



Highest point in West Bengal.

Message from the Chairman's desk



Dear Fellow Members:

As the chairman of Garden State Cultural Association for this year, it is my privilege to wish you all a peaceful, safe and joyous summer. All of us went through a rough winter this year and now the time has arrived for vacation, gardening, bar-be-cue etc.

GSCA has come a long way from its inception. Started by a handful of highly spirited Bengalis, today our member list occupies several pages. While new members are bringing new ideas with their expertise of technology and modern organizing skills, veteran members are always behind them for guidance in the right path, which reflect growth and progress of our organization.

In addition to organizing events throughout the year including Durga Puja with colorful cultural programs of superior quality and other commendable recreational activities, GSCA is also extending its hand in community services.

With the help of its generous members, GSCA has participated in charity work in several recent natural calamities to help people in disaster, donated funds for a local temple construction etc.

Our goal for this year is to continue the charity work in local community. Our dedicated volunteers are already spreading words to the members for food and clothing drive to take place in this summer and fall. During Holidays, we plan to take part in soup kitchens for the underprivileged people of the society. There is an initiative for organizing blood donation by the members. Scholarship funds in alignment with GSCA missions and goals are planned to be introduced in certain schools of Middlesex County.

The picnic will be on July 17 at Mercer County Park, Princeton- a change in location from the past years. This newsletter should be in your hands by this time.

GSCA members participated in Tagore's 150th birth anniversary celebration on May 14 at Rutgers University organized by Cultural Association of Bengal. GSCA members also performed at NABC Baltimore on July 2.

While we welcome a significant number of new members in our association, we must remember the dedication and hard work of the founding members who built this organization and it is a responsibility for us, the Board of Trustees, to connect the new members with them.

I extend my sincere appreciations to my fellow Board of Trustees and all the committee members for their meticulous planning, hard work and dedication in GSCA events.

Together, let us make this year another success for GSCA.

- **Tapas Sanyal, Chairman, GSCA**

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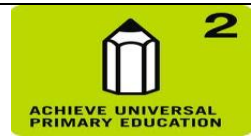



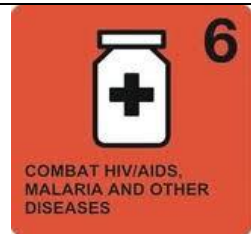


Upcoming GSCA events:

1. GSCA Blood Donation drive – Lawrenceville – August 7, 2011
2. India Day Parade – Oak Tree Road – August 14, 2011
3. DURGA PUJA – Plainfield High School – October 1 & 2, 2011

Millennium Development Goals: At a Glance

By Adityadeb Sanyal (Riju)

The United Nations developed eight Millennium Development Goals (MDG's) in 2000 to reduce extreme poverty by 2015. These goals are outlined below along with key facts and some countries' successes to date.

