. He is the Vice President of Human Resources working with Unilever and has worked in HR for the last 18 years, across a very wide range of business functions and environments. He has worked in the UK, Europe and the USA, in variety of regional and global roles.

Ilana designs, delivers (and trains people to deliver) experiential programmes in transformational & facilitative leadership, that creates upliftment and sustainable change, from the insides as well as outsid es of individuals. She works with organisations, communities and individuals around the world.

During the first two and a half days the participants underwent the Transformational Leadership Programme, and the next three and a half days, we were trained how to serve as 'Catalysts', i.e. become trainers ourselves.

It was not a conventional power-point instructional programme. It was a completely participative and interactive mode of instruction punctuated with several activities. These activities were reviewed after completion to draw learnings very relevant to everyday life situations and our response-abilities to the same. Transformational Leadership was defined as the "awareness to serve everyone for the good of all". The programme revealed how being a good leader also meant being a good follower and a good team-player. The course defined the existence of three types of energies in human-beings which can be created as well as managed to deliver



as per desire. It also defined six types of leadership styles to be used in combination to achieve goals at different time-scales. The experiential training demonstrated how easy it was to convert every conflict into a dialogue and how easy it is not to get judgemental. Without being assessed for strengths and weaknesses, at the end of the 6 day programme, every participant was aware of her positive and negative traits and how they could improvise to further enhance their skills. The programme focussed leadership aspects like self-awareness, social awareness and people-management. It addressed skills like public speaking, team-work, observation, assessment, planning, goal assessment and capturing. The key to transformational leadership is one question asked at every point of decision, viz. "What is needed here?" and the strength is derived from the quote, "If you think you can, or you cannot- either ways you are usually right".

The Foundation had carefully chosen senior Lila Fellows based on their CVs to participate in this programme, with an objective to train these girls to become trainers for the LPF. That's why the programme was called "Catalyst-Train the trainer". At the end of the 6-day training, the fourteen participants who included Mrs. Lila Poonawalla, were awarded a certification to train for the LPF in collaboration with Foundation for Transformational Leadership. These girls are currently in the process of refining themselves as trainers and formulating modules to train other Lila Fellows and offer Corporate Training in Transformational Leadership in the near future.

■ - Rajani Panchang-Dhumal

## Mel Ghat – A Memorable, Lifetime Experience

ॐ KṁQ>- EH\$ gñ\_aUr` AZw^Vr

*On one hand, we claim that the world is shrinking due to globalization. Yet on the other, although children from tribal areas have no access to modern amenities, they spend each new day with utmost merriment. More importantly, whatever their condition, they never shirk from spreading happiness around them. 'Maitri', a Pune-based NGO initiated a movement to educate such tribal children by sending volunteers to teach them. Shraddha Kelkar (LF-2010) is one such volunteer. Inspira brings you her experience in her own words...*

Christmas vacations were to start and I was pre-decided to spend those 10 days with my parents. Just then, a



golden opportunity came my way. NGO 'Maitri' offered me a voluntary position to teach tribal children in the tribal areas of Mel Ghat for 10 days in school. 'To go, or not to go?'- That was the question. Finally, after shilly-shallying, I signed on! We never know what each moment that unfolds in front of us, would bring into our lives. I had never dreamt that the following 10 days would change my outlook towards life. My unforgettable journey began on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2012.

As soon as we reached Mel Ghat, chirpy children full of life welcomed us. I had imagined disciplined school-children in regular uniforms ready for routine. However, the children were in an unusually happy mood, seemingly carefree! We wondered what was wrong. And then, an organiser informed us that every fortnight, on a weekend, the children were allowed to visit their homes. And we had arrived on one such fortnight!

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# Explorer...

Some organisers were accompanying groups of these children to their villages. I decided to join the children of Sakharkhed village. It was a lengthy walk. We kept switching our terrains between fields, forests, foot-trails and some broad roads, until we reached a small hamlet of 15-20 houses, Sakharkhed. The locals call these houses 'padas', which are made from resources obtained from the nearby forests and they all looked exactly the same. We could see three to four hand pumps and there was immaculate cleanliness all around.

