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10th anniversary



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
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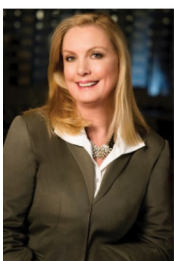
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Vol. 9- Annual Magazine

CONTENTS

দেখতে দেখতে ১০-টা বছর	3
Three Stories	8
Everstanding	8
Success is my Name	10
চিঠি	10
Cultural Program Schedule	12
Program Highlights	14
Allusion	19
Another Rise of the Sun	19
On One's Own	19
An Out of this World Experience ..	21
Great Wolf Lodge	21
Home	21
Art Gallery	22
Why the World Need Heroes	24
Haunted Halloween	26
The Sahara Special	27
My Karate Journey	28
No More YouTube.....	29
The Big Race	30
Puja	32
Bollywood Exposed	32
Few reasons I like Saraswati Puja .	32
Yet the River Still Flows	35
Season for Reason	37
A Lesson in the Woods	38
Travel Diary	39
Not Athletic Ravi	40

COVER ART

by Somdip Datta

দেখতে দেখতে ১০-টা বছর কেটে গেল। বাঙালী সংস্কৃতি ও ঐতিহ্যের ধারা এই সুদূর প্রবাসে আমাদের মধ্যে ধরে রাখার অভিপ্রায়ে ৪৫ টি পরিবার নিয়ে শুরু হয় প্রথম সরস্বতী পূজা। ২০০৮ সালের এমনি এক শীতের সকালে গুটি কয়েক পরিবার একত্র হয়ে ঠিক করা হয়েছিল সরস্বতী পূজা করা যাক। কেন হঠাৎ সরস্বতী পূজা? মনে পড়ছে না ঠিক কারণটা। কুয়াশাচ্ছন্ন স্মৃতি। হয়ত সেদিন মনে পড়েছিল হলুদ শাড়ী / পাঞ্জাবী পরে বাড়ীর পাশের গলিতে বন্ধুরা মিলে ছোট সরস্বতী পূজা করার স্মৃতি। চাঁদা আসতো পাড়ার কয়েকজন বন্ধুর মা, বাবার থেকে। দাদা, কাকারা বলত সরস্বতী বানান কর তবে এক টাকা দেব। ছোট প্যান্ডেল বানিয়ে দিতো একটু বড় দিদি, দাদারা। অল্প ফুল প্রসাদ কিন্তু নকুলদানা, বাতাসা মাস্ট। সন্ধ্যা হতেই চান করে, বই খাতা পেন গুছিয়ে রাখা হত মা সরস্বতীর সামনে। পূজা শেষে পান পাতায় লেখা হত "ওম সরস্বতী নমঃ"!

তারপর আসল জিনিস, ভুরি ভোজ - খিচুড়ি, লাভড়া, বেগুনী, চাটনী আর অনেক অপেক্ষার পরে খেতে পেতাম কুল। ২০০৮ র সেই সকালে আমাদের হয়তো অল্পই পরিবর্তন হয়েছিল ছোটবেলার সাথে। পরণে ছিল ডিজাইনার শাড়ী গয়না বা ডিজাইনার ধুতি, পাঞ্জাবী। বয়সটা কিছুটা বেড়েছে, কিন্তু একই রকম উত্তেজনা, খুশি। সেজে গুজে, পূজোর আয়োজন করে যে পরিমাণ আনন্দ হয়েছিল তা বোধহয় সচরাচর হয়না আজকাল। তার আগে এক মাস ধরে অনুষ্ঠানের প্রস্তুতি। নিজেদের অজান্তেই গড়ে উঠলো একটি সুন্দর পরিবার। বেশ ক'দিন ধরে হাসি, গল্পা, ই-মেল, টেক্সট চালাচালি। আর তার সাথে প্রত্যেক প্র্যাক্টিস এ প্রচুর খাওয়া-দাওয়া। সে এক অনাবিল খুশির ধারা, তুষার ঝড় আর জাঁকানো ঠান্ডার মধ্যে কোথা থেকে যেন নিয়ে এল বসন্তের এক বলক সুগন্ধ।

ধীরে ধীরে আমাদের এই পরিবার অনেক বড় হয়েছে। প্রত্যেক বছর নতুন এবং পুরোনো মিলে আমরা গড়ে তুলেছি আরও অনেক বড় এবং সুন্দর এই কমিউনিটি। ২০১৬তে ১৪০টি পরিবার একত্রিত হয়েছিল সরস্বতী পূজা উদযাপন করতে। পূজা ছাড়াও, দীপাবলি অনুষ্ঠান, চতুইভাতি এবং অন্যান্য নানান অনুষ্ঠানের মধ্যে দিয়ে আমরা বেঁধে রেখেছি সঙ্কলকে একই সূত্রে। সামারসেট বেঙ্গলি এসোসিয়েশন হাত বাড়িয়েছে অন্যান্য সংগঠনদের দিকে নানারকম সামাজিক প্রকল্পের সাহায্যার্থে।

অন্য সব বছরের মতোই, এবারও আমরা তৈরী হয়েছি ডালি ভর্তি অনুষ্ঠানের তোড়া নিয়ে। সাথে আছে অবশ্যই বাঙালির ভুরি ভোজ। এবছরে আরো একটি নতুন জিনিস আমরা দেখতে পাবো যেটা আমাদের খুবই গর্বের বিষয়।

ইয়ং এডাল্টস দের পরিচালনায় নাচের অনুষ্ঠান এবং খুদে হাতে বাক্স বন্দি হবে আমাদের এবছরের পূজোর প্রতিটি মুহূর্ত। পরবর্তী প্রজন্ম কে এরকম ভাবে এগিয়ে আসতে দেখে আমরা অভিভূত। সাথে অবশ্যই আছে, প্রত্যেক বছরের মতন কচি ও কাঁচাদের নাচ, গান, নাটক এবং তাদের খুদে হাতে লেখা এবং আঁকা নানান রচনা সমৃদ্ধ এই পত্রিকা।

সামারসেট বেঙ্গলি এসোসিয়েশন বোর্ড এর তরফ থেকে আমরা সকল স্পন্সরস, ডেন্ডরস এবং ডোনার্স দের স্বতঃস্ফূর্ত ভাবে অংশগ্রহণের জন্য জানাই আমাদের গভীর কৃতজ্ঞতা। সেই সঙ্গে জানাতে চাই আমাদের আন্তরিক ধন্যবাদ প্রত্যেক কমিটির সদস্যকে যারা অক্লান্ত ভাবে পরিশ্রম করেছেন এই অনুষ্ঠানটি সুষ্ঠু ভাবে সকলের সামনে পরিবেশন করার জন্যে। সামারসেট বেঙ্গলি এসোসিয়েশন এর এই মঞ্চ তৈরী হয়েছিল বাঙালির ঐতিহ্য এবং সংস্কৃতি কে এগিয়ে নিয়ে যাবার প্রয়াসে। আমরা এই আশা রাখি যে আমাদের কমিউনিটির প্রত্যেকে এগিয়ে আসবেন আমাদের এই প্রচেষ্টাকে সার্থক করতে এবং আরো বহুদূর এগিয়ে নিয়ে যেতে।

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সমসেট বেঙ্গালি অসোসিয়েশন

Saraswati Puja - January 2017

Officiating Priest: Arkendu Chatterjee

Event Manager: Probir Dhara

Puja Arrangements: Satabdi Choudhury, Ratnanjali Dutta, Doel Ganguly, Sreerupa Ghoshal, Lopamudra Mukherjee, Moumita Mukherjee,

Cultural Committee: Mitushi Banerjee, Malini Mazumdar, Ranjana Sanyal

Food Committee: Nabanita Chakraborty, Ashish Das, Sanchoy Das, Krishnendu Mukhopadhyay

Fundraising: Sumita Dhara, Kaushik Dey, Subhrojit Dutta, Niloy Jana, Soumi Jana

Guest Relations & Registration: Debesh Chakraborty, Rahul Ganguly, Debasish Ghosh, Indrajit Ghosh

Facilities Management: Abhishek Banerjee, Chanchal Banerjee, Anirban Biswas, Surajit Deb, Indrajit Giri, Bikramaditya Mukherjee

Magazine committee: Hiya Banerjee, Manjari Chowdhury, Somdip Datta

Photography: Pramila Baisya, Prasenjit Baisya, Siddhartha Ghosh

Diwali Party - November 2016

Event Managers: Sharmila Ghosh, Anasua Sanyal

Summer Picnic - June 2016

Event Managers: SBA Team

Thanks to the many volunteers who made these events a success

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Diya Paul

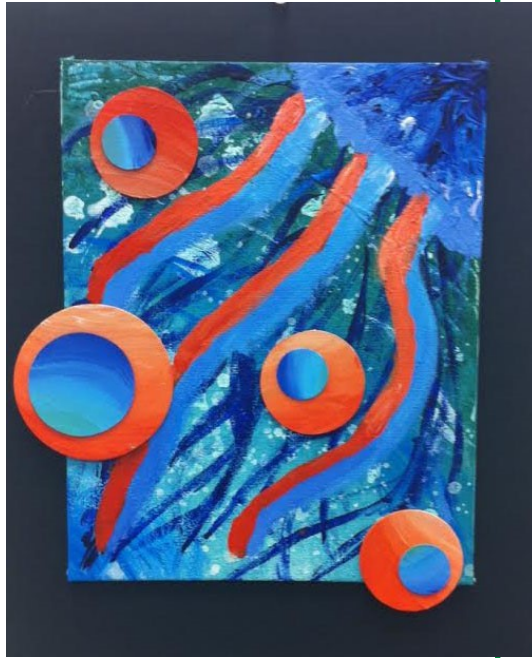
Three stories

Disha Bhowmick

Is Time Really Endless?

