

Inspira



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(2005)



Vol. No. 16 / July 2005

FROM MY HEART

My Dear Lila Fellows,

As we cross the milestone of having completed ten exciting years of the Lila Poonawalla Foundation, the path traversed seems an unbelievable experience. Tremendous joy. Bountiful happiness. A lot of hard work. Great satisfaction. Some frustrations. New families. Many friends. Some disappointments. All this in the past ten years! Ten years which feel like a moment gone by. It feels like we started the Lila Poonawalla Foundation just the other day.

But when I take stock of what we have done, and the number of lives we have touched, it brings home the magnitude of the work done. In these ten years over 300 young girls have joined the Lila Family. Not only 300 girls, but also 300 new families have created a bond with us. **A Bond, which is forever.**

I am also happy and satisfied (not smug) with how well the Lila Fellows have done. I am proud of your achievements, as I would be when a member of the family does something outstanding and receives a much-deserved pat on the back. You have all groomed yourselves into young ladies. Some of you are married and some have also become mothers. But what is important is that you are all confident, empowered to face the world at your own terms. It is for this reason that I was very committed to pen down the developments in the lives of some of my Lila Fellows. I am indeed very happy that ultimately this has become a reality. The book named "21st Century Belongs to Them" is ready and is being released at the 10th Award function.

One other important development that has brought happiness to me is bringing on board a Lila Fellow as a TRUSTEE. Shaheen Patel (Shaikh). My ultimate goal is that this Foundation, which is of the Lila Fellows, should be totally managed by the Lila Fellows, for the Lila Fellows. Hopefully this will happen in the next couple of decades.

This year we have introduced 10 special scholarships for those girls who with all their hard work have still not been

able to secure a first class in academics due to circumstances beyond their control. All the trustees unanimously agreed that these girls should be given an equal opportunity.

We had a very interesting and an enjoyable experience with nature. Lila Fellows and Trustees got together and with the help of Vanrai, planted over 100 trees. It was a beautiful experience for all of us. With the hard work of planting and watering the plants, we all got real hungry. It was the Pizza Hut brunch that came to rescue. We also had a Madhubani painting awareness program conducted by Mrs. Dongre; some of the Lila Fellows are undergoing a full-fledged course with her. We had Mrs. Preeti Rao VP Infosys Technologies, talk to Lila Fellows about opportunities in the world of emerging new technologies. She also released our 15th issue of Inspira. Lila Fellows took the opportunity to celebrate Mr. Poonawalla's birthday at this occasion, and had a great time enjoying all that the birthday party had to offer.

I take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported the Foundation and made it possible to grow it, and bring it to where it is today. Especially all the Trustees, who have worked with total dedication, the Inspira editorial team, the Lila Fellows who work as volunteers, friends and well wishers. A special thanks to those who have financially contributed to the well being of the Foundation. I am sure all of you will continue your strong association with the Foundation.

Let us together, move ahead to the next decade with the ambition of growing the Lila Poonawalla Foundation, to encompass many more young deserving girls and be a catalyst in changing their lives.

Warm regards

Lila
Lila Poonawalla



SHORT TAKES

A little shy, but a friendly and cheerful child, NEELAKSHI JOG grew up taking care of herself. Rajani Panchang urges this careful Capricorn to spill the beans about what took her so away from Hindustan

Her father is a scientist at DRDO. Neelakshi dreamt of at least becoming a medical doctor. But bad results at the HSC examinations left her completely shattered. This was her first failure in life. She took admission in B.Sc. Microbiology in Abasaheb Garware College, Pune. Because she was dejected she hardly went to classes except to the laboratory



Neelakshi Jog In Her Lab

throughout the first year. Neelakshi had never been a bad student, but neither was she very much into studies. She says, "I was not like those kids who are ever focused as to what to do in life. I always got good grades as Dad was always very strict about it. Even he did not expect these results. He was the one who helped me change my attitude to becoming optimistic. He used to tell me that slowly, steadily and strategically I would move ahead and reach the top some day. I wouldn't be what I am if it weren't for him."