When the weekend was over, we had to get the kids back to school. The joy of bringing them back to school obviously was greater than that of accompanying them home. Usually it takes at least a year for these children to develop interest in the school routine and to assume that they would feel comfortable within a month was too much to expect. These children would keep running away from us, thinking, *"These people are here to shut us up somewhere and we have to escape"*. But we cajoled them, coaxed them and when they were convinced, we walked them to school, chatting with them and singing the official jingle for the National Education Mission..... *"School Chale Hum"* (Off we go to school).



It was the chilly month of February. Whilst walking to the playground one morning, I noticed that, of the 40 children, only few had sweaters on them, and even fewer wore footwear. On seeing this, mixed feelings of sympathy, embarrassment and anger welled within me. Sympathy – towards the children walking barefoot on uneven roads, without any warm clothes in the wintry cold; embarrassment – as I was walking snugly clothed in my windcheater, with floaters on, in such an awkward situation; and anger – towards myself, because although I was aware of the situation, I was completely helpless.

In the next 4-5 days I realised that, each child had been sharing his/her footwear with 4-5 others. After a short distance travelled, the child wearing footwear would give them to a barefoot child, who would then give it to yet another child for some stretch of walk. I was amazed at their sensitivity! All those girls and boys were about 8-12 years of age. At this age, we are naturally so possessive about our toys and our belongings. I was left to wonder, at such a tender age, where did these children find the

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sensibility of spreading happiness among others at the cost of their own comfort! I remembered a proverb I had heard during my childhood: "To eat when you are hungry is nature! To snatch food from others when you are hungry is immorality! To give away your share of a meal to another when you are hungry is culture!" I had witnessed this gentleness in these children.

Soon I became comfortable with my routine at school and I would never realize when a day started and when it was over. The time of day that tested my patience was between 9:30am and 12:30pm. How could someone expect these children, who had been schooled by the liberty of the forests, to concentrate within the four walls of a classroom! It was really boring for them to learn the alphabets, numerals, sums, mathematics, etc. After all, children will always remain children and do just what they wished. The children would become restless and inattentive within the first 10-15 minutes of class. Communicating and explaining to them the smallest thing in this situation, was most demanding as well as challenging for us.

Yet, in those ten days, I lived one of the best experiences of my life.

It felt as if the entire world around me was devoid of gadgets and communication, such as clocks, computers, TV, radio, telephones, newspapers, internet, etc., which would otherwise induce competition. Although we were on our toes all the while, with loads of work and haste, our minds always felt calm and composed. It made me realise that despite the absence of amenities that appear to be important necessities, life still does on.

When I had decided to volunteer for this cause, I went there thinking I would be teaching the children there. Instead, it was me who ultimately learned the many lessons of life from these very children. More importantly, I now appreciated that a task performed without expecting anything in return, actually gives us the ultimate satisfaction with which I returned to Pune.

■ - Shraddha Kelkar (LF-2009)  
(Compiled by Ritaa Shetiya)



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# H ealth Capsule...

*Bringing to our readers the gist of the second module of the Health Awareness Workshop, "BREAST AND ALLIED CANCERS IN WOMEN", organized by LPF for LFs, LGs and their mothers. Dr. Shona Nag, surgeon and consulting medical oncologist at the Jehangir Hospital, conducted a session on early breast cancer detection and preventive measures for avoiding its development and aggravation. Dr. Anupama Mane, a breast surgeon at the Sahayadri, Ruby and Jehangir Hospitals was the other invitee, who focused on allied cancers in women and discussed the various tests for cancer detection, as well as cancer treatment.*

The incidence of breast cancer is especially rising in developing countries such as India. Women opting to work out of their homes, late age at first childbirth, fewer children and shorter duration of breast-feeding are some of the reasons for this rise. Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer in all urban areas in India, accounting for 28-35% of all cancers in women in metropolitan cities. This number is expected to double by 2015. In rural areas, this is the second most common type of cancer. According to Dr. Nag, about one million new cases of women-related cancers are detected every year in India. Alarmingly, the average age of developing breast cancer has dropped from 50-70 years to 30-50 years. Although the current mortality rate is 50%, the good news is that most cases of breast cancer are curable, if detected at an earlier stage. Hence, it is essential for all women to be aware of this cancer, understand it properly for early diagnosis and get appropriate treatment in time.