Is time really endless
 With its pressurising crunch
 As if it was eating
 Your long desired brunch

It munches on your fun time
 With its greedy hands
 It lengthens your sad time
 It never understands



Everstanding Prannoy Nandy

Through my little window I can see,
 a quarrel of the seasons.
 The last of the leaves spread out
 beneath me,
 making their final stand.
 For soon they will be lost,
 as frost is creeping over the land.
 But one tree stands tall and green,
 while all others fail.
 The frost arrives,
 not a single living creature in sight.
 But the tree stands tall and green,
 while all others fail.
 And then the snows arrive;
 a blanket putting the world to sleep.
 But the tree stands tall and green,
 while all others fail.
 And then the winds flow,
 making the snow restless.
 But the tree stands tall and green,
 while all others fail.
 And that is why on the final days of
 the last month,
 I bring the tree in with me.
 I adorn it with lights and ribbons;
 A reward for its perseverance.
 And that is why we call the great
 green tree:
 the evergreen.

What Peace Means to Me

What is peace ---
 It is to me --
 A smile, a laugh -
 A bird flying free

To say what you feel ---
 Not mind what you say --
 Peace is a feeling -
 Not to command or obey

Peace can be felt -
 in a raging battle
 As fear can be felt -
 in a field full of grass

We make peace in the world ---
 We have done our part --
 Our gift may be simple -
 But it comes from the heart

A Rose

Why does a beautiful flower
 Have such a prickly thorn
 The flower of love and compassion
 So red, so pure
 Yet a heart bleeds
 By that prickly thorn

Why does a pretty flower
 Have such a rotten meaning
 The flower of blood and death
 So red, so pure
 Yet two hearts become one
 By that beautiful flower

A balance of both
 Warm and Cold
 Love and Death
 Sweet and Sour
 All just the meaning
 Of one simple flower

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Success is My Name

Kriti Mukherjee

Raging clouds fill raven colored sky,
Engulfing the light inside my eyes,
Desperation filling my head,
Without hope I shall dread.

Once the sun had covered magnolia branches,
Not a word of despair,
Yet the world had been repulsive,
Trying too hard to declare.
With the color of blue that fills my heart,
My dear mother has said,
Nothing will happen everything's gonna be fine,
Still the tears that I shed,
The melancholy that rises,
And the discouragement that fills instead,
The light is fading,
The room is dimming,
Sigh.

Will it be true? Will there be light? I ask,
Maybe,
May not be.
Up and down,
Through curves and turns,
And obstacles that face my way,
Have hope I say,
Cause success is my name,
And success is what I will repay.

চিঠি

Atreyee De

শনিবারের ছুটির সকাল ...হাজার মাইল দূরে বসেও আমি দেখতে পাচ্ছি ... আমাদের পূর্বের খোলা বারান্দাটা হেসে উঠছে সকালের সোনা রোদ মেখে। বাগানের দিকে মুখ করে আরাম-কেদারায় বসে আমার বাবা, সামনে প্রায় শেষ হওয়া চায়ের কাপ, হাতে খবরের কাগজ; পড়তে পড়তে মা কে হাঁকআরো এক কাপ চায়ের জন্য।

হলুদ মাখা হাত আঁচলে মুছতে মুছতে মা আমার রান্নাঘর থেকে বারান্দায়. মুখে প্রশ্ন মেশানো শাসন"সকাল থেকে তিন কাপ তো হলো, আরও চাই?"

অপ্রস্তুত হাসির ফ্রেমে বাবার মুখে ক্ষীণ প্রতিবাদ..."ছুটির সকাল, একটু চা না হলে..." ফরমায়েশি চায়ের জন্য মা রান্নাঘরের দিকে পা বাড়াতেই বাবার অস্থির জিজ্ঞাসা

"কটা বাজলো বলতো, দশটা কি বেজে গেলো??"

"আর কতবার জিজ্ঞাসা করবে, ঘড়িটাও তো সময়ে বাঁধা, নাকি?" ...আপাত -স্থির উত্তরটা বাবার দিকে ছুঁড়ে দিয়েই মার ও ব্যাকুল চোখ সেই ঘড়ির দিকেই "ঘড়িটা আজ এতো অলস কেন, ওরও কি আজ ছুটির সকাল??".... ঘড়ির কাছে নিরাশ হয়ে ধীরপায়ে মা রান্নাঘরে, বাবার চোখ অনিচ্ছাতেও খবর খোঁজে;

হঠাৎ হাঁক সদর দ্বারে...."চিঠি আছে-এ -এ".....

চায়ের জল বাষ্পে বিলীন, খবর তুই কাগজেই থাক....

বাবা, মায়ের ছেলেমানুষি দৌড় গোট-এর দিকে

কে নেবে আগে মেয়ের চিঠি ডাক -পিয়নের হাতের থেকে

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3:30pm	Welcome Announcement	Soumendu Bhattacharya and Arpana Bhattacharya		
3:35pm	Dance In Worship	Choreographed By:	Sanjeeta Mukherjee	
		Narrated By:	Atreyi Sanyal	
		Dancers:		
		Aaheli Mukherjee,	Ayanna Arora,	Rayna Hazarika,
		Aanya Chowdhury,	Elizabeth Thekkanath,	Reejo Thomas,
		Aditi Sanghi,	Enika Kerr,	Reva Venkatraghvan,
		Akshara Vikram,	Hemadri Saxena,	Rose Parayil,
		Ananya Sanyal,	Janki Gaglani,	Roshni Datta,
		Ananya Vikram,	Jyoti Dingle,	Saanvi Saxena,
		Anjlee Sidhartha,	Kamalini	Sara Varghese,
		Annamaria George,	Senthilkumar,	Shibani Sarkar,
		Anushka Rakhe,	Meghna Iyer,	Shonchori
		Any Jain,	Priya Arora,	Mukherjee,
		Archana Sidhartha,		Shreya Sarkar
		Arthi Swaminathan,		
3:55pm	President's address and SBA introduction	Satabdi Choudhury and Probir Dhara		
4:15pm	Children's Dance Drama "Saath Bhai Chompa" - Thakumar Jhuli	Directed By:	Mitushi Banerjee & Anamika Sain	
		Choreographed By:	Anoushka Ghosh, Rupsa Jana, Spreeha Choudhury	
		Sound:	Nipun Banerjee	
		Light:	Rishi Mukherjee	
		Art/Set Creation:	Teesta Roy & Somesh Choudhury	
		Introduced:	Prisha Ghosh	
		Participants:		
		Aarushi Kuila,	Eamon Khan,	Ria Mukherji,
		Abheek Dhara,	Hiya Khan,	Risha Vasanthavada,
		Aditi Dhara,	Ishaan Ghosh,	Rishaan Deb,
		Aditya Basu,	Mahika Maitra,	Rishi Roy,
		Aditya Chakrabarti,	Nirav Banerjee,	Rohan Dutta,
		Alina Mukherji,	Prajna Karmaker,	Rohan Giri,
		Anshini Ghoshal	Pranita Kundu,	Shounak Ghosh,
		Biswas,	Prisha Mitra Thakur,	Shubham
		Anushree Sutradhar,	Priyanka Chatterjee,	Roy-Choudhury,
		Arkadeep Das,	Purba Karmaker,	Shweta Roy,
		Arshia Chakrabarti,	Rashi Roy,	Snesha
		Avik Dutta,	Rashmika Majumdar,	Roy-Choudhury,
		Ayushi Goswami,	Rhea Vasanthavada,	Soumita Banerjee,
		Devjit Bhattacharya	Ria Giri,	Soumyanil Jana,
		(Adi),	Ria Mukherjee,	Vibhu Datta

Cultural Program Schedule

Time: 3:30 pm to 7:35 pm

4:50pm	Sponsor Announcements	[Gold Sponsors]		
5:00pm	Hrid Majhare : SBA Singers presentation	Directed By:	Malini Mazumdar	
		Musicians:	Jayanta Das, Satyajit Bhattacharya, Gokul Panda Atreyee Dey Kaushik Dey,	
		Narrated By:	Lopamudra Das, Ratnanjali Dutta,	
		Singers:	Subhrojit Dutta,	
		Achintya Pal,	Sumita Dhara,	
		Bikramaditya Mukherjee,	Tathagata Ghosh	
		Chitra Srinivasan,		
		Debasree Saha,		
5:30pm	Sponsor Announcements	[Silver Sponsors]		
5:40pm	Shruti Natok – Biliti Pishi written by Banani Mukherjee	Directed By:	Banani Mukherjee	
		Cast:	Sangeeta Bhattacharya, Suparna Das, Teesta Roy.	
		Alo Shrabani Nandi,	Sangeeta Bhattacharya,	
		Keka Sirkar,	Soumi Jana,	
		Rina Roy,		
6:10pm	Raffle Drawing	Gift from sponsors		
6:20pm	Bollywood Grooves	Choreographed By:	Anjali Mitra and Spreeha Choudhury	
		Narrated By:	Sompurna Choudhury	
		Dancers:	Nishka Abraham,	
		Amrita Sutradhar,	Ria Mukhopadyay,	
		Anjali Mitra,	Rohan Sanyal,	
		Anoushka Ghosh,	Rupsa Jana,	
		Aravind Sridharan,	Shounak Ghosh,	
		Arka Ghose,	Spreeha Choudhury.	
		Aruna Dontabhaktuni,		
		Darshana Maitra,		
			Dolon Mukherji, Nishka Abraham,	
			Komal Deb, Ria Mukhopadyay,	
			Mousumi Mitra, Rohan Sanyal,	
			Namrata Thakur, Rupsa Jana,	
			Bhattacharyya, Shounak Ghosh,	
			Nibedita, Spreeha Choudhury.	
			Bandyopadhyay,	
6:45pm	Closing Remarks	Soumendu Bhattacharya and Arpana Bhattacharya		
7:00pm	Murchhana - Presentation of unforgettable melodies with high-energy rhythm.	Concept, Rhythm and Directed By:	Dr. Arindam Chakraborty	
		Introduced By:	Arnab Mitra	
		Singers:	Gayatree Sarma, Shankhadip Chakraborty	
		Aratrika Dey ,		

DANCE IN WORSHIP

Praise the Lord with dancing

This ballet is one that celebrates the form of the all-pervading, omnipotent and omniscient divinity, the supreme absolute godhead that humanity prays to world over in different names.