Presently pursuing a Ph.D. in Immunology at University of Louisville, Kentucky.... She aims to be an academician, a professor at the graduate level and work in basic sciences. How did research happen to her? "M.Sc. times were really good. It was basically my Dad and my Professors at Pune University and NARI (National Aids Research Institute, an ICMR Institute at Bhosari) who encouraged me. During M.Sc., I got a bilateral experience; a thesis on lectin production in the department and summer training at NARI where I got introduced to immunology. My supervisor there was very nice. My project was isolating and characterizing an upper respiratory tract bacterium. The whole objective was to introduce us to research as by now, we were quite familiar with the microbiological techniques. My M.Sc. experience taught me where and how to apply what I already knew."

"While finishing my M.Sc. I thought about doing the GRE exam and took it up after a couple of months after completing my Masters. Meanwhile, I got through as a JRF at NCCS on a project- 'Characterization of immune response towards DNS vaccine against HIV infection' with Dr. Bhaskar Saha. After a year I left coz I'd got admission in the United States, directly to a PhD program. I had prepared for my GRE on my own, scored badly but enough to get a fellowship. It covered my stipend, health insurance, and tuition." That fellowship lasted her till 2003. Now she has a pre-doctoral fellowship from the American Heart Association for working on her Ph.D. topic- 'Molecular signaling pathways in neutrophils'.

Comparing the Indian and American education systems she says, "Well, it's really difficult to compare these two. They are completely different systems. The good thing about the schools and professors there is that they trust their students, which is kind of rare in India. There the students get more

independence. They are made to think more, rather than remember whatever they have been taught. Just to give a simple example; in an exam if you write an answer which is exactly opposite to what the professor has in mind but give a logical explanation for your answer, you get the credit although the model/ideal answer is different."

Does she want to return to India? "My mother died in 1996. Dad died in November. So I don't feel I have a reason to come back to India. Only after his death have I realized how much I attached myself to him. It's my biggest loss in life. The best thing to happen to me was maybe 'coming to USA'. My dad had been offered many chances to come to this country which he really wanted to do. He did not want to keep moving around the world thinking it would affect our lives and education. So it was my dream that once I finish my Ph.D. I would get him here, which of course now I cannot."

How did she get associated with LPF? "I learned about LPF from the newspapers and at the Department while doing my M.Sc. II year. We were not filthy rich, but finances were never a problem. It was just a way of reassuring myself and seeing that I was falling short than others, which I realized I was not. LPF was really important for me as it gave me confidence about myself. That was the time I was actually getting serious about my career. My sisters were more talented than I, so I had developed an inferiority complex and LPF helped me get over it. I feel the foundation is working for a noble cause, and wish it all the best. And, yeah, I wish to mention one thing here. When I became a Lila Fellow back in 1998, on my birthday, I got this huge bouquet of roses from the foundation. It was totally unexpected and made me feel really happy. I will never forget that!!"

Neelakshi describes her journey as 'educating'. She is still single not because she does not want to marry but because she feels she has not yet met the 'right guy'. Of her hobbies, painting has got left behind. She likes visiting places, reading and playing the Sitar. When in Pune she had learnt the Sitar for a few years from Ustad Usman Khan. She played at an Indian Student Diwali Function and had her picture in the University Newspaper; the coverage of which we quote, "the audience went crazy over the seemingly impossible skill that Jog displayed".

Does she have a message for all of us? "It's really difficult to give a message like that, but I feel that by just being yourself and taking advantage of what is best in you, will make you successful in life. Aiming at being at the highest position is not bad, but at the same time you have to realize that there is no place which is "the highest". There is always someone who is going to be in a higher position than you. So don't get depressed if you realize that you don't have the ultimate power even after working hard. It's probably not your fault. That's the way the world works!! Try to be at your best rather than being the best in society. According to me, any career is good, if you are really devoted to it. If you are ready to work hard, you can achieve lots of things, no matter what field you choose to work in."

- Rajani Panchang



LIVING LIFE WITH A DIFFERENCE

Whodunit games are favorite childhood memories. But how exciting can such adventures be in real life? Perilous, for sure. For a woman, more so.