Stressing the lack of awareness about breast cancer in women in India, Dr. Nag talked about how, in the modern times, most of us women, due to busy schedules, find less time to care about our health, and thus, panic when detected positive for breast cancer. Breast cancer induces fears related to loss of body image, sexuality, surgery and death. Dr. Nag informed that breast cancer takes a long time to develop to a stage where it becomes palpable. Hence, if women do not carry out routine breast examination, it may go undetected until it is too late and may require surgery or even lead to death in extreme cases. However, it is also true that chances of developing breast cancer for the Indian women is one in twenty five cases in the urban population, of which less than 5% is hereditary.

According to Dr. Nag, women also need to be aware that not all lumps in the breast are cancerous. Most breast lumps are benign, abnormal growths, which do not spread outside the breast and are not life threatening. BUT such breast lumps can increase a woman's risk of getting breast cancer.

Dr. Nag indicated that there are seven warning signs shown by our body, which are symptoms associated with breast cancer. They are as follows:

1. Change in bowel or bladder habits
2. A lump or thickened part in the breast

3. Unusual bleeding and discharge from one or both breasts
4. Persistent indigestion or difficulty in swallowing
5. An obvious change in moles on the breast
6. A nagging cough
7. Non-healing mouth ulcers

Dr. Nag informed that breast cancer can be diagnosed by a physician and/or through self-examination of the breasts, mammography, ultrasound testing and biopsy. She advised that mammography needs to be carried out by every woman above 30 years of age once in two years, and annually after forty years of age. After fifty years of age, mammography is advised to be done twice a year.

As is the case for most cancers, the exact cause of breast cancer is not clearly known. Furthermore, neither is there currently a cure for this advanced disease, nor is there a definitive way of preventing it. Dr. Nag explained that breast cancer is usually treated with surgery, followed by chemotherapy or radiation, or both. She said that the treatment for breast cancer is quite expensive and so it is better to detect it in an initial stage.

## Breast Self-Examination

Step 1: Begin by looking at your breasts in the mirror with your shoulders straight and your arms on your hips. Check if your breasts are their usual size, shape and color. If you find dimpling, puckering, or bulging of the skin of the breast, any nipple that has changed position or an inverted nipple, or redness, soreness, rash, or swelling of the breasts, these may be symptoms of breast cancer.

Step 2: Now, raise your arms and look for the same changes.



Breast self-exam :  
Manual inspection  
(standing)

With fingertips, close together, gently probe each breast in one of these three patterns.

*contd...*



# H ealth Capsule...

Breast self-exam :  
Manual inspection  
(reclining)

With fingertips, close together, gently probe each breast in one of these three patterns.



Step 3: While you are at the mirror, look for any signs of fluid coming out of one or both nipples (this could be a watery, milky, or yellow fluid or blood).

Step 4: Next, feel your breasts while lying down, using your right hand to feel your left breast and then your left hand to feel your right breast. Use a firm, smooth touch with the first few finger pads of your hand, keeping the fingers flat and together. Use a circular motion, about the size of a quarter.

Cover the entire breast from top to bottom, side to side — from your collarbone to the top of your abdomen and from your armpit to your cleavage.

Step 5: Finally, feel your breasts while you are standing or sitting. Many women find that the easiest way to feel

their breasts is when their skin is wet and slippery, so they like to do this step in the shower. Cover your entire breast, using the same hand movements described in Step 4.

## Allied Cancers of Woman

Besides breast cancer, women are also susceptible to ovarian and cervical cancers, of which cervical cancer is more common. Dr. Mane informed that the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) causes cervical cancer. To enable cervical cancer detection in its early stages, Dr. Mane advised women to undergo the Pap smear test once in three years. Such a kind of cancer is curable with proper medication. Dr. Mane explained that ovarian cancer symptoms may include abdominal and/or pelvic pain and can be detected only by ultrasound sonography.