SHAKTI the one who destroys our fear and our own mother who stands by us and destroys any threat to our success. **SHIVA** is the god of the yogis, self-controlled and celibate. Shiva is responsible for change both in the form of death and destruction and in the positive sense of destroying the ego, the false identification with the form.

GANESHA The son of Shiva and Parvati, He is the Lord of success and destroyer of evils and obstacles. God created us body and soul to praise him. He gave us the ability to move, to walk, to jump, to clap, and to wave. He also gave us rhythm— so "Praise the Lord with dancing"
That is "worship in dance"

Aaheli Mukherjee
Aanya Chowdhury
Aditi Sanghi
Akshara Vikram
Ananya Sanyal
Ananya Vikram
Anjlee Sidhartha
Annamaria George
Anushka Rakhe
Anya Jain
Archana Sidhartha
Arthi Swaminathan
Ayanna Arora
Elizabeth Thekkanath
Enika Kerr



SANCHARI

School of dance

CHOREOGRAPHED BY:
SANJEETA MUKHERJEE

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Janki Gaglani
Jyoti Dingle
Kamalini senthilkumar
Meghna Iyer
Priya Arora
Rayna Hazarika
Reejo Thomas
Reva Venkatraghvan
Rose Parayil
Roshni Datta
Saanvi Saxena
Sara Varghese
Shibani Sarkar
Shonchori Mukherjee
Shreya Sarkar



Achintya Pal, Bikramaditya Mukherjee
Chitra Srinivasan, Debasree Saha,
Kaushik Dey, Lopamudra Das,
Niloy Jana, Ranja Bhattacharya,
Ranjana Sanyal, Ratnanjali Dutta
Subhrojit Dutta, Sumita Dhara,
Tathagata Ghosh

Director: Malini Mazumdar
Musicians: Jayanta Das,
Satyajit Bhattacharya, Gokul Panda
Narration: Areyee Dey

Hrid Majhare

বাঙালীর প্রাণের উৎসব 'বাণীবন্দনা'। আত্মদী শাড়ীর আঁচল কোমরে জড়িয়ে, পাটভাঙা পাঞ্জাবির নতুন গন্ধ গায়ে মেখে "জয় জয় দেবী, চরাচর সারে"। আবার আর একবার, Calendar এর হিসেবে প্রায় এক বছর পরে, Somerset Bengali Association এর আমরা সবাই একসাথে হয়েছি আমাদের গানের ডালি নিয়ে। সাজো সাজো রব শুরু সেই কবে থেকে। প্রতি সপ্তাহান্তে মহড়ায় মগ্ন সবাই। কর্ম জীবনের নিদারুন ব্যস্ততার চোখরাঙানি, শীতের হাওয়া, বৃষ্টি, তুষার...কোনোকিছুই রুখতে পারে নি এই অবিরাম উৎসাহ কে। মহড়া শেষে এক পেয়ালা গরম চা হাতে সবাই বলে উঠতাম "প্রতি বছরই এমনটাই চাই"। রোজনাচার বাঁধাধরা রুটিন থেকে মুক্ত হয়ে এ যেন ছিল এক বলক তাজা হাওয়া!

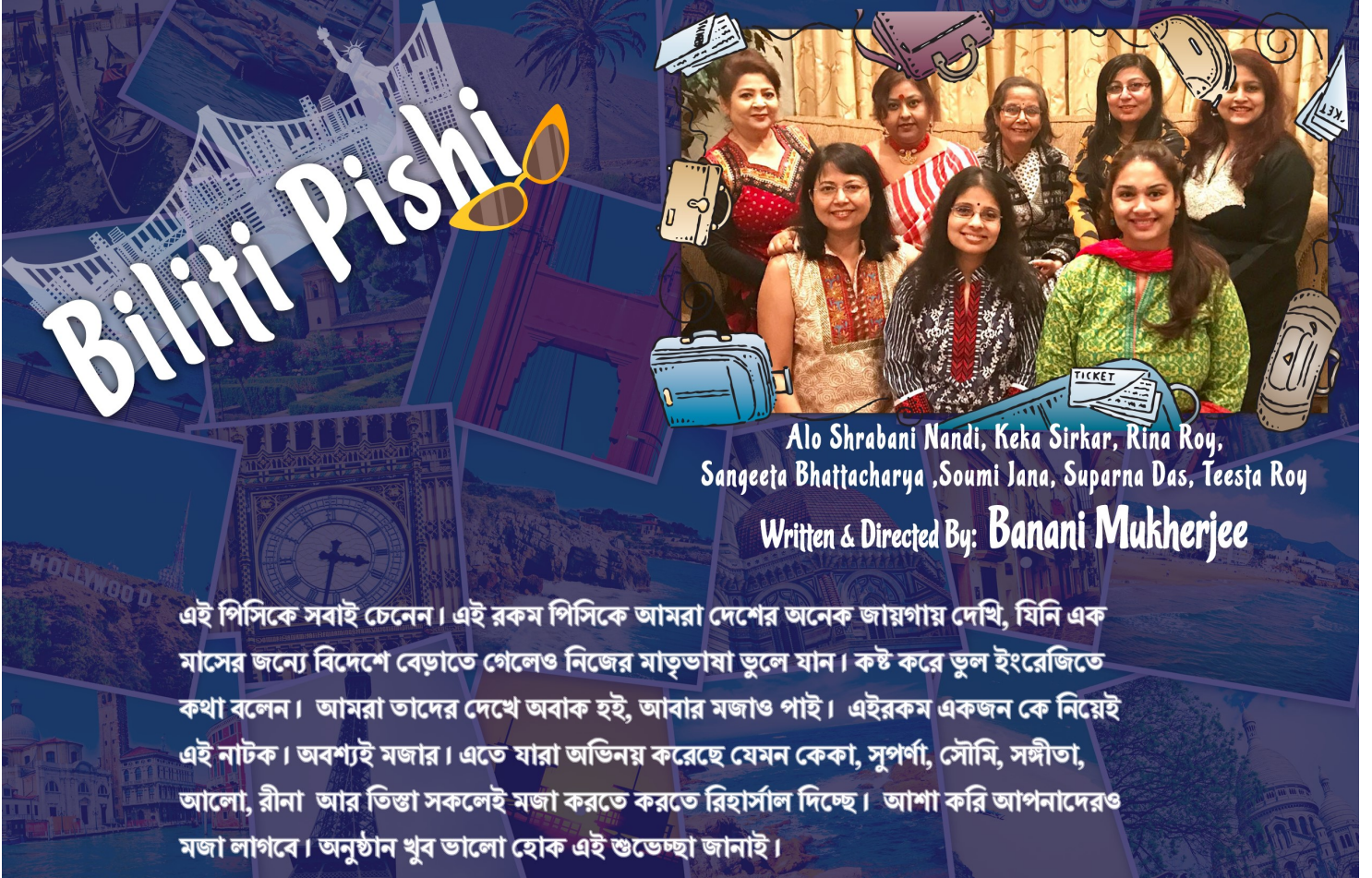
ভালোবাসার একটা চিঠি

নীল তিয়াসার খামে,
পাঠিও আমার নামে ...

আমাদের এবারের গানের পসরা তে সাজিয়ে এনেছি ভালোবাসার হরেক ফুল। প্রেমের সুরে লেখা কত রদীন কথা! কবির ভাষায় বলতে ইচ্ছে হয়, "তোমার জন্য লিখবো তবে নতুন করে, তোমার জন্য লিখতে পারি এক পৃথিবী!"

তোমার জন্য আকাশ জুড়ে মেঘ করেছে, বৃষ্টি মনের তারে, তোমার জন্য সোনারারা জাফরানি রোদে হেসে ওঠে 'হৃদযাবারো'!