SAVVY SONAWANE

is a private detective working at the S.S. Detective Agency. She completed her schooling from Pune and shifted to Mumbai. Along with pursuing Arts in Psychology she appeared for the IPS exam and



Savvy Sonawane the savvy detective

secured a good rank. She also studied law from National College in Mumbai. She is a black belt in karate and a national level kabaddi champion. Since her childhood she read stories of Superman, watched movies of James Bond and was fascinated by Spiderman. She didn't play 'bhatukali' with other girls of her age but she played 'Chor Police' with boys.

When she was in school, her classmate was raped. The victim kept mum as the rapist was from a high-class family. But Savvy with the help of some of her friends found out the culprit and brought him before the Panchayat. These incidents of courage carved the path for her career as a detective.

After passing the IPS exam, she worked as an IPS officer. "I did not continue as an IPS officer as I do not wish to work amidst corruption. While posting or while reporting to a senior person, I experienced it all, so I resigned from the post. After that I joined a multinational investigation company", she reveals. She worked for 3 years before setting up a detective company of her own. "The previous work experience was crucial to start a detective agency. I wanted to be the boss instead of working under one. I took admission for a correspondence detective course from Switzerland. The admission criterion for this 2-year course was first class throughout graduation from either an Arts or Science background. Moreover one needs permission from the Indian Home-Minister for this." So she used all her previous experience and her network and got the permission. "This training program involves one year of rigorous physical training, taking fingerprints, flow of investigation, different laws, and different test cases. These test cases sharpen your brain." One of her test cases is the famous 'Abhyankar Khun Khatla' crime case from Pune. This case helped her learn that there are minute things in cases that one mustn't ignore. "This course gives us the training to think differently. The learning process itself is so different that your brain starts to think in a different way",

she explains. It's been 7 years since she has been working as a detective with the same courage and enthusiasm at the age of 33. "Initially I got some cases from the Police Department. Then I got the cases from 'India's Most Wanted'. And slowly I built up a good clientele that has faith in me. My clients confidentiality is strictly maintained," she says.

Now she has a well-established agency with 17 people working under her, 6 of who are women. Considerable detection goes into even choosing the staff. Savvy's clients include people from all walks of life, right from the film industry to corporate houses down to the common man. How does she solve these different cases? "The Risk factor is high. You have to be alert, courageous and confident in tackling situations. When a detective makes a friend, he also makes an enemy of the person against whom the case is. The cases involve murder, making of duplicate trademarks or logos, making blank-calls, giving 'dhamki' on phones, cyber crimes, enquiry of boy/girl before marriage and extra marital affairs. Face-reading and body-language are the two most important aspects to be considered while solving a case," she unfolds. She has solved more than 1200 cases already. "Some complex cases can take as long as 2 months. But I normally solve a case within 10 days to a month. Once I had donned a false beard and a moustache to procure evidence related to a corporate case. I went to a dance-bar for getting evidence in one divorce case. I had even become 'Bhajiwali' and 'Bhangarwali' to solve different cases of theft and murder. Many times I escaped by the skin of my teeth in attacks on highways while solving a case."

"My job is my hobby. I can't think of anything else. The Latest technology helps immensely in solving cases. Electronic equipment like wireless cameras, hidden cameras and phone devices that prompt us on incoming and outgoing calls, computer systems that can capture the pictures of a person even if it's too dark in a room are a great help."

With branches already in Pune, Delhi and Singapore, Savvy has plans to spread out globally and set up her office in New Jersey as well. She did not get family support but she never gave up. "Every woman should be self-sufficient and independent. Whatever you do check it several times before proceeding. Enquire about the boy/girl before marriage instead of suffering later".

Hats off to this lady who puts her life in jeopardy to make our world a safer place!!

■ - SUJATA DONGRE

POT POURRI

Talk of the radical spirit permeating through our Lila Fellows, here is **UMA KELKAR**, a novel peccadogogue all set to warm your hearts with her earnestness, determination and candor. A hardware engineer with the mettle of steel, she invites you to join forces with her....