She added that lifestyle changes, a healthy diet, regular exercise and weight reduction can help reduce the chances of developing breast cancer or allied cancers. However, the most important strategy in improving survival is cancer screening and early detection. There is an urgent need to spread awareness about breast and cervical cancers, as well as screening for breast and allied cancers. Achieving this in society will lead to better longevity as well as quality of life for all.

■ - Jyoti Otageri & Nisha Pandya



# S nippets...



*28 teachers from the 5 schools under the school project were given instructional guidance and training at Hotel Pancharatna*



*103 girls from the 5 schools under LPF's school project '2morrow2gether' participated in 'Art Pitara', the art and craft workshop conducted by LF Rashmi Borole and her husband at the Camp Education Society's Girls High School.*





*Mr. Poonawalla's 75th birthday celebration*



*The team of LGs who underwent the Versatile Soft Skills Training at KPIT*



*Orientation of Lila Girls 2012*



*'The Power of Self-Motivation' by Mrs. Poonawalla & Workshop on Global Warming by LF Jyoti Otageri*



*Thanks-giving Party for the Volunteers of the Parent's Day Celebration at the Residency Club*



# Editors Desk...

Dear Readers,

Inspira has again undergone a makeover, which is here to stay for long. Our Dad (Mr. Firoz Poonawalla) felt the need to make Inspira more reader friendly to its aged readers. In this issue, a couple of articles are bilingual (English and Marathi). This is meant to increase the outreach of Inspira; especially amongst those of our parents who are not well-versed with English. Inspira has been receiving a lot of praise from many of our readers and this only encourages us to serve every section of our readers better.

Mrs. Poonawalla's column has already informed you of the many developments at the Foundation. It is equally rewarding to share with you the recognitions our family members keep earning for themselves. Heralding the list of achievements is the "International Woman Achiever's Award 2012 (Social)" to Mrs. Poonawalla from the Human

Shinde's experience at the "Enhance your Employability" workshop were featured in the news daily Life 365. Not just this, even the release function of our last issue of Inspira was covered by the leading Marathi daily, Pudhari.

Adding to this visibility of our Foundation, our proud "Mom & Dad" added another feather to their cap. The Indian Postal Department released a postal stamp featuring the Role Model Couple of Mr. & Mrs. Poonawalla.



And, as the list of achievements goes on, the next trimester is going to be busy at the Foundation rewarding the Lila Scholars in different categories who have bagged their scholarships in 2012.

Good news within the Inspira team too! Our team Crusader, Nisha tied the wedding knot in June. On behalf



*35th issue of Inspira being released by Mr. Nandkumar Sutar, the editor of the daily, 'Pudhari'*

Achiever's Foundation on World Women's Day. Our new Trustee, Mrs. Gulshan Gidwani also received the award in the field of Education at the same forum. Mrs. Poonawalla also received the "Women Achievers Award 2012" from JSPM (Jayawant Institute of Management Studies) Group of Institutes, in appreciation of her praiseworthy and unequivocal contribution in the field of entrepreneurship and the "ZEAL Leadership Award 2012" in recognition of her being a successful woman in management.

The achievement of our LF Ketaki Desai at the Hult Global Challenge 2012 was covered by the Indian Express. LF Dr. Rupali Soni's individual initiative of donating new shoes to underprivileged children and LF Sushma

of my entire team at Inspira, I congratulate and wish her and her husband a long and happy life together. Our old Crusaders, Sunetra and Harshada have rejoined the team after short breaks, due to developments on their personal fronts.

Please do write in to share your opinions and experiences with Inspira in particular and LPF in general. I look forward to connecting with you all through another power-packed issue of Inspira. Till then, signing off with lots of love and luck,

■ - **Rajani**  
Chief- Editor

(rajanipanchang@gmail.com)

**Chief Editor:** Dr. Rajani Panchang-Dhumal  
**Asst. Editor:** Ms. Jyoti Otageri

**Crusaders:** Ritaa Shetiya, Nisha Pandya, Harshada Babrekar & Sunetra Chaphalkar

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