	Key Facts	Country Progress
 <p>1 ERADICATE EXTREME POVERTY AND HUNGER</p>	<p>→ The proportion of people living in extreme poverty in developing countries has dropped from 46% in 1990 to 27% in 2011.</p> <p>→ India contains the world's largest hungry population though it is one of the top food grain producers.</p>	<p>→ Brazil's program Fome Zero launched in 2003 has halved hunger largely due to free school meals.</p> <p>→ Vietnam's investment in sustainable agriculture helped halve the number of underweight children from 1991 to 2006.</p>
 <p>2 ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION</p>	<p>→ 69 million children are not in school, down from 106 million children in 1999. Net enrollment in developing regions is 89%.</p>	<p>→ In Tanzania, primary school enrollment rose to 99.6% due to the abolition of public school fees.</p>
 <p>3 PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND EMPOWER WOMEN</p>	<p>→ Women make up half the world's population, but 70% of the poor.</p> <p>→ Women produce 60-80% of food in developing countries, but own less than 1% of the world's land.</p>	<p>→ In 2008, Rwanda elected a majority of women to parliament, the highest in any country.</p>
 <p>4 CHILD MORTALITY REDUCTION</p>	<p>→ The highest rates of child mortality are in sub-Saharan Africa, where 1 in 7 children die before age 5.</p>	<p>→ 2 new vaccines for pneumonia and diarrhea, the 2 biggest killers of children under 5, will be introduced this year.</p>
 <p>5 IMPROVE MATERNAL HEALTH</p>	<p>→ In Bangladesh, 91% of births occur outside of hospitals.</p> <p>→ In sub-Saharan Africa, 1 in 30 mothers die during pregnancy.</p>	<p>→ In Rwanda, the skilled birth attendance rate has increased from 39% in 2005 to 52% in 2008.</p>
 <p>6 COMBAT HIV/AIDS, MALARIA AND OTHER DISEASES</p>	<p>→ 2/3 of HIV/AIDS-infected live in sub-Saharan Africa.</p> <p>→ Access to HIV medication has increased, reducing AIDS-related deaths by 20% since 2005.</p> <p>→ Malaria, a thousand-year old disease, is responsible for 20% of childhood mortality.</p>	<p>→ Antiretroviral therapy to avert mother-to-child HIV transmission has reduced infections in children in Botswana by 80% since 1999.</p>
 <p>7 ENSURE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY</p>	<p>→ For each 1°C rise in temperature due to global warming, rice yields are expected to decline by 10%.</p>	<p>→ Small farmers and peasants in Costa Rica lobbied the government to protect rainforests to avoid the emission of 11 million tons of carbon.</p>
 <p>8 A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR DEVELOPMENT</p>	<p>→ Development aid to countries is 0.31% of the budgets of developed countries. This assistance is vital for disaster relief, food aid, and vaccines.</p>	<p>→ The largest aid donors are the U.S., U.K., France, Germany, and Japan.</p>

Travelogue: A trip to the Death Valley

By Monalisa Chakraborty

Death Valley National Park is one of the most beautiful and adventurous places in the country for nature lovers. The name, Death Valley, is gloomy and scary but there is no dearth of beauty in there. It is a superlative desert with mesmerizing sand dunes, snow-capped mountains, multicolored rock layers, canyons and 3 million acres of wilderness. In spite of the name, Death Valley, it is full of life with over 1000 species of plants and over 400 species of animals that live within the park.

Where is Death Valley?

Death Valley covers 3 million acres of land and spans across two states California and Nevada. It is a short 2-hour drive from Las Vegas.

Why is it called Death Valley?

It got its forbidding name from a group of travelers who lost few of their members here in the winter of 1849-1850. Since a few people had died here, they all assumed that this valley would be their grave, which is not so. It is however true that it is the land of extremes - hottest, driest, lowest point in North America. Summer temperatures often exceed 120 deg F with overnight lows dipping only into the 90s deg F. Average rainfall is less than 2 inches, a fraction of what most deserts receive.

Why is Death Valley so dry and hot?

The dryness is created by a geological effect called "rain shadow effect". Four major mountain ranges lie between Death Valley and the ocean, each one adding to an increasingly drier rain shadow effect. By the time the clouds reach the mountain's east side they no longer have as much available moisture, creating a dry "rain shadow". The depth and shape of Death Valley influence its high temperatures. The valley is a long, narrow basin 282 feet below sea level, yet is walled by high, steep mountain ranges. The dry air allows sunlight to heat up the desert surface. Heat radiates back from the rocks and soil, and then becomes trapped in the valley's depths.

The amazing sand dunes:

We visited Death Valley to experience the stark and lonely vastness of the valley; the panorama of rugged canyons and mountains. It was 100 deg F on the day we reached Death Valley - and it was only spring which is one of the best times to visit the park. The park is inaccessible in summer because of the unbearable heat waves. When we entered the park it seemed like we are in a different planet surrounded by breathtaking wilderness; we felt like we are in an outdoor natural museum. We had already reserved our lodge inside the park at the foothills of the mountains, overlooking the sand dunes. After checking in, we went to the sand dunes. It was a magical experience to watch the sand dunes during sunset. The beautiful natural landscape of the sand dunes and dim sunlight during dusk complemented each other to create the most picture-perfect view one can ever see. There was a slice of heaven right in front of our eyes!

