Dear Members,

To commemorate 100 years of Visakha Vidyalaya, the VVOGA is preparing to bestow a new building for the school as a meaningful centenary gift.

We have initiated this project primarily to provide adequate classrooms to the primary school as currently, the Grades 3 to 4 are located within the senior school. Once the project is completed, these Grades will be housed within this building. It will also have a pavilion on the ground floor.

The EXCO is brainstorming a name for the building and suggestions are most welcome. Please direct your suggestions to the joint secretaries with your contact details.

The project cost is estimated at Rs. 45 million. The EXCO welcomes donations from members and well-wishers to support this mammoth task and the names of donors of Rs 200,000/- or above will be displayed on a plaque on the building facade.

We once again invite the general membership to join hands in making this endeavour a grand success!

Joint Secretaries
Renuka Dharmadasa  0777289389
<renukadhrmadasa@yahoo.com>

Darshi Neelawathura Bandara  0773084142
<darshi@adshop.lk>
We tend to accumulate more and more as we go on advancing in life and time. Yet, since we rarely deploy an exit policy for the things that seem to collect in our homes and hearts, we find ourselves stuck in clutter, physically and mentally.

Having more on our plate than we can handle in terms of chores, responsibilities, expectations, household duties and items, peer and family pressure, attachments and choices, our lives are sandwiched between the past and the future.

As days add to our life’s journey, more loose ends, twists and turns appear as life after all is not the perfect picture book of our childhood or the adolescent day dreams. So clutter becomes the norm of our lives with the material essentials and non-essentials that we collect, and the mental baggage that we tag along with each passing day, week, month and decade.

Clutter creates chaos and de-cluttering requires discipline. A trick to de-clutter physically is to employ a strategy to donate or throw away one thing at a time. Provided you get started straight away, you will be less 365 things in a year from now.

Once started, it can turn out to be an amusing pastime in itself to decide on what to give away each day and might work wonders as a New Year resolution. On the other side of the coin, what you may take for granted and cast aside nonchalantly could be a rare treat to a less fortunate soul.

Physical clutter leads to stress they say, and mental clutter I would say is ‘stress’ itself. Be young or middle aged or old, most of us keep a large cabinet of mental drawers stored in the back of our minds. These drawers are filled with what ifs, never agains, mistakes we’ve made, opportunities we’ve missed, hurt, pride, guilt, sacrifices, past grievances, fumes of anger, tinges of jealousy, comparisons, fear of failure and the list goes on.

Sometimes we de-clutter our shoe racks but not our heads, because the latter is not so easy. Certainly, not as easy as writing an editorial on it, I admit. Yet addressing the clutter in our life usually opens the door for new and exciting things to happen. It will help us discover what truly matters and enjoy the simple joys of everyday life.

Therefore, let’s not sweat the small stuff but dare to ‘let go’, de-clutter our lives and create a little head space, not forgetting the school motto;

‘Pannaya Parisujhati’
‘By Wisdom is one Cleansed.’
And this time is a good one to start.

-Thamarasi-

Send your views on “What makes Visakha/VVOGA a great place to be” in one or two sentences to <visakhaoga@gmail.com>

Don't forget to mention your name & batch as well.

Save time, save trees, save money and switch to the VVOGA e-newsletter.
Please send your OGA No/Name & Email Address to <oga@visakhav.org> to receive your e-newsletter.

Together we can make a difference.
“This is a mark I see in professionals who are products of our Alma Mater”

Even by late seventies, we still had temporary classrooms with timber planked walls and metal roofing sheets which gave off so much noise that teaching was impossible during rains. Lines of such temporary classrooms stood next to those wonderful spacious buildings finished to highest standards. No one complained. Students took it in their stride; being in temporary timber sheds in some years and being in comfortable well-built classrooms in other years. This is a mark I see in professionals who are products of our Alma Mater; they do their job and do not let the facilities affect the standard of their service.

POORNARATNAWEERA (NEE DE SILVA)
1967 Batch
Chartered Civil Engineer
Chief Operating Officer
Northshore College of Business & Technology

“Future Visakhians will continue to be visionaries and leaders because of the core qualities that define us.”

Remember, like the many worthy Visakhians before us, we must continue to be:
Strong; speak up in the face of injustice, regardless of what it costs us to advocate for someone without a voice.
Independent; value and delight in family and friends, but also be comfortable in our own company.
Patriotic; love and support our motherland and not silently stand by if it is being plundered.
Hardworking and intellectually curious; knowing that we are as worthy as our efforts and are perpetual students.
Embodying the ideals of Buddhism; tolerant and compassionate towards everyone, equally, regardless of the labels that identify them.

Here’s to the next glorious century!

NILAKSHI PARNIDIGAMAGE
Head Prefect 2000
Jeremias Dias Best All-Rounder Award Winner
Year 2000 ESU International Best Public Speaker Award Winner at the Buckingham Palace
Yale University (B.A. in Political Science, Distinction)
President of the Yale Center for Buddhist Life
University of Virginia School of Law (Juris Doctor)
Humanity in Action, Senior Human Rights Fellow
Attorney at Quinn Emanuel LLP, New York and Washington, D.C.