Two years of Master's study made me a hardware engineer in the Silicon Valley, a Mixed Signal Designer to be precise or an IO designer to sound cooler. However, during my Master's study, I realized I was behind the rest of the pack because of my own lack of understanding of the basic transistor! 4 years of Instrumentation Engineering had not armed me with this



Uma Kelkar

strong foundation, which undercut any efforts that were being taken by me to improve to be at least at par with my classmates. This mini struggle within me propelled me to devise a way to harness new graduate students with such a fundamental topic. Electronics and hardware design historically have the lowest passing percentages and my classmates from Cummins College of Engineering used to be mortally afraid of these in my college days if my memory serves me right. Thus, classes for Electronic Device and Circuits and its like topics abound, which are overworked with a vast syllabus that they must cover in 2-3 months. Having learnt my favorite transistors from the industry's best, I realized that the xtor (in industry we like to call the transistor this) was not such a fearsome thing if taught clearly, slowly and once. Thus began an effort to get an on-line Cummins Alumni Guidance Center (CAGC) started wherein the batch mates that I had gathered would be able to communicate with students over the web and potentially even have interactive sessions on technical topics or professional etiquette or mentor students for projects. Ever after about a year's pursuance, this idea did not take wings as we, (in the CAGC group) were unable to overcome the hurdle of getting college permissions or support and failed to build a swift communication channel between students and us. It was clear therefore, that to meet my objective, we were to circumvent 'institutes' and have an independent connection with all interested students. A blessing came in the form of a friend who had returned to India after doing his Master's at Stanford. He too had started arranging seminars in VIT with the same intention, viz. making available his clear knowledge to more people. We met, we spoke and it was arranged, that during my next visit, I would conduct a lecture series for 2nd and 3rd year engineering students and early industry electronics aficionados!

Come March 10, 2005, 44 students from multiple colleges and departments showed up in the rented classroom in

IMDR, Pune. I was quite amazed that the on-line registration had even enrolled 1 person from Bangalore! We had to politely inform him that the lectures would be taking place in Pune, putting him at a disadvantage greatly! Of the enthusiasts, I quelled the budding exuberance of people by talking about Device Physics for the first lecture. It was initially demoralizing to most, but this turned out to be a great filter to retain people with real interest and a strong physics background. Given only 6 days to cover x expounding on device physics for any longer was not an option. Six days passed quickly and left both the student and the instructor - myself invigorated. The bunch that stuck around lecture after lecture, ruminated; they made me think, asked pointed questions and learnt! The class was purposely kept interactive and I thank the students for helping me make it one. I handed out lecture notes at the beginning of the lectures as much as possible so that the students wouldn't spend time jotting things down. Students picked up on this style of teaching and by the last lecture when I didn't have handouts ready, demanded them! At the end of the last lecture, students showed much appreciation by getting a huge chocolate cake which we enjoyed over informal introductions. Having a small group indeed helped us to get a bigger piece each!!

I must mention that since I visit my family for 2 weeks once every 2 years, my time comes at a high premium. To let me lecture for 2 hours for 6 of the 13 evenings we were in Pune and to let me prepare for about 2 additional hours every afternoon is a big price they paid and I am indebted to them for that. Not only had that, my husband who is a Mechanical Engineer by trade, attended all my lectures in a show of support. Now he knows when I am trying to pull the wool over his eyes with my electrical engineering lingo! So it came to an end, my hugely satisfying teaching stint in Pune which I very much intend to repeat on my future visits. If anyone has better ideas to help me promote such instruction sessions or would like to volunteer to help us do the ground work in Pune we'd welcome suggestions at ukelkar@gmail.com.

My ideas for setting up an Alumni Center are here-
<http://www.speakeasy.org/~ukelkar/crude/index.html>.
Udayan Kanade, my friend who arranges seminars on other Computer Science and Electrical Engineering related topics maintains all the information here-
<http://www.udayankanade.com>

■ - UMA KELKAR

EVE'S VOICE

DIVYA IYER, the young lass who let her heart rather than her head lead her, is happy tasting, testing and marketing her creations. But its no cakewalk, believes this gourmet chef...

Born in Mumbai and brought up in Chennai in a traditional South Indian family, Divya learnt Bharatnatyam, music, art and culture. Inclined towards painting and the traditional way of cooking food which was served in her family, she followed her heart.



