



IWA

DHWAANI

Indian Women's Association

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Sounds of IWA, Singapore



CONTENTS

Letter from the President	1
From the Editorial Team	2
TRAILBLAZERS AND ROLE MODELS	3
#Hashtags <i>By Anindita Ghosh</i>	
Regardless of wealth, status or beauty <i>By Azeena Badarudeen</i>	
The Quality Inspector - A Tall Order <i>By Priya Aditya</i>	4
#Lifelonglearner <i>By Ramanpreet Kaur Bhatia</i>	
An Everyday #Role-Model <i>By Bhanu Ramchandran</i>	5
Upwards and Onwards <i>By Jolly Vatsa</i>	
Queen of Green Claire Sancelot <i>By Sukanya Pushkarna</i>	6
Let there be Green <i>By Tvisha Agarwal</i>	7
Of Need and Greed <i>By Priya G Aditya</i>	
KIDZ CORNER Voyage of Discovery <i>By Anushka Yadav</i>	8
GOURMET CORNER Potato Stuffed Bun <i>By Ruchi Bajj</i>	
WEC CORNER Loneliness <i>By Madhu Suri</i>	9
The Wait <i>By Shilpa DikshitThapliyal</i>	10
The Awakening <i>By Mita Bhatt</i>	
HEALTH Understanding your Headaches <i>By Raffles Hospital</i>	11
IWA - Out & About	14
CONNECT Self-Care: Deliberate, Restorative & Personal <i>By Rakhi Shankar</i>	16
CARE	17
IWA CLUBS	19

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends

Hope you all have had a great summer break and it's great to see you participating in and enjoying yourselves at the IWA events.

The Iron Lady of India, Shrimati Sushma Swaraj, a trailblazer for women and politics, is no more. We shall miss her feisty and inspiring speeches which had clarity of purpose and passion. I am indeed privileged to have heard her in person, in January 2018 in Singapore, and her voice still echoes in my heart.

IWA had a super successful Summer Bazaar in April. I take this opportunity to thank all volunteers, shoppers and vendors who made this possible. We made it the most happening bazaar in town. The smiling faces of the vendors said it all.

Our events calendar has been brimming over with more than forty events since my last note. IWA club chairs have brought diverse flavours and colours into each meeting, leaving IWA members saying, "Yeh Dil Maange More." One of our most memorable events was a trip to Batam with the Travel club.

While we did many fun things, we continued to work with our community partners too. We spent a fulfilling afternoon at the Swami Home, celebrating the birthdays of the elderly residents. HCA Hospice organised an orientation session, where we learnt of many more service opportunities.

A donation drive for groceries was very well received and supported wholeheartedly by the members, their families and friends and their kind hearts filled the pantry of the H.O.M.E. shelter. The recipients had tears in their eyes as they smiled and we were humbled to receive their love.

We are in the middle of a collection drive for phone cards for migrant workers. Thank you members - your generous hearts leave me speechless.

IWA has been an integral part, formally and informally, of the national integration efforts. The integration activities are largely covered in the 'Out and About' section of the magazine. We continue to work with the People's Association, the National Integration Council, the Indian High Commission, Singapore, among others.

IWA continues to plan and curate exciting events for all of you, so do check the newsletter, website and Facebook page for updates. Do look out for the pioneering 'IWApreneur' - IWA's event for service providers, on November 5 at Royal Palms, Clarke Quay. We look forward to your wholehearted participation.

As this edition of Dhvani is dedicated to trailblazers, I would like to thank my dad for making me what I am today. He stood against all odds for me to fulfil my dreams. I am what he made me and I love my creator. To quote Helen Keller, "It is always painful to set one's self against tradition, especially against the conventions and prejudices that hedge about womanhood."

Starting with the Mid-Autumn festival and going right up to Christmas and New Year, the festive season is here! Let's get it off to a rocking start with yet another happy and happening 'IWA Festive Bazaar' on September 17 at Suntec City!

Celebrating ourselves,
Yours truly
Anu

FRONT COVER

About the art:

Sushma Swaraj was one of the greatest women leaders of India, who blazed a trail for others to follow. She was very caring, compassionate and charismatic. I believe that her contribution to the nation and its citizens will remain unparalleled.

Medium: Acrylic on canvas

Size: 14x11 inches

About the artist:

An Engineer by profession and an artist by passion, Rosni sincerely tries to reflect a glimpse of her passion and innovation in her creations. She is the owner-cum-founder of Ros Petals. Her specialties are Kerala mural paintings and realistic paintings.