“Be a patriotic citizen of our motherland”

Endeavour to make the best use of the excellent education provided at Visakha. Engage in many extracurricular activities available, as this helps to round up your personality. Remember the Latin phrase “Menssana in coporesano” – healthy body requires a healthy mind.
Imbibe the Sinhala Buddhist values, customs, traditions and the way of life which is part and parcel of our life at Visakha. Be up to date in IT. Enjoy the arts and music. Grow up to be the ideal Visakhian.
Be loyal and do your best for your school, community and country. Be kind, helpful and generous to the less fortunate. Be a dutiful daughter, an obedient pupil, a loving wife, and a caring mother. Be a patriotic citizen of our motherland.

ANULAWIJESUNDERE (NEE SAMARANAYAKE)
Head Prefect 1968
Consultant Physician
First Hon. Professor, Medicine
Sir General John Kotelawala Defence University
President, Success-Colombo
Vice President, Temperance Association of Sri Lanka
Former President, Ceylon College of Physicians

“Being a Visakhian - now and in the future - is to be an extremely special person”

To be the very Essence of our Nation: Her leading care givers, most outspoken advocates, to partake in engineering and building our nation and educating our people. Visakhians will be the best among equals, as we are taught to be within the hallowed walls of our Alma Mater. To be shining examples of what it means to be learned, powerful and female. To have integrity, be responsible, humble, gracious...intellectually brilliant, athletically formidable and culturally informed. Being a Visakhian - now and in the future - is to be an extremely special person. A good human-being and enlightened Woman of the Future.

KISHANI JAYASINGHE-WIJAYASEKARA
MMus, PGDip-Advanced Opera, LRAM, ARAM, DipRAM, LLB, LLM (Intl.Com.Law)
Head Prefect 1996
Best All Round Student - Senior (1996) & Junior (1994)
Youngest Recipient of the VV Alumni Platinum Award
President, International Students Union & Alumni Laureate - University of Nottingham, UK
Asian Woman of Achievement for Art & Culture
Commonwealth Representative for the Arts
International Olympic Academy Youth Representative for Asia
International Opera Singer
International Goodwill Ambassador - South Asia Women’s Fund Founder, Artistic Director & CEO - Colombo Opera Company
A RECAP OF THE EVENTS IN 2015

Visakha Avurudu Pola

The meticulous planning and the untiring effort of our old girls paid off as the annual Avurudu Pola which is one of the highest fund raisers for the school, concluded on a hugely successful note on March 28th 2015 with a princely sum of profit collected for the OGA coffers. Past Visakhian Ms. Clodagh Fernando was the chief guest of the event.

Vesak Project

The 2015 Vesak Project saw the VVOGA donating a Multipara Monitor worth Rs. 460,000/- to the Premature Baby Unit and eight wheelchairs worth Rs. 360,000/- plus gift packs amounting to Rs. 80,000/- to the Rheumatology Ward of the LRH. A further Rs.400,000/- was donated for providing spectacles and lenses to needy children with visual impairments. A donation of Rs. 100,000/- was also made to an old girl undergoing Hemaedialysis treatment.

Esala Sil Programme

'Being content with what we have' was one key aspect elaborated in inspiring sermons by eminent Buddhist priests and lecturers at the Esala Sil programme held on 31st July at the school bo-maluwa amidst a large gathering of past and present teachers, old girls and students.

Bathiya & Santhush Concert

The Jeremias Dias Hall came alive with music on June 12, 2015 with Bathiya & Santhush concert organized by the VVOGA Fund Raising Sub-Committee as a musical endeavour undertaken towards raising funds for the new building for the primary school. It was a fun filled evening for all those who attended the event.

Pulimood Oration

The 25th Pulimood Oration took place on July 23rd 2015 at 5.15pm at the Jeremias Dias Hall with Dr. Hemamala Hettige, the Senior Advisor to the Independent Evaluation Department of Asian Development Bank in Manila, Philippines, delivering the memorial oration on 'Tackling Twin Towers: Taking Steps Towards Inclusive & Sustainable Development.'
It looked as if time stood still on May 16, as scores of past Visakhians marched back to school full of vigour and in full uniform. Having met all time favourite teachers and principals and having filled bosom friends in on news of each other, the girls had a time of their lives. In the morning they gathered for assembly in the main hall and later in the school grounds as games got underway, before rushing to catch the school bus just as in those days. Once more the house flags flew high in the air while the school band played the old familiar tunes. The event was a huge success. The turnout exceeded the expectations of the organizers by great numbers. This time travelling venture of old girls, was a first time event in our school, and no doubt it left pleasant memories of a day to be remembered by all those who participated.
UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2016

Universal Children's Day - January
Universal Children's Day celebrations will take place at the school premises on 30th January from 9am onwards. Past hostellers, it's time to come back and inspire the young ones. Donations too are welcome! Do join us!

Harshini - 0777415499

Founder's Day Pirith & Dane - March
In memory of the Founder of Visakha Vidyalaya, Mrs. Jeremias Dias, Pirith & Alms giving will be held on 25th & 26th March at the school premises.