Biliti Pishi



Alo Shrabani Nandi, Keka Sirkar, Rina Roy,
Sangeeta Bhattacharya, Soumi Jana, Suparna Das, Teesta Roy
Written & Directed By: **Banani Mukherjee**

এই পিসিকে সবাই চেনেন। এই রকম পিসিকে আমরা দেশের অনেক জায়গায় দেখি, যিনি এক মাসের জন্যে বিদেশে বেড়াতে গেলেও নিজের মাতৃভাষা ভুলে যান। কষ্ট করে ভুল ইংরেজিতে কথা বলেন। আমরা তাদের দেখে অবাক হই, আবার মজাও পাই। এইরকম একজন কে নিয়েই এই নাটক। অবশ্যই মজার। এতে যারা অভিনয় করেছে যেমন কেকা, সুপর্ণা, সৌমি, সঞ্জীতা, আলো, রীনা আর তিস্তা সকলেই মজা করতে করতে রিহাৰ্সাল দিচ্ছে। আশা করি আপনাদেরও মজা লাগবে। অনুষ্ঠান খুব ভালো হোক এই শুভেচ্ছা জানাই।

BOLLYWOOD GROOVES



CHOREOGRAPHY
Anjali & Spreeha

Music Mix By
DJ Kabir

A Homage to Bollywood by the SBA Dance Team

Bollywood has been a never-ending constant source of entertainment and frolic for every Indian over the years. We have laughed, we have cried and we have danced with our onscreen actors. The SBA team has attempted to recreate the magic by creating a medley of popular songs through the decades. Mixing diverse dance forms and a variety of songs they have created a groovy and entertaining program which is sure to please everyone. Come take a trip down memory lane!

Amrita Sutradhar, Anjali Mitra, Anoushka Ghosh, Aravind Sridharan, Arka Ghose, Aruna Dontabhaktuni, Darshana Maitra, Dolon Mukherji, Komal Deb, Mousumi Mitra, Namrata Thakur Bhattacharyya, Nibedita Bandyopadhyay, Nishka Abraham, Ria Mukhopadhyay, Rohan Sanyal, Rupsa Jana, Shounak Ghosh, Spreeha Choudhury

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Saath Bhai Ghompa

Dance Drama by SBA youth division



Aarushi, Anshini, Arshia, Avik, Ayushi, Mahika, Prajna, Pranita, Purba, Rashmika, Rhea, Ria, Ria, Risha, Rishaan, Shweta, Soumita, Vibhu

Abheek, Aditi, Aditya, Aditya, Alina, Anushree, Arkadeep, Derjit, Eamon, Hiya, Ishaan, Nirav, Prisha, Priyanka, Rashi, Ria, Rishi, Rohan, Rohan, Shounak, Shubham, Snesha, Soumyanil

Light | Sound | Narration
Rishi Nipun Prisha

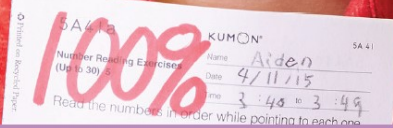
Direction
Mitushi & Anamika

Art Direction
Somesh & Teesta

Choreography
Anoushka, Rupsa, Sprecha

The dance drama undertaking this year was the biggest till date. We had 40 kids performing and a few more working diligently behind the scenes. The rehearsals were as expectedly chaotic in the beginning but as the kids learned their dance steps and memorized their lines a calm harmony settled in. From the tiny debutants to the seasoned veteran older kids, each one put in a fabulous effort to do their best. The rehearsals also became an opportunity to form new friendships and strengthen existing ones. A big thanks to the moms and dads who diligently got the kids to each rehearsal in time braving the weather at times. While there were always times when the team was nervous about being responsible for a huge undertaking but in the end the experience was unequalled and the memories made unsurpassed.

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Allusion

Rohan Deb

Beware of me, for I am the master of sweets
With a little time, I can make the largest gingerbread
house you'll ever see
I hobble on my staff to get around
But don't let my looks deceive you, for I can be a
hound
My red eyes hold back my vision
But my tricks and traps let forward the children

Two little kids come into my woods,
Both of them short, but there are no red hoods
Those pesky ones devour my house
To my surprise, it wasn't a mouse
Yet through that I could see a profit
I tricked them in before they could eat my soffits
Those little tykes, they should've run away
But little did they know that I'd make them pay

They entered my house, with no effort at all
Oh, how interesting life is when two naïve ones are
about to fall
The oven was fired up in a blink as I held my knives
near my hips
I was so close, but then they took my feast from my
fingertips
I took it too far, but then that was the end of me
Left to watch in an oven while they took my riches and
started to flee

Now guess who am I?

An allusion poem is when you take something and make references to it. For example, an allusion in dialogue would be "You put on a hat and then you get special powers? Who are you, Frosty the Snowman?" This dialogue relates to how something special makes the person in context seem like Frosty the Snowman.

Another Rise of the Sun

Aratrika Dey

Another day,
Another breath,
Another rise of sun

Another wish,
Another ray,
Another tale begun

The past looks on,
The present smiles,
The future beckons ahead

A flower in bloom,
Birds in tune,
Another word unsaid

The tale of life,
Of struggle and strife,
Not a single moment undone

Another day,
Another breath,
Another rise of sun.

On One's Own

Aratrika Dey

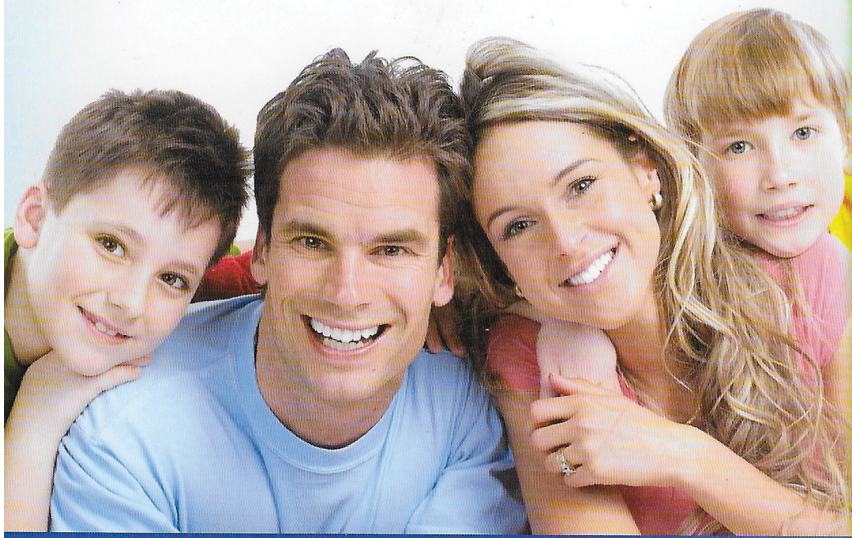
We are all so engulfed in hustling about, occupied in creating the ideal animation of life. Stress becomes a helpless addiction; societal recreation too, seems like scheduled effort. Time is a whiz, taunting us to catch up to its pace.

There are fleeting moments within this chaos of a journey that may not cease time, but do lull its rapid rate. Solitude is not always bad. One who has never been by themselves may never know the empowering feeling of capturing the intangible. Silence does not necessarily mean distress or sadness or anger. It may simply mean introspection or meditation. Appreciating the quietude in the midst of mayhem is what brings sanity to the soul.

And then again, time seems to be running first in this mad race. But it cannot take from me my spirit, for I am not oblivious to what lies beyond ruckus.



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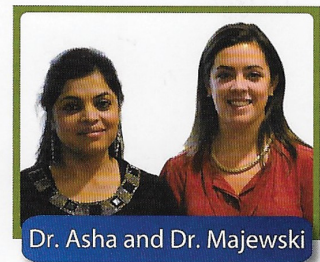
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Dr. Asha and Dr. Majewski

An Out of This World Experience

Rishi Roy

“Wow”. I exclaimed as I saw a giant Jumbo Jet in the distance. We were at Nasa’s Johnson Space Center at Houston, Texas. We parked and stretched our legs and finally after what felt like forever, we went inside.

It was a sight to behold. There are marvelous displays, simulator rides and theaters. We first saw how it was like to live in the International Space Station. It was cool to see how they slept and how different toys worked in space. We also did a simulator ride that showed how it feels when a rocket takes off.

We also went to a theater where we met with a real-life Astronaut! He talked about his different missions. His stories amazed us. We also saw a video of them. We even got a little card with the astronaut’s biography. Then we went on a tram ride. They took us to the Mission Control Center. Here we saw how they communicate with the spaceships and how they are preparing for the next mission to Mars. Our last stop on the ride was Rocket Park. Here the different parts of a rocket is displayed alongwith the timeline of different Apollo missions. It was cool to see how they progressed. Next was the Starship Gallery which had displays from the moon. We also took a quiz to see how much we learnt. It was cool.

Finally we got to go to the giant Jumbo Jet aircraft carrier. It was great exploring all five floors of it. I had an awesome time at NASA. We even ate icecream made by a robot. This is a trip I will never forget.

Great Wolf Lodge

Rashi Roy

“Wow”! I said when I took my first step in the waterpark. This year my birthday present was a trip to the Great Wolf Lodge indoor waterpark. “There is so much to do, which one should we do first?” said Rishi.

Then all of a sudden there was a voice behind us. It was mommy saying “ Okay guys, we are sitting right over there. If you want to go somewhere else check with Dad or me first.” I thought to myself, it was amazing to be a year older.

We first raced to the wave pool. It is a pool where waves crash at you. We also went to the Big Foot Pass. Here you step on lily pads floating in the water and try to cross the pool without falling in the water. There is a rope overhead that you can use for help. We challenged ourselves by running across the pool without stopping or taking help of the rope.

Then we moved on to the waterslides. It was crazy fun! To start with if you go backwards and you are relaxing...suddenly a huge drop comes and it is really scary. My brother and me went on the slide 3 or 4 times. Our parents joined us once too. It was great. We also went on other slides and even surfed through one of them.