Divya Iyer in her office

A topper at school, she completed her schooling from the CBSE board in Chennai and stood state first in Tamil in SSC. Her high marks in SSC, could easily have got her into Science or Engineering, but Divya wanted to plunge into whipping, blending and grilling. Whats that? The sound of pots and pans! Her parents completely supported her. At her mother's suggestion she enrolled for Home Science at SNDT, Pune. This brought Divya to 'amche Pune' and she began living a hostel life away from her family. She says, "The sudden change in lifestyle was initially horrifying... Moreover, I didn't know Hindi/ Marathi at all. My friends and Professor Dhonake helped me overcome the language fear and taught to me how to deal with a new language. The then Principal of SNDT, Mrs. Frenny Tarapore earned the love and respect of the staff and students. I remember she use to personally write remarks on my report."

In her first year of college, she participated in several extra co-curricular activities like speech, quiz, drawing, organizing cookery exhibitions, fashion shows and the youth forum. In the second year of college she took up specialization in Dietetics and Food Service Management, which was nerve-racking and involved a lot of Chemistry. "I worked on spices and herbs as a part of a project at Provin Masalewale in Pune, besides assisting in the website development for the same project. B.Sc taught us various subjects. We visited several food industries, learnt mass cooking and preparing numerous dishes, and selling them too", says the plucky gal. She stood first in BSc in SNDT and 2nd in Maharashtra and Gujarat state. Wanting to court the love of her life- food - she got an MSc seat in Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai.

At this time her father took retirement from the post of CEO in Bharat Gauge Ltd., wanting to serve society. "It was not that my father could not afford my fees but it would not have been possible for him to serve and work for the society which was his dream. It was then that I applied for the LPF scholarship for MSc and also received one from Nirmala Niketan. I really thank Lila ma'am who helped me to perform better. I was able to concentrate on my Masters programme".

"MSc at Nirmala Niketan was an experience in itself-the hard work, research oriented professors, visiting slums to teach those folk about food and health, exposure to all national and international programs, visiting hospitals and restaurants. I had taken Foods, Nutrition and Dietetics as my specialization and worked in Tata Cancer Research Institute's Advanced Center for Treatment, Research and Education in Cancer (ACTREC) as a part of a sponsored project for 'comparative analysis of polyphenol content of three brands of green tea' in Mumbai. I also worked on a sponsored project for my M.Sc. dissertation on 'antioxidant and anticancer properties of tea' in the same institute between the years 2001 and 2003. MSc was hectic, grilling and put me to test, which actually made me tough.

She states, "After MSc, I got admission for Phd, but I never wanted to settle abroad. Suddenly I did not feel good about what was happening. My parents being very supportive didn't press me on, so I decided to put a full stop to research and help my mother's friend, Mrs. Kasbekar, who owned a catering business-Corporate Caterer. It was a challenging job. I took care of everything right from marketing, organizing, and value addition to recipes and incorporation of nutrition in the catering industry. I was also consulted on the complete set up and market of SMS café."

Currently Divya is working as a freelance consultant to software companies, caterers, restaurants, social institutions and individuals. She also organizes and prepares various menus, demonstrations and buffets for Seva foundation, Hermes health line and the Surya Shakti gym in Pune. She is presently associated with the international group Quest International the principle of which is, 'Money should be used in the right way.' It is about learning the business aspects of banking, finance, technology etc. She was recently invited to Dubai by the Quest group.

Divya loves Maharashtrian food. She likes all the traditional ways of cooking, various dishes. She believes in the cultural and traditional way of cooking and mentions that everything has a reason; the ancient way of cooking was very scientific, which states **Let food be your medicine**.

Sharing her vision with us she says, "2/3 years down the line I would like to start some food business or own a restaurant or an institution to promote and teach the Indian dining etiquette." She advises Lila fellows never to give up as whatever happens, happens for the best and to 'listen to their bodies'.

That's some 'healthy' advice. Keep 'whipping and dishing out' your best!

■ - Sunetra Chaphalkar

LEADING LADY

A tough, determined, brilliant conversationalist and armed with the weapon of service is Mrs. MANGALA KADAM, mayoress of Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation. SUNETRA CHAPHALKAR meets up with this successful politician who has carved her path and defined her own success.