Visakha - 0768691555

Visakha Avurudu Pola - March/April
Be there to have fun & engage in a shopping spree for the Avurudu season.

Renuka - 0777289389

Annual Medical Camp - May
The medical camp for past and present teachers of Visakha Vidyalaya which has continued as an annual event for more than 17 years is an opportunity to express the gratitude of the past pupils to their teachers.

The Medical camp to be held on 8th May 2016 will provide services related to curative & preventive care, and health promotion related services as well.

Indeewaree - 077 3654760

Bodhi Vandana - January
Bodhi Vandana to mark the 99th B'Day of Visakha Vidyalaya

The Religious Subcommittee will be organizing a special Buddhist sermon and Bodhi Pooja with the initiation of Most Ven. Kiribathgoda Gnanananda Thero to commemorate the 99th birth anniversary of Visakha Vidyalaya on Saturday the 16th January 2016 from 4.30 pm onwards at the school bo-maluwa.

Come & join hands to invoke blessings on mother Visakha on her march towards the centenary milestone!

For further information!
Visakha - 0768691555
Rashmi - 0773738085

CONVENERS OF THE SUB COMMITTEES 2015/2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub Committee</th>
<th>Convener</th>
<th>Contact details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Nirosha Tharanganie</td>
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**VVOGA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OFFICE BEARERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS - 2015/2016**

**President**  
Mrs. Sandamali Aviruppola

**Vice Presidents**  
Ms. Sita Siriwardena  
Ms. Anoma Perera

**Joint Secretaries**  
Ms. Renuka Dharmadasa  
Ms. Darshi Neelawathura Bandara

**Treasurer**  
Ms. Sujeenie Gunasekera

**Asst. Treasurer**  
Ms. Sumudu Abeygunawardane

**Staff Member**  
Ms. Buddhinie Medawatte

**30 to 40 Years**  
Ms. Ayomi Kaviratne  
Ms. Erandi Nanayakkara  
Ms. Erangi Hulangamuwa  
Ms. Harshini Madurapperuma  
Ms. Harshini Yapa  
Ms. Himali Senanayake  
Ms. Rashmi Navaratne  
Ms. Sarangi Suriaratchie  
Ms. Nirosha Kapurubandara  
Ms. Thilini Aluthweediya  
Ms. Thisanthi Kaluarachchi

**40 to 60 Years**  
Ms. Chandima Karunatillaka  
Ms. Irosha Chandrasekere  
Ms. Ishani Ariyapperuma  
Ms. Nirosha Tharanganie  
Ms. Preethi Manohari  
Ms. Priyangani Ratnasekera  
Ms. Punsirini Malavi  
Ms. Samiddhi Dewapura  
Ms. Visakha Samaraweera

**60 Years & Above**  
Ms. Anoja Fernando  
Ms. Anula Wijesundere

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF VVOGA - 2015/2016**

**1st row - Left to Right**  
Ms. Samiddhi Dewapura, Ms. Anula Wijesundere, Ms. Sumudu Abeygunawardane (Asst. Treasurer), Ms. Darshi Neelawathura Bandara (Joint Secretary)  
Ms. Anoma Perera (Vice President), Mrs. Sandamali Aviruppola (President), Ms. Sita Siriwardena (Vice President), Ms. Renuka Dharmadasa (Joint Secretary)  
Ms. Anoja Fernando, Ms. Priyangani Ratnasekera, Ms. Buddhinie Medawatte (Staff Member)

**2nd row - Left to Right**  
Ms. Ishani Ariyapperuma, Ms. Ayomi Kaviratne, Ms. Indeewaree Liyanage, Ms. Visakha Samaraweera, Ms. Preethi Manohari, Ms. Thisanthi Kaluarachchi,  
Ms. Erangi Hulangamuwa, Ms. Harshini Madurapperuma, Ms. Thilini Aluthweediya, Ms. Erandi Nanayakkara, Ms. Rashmi Navaratne, Ms. Sarangi Suriaratchie,  
Ms. Thamarasi Mahawattage, Ms. Nirosha Tharanganie, Ms. Lathika Athauda, Ms. Shashikala Perera, Ms. Irosha Chandrasekere, Ms. Harshini Yapa, Ms. Surani Peiris

**Absent:**  
Ms. Sujeenie Gunasekera (Treasurer), Ms. Chandima Karunatillaka, Ms. Punsirini Malavi, Ms. Himali Senanayake, Ms. Nirosha Kapurubandara, Ms. Sashi Liyanaraachchi
We bring you the proud news of Ms. Indira Malwatte, Vice President of last year’s VOGA EXCO being appointed as the Chairperson of the Sri Lanka Export Development Board with effect from 29th October 2015. Sri Lanka Export Development Board (SLEDB) commonly known as the EDB is the apex state organization responsible for the development and promotion of exports, and Ms Indira Malwatte is the first woman to take office as the head of the EDB. On behalf of the entire membership, we take this opportunity to express heartiest congratulations, and, to wish Ms Malwatte all the very best for her tenure of office.