Finally, it was time to leave the waterpark and move on to our next adventure. We were going to the Magiquest. Oh I forgot, that is a different story for another day. Bye...

Home

Pramila Baisya

They told me home,
is where the heart is.
Where the love is.
Where the blood is.
But not where isolation is.
Sometimes loneliness.
Sometimes sadness.
Sometimes lingering.
Because to me home
Was....
Miles and miles away.
It was in the dust that hit you in
traffic.
The sweet shops at every corner.
Friends in phuchka competitions.
But I find that the true meaning of
home,
Isn’t that all.
It is not greetings or goodbyes.
Or worship at dawn and the color
red.
Not cheesy Indian films,
Or the rain.
Not girl meets boy,
Aur “pyar zaruri hoga.”
It is not sarees nor churis.
Or long hair with tan skin,
Or Ma wearing sindoor and,
A bindi before her day.
Not chai adda and monsoon season.
Not even the hot days,
Or your mother tongue.
Yes indeed home is where heart is.
India apane dil mein hai.

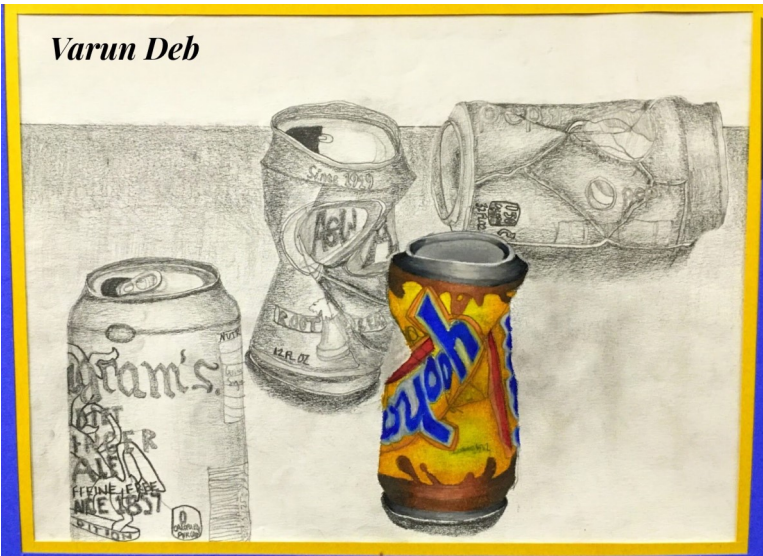


Instruments by Ramona Chatterjee
Girl in Rain by Shonchori Mukherjee



Still Life by Rohan Giri
Sunrise by Mehuli Mitra
Fish by Rohan Deb





Still Life by Varun Deb

Bird of Prey by Kriti Mukherjee

Nest by Aarushi Kuila



Dancers by Shourabh Mukherjee

Durga by Vibhu Datta



WHY THE WORLD NEED HEROES?

Sandeepan Mukherjee

From Beowulf to Martin Luther King Jr, and Sir Gawain to JFK, heroes have been an integral part of society throughout the course of time. Their impact on society cannot be overstated because of the change that they can cause to populations who are in desperate need of uplift, like Martin Luther King’s civil rights movement or Beowulf’s liberation of the Danes from Grendel’s terror. Heroes are, and always will be, integral to society because they provide the everyday man or woman with hope in times of distress and provide each incoming generation with role models that define their morals and actions.

A hero’s biggest impact on society is usually achieved when they take a demoralized and faltering population, and lead them to victory against their oppressors, human or not. As a result, the hero’s deeds fill the common man with hope for a better future, even when times may look bleak. An apt example of this heroic behavior was Beowulf, when Denmark and its king (Hrothgar) were under attack from a monster named Grendel and despite everyone’s efforts to stop him, the Danes felt powerless and dismayed. Beowulf came along to fight the monster, and by boasting about his deeds, gave Hrothgar hope that he will defeat Grendel, prompting him to say, “With Glory in your heart, Purge Herot!”, indicating his confidence on Beowulf’s ability to slay the monster (Beowulf). Even heroes in contemporary times provide people with similar feelings of hope and betterment. Mahatma Gandhi’s fight for Indian Independence provided many Indians with a feeling of revolution, as they had finally found someone to rally behind. Gandhi’s actions exemplified how heroes can stir up the feelings of courage, confidence, and hope, and direct them towards moral causes. Heroes provide society with hope towards a better future through their leadership and confidence.

While heroes like Beowulf are the epitome of physical prowess, most heroes are remembered for their legacies and values. The demographic most affected by heroes is children, and they often serve as role models for future generations. According to Dr. Jim Taylor, “heroes are essential to children’s development. They

convey values that reflect the best society has to offer” (Where Have all our Heroes Gone?). Their morals and standards are what everyone else in society measures up to, and without them, there would be no defining standards for children to compare themselves to. Heroes also can define the dreams of many young minds because “heroes help define the limits of our aspirations” (Why Heroes are Important). For example, the achievements of Mahatma Gandhi would go on to inspire Martin Luther King Jr’s Civil Rights movement. They define the dreams of children by showing them just how much one individual can impact society. Without heroes, an upcoming generation would lose strong, morally upstanding role models and be unable to grasp the fact that anyone can change history.

Heroes are an important part of culture and society. They provide happiness to the depressed and reassurance to the distressed. Their morals, actions, and values define the standard for children to measure themselves against and draw inspiration from. Without heroes, society would be unable to break glass ceilings, overcome obstacles, and explore new frontiers; without heroes, society would have nothing.



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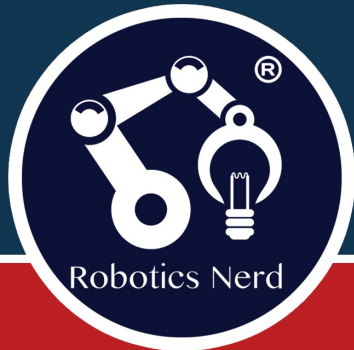


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Haunted Halloween

Arkadeep Das

One Halloween night in 2010, my dad and I were driving in the car towards the Las Vegas, but after a while we ran out of gas. I was worried of how we would find a gas station on this dusty road. So we were thinking to borrow some from the nearest house, but we couldn't find any house that had gasoline. Suddenly a huge house appeared before us on the road. The house seems haunted, was spooky and full of surprises. Birds and scary bats roamed around the haunted house. I asked my dad, "Should we go inside the house?" He said, "Sure lets go in!"

I glanced around as we strolled inside the house. As I was looking around the house there was a sudden noise. Three ghosts were looking at us. The first ghost was Casper (the tallest) and the youngest was Casper. "It's a pleasure to have you visitors here in the castle." Then we went to get our belongings. Casper whispered to us that our room is on the 3rd floor. I answered, "We will unpack into our home clothes and meet you downstairs." After some time we were ready to eat lunch. It was a great lunch for everyone. After lunch, my dad went to do his work in his room while I imagined in this haunted castle of the exciting things we could do on Halloween afternoon. Then I thought up a plan of decorating and playing Halloween and other games with the ghosts.

When I ran to tell that to Casper he agreed it would be very exciting. So we started to do Halloween decorations for the haunted house so it would look like real Halloween. The castle looked great after we were done with our creations which included jack-o-lanterns, scary animals and witches, using my art supplies. Casper made lots of creations, but it is too hard to really know what they are. At the end we did Halloween games and had dinner. The room that we slept in was half lit. Casper and the other ghosts spent the rest of the night with us in the same room.

On the morning, the next day, I went out of the room and down the staircase to the dining hall. Everyone told at the breakfast table that they had a great Halloween night. Then we had to leave for home and I called out, "Goodbye Casper. See you next Halloween", I answered. I ran to the car as birds and other animals

flew along with me and called out, "Goodbye Arkadeep". Everyone was sad to see me go home, but they had a good time with me.

I walked until I saw my car. I went inside my car and my dad started the engine so we could see if we have gas. We finally found a gas station and had someone fill in gas for us. We reached Las Vegas later that day and had a perfect Bengali meal with everyone in my family and had great fun during the rest of our vacation.

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The Sahara Special

Anoushka Ghosh

Anoushka: Camels, Camps, Action! Welcome to TravelNews where we get to show our viewers exotic places all around the world all under 60 minutes. This is Anoushka Ghosh, reporting to you live from the studio. Today, we get to interview our two lucky winners who landed a three day all inclusive round-trip to the Sahara Desert in Merzouga, Morocco. The two guests are Charlie and Angela, who will be sharing their experiences from their vacations. Let's start with Charlie. Please give him a warm round of applause.

Charlie: Hi, how are you doing?

Anoushka: Good, good. So, word on the street is that you had a wonderful time in the Sahara and that you even got to stay in an overnight camp in the desert. I think we would all love to hear about your travels. Let's talk about your night in the camp.

Charlie: Words cannot even begin to express the beauty of the camp. It was located in the middle of the desert with nothing surrounding it but flame colored sand dunes. There were about 12 tents in total, and they were assembled in an oblique formation.

Anoushka: That sounds amazing. I think we are all also itching to hear about the interior decor of the camps.

Charlie: The navy blue and cream tents were spectacular. The tent that I sojourned in was a deluxe suite which meant that it was an extremely spacious room equipped with a heater and a shower. The deluxe tent was draped with deep red curtains, which were adorned with yellow motifs. In the corner of the room, there was an ornate dressing table with a small wooden stool. Throughout the room, beautiful lamps were tastefully situated, brightening up the entire room.