The canyons, volcanic mountains and Artist's palette:

Next morning, we did some hiking to see the golden canyon that has a gorgeous golden shine to it. We also drove thru the scenic route called Artist's drive. This is a stunning drive thru the multi-hued volcanic hills. The amazing colors on the hills make it look like an artist's palette. After that we headed to Devil's golf course that is a huge area covered with rock salt that has eroded and formed incredibly serrated area where only the devil could play golf! After this we visited other significant viewpoints of the park. There's a massive area of salt flats that creates a surreal landscape called Badwater basin. It is the lowest place in North America and one of the lowest places in the world at 282 feet below sea level. The most wonderful panoramic view can be seen from a mountain-top overlook that's 5000 ft. high called Dante's view. The park's most famous viewpoint is Zabriskie point which provides a spectacular view of vibrant colors and varied landscapes of the surrounding volcanic mountains.

Our trip to Death Valley was an amazing experience; the striking views of colorful volcanic mountains, canyons and scenic vistas will remain in our mind forever. It was a worthwhile exploration of wilderness in the land of extremes.

Pictures of Death Valley



GSCA Essay Competition Runner-Up – SENIOR Category
Achieving World Peace if I was the most powerful woman on earth
By Amrita Majumdar

World Peace is not a very simple dream that can be achieved through the willpower of a single man or woman. It is a dream that requires much more effort and understanding. If I were to go about an effort to achieve world peace, I'd have to say that there is no peace that we cannot achieve without empathy and understanding.

We live in a world where every individual is unique; having different dreams, different values, and different ways to go about fulfilling them. For example, people around the world live their lives in different ways. Sometimes so different that it is nearly impossible to completely understand the opposing side. A man in America living his life as a free man would find it hard to imagine the life of a man living under the oppressive regime of a government like China. Thus, peace between these two men would be nearly unimaginable since they can hardly understand themselves, let alone the other's needs and wants.

Similarly, we might find ourselves reluctant to acknowledge the values and beliefs of a religion that is not as familiar as our own. For example, countries in the Middle East who are completely surrounded by countries who share similar religions, similar lives, and similar governments, find a world like ours outrageous in more ways than one. Can we then expect ourselves to value and respect their culture if they can not respect ours and vice versa?

To find peace, we must find a balance between the dreams of different people, their values, their religion, their needs, and their wants. As Articus Finch from "To Kill A Mocking Bird" said, "You cannot understand a man until you climb into his skin and walk around in it." In the same way, even if we find it difficult to understand those around us, until we convince ourselves to, we may never come to peace with the world because world peace is not a peace that should be forced upon the world, but a peace that we must enforce within ourselves. Only then can we begin to understand those around us and accept their views as our own.

GSCA Essay Competition Runner-Up – JUNIOR Category
Talking with President Obama in the White House
By Anushka Chakraborty

"Hello!" I said. Here I was face to face with the President himself. "Hello," he said back in a deep voice with a friendly tone. "I have come to talk to you about how me and kids my age can help make the world a better place." "An Excellent topic" he said, grinning broadly. "Come let's sit down and talk this over".

"Why don't kids my age recycle and reuse to reduce the amount of trash thrown away in landfills?"

"That is a great start," he assured me. "You can begin by spreading that around in signs and actions in your school and neighborhood."

I nodded, eager to hear more. . After all he was my role model and I looked up to him. "Another thing I would like to talk about is animal cruelty" He nodded. "So many innocent animals die every day because of mistreatment by their owners."

President Obama asked, "How do you think you, as a student, can change that?"

