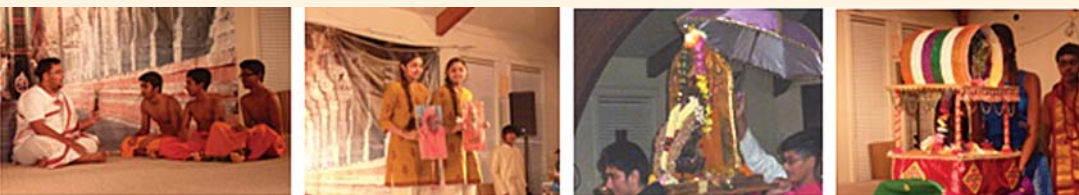


Thanksgiving Vedanta Retreat 2015 at Saylorburg Gurukulam



*The quest for the knowledge of self is a journey
into one's self.*

Swami Tattvavidananda Sarswati



The Thanksgiving course was held from November 26 to 29 with Swami Tattvavidanandaji and Swami Pratyagbodhanandaji. The course began with registration and orientation. During the orientation, Suddhatmaji explained the course schedule and provided other related information. The children were grouped according to their ages as: the juniors (ages 6 to 9), the seniors, (ages 10 to 12) and the Teens (Ages 13 and above). Each group had its own activities such as Vedic chanting, yoga, Sanskrit study, drama, Arts and Crafts, Vedic Heritage, aarati and camp fires administered by the staff and the volunteers. Lance Daniels, Savithri Aunty, Ganesaji, Girijaji, Radhaji, Balaji, Vasilikiji, and Saumyaji participated in the children's programs.

Swami Tattvavidanandaji taught Mati Vilapanam from Upadesa Sahasri. He also taught meditation. He held Satsangs. Swami Pratyagbodhanandaji taught Vrtasura Catuhsloki from Bhagawata. Suddhatmaji taught chanting and Vijaya Hari Darve conducted Yoga classes. Mukesh Desaiji provided instructions in Hindustani classical music in the Raga Bhairavi. He also sang Bhajans.

Swami Tattvavidanandaji explained how me and mine create separation. You act this way because of your fears and desires and create problems in life. You have to realize that you are the knowing awareness. The mind moves all the time. You need to slow down the mind. For this you just watch the mind. You cannot depend on mind for

happiness. When the mind is quiet, you will know that you are already happy. You are the happiness.

Swami Pratyagbodhanandaji told the story of Vrtrasura who requests the Lord to allow him(Vrtrasura) to be a servant of God's servants; he did not want to be attached to anything, not even the freedom from the cycle of rebirth. All he wanted was to be in the presence of God. Swamiji said it was important to have this kind of devotion. To get the knowledge that leads to the devotion one should have a good Guru and a proper school where such knowledge is taught.

On November 28, under the direction of Savithriji and with the help of Girijaji the children presented a cultural program. The Junior students enacted a play 'Gopal Bhaiya'. The seniors presented a play 'The tenth man'. The teenagers, in tribute to Pujya Swami Dayanandaji presented 'Lok Kalyan' a program showing Pujya Swamiji's work and his life. The program was greatly appreciated by everybody.

All the staff and volunteers worked hard to make the course a success.

Thanks giving camps are fun and entertainment for all. The children enjoyed it. The adults received valuable knowledge also. During this camp they learned some good Yoga and chanting. It was a very nice gathering for Thanksgiving. The camp ended on November 29, 2015.

Reported by Aroind Bagal