Anoushka: Wow! I cannot even begin to wrap my head around the idea that this was a tent that was located in the middle of the Sahara desert! Well, thank you very much for taking time to talk with us, Charlie!

Charlie: The pleasure was all mine!

Anoushka: Now, please welcome the second guest on our show: Angela. Please give her a round of applause.

Angela: Hi, thank you for having me on TravelNews. I'm so excited to be here. My trip was amazing and I got to make so many amazing memories on it.

Anoushka: I bet you did! What was your best memory?

Angela: Well, for me, I think it would definitely be the camel ride through the desert while the sun was setting.

Anoushka: It sounds phenomenal! Please indulge us in the juicy details of your excursion.

Angela: It all started when I reached the camp. I had just stepped out of the car when the owner of the camp instantaneously appeared by my side and told me that if I wanted to see the sunset I would have to rush. Hurriedly, I grabbed my luggage out of the car and placed them in my room. I lunged for my hat and mittens, since I had been warned that it was going to be frigid, and I ran out of my room. I slowly approached the camels, and they started at me with their large, wise eyes. I shakily approached the camels but the herder told me not to be afraid. I slowly petted them and was told that my camel's name was Rashid. When Rashid heard his name, he calmly turned his head around, and let me feed him.

Anoushka: You fed a camel!?! Wow, that is truly a rare experience. What happened afterwards? I can't wait to hear more! Am I right, viewers?

Angela: After feeding the camel I was given detailed instructions on how to mount the camel. I swung my leg around Rashid and got ready for the adventure. The camels took their time in getting up and I slid back and forth while they rose up. Once they were up, Rashid began to slowly trot through the sand. His hooves ran through the fine Saharan sand and we rode for about 30 minutes in complete serenity. We stopped at the top of a sand dune, and the herder laid a blanket for us to lie on as we watched the sun set. I placed my head on the ground and the vibrant rays of the sun pierced my eyes. We sat there for a while and soon the sun began to dip behind the larger sand dunes. It was truly breathtaking!

Anoushka: I wish I was there! Thank you so much for coming onto our show! Thank you for watching TravelNews and join us again next week for another special.

My Karate Journey

Abheek Dhara

“KIYA!” I yelled at my karate graduation, throwing the last bad guy. I was done. This is my journey to my black belt.

When we moved here, we wanted to do some activities just for fun. We were looking for a karate dojo near us. When we found one, I loved it right away. It was fun to do different self-defense and train with new people. I had so much fun, that I knew that this was what I wanted to do. For weeks, I trained with so much passion and love that I started to go to karate every day. I learned many self-defense in that time-period. Most of my classmates were much younger than me, most of them were 4 or 5, and I was 7. But that would change soon, as I progressed very quickly.

After a few more weeks of training, my sensei felt I was ready for the next belt. I was so happy when my master, or sensei, wrapped the new advanced yellow belt around my waist. From then on, I worked even harder to achieve more belts. All of my school friends were already so far ahead. When I had the time, I sat down to watch the advanced kids class. I always watched in awe as the big kids threw the bad guy down while making it look so easy. Whenever I went home, I tried the self-defenses, but couldn't get it done properly. I knew, though, that one day, I would be in that class. Now, I was in the group called intermediate, so I was now in a new class. Something definitely changed, and I was pumped. I didn't need an introduction to more than half of the class!

Most of my friends there were friends from school, and that made karate class even more fun. Whenever we made a mistake, we all laughed. Whenever we did something great, we all clapped. But there was an even bigger change, now that I was a green belt. Now, I was going to start testing for my next belt with the big kids. We weren't going to get a belt every three months. I was going to have to train my hardest to become the best of the best. Now, karate wasn't a hobby. It is now part of my life, my bloodstream, my everything.

After months of training, the big day finally arrives, and I walk into my karate graduation. It was like an audition, where everybody did something extra special for the judges. The kids who were testing for their black belt had to do extra work. We had to show the judges what we have learned in the past 6 months. I was amazed with what everybody could do with their

karate knowledge. At the end of the ceremony, they give out the trophies, medals, and belts for everybody's performance. I saw the looks on the boy's and girl's faces who just got their brand new black belt. I smiled. Their journey had come to an end, but mine, just the beginning.

This is basically what happened for my beginning years in karate. Then came the golden winter of 2014. The graduation started out normally, everybody doing their part. It must have been something I did that sparked my judges, but they saw something in me. Finally, at the end, it happened. When they were calling out trophies, I didn't hear my name, so I thought that this would be the first time that I wasn't going to get a trophy. Then, they started announcing Student of the Year awards. Those are for the best of the best, so I had no chance getting that one. I was still happy as my friends got student of the year trophies. I was even happier when it happened. Remember when I said that I thought I wasn't getting a trophy? Well, I was wrong. It turns out, I did win the Student of the Year trophy. It is a big honor to win that one. The trophy was huge, almost as big as me. I was so happy when I heard my name get called. I looked at my

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Here is a picture of me in my race where I got my Junior Olympic time.

Now I know that if I have determination, I can achieve my goal. That was a day that shaped me as a person, and helped me understand

The Big Race

Shonchori Mukherjee

I felt the cool water run past my red, hot face as I got out of the pool. "Great job today!" my coach said. "I think you guys are going to be awesome at the meet." As I got out, I felt the cool breeze of a fan nearby as it cooled my tomato-looking face. Today is the last day of swim practice for me until the last meet of the season. I have been coming nonstop to practice just to get a JO time (junior olympic) as a ten year old because next year when I am eleven, the times will change to a faster time.

Soon, when my mom came, I scurried through the cold winter day into the car. In the car, my mom asked "How was practice? Do you think that you are ready for the meet?". "I think I am," I replied very confidently, but inside, I didn't feel as confident. I was feeling good about my swim physically but, not so much mentally. "I really hope that my hard work pays off," I said hopefully. When I went home, I took a hot shower and was in the bed by 8:30 because the next day morning, I would have to be out the door by 6:00am. "Ring....Ring....Ring...." That was my alarm saying that it is time to wake up, and get ready. Soon enough, I was out the door and on my way to the biggest swim meet of my life!! There were butterflies in my stomach, but I could not stop bouncing off the

walls. The whole car ride to the pool, my family was with me, but I wasn't with them. My family was talking but I zoned them out and all I could hear were sounds of olympians finishing races, the loud sound of the beeper, and people cheering coming from my phone. The whole way to the pool, I was watching olympians racing, I was watching their every stroke, I rewound the video and looked at their dives, and finishes. I was going to do anything to make me get the Junior Olympic time.

Once we reached the pool, I was in awe, I have never seen anything that is so grand in my life. The clean deck, spotless bleachers, and not too cold and not too hot air was amazing. I knew this was going to be that place where my hard work was going to pay off. Soon, I saw my friends, and put my stuff down. "Okay everyone, please get ready for warm-up." said my coach, as everyone got their stuff. When I got to the pool, it was very crowded, and I knew that I could not have a good warm-up to work on my strokes. So after the regular warm-up, I went to another warm-up pool. This pool is in case you have been waiting for a while, and you need to warm-up. And I needed to warm up! At the other pool, I worked on my breaststroke. I tried doing the finishes that I saw in the videos, I tried doing my hands just like the olympians. At the correct time, I saw that it was time for me to go behind the blocks for my race. As I walked, I visualized my race: my start, my finish, my turn. I slowly took off my sweatshirt, and my flip-flops, and I stretched. I stretched my legs, my hands, and my back. I was doing everything needed for this to be the

race I get my Junior Olympic time.

After I stretched, the timer next to me said "It is time for your heat." I nodded and put my goggles on. Even though there were a lot of people there, I felt like it was just me and the pool. This was my only chance to get the Junior Olympic time I have been waiting for this whole season. "Swimmers step up," said the announcer. My heart fluttered with butterflies. "Take your mark" I felt the ridged grip of the blocks. It may have been how nervous I was but the blocks were very slippery. I felt the water slipping in between my feet. "BEEP!!" went the machine. I leapt like a leopard off the blocks and did my pull-out, and came out of the water as fast as I could. I pulled the water in close to my body, and then pushed it back. Stroke by stroke I was moving forward and soon I was in the lead. I did my turn as fast as lightning, and pushed off. I knew that if I was going to get this time, I had to pick it up. Now it was down to the last lap of the 100 breaststroke. I had to get this time so I sprinted as fast as I could to the wall. I was filled with butterflies when I looked at the scoreboard. I felt frightened but excited. I was out of breath as I used my last piece energy to

look. I was shocked but relieved as I looked at the scoreboard, and that's when I saw it. I saw my time brighter than all the others, I saw the pride in my family's eyes, I saw my coach clapping. I saw that I got the time!

All my hard work paid off! The swim videos, the extra time in the pool, and the amount of practices I went to. It all paid off! I was on cloud nine! When I got out of the pool, I was congratulated by everyone I knew. Once I got changed, my family surprised me and took me out to the Cheesecake Factory. When we reached the restaurant, all my family and I could talk about was my race, and how amazing my swim was. We watched the video over and over again. After we finished food, and we were in the car, all I could think about was how I felt while racing, and how happy I felt. All my hard work had paid off. Then, I had a doubt, but now I realize that if I put my mind to achieve something, I have the potential to reach my goal. December 14th, 2014. I will never forget that day. Slowly as I laid next to the window in the backseat I slowly drifted off to sleep with a smile on my face.