I pondered for a moment. How could I change that? "Well, I guess I can volunteer to help out in shelters with my friends sometimes, or even see if it's possible to foster or adopt."

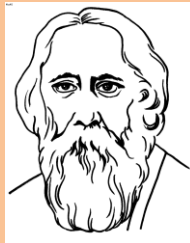
"But what about the elderly and needy?" I faltered for a second. I didn't like to see people hurt or troubled. "What do you think you can do?" he asked. "I can volunteer to help at a nursing home and during food drives at school, I can donate canned foods. Hey! Maybe I can start a food drive of my own in my neighborhood." He smiled. "Brilliant ideas can be sparked from anything. You didn't need me to figure these things out, you just needed someone to ask you what you can do." He paused. "Even people as young as you, if they are determined can make a lasting impression in this world. Step by step, you will be this much closer to changing the world, for good."

A Photographic Presentation of GSCA past events

Tagore Festival 2011 (New Jersey)



Tagore's 150th Birth Anniversary Celebration



GSCA celebrated Tagore's 150th Birth Anniversary with several other organizations in New Jersey organized by Cultural Association of Bengal on May 14, 2011, at Nicholas Music Center and Mastrobuono Theater of Rutgers University. The festival commenced with "Briksha Ropan" ceremony, an open-air program with dance and songs by performers of the local community followed by group performances of several local organizations as well as captivating performances by overseas artists. GSCA members delivered a spectacular performance in "Western Influence on Tagore Songs" a collage of Tagore songs, dances and readings. The quality of GSCA program reflected the hard work of the team in planning and rehearsals.

GSCA volunteers demonstrated remarkable teamwork in areas of stage and hall management, collection of donations, reception desk, role of master of ceremony etc. GSCA Youth Members volunteered as ushers and assisted in stage management. Two senior members of GSCA were invited in the lamp-lighting ceremony of the inauguration event at the courtyard along with several other senior members of the community.

- **Contributed by Tapas Sanyal**

RECIPE: Shrimp Scampi

by Lipika Mukherjee from www.AllRecipes.com



(pictures above are not authentic...just representations of the recipe)

Ingredients

- 1 (8 ounce) package angel hair pasta
- 1/2 cup butter
- 4 cloves minced garlic
- 1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley

Directions

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Stir in pasta and return pot to boil. Cook until al dente. Drain well.
2. Melt butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Stir in garlic and shrimp. Cook, stirring constantly, for 3 to 5 minutes.
3. Stir in wine and pepper. Bring to a boil and cook for 30 seconds while stirring constantly.
4. Mix shrimp with drained pasta in a serving bowl. Sprinkle with cheese and parsley. Serve immediately.

Nutritional Information

Amount Per Serving Calories: 533 | Total Fat: 26.5g | Cholesterol: 235mg

Poem: Things To Do

By Ishani Sanyal

*Read my pages day by day,
Figure out the mysteries that lay before you,
Fight over who gets me and who doesn't,
Tear my pages or even throw me in a puddle,
Ruin it for other people wanting to read me,
Enjoy getting a band-aid for the paper cuts I give,
Leave me alone with the other books in your room,
Forget about me until a day or two,
Put me on the shelf to rest for the night,
Remember to read me again.*

GSCA Essay Competition Second Runner-Up – JUNIOR Category

My Life As A Dollar Bill

By Sreyashi Ghosh

A large hand picked me up. Then passed me to another hand and I heard someone explain, "Thanks for the money, Jack!" I was slipped into a pocket, at least I thought it was a pocket--it was a dark oval shaped cloth compartment with an open top.

About a minute passed when something big slammed into where I was being kept. Before I knew it I flew out of the pocket and onto the floor. My back hurt and I wished I had hands to rub it.

I lay there staring at the ceiling for what seemed like an hour. Then a kid, about ten years old, came and picked me up. He smiled and put me in a bag. Bump! Bump! Bump! I was jolted up and down. Then a hand reached into the bag and pulled me out carelessly and shoved me into a box with other dollar bills like me.