From the EDITORIAL TEAM

Dear Readers,

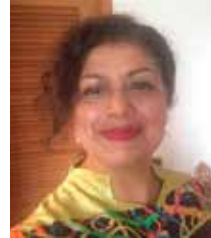
When we were deciding our 'Trailblazer' theme for this issue, little did we know that we were going to be losing one of our most popular role models and trailblazer par excellence - Smt Sushma Swaraj in August. It is only fitting that we pay homage to this great leader who had close ties with Singapore, with a painting of her on our cover page. Sushma Swaraj will continue to be an inspiration to many generations of women to excel in their respective chosen fields and serve the nation on their own terms. We will sorely miss her iconic waistcoat and sari clad figure, feisty addresses in immaculate Hindi, her humour-filled incisive responses and comments on Twitter, her concrete and selfless service to India but above all, her "can do" attitude.

We hope that with our theme, we have planted the seeds of motivation to go green with IWA. We have some ideas here and will be posting more as a regular feature. The back cover is designed to show the close relationship between women and the environment.

Our photo collage speaks for itself - there's always something for everybody at IWA and our calendar is packed! Read about who we are and what we do in the pages that follow especially 'IWA Out and About.'

We would love to hear from you, so do send in your thoughts, essays, travelogues or art to editor@iwasingapore.org

Cheers!



*Sukanya Pushkarna (Editor), Priya G Aditya (Sub-editor)
Bhanu Ramchandran, Tara Dhar Hasnain, Bageshree Kulkarni,
Azeena Badarudeen*

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TRAILBLAZERS AND ROLE MODELS



#HASHTAGS

By Anindita Ghosh

This world has many better #Pathbreaker examples than me...

But for my son a #TrailBlazer #RoleModel I hope to be.

For I believe womankind is too talented to be boxed into tiers:

'Home-makers', 'SAH Mums', 'Career Women', 'Entrepreneurs'.

So a career banker on a motherhood break

Took a leap of faith...

Into the world of arts & entertainment ...

Though she was many years too late.

But the universe was kind... opened many a gate.

In just two years – she had 24 commercial productions under her belt!

Her starry-eyed childhood dreams started coming true...
When on stage - she felt as if without horses, on wings she flew.

And when the film / shoot sets go live with Lights Camera Action...

Reality slides away and she doesn't hold back a fraction.

Actor, Director, Producer, Writer, Singer, Choreographer – many a hat she now gets to wear

Which she enjoys as much as managing a banking product with flair!

Truth be told - Arts are my passion, though entrepreneurship isn't an easy ride,

But then...

What is life without challenges to make us rise up and fight?

The stories I'll be able to share with generations after

Of how #WomanPower can tame any #UnchartedWaters!

Sharing the story to inspire more women

To #StartSomethingNew

Coz from #BreakingTheMoulds to #ForgeNewPaths – #NoGlassCeiling can stop you!



REGARDLESS OF WEALTH, STATUS OR BEAUTY

By Azeena Badarudeen

I winced at the reflection that stared back at me in the mirror. "One, two, three on my forehead. One, two, three, four white hairs!" I murmured under my breath. "Now you know why I keep telling you to settle down soon. Only 33, yet the marks of ageing are all over your face!"

I took a deep breath. My mother's callous comments were usually no deterrent in making me conscious of my physical appearance - the one aspect of myself I was least bothered about. But these white hairs and the lines that crawled across my forehead were too obvious to ignore. The last thing I wanted, hours before attending my MBA graduation ceremony, was to get into a row with my mother.

I shut my eyes tight and allowed my thoughts to drift to July 7, 2009, the day I was conferred my BA (Honours) degree. My mother's words as we left the convocation hall reverberated through my head, sending chills down my spine.

"Now, I'll have to start the great groom search for you, Suha. 23 - the perfect age and armed with a good Honours degree. Am so thankful I started you on a savings plan the moment you entered Primary 1, and have bought enough gold to be the envy of my friends and our relatives. I'll spare no effort in ensuring your wedding is on par with what my sisters did for their daughters!"

I narrowed my eyes and raised my neatly threaded eyebrows, yet another beauty mission thrust upon me by my mother, a woman who had fulfilled all the rites of passage at "the right time." Everything seemed to have fallen into place for my parents - the age gap between them was perfect, their horoscopes had matched, and every senior member of the community had been present to bless them at their wedding. He too had everything, a coveted degree from an Ivy League university completed on a public scholarship, and a family status to boast of, among several other gifts.