Mrs. Mangala Kadam interacts with LF-Sunetra

Mrs. Mangala Kadam completed her schooling in Pune from Renukaswarup Bhawe School. She was an excellent Kabaddi player in school. Sports nurtured her leadership skills, firmness and helped her immensely in politics. She got married to Mr Ashok Kadam at the age of 16 and came into a family of renowned politicians. With the constant support from her family, she entered the family business of construction. She proudly states, "I was the only woman in this field of construction, transport business and especially truck transport which was hitherto never handled by women. I started by own sand business and supplied sand to other construction companies. This business got me in contact with different people that helped me understand people management".

Simultaneously, with constant egging from her family, especially children, she entered politics in the year 1992 which was the first time when reservation for women was declared. "Entering into politics was never on my agenda," she smiles. She was elected as a corporator for Chinchwad. As she had a political backing after marriage and an urge to serve the society, people accepted her very soon.

Politics as a career

The mayoress believes that Politics cannot be a 'career'. It is a hobby where a person wants to serve society. It is a social responsibility of giving back something and serve the weaker sections. "I believe you *should first be financially settled so that you can think of others' future*. You should be firm to get into politics as you *are dealing* with hundreds of different people who will try to *discourage* you from your objective. Qualified women should *avail* of the opportunity of women's reservation and enter into politics, as women, I think, can manage the society very well if they are determined. They should have a proper hold on situations so as to get the work done."

A Woman as a Boss

"I have somehow faced no problems on this front and have been easily accepted. It all depends upon how you portray yourself. I don't expect to be treated differently just because I am a woman. If you carry yourself as a 'human being' and

are working towards the common objective of serving society, I don't think people will treat you differently."

Her Contributions

Our leading lady has worked hard for the emancipation of women. She has encouraged widow schemes and other PCMC corporation courses for women like driving, stitching, beauty courses, cooking, and interior decoration so that women's financial dependence on others is done away with. She was felicitated with the "Mahila Shiromani" award at the hands of Mrs. Vimala Sharma (wife of the ex-president of India, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma). This is a social work award, which was given for the work done for women. She admits that this award inspires us to take on more responsibility for the society. She has also worked as a president of the women's unit of the National Congress party (NCP), PCMC wherein she strived for women's welfare. Being the first woman president of NCP, she had a great deal of pressure and responsibilities. Elected as a corporator for the second term from ward 2 as a NCP candidate in 2002, was a boost. "My children have supported me in growing up and facing the challenges."

Mayor of PCMC

She was elected to the prestigious post of 'Mayor of PCMC' on 18th Feb 2005. As Mayor of Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation she initiated the development of the MIDC area, employment opportunities, business loans etc. Presently, she is also the Chairperson of the All Maharashtra Mayor Council.

On her Agenda

The first citizen wants PCMC to become developed to such an extent that the citizens living there will find everything in this place itself, for which presently, they have to travel all the way to Pune city. She explains, "PCMC, MIDC has many industries. I aim to make provisions for employment, develop good colleges and Institutes, shopping malls, a cricket stadium, excellent infrastructure, entertainment centers, science and industrial exhibitions. I want to bring about these remarkable changes in PCMC in my tenure and see this happening very soon." She is also working on uniting housewives and giving them business loans so that they can prepare and sell household articles. "I look forward to creating a market for them where they can sell their products."

As a person

She is a person who likes to talk to people, understand their problems and work out solutions. Despite her exhausting schedule she makes it a point to have meals with the family. Also exercise is her priority as is traveling and her love for nature. An admirer of our Lila ma'am, she says, "I thank her for the great work she is doing for girls. At this age also she has kept herself so fit and enthusiastic and it is something that all of us should learn" (We sure agree with you on this, ma'am!)

Advice to Lila fellows

"Each woman should strongly support at least one woman to empower her and help her to move ahead. To do this, higher education is a must. There should be a sense of responsibility to return to society what it has given us. Give proper guidance to those who need it. Take efforts to become true Lila fellows. I wish you all the best in the future."