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Puja Romir Chatterjee

From When I hear the word “Puja” I think of a hindu festival, but a Puja is much more than that. Puja is the act of showing reverence to a god, a spirit, or another aspect of the divine through invocations, prayers, songs, and rituals. An essential part of puja for the Hindu devotee is making a spiritual connection with the Gods and Goddesses. Most often that contact is made through an object, an element of nature, sculpture, a vessel, a painting, or a print. This Saraswati puja we all should take the time and realize who Goddess Saraswati is. She is the Goddess of all knowledge, and we the younger generation must understand the significance.

Saraswati puja is very close to our heart as this puja we (my sister , me and our family friends) have it at our home or any of our close uncle's place. We get to see the arrangements and decorations made by our parents and always sit through the whole puja ritual . Also, all kids say aloud the pushpanjali repeating after my dad (he is the priest at our saraswati puja).

Since Saraswati goddess is the goddess of knowledge , music and art , the kids perform any form of art they love in the evening. It's an evening full of fun and extra curricular activities which goes by very quickly .

Bollywood Exposed Pramila Baisya

It always starts with a girl and a guy.
They fall in love and god knows why.
Girls hates guy and thinks he's a sleaze.
Guy doesn't leave, as she pleased.
Anyway...
They have a good time and go on a date,
To the boy, it must be absolute fate.
He then summons her with a song,
The girl finds, she was all wrong.
Now they both love each other,
shouldn't it be easy?
No! Because Bollywood is never that breezy.
Now the girl's going away to get engaged.
Her parents don't approve how the village boy was raised.
Oh wait, now we break into a song,
Because it's so necessary, it's 5 minutes long.
They sing and dance and have a good time.
Because the boy's love, is his only crime.
He goes to stop her before the marriage,
Or she gets taken away on rich boy's carriage.
It's all about money these days,
What a shame.
He goes to stop her, and says he loves her,
“Please let me marry her sir.”
Sir miraculously complies,
And the wedding scenes fly by.
They live happily ever after,
And wait *another song*
Because it was so necessary this plot be 3 hours long.

These are a few reasons I like going to Saraswati Puja every year. Nirav Banerjee

- I get to meet up with ALL my friends.
 - I get to participate in the kids drama.
 - I get to sit down in an auditorium to watch the other dance and song programs.
 - I get to play in the corridors with my friends.
 - I like to collect a souvenir from each stall.
 - I love the energy and all the hard work our parents put into this Puja.
 - There are always so many people to meet and pictures to be taken and memories to be made
 - Best of all I get to spend time with my Family
- Those are a few reasons I like to go to Saraswati Puja every year

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Yet, the River Still Flows

Rupsa Jana

Folks say , “Life’s a river. Its narrow rapids symbolize the hardships faced while its smooth, wide stretches, the tranquility of one’s soul at times.” As the fiery sun rises to kiss the dawn sky with its radiant lips , I settle down into my emerald green canoe with its rustic wooden seats, somehow anxious to start my day of adventure.

“Splash! Splash!” I start to vigorously row the canoe across the clear, yet murky waters. Cool, foaming waves lap against the hull of the canoe , calming me down, my only mother with a singsong voice. Looking back, a line of diminutive ripples mark the path to my tiny, yellow house nestled in the thick ferns of the riverbank, coaxing me to return to the safety of home. However, my arms continue to steer the boat forward, a machine never ceasing to stop.

After a while, the blue sky transforms into a bright cover wrapping around the river and I. To protect us from the dark gray masses of fog rolling in , if there’s any. Cotton-soft dewdrops perch on top of my eyelids, trying to close them, invoking the need for rest, cradled in my mother’s arms of serenity. Suddenly, as soon as I laid back, “ Push! Push! ” My arms jerked , beginning to row faster on their own , coursing me forward rapidly in matter of seconds.

“Ahhh! What’s happening!” My mind was a swirling and swooshing current devouring any trace of relaxation.

After a grueling twelve agonizing seconds, my canoe halted abruptly.

“SLAP!” A sharp wave slapped my cheek, the icy sting pricking my nerves.

“Now , this is a real adventure!” I relished this moment dazed yet, jubilant. I continued to paddle.

Soon, I came across a narrow, dry stretch in the river. My arms ached as strength ebbed out of me. The riverbank soil was scattered with deep, jagged cracks. Instead of the mellow, chirping calls of ducks and egrets, my ears flinched as I heard warbled voices and yelping screams. Even the ripples struggled to grow , knocked unconscious by the sun’s scorching heat.

“Oh my goodness!” My hands flew to my mouth, astonished to start a journey like this. In a distance, I glimpsed at two indistinguishable , blob-like figures, throwing their arms out, heavenward in desperation.

“Please god, help us! Save us! Grant us the blessing of water!”

Then, “SMASH!” The ornate, clay pots balanced atop their heads shattered into pieces. Hot tears scalded my throat as I felt their pain, despondent . I had a sudden urge to paddle faster, to flee from this calamity. But, my canoe dragged on slowly scraping against the narrow banks of the river. I thought I was trapped.

“What is the meaning of this journey?” I cried, frightened.

Yet, the river still flows, without barriers , without hesitation.

A few minutes passed by, my canoe rocked back and forth as it careened down a steep descend. Suddenly, tomato - red hues in the water caught my gaze.

“What now?” I wondered , confused yet curious. Then, I was surrounded by a pile of faceless mounds stacked on top of the riverbanks and an infinitesimal amount of muskets strewn across the bank’s edge.

“Ahhh!” I gasped , petrified. The acrid scent of gunpowder combined with the pungent one of blood clouded my nostrils, nauseating me. At instinct, my hands started rowing faster.

“Swish! Swosh! “ Back and forth....

As the grotesque bodies pulled into the stream and chased after me , I thought the water would stop flowing , overpowered by lifelessness.

Yet, the river still flowed , and soon the red hues would mix into the clear water.

After quite a while, a cool breeze blew through the chambers in my broken heart as I once again saw my tiny, yellow house sitting atop the banks.

Then “WHOOSH!”

My body reeled backwards as a gust of wind swirled at my direction. My eyelids snapped shut, trying to forget what I had just seen. Then, all was calm and quiet. I glanced back , and there it was. The faceless mounds.....the coffee brown muskets.....the crumbled clay pots which formed a dam , creating a reservoir of past memories.

I slowly tilted my head to the opposite direction , and sighed with a peculiar sense of comfort and relief. The same crystal clear water coursed forward carrying the logs and the leaves of the future with her.

I whispered, “Alright. I will wake up and take this journey again.”

Yet, the river still flows and I shall flow with it.



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Season for Reason

Aditi Dhara

Every season has a reason, right? Everyone thinks the seasons change because the earth always moves. Actually, it's because we want the seasons to change. True fact, we want winter because we want the snow. Spring comes because we love flowers! In the summer, we get to go to the pool. Fall invades and we jump into mountains of leaves! I wish I could change the seasons in just aSNAP!

Winter is the season when we spread joy. Everyone runs outside and messes around with gobs of snow. Everyone makes snowmen with top hats and scarves and cute little faces. I can't wait until everybody opens their Christmas presents and screams, "Yes"! This is awesome!" Some will get toys and others will get games. We all bundle up and we go down the street singing carols. This time of year, we also come to the Saraswati Puja!



April showers bring May flowers! Flowers are everywhere! I love spring because everywhere there is flowers. Everyone gets chocolates and all sorts of goodies. Everything is so exciting! The trees are green and the air is sweet. The sun shines very brightly. There is no fighting and everything is so calm. Rabbits, squirrels, deer, bears wake up relieved from winter.



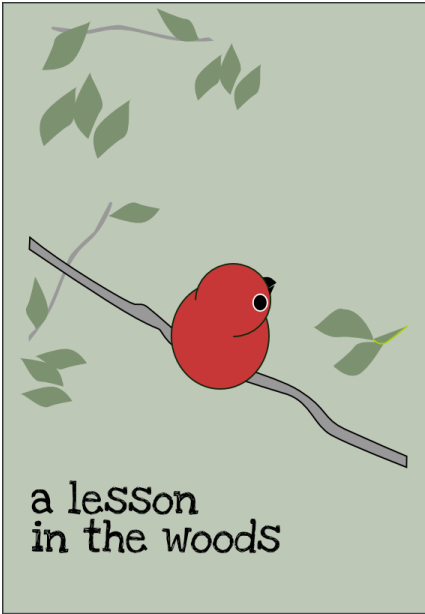
Summer is here and we all want to go to the pool! School is out and everyone wants to play! Some people go on summer vacation, while others stay at home. 4th of July comes and we all celebrate by watching fireworks! BOOM! CRASH! Fireworks burst as we watch the sparks shoot through the air! The sun's rays hit us making us sweat. The beach sand trickled between my feet. Waves crashed against the sand, kids laughed every time a wave crashed into them.



Fall has invaded in clusters of leaves. School will start soon and there is so much to do! Everybody has to do school shopping and buy new school clothes for school. The trees are bare and leaves are brown, yellow, red, and orange. Kids will meet their former teachers and new teachers. Fall is when we also jump into masses of leaves! Come on! Everyone jump in your piles of leaves!



I enjoy all the seasons from winter to autumn and I hope that you do too! I hope you liked my writing!