The bill under me yelled out, "Get off of me or I'm going to die of suffocation." I tried to move up a little but couldn't do it. "Sorry," I said to him. The box was stinky and just as I was going to puke a hand lifted me out and put me on a table. A man opened the window in the room and the cool breeze lifted me up and carried me out into the open world.

"Hey, come back here!" called the man but it was too late. He waved his fist and shouted something that I couldn't hear. I was too far away. Suddenly I was dropped on the sidewalk as the wind died down.

Woof! "Charlie, come here boy!" The brown dog picked me up in his mouth and carried me along. Suddenly pain shot through me as the dog bit into me. "Hey boy, what do you have there," a boy asked as the dog wagged his tail at him and dropped me in his hand.

"It's a dollar bill! Cool, now I can buy some candy at the candy shop," he exclaimed while clutching me tightly in his hand and running towards a huge building. I assumed it was the candy shop.

Then a little girl ran up to him and snatched me away from him with her grubby little hands and tore me in half. "Nooooooo..." I screamed but my life just ended as I saw her tearing me to bits. That was the end of me!

Bengali Calendar 1418

(March to May 2011)

July (Ashar-Shrabon)

15th --- Guru Purnima
17th ---- Sabebarat

August (Shrabon-Bhadra)

9th --- Jhulon Yatra
13th -- Rakhi Purnima
31st --- Id-ul-fitr

September (Bhadra-Aswin)

1st -- [Ganesh](#) Chaturthi
18th --- [Biswakarma](#) Puja
27th --- Mahalaya

October (Aswin-Kartik)

2nd -- Durga Shasthi,
Gandhi Jayanti
3rd --- Durga Saptami
4th --- Durga Ashtami
5th --- Durga Nabami
6th --- Bijaya Dashami
11th --- Laxmi Puja
26th --- Kali Puja
28th --- Bhatri Ditiya,
Bhaiyaduj

More in the next issue...

NABC 2011 (Baltimore, MD)



GSCA at “Banga Sammelan” (NABC 2011, Baltimore)

-Contributed by Arundhati Sanyal

For the first time since its inception, members of GSCA took a show they have conceived, directed, choreographed, and performed to the larger national (and international) forum of NABC at Baltimore. The program titled, “Amra Sabai Raja” was staged on Saturday, July 9 2011 at the spectacular “Sona Toree” stage of the Baltimore Convention Center at 3.00 PM. The performance included a collage of folk and popular songs from Bengal that focused on rural working and professional life of artisans, farmers, palki-bearers, wood-cutters each song emphasizing the joy of life and dignity of labor that marks the world of simple people enjoying their chosen livelihoods. The songs were performed live on stage accompanied by music and percussion. There was also a spectacular dance performance that worked in tandem with the songs and illustrated the narrative within the song lyrics. The entire songs and dances were held together with narratives explaining and introducing the songs. There was quite a substantial audience present and the response to the show was universally positive and warm.

The following is a list of directors and performers who were mostly members of the organization.

Overall direction: Mahua Bose

Dance Choreography: Tilottama Bose

Script and Narration: Biswajit Sengupta

Singers: Biswanath Majumder; Tamal Roy; Kakoli Sinha; Sucharita Das; Archita Roy; Anindita Das; Jayeeta Adak.

Dancers: Sutapa Bhattacharya; Sandipta Mukherjee; Rima Sarkar; Anindita Dey; Patralekha Bhattacharya; Rinku Dutta; Shubhendu Dutta; Anish Roy; Avi Dutta ; Srishti Bose; Ishani Sanyal; Alicia, Sharanya, Neel and Prisha.

Musicians: Debashis Basu; Jayanta Das; Narayan Roy; Alak Mitra

Light: Mimi Sengupta

Narrators: Biswajit Sengupta; Arundhati Sanyal.



End Quote:

“I am only one, but I am one. I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do interfere with what I can do.”

- Edward Everett Hale

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