- Sunetra Chaphalkar



LF celebrating Mr. Poonawalla's Birthday



Preeti Rao - VP Infosys Technologies releasing 15th issue of Inspira

Down Memory Lane... SNIPPETS



Mrs. Frenny Tarapore and the LFs busily indulged in tree plantation



The LFs volunteering for the 10th award function



The trustees engrossed in discussion during evaluation of the new applicants



Lila Fellows at Madhubani painting workshop conducted by Mrs. Maya Dongre

Acknowledgement



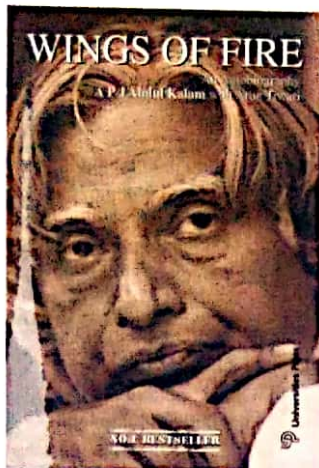
Sonia Thadhani
(daughter of LPF Trustee
Maya Thadhani)

Friend and well wisher of the Lila Poonawalla Foundation has generously donated US \$ 1000 on the special occasion of 10th year of the foundation. We really appreciate this gesture and wish her well.



LPF posing for a pic after savouring pizzas on the way back from the tree plantation drive

BOOK REVIEW



Name of the Book
WINGS OF FIRE

An Autobiography
A P J Abdul Kalam with
Arun Tiwari

Publisher
Universities Press

Price : Rs 250/-

"We all are born with a divine fire in us, our efforts should be to give wings to this fire, and fill the world with its glow of its goodness."

-President A.P.J. Kalam

True to its meaning the book portrays Kalam's life, what zest for life is all about, a thought that gently cascades deep down, inspiring and nurturing all that is kind, gentle, compassionate and sincere in

human nature. Humble beginnings, hard work, persistence, and above all a passion for life and all things that are possible in it, are all well described in the book.

The book is split into different phases each depicting varied faces of his life: Orientation, Creation, Propitiation and Contemplation, each phase highlighting thought-provoking intensions - pioneering success of the Satellite Launch Vehicle (SLV-3), Agni and related missile programmes- a trip through adventure, failure, thought... and finally the success!!

An engineer, an innovator, an inspirer, a mentor of courageous colleagues, and a builder of teams and institutions, Dr. Kalam's life has been most selflessly devoted to his country, and has been rewarded most deservedly, with the highest civilian award of the country - The Bharat Ratna. The book also goes beyond biography, and serves as an excellent practical tool to management of not just one's profession, but people and life.

■ - Vanita Kriplani

YOURS TRULY

She is charming, alluring and enticing! Inspira is Sweet Sixteen!! That she has metamorphosed into a cult figure is evident from the feedback we receive. It has augmented our enthusiasm for which we thank our readers. Prachi's elucidation on 'dressing up right', Manjusha's stand on the environment and Rajani's detailed de-construction of the disastrous tsunami have secured applause that is well deserved. (*No surprise, our girls are in their element at their calling!*) The hazards for a lady detective, LF Uma Kelkar's lecture and Neelakshi Jog's journey to her dreams, are just a slice of the spectrum we offer you in this issue. I'm sure this will inspire, fascinate and motivate as will our special collection in the 10th year special supplement, which is an engrossing collection of the best work of our team.

Inspira has engulfed the keen trio, Pradnya, Vanita and Vandana in its assiduous team, which also welcomes the new Lila Fellows. We now have the choicest assortment all in one family! From language to the arts to the laboratories, each year the LPF incorporates the felicitous rare specimens after acute scrutiny.

The good work doesn't stop there. The LPF has left no stone unturned into chiseling the Fellows into masterpieces. Over a decade, the emery of personality development sessions, art workshops, educational tours, dining etiquette programmes has become endemic. That is the LPF hallmark! (*We swell with pride of our clan. It has given us enough reason to. To attest this, read what some of our leading ladies have to say in the special supplement. I needn't say more. Our work is our identity.*)

Relentless handiwork has gone into the shaping of the epoch of LPF's history. Today is the moment of exultation for us. Come, join the LPF bandwagon. The curtain is up again! Encore! Encore!

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For Private Circulation only

Printed & Published by : Lila Poonawalla Foundation S-37, MIDC, Bhosari, Pune - 411 026 Tel : 20-27110370

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