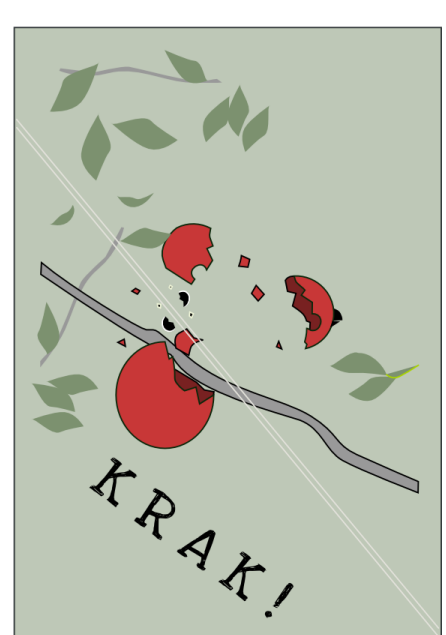
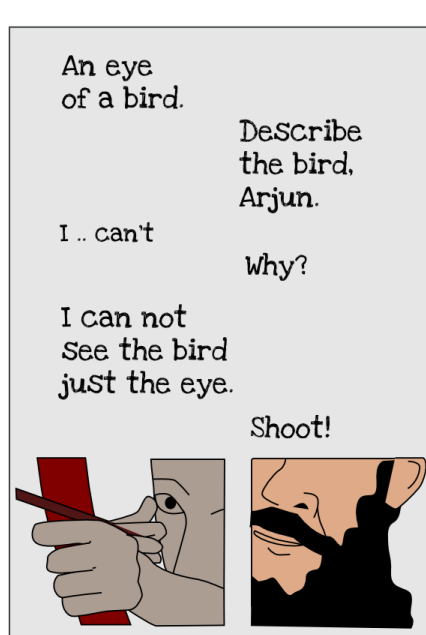
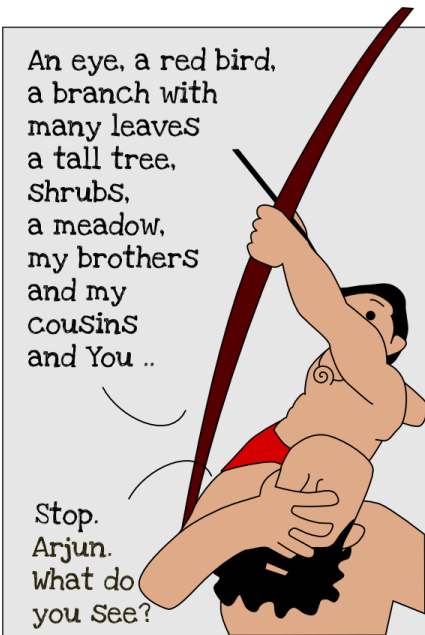
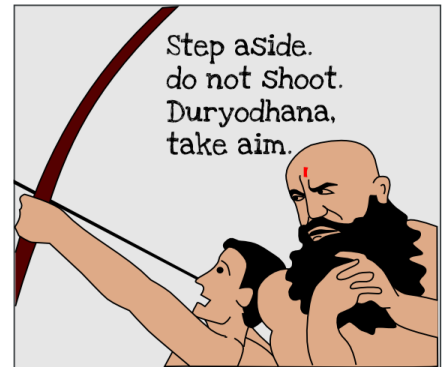
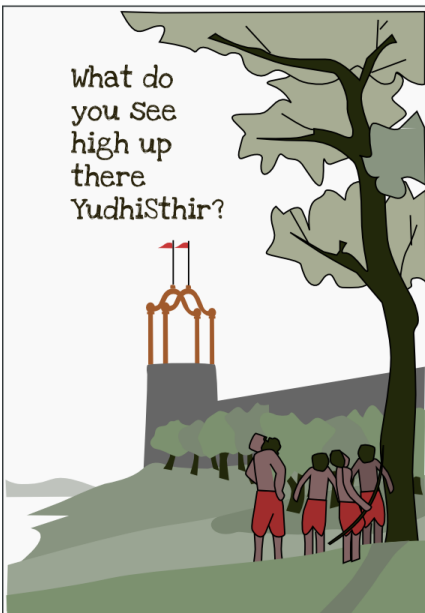
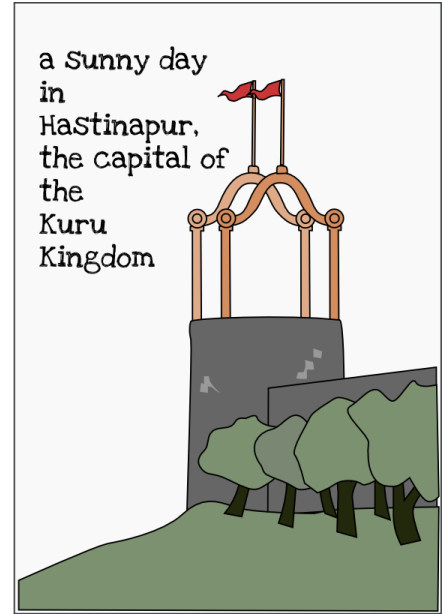


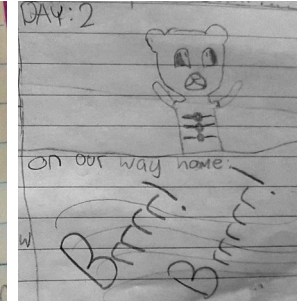
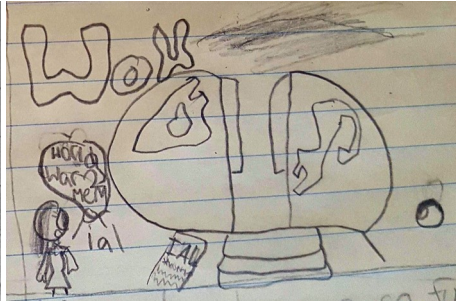
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Travel Diary

Anoushka Mukherjee

Road trip begins:
I have never been on a road trip before with my friends and of course our parents accompanied us .

First Stop Savannah :
I had learned in school about the 1st war of independence, and Savannah being the first of the

places that played an important role in the civil war. I was very excited to be there.

Next stop Orlando :
Magic Kingdom was so much fun!!
At the very end of the whole day of meeting princesses and rides, there were fireworks near the huge castle. It was spectacular!!

Epcot was super fun too! We got to spend the day in different country's pavilions , get a taste of their

culture and get stamps.

Next stop Charleston :
At last week were eating in a fantastic restaurant in Charleston. We were getting back to driving.

On our way home:
We'll are getting super duper close to New Jersey. We are almost home !!!! It is getting cold again .
Brrrrrrr Brrrrrrr :)

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Not Athletic Ravi

Shounak Ghosh

"Ugh, do I have to," Ravi thought. Ravi's parents made him join a sport. First they thought soccer would be good because the sport itself wasn't too hard or too confusing. Ravi wasn't that much of a sports fan. Or as his parents would say without a sport he wouldn't stay fit. He felt butterflies in his stomach. He knew he wasn't ready for his first game

On Saturday he went to his first game. Ravi's dad's head must have hurt because of the million times Ravi repeated "let's go home." Ravi very slowly got up from the car seat. He gradually walked through the driveway. Once he got to the field he would not move. He went to the hill with his dad to place down the chair they brought. Then Ravi's dad told him to get his soccer uniform. Taking baby steps he walked down the hill as slow as a turtle. You would think he could walk faster. He probably set a world record of walking the slowest. Finally when Ravi's dad thought that his son couldn't walk any faster he went with him. They met with Ravi's coach. "He, hello" stammered Ravi nervously. Their team shirt was purple and his number was nine.

He went to the field with his team and coach. They first did some practice kicking and shooting. Then they played the actual game. They played up against the green team. When his coach told him his position Ravi had no idea what his coach said. BUt the times Ravi's dad showed the boring soccer matches actually came to use. From those matches Ravi remembered some of the positions. In the beginning of the game it was quite enjoyable. Even though Ravi basically did nothing he kind of liked it. As the game went on his hair seemed to get sweatier and sweatier and he seemed to get more tired. The time seemed to stop. He started to run slower and wished the game would stop, and to his luck it did. He ran to his dad's chair and laid down on it. "Wake up" Ravi's dad shouted and gave him some gatorade. And with that they left.

Ravi went home and told his parents that he didn't want to play soccer. They didn't want to argue too much about it because they knew that their son didn't like to play sports. Although they did want Ravi to play a sport. His parents didn't want to give up. They kept on researching.

Finally they find a good sport (It was tennis). Ravi's parents thought it was a good idea because they had a

tennis court near their house so they could get a lot of practice in. The next day they go to the court and practiced but Ravi's dad realized that his son is not good with aim. So that didn't work either.

Ravi told his mom and the next thing you know she went straight to researching another sport. Ravi was getting tired of doing sports so he told his parents but they wouldn't budge.

The next day Ravi thought about all the sports his parents looked through on the computer and decided that swimming was going to be his choice. He went downstairs to tell his parents and his parents agreed. "Over the summer we can practice in the pool" Ravi's dad exclaimed! They had a pool right next to their house. In the summer they went to their pool often. Ravi's mom thought Ravi should have swimming as his final option. After a few days Ravi and his dad went to Swimming Club to have his first lesson. He told his parents that it was fun playing in the water. Since he liked it Ravi's parents wanted him to continue. As weeks went on he got better and better. After one year of practice Ravi reached level 5. His parents finally were happy and proud of their son for accomplishing a sport. And Ravi was proud of himself too.



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