

Purna Vidya Teachers Training Program and Carnatic Music Workshop at Saylorburg Gurukulam 2013

The camp was held at Saylorburg PA from August 11 to August 16, 2013. This is the second camp of Purna Vidya Teachers Training Program. Swami Pratyagbodhanandaji and Savithri Maniji administered the program. Maharajapuram Sri Ramachandran conducted the Carnatic Music Workshop. Suddhatmaji taught chanting and meditation. Yoga classes were conducted by Lance Daniels.

The Purna Vidya Teacher's Training program was conceived by Pujya Swamiji for children and youth growing in the modern world. The native forms of culture and religion are challenged by other forms reaching the children through global media. They have to choose. This program provides knowledge and insight into the vision of Vedas, the literature and religious culture of India. In this retreat the adult students were taught how to offer this program to their own communities.

During the orientation on the first day Savithriji explained the intent of the program and how it will be conducted. She has been organizing Cultural Programs, essentially for children at this Gurukulam since 1992.

The purpose of the camp was to teach the students a method to organize programs especially for children and expose them to Indian culture. To that effect a small play on Krishna Leela was staged by the



students with Savithriji's help. The teaching exposed the students to various techniques including planning, arranging the scenes, props, acting, directing, and music. The students practiced several Bhajans every day.

Swami Pratyagbodhanandaji emphasized the need to be careful with the children. He illustrated with examples, how the good values in Hindu religion and Indian culture can be taught. Swamijis used extensive charts to explain the values that should be preserved. He explained the meaning of Prasad Budhi and how a cheerful attitude can be maintained in all circumstances. He said children watch and follow their parents. Therefore, it is necessary to take the responsibility for one's action but one should do whatever needs to be done. Any action has a reaction. Ahankara can cause serious effect on many. What you teach will affect the next generation.

Gokulasthami was celebrated with Sri Krishna Puja, chanting and distribution of Prasada.

Suddhatmaji explained the chanting of mantras in great details. There were new students in the class and it was appropriate to expose them to teaching of Vedas, the Upanisads and the correct way of chanting. Suddhatmaji conducted chanting classes everyday which included shanti mantras and Gita Dhyanam.

Students were given sufficient teaching material during the course on rituals, pujas and many bhajans and songs for use when they start teaching.

The Carnatic Vocal Music Workshop was designed to facilitate the understanding and appreciation of Carnatic Music. Sri



Maharajapuram S. Ramachandran is a renowned Carnatic Vocal Musician. In this workshop Sri Ramachandranji taught music. He paid individual attention to each student, gave them instructions and practice lessons. It was very beneficial for the students to learn from Ramachandranji, who is recognized as one of India's top artists in Carnatic Music.

The Kitchen Staff worked hard to serve delicious food. The food was served on time. Priests Sri Ravichandran and Sri Ganesa both performed the pujas regularly. Suddhatmaji, the staff and the volunteers worked hard to make this camp a success. The retreat ended on August 16, 2013.

Reported by Arvind Bagal