It was a match made in heaven, except that the marriage was hell.

Years of prolonged pain stemming from his infidelity, masked in picture-perfect family photographs of the three of us smiling as per the cameraman's instructions, and holidays to exotic destinations, failed miserably at salvaging my parents' marriage.

I opened my eyes slowly and decided that I was neither my mother's sisters nor their daughters. Whoever intends to marry me has to accept me for who I am, regardless of my wealth, status or beauty.



THE QUALITY INSPECTOR - A TALL ORDER

By Priya Aditya

Naini is a small town in Allahabad, India. It was here that our company had placed the order for two transformers of 400 kV.

I was all of 32 when I was assigned the privileged task of going there to inspect these high voltage generator transformers for our power project. Our Head of Purchases looked askance when my manager told him that he was sending me for the inspection.

I boarded the overnight train to Allahabad. Travelling with me was the Quality Inspector of the end customer. His face widened into a huge grin when he saw me alone in the train, thinking of possibilities perhaps. "Why is he so happy to see you?" asked my husband, a bit annoyed, as he saw me off. As the train started moving, this gentleman came up to me and said, "Don't worry, okay?" I didn't really like the look of him. I silenced him with, "Why should I worry?"

On reaching our destination, we checked into our respective hotel rooms. Such nights alone out of town are nerve wracking for me. I do not sleep because the windows of hotel rooms do not have latches. I usually keep staring at the window wondering about the possibilities of somebody breaking in, until sleep overtakes me. It was thus that I woke up the next day.

Scene two: At the factory, everybody welcomed this harmless young woman in traditional Indian clothes. After all, what would a female inspector know about transformers? The supervisors, along with the elderly factory manager, conducted the Factory Acceptance Tests (FAT) one by one. I kept pointing out insufficiencies and they didn't seem to mind accepting them.

It took three days for the inspection of the transformers, two storeys tall, to be completed, and for my list of observations to be ready. That evening as we met in the manager's chamber, the old man handed me the inspection report jovially and asked me to sign it. I refused, asking him to attend to my list of observations first. The manager was taken aback. How dare a mere woman ask him to attend to a sheet full of observations, that would take many more days to comply with before getting paid! But this woman stood firm as her duty dictated.

Another gentleman from his team saw reason and eventually they accepted my list, after some ranting. But I was angry by now. They offered me sweets but I refused, and they understood why. I guess their respect for women engineers increased from that day.

I returned to my room, packed my suitcase, picked up my counterpart and got into the taxi that was to take us back to the railway station. I tried to speak professionally with this frivolous gentleman. But all he was interested in saying was that he was totally impressed with me, and so forth. The taxi driver, more decent, directed annoyed looks at this man but he didn't seem to care. I ignored his advances and asked instead if the train was on time.

Finally, he gave up. But I should thank him and the chauvinistic manager on the shop floor for giving me this story!



#LIFELONGLEARNER

By Ramanpreet Kaur Bhatia

My philosophy is that not only are you responsible for your life, but doing the best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment - Oprah Winfrey

As an ambitious individual, I have always had a go-getter attitude in every walk of life. As much as I believe in destiny, my life's experiences have instilled in me the belief that hard work, a huge amount of faith and sheer courage in oneself are imperative in shaping one's destiny.

At the crucial, nascent phase of my professional life, I took the decision to become an entrepreneur and carve my own path and be a trailblazer. Facing a sea of risks and an ocean of challenges as a relatively young entrepreneur with a plethora of ideas, in a valley of judgmental people, I had to tread wisely on the path to my eventual success. It meant a lot to me that my achievements became a benchmark for other people.

I moved to Singapore in April 2016 as a trailing spouse, leaving behind my work, my family, my friends. I felt uprooted and lost in a new land.

But as someone once said, "Never allow waiting to become

a habit. Live your dreams and take risks. Life is happening now," my trailblazer attitude resurfaced and I decided not to let this change dampen my spirit.

The journey started with enrolling myself in kathak classes at SIFAS, fulfilling a childhood passion. I went on to join the Toastmasters Club to pursue my love for public speaking and the Singapore chapter of ICAI to continue my professional pursuits, and started using my professional knowledge and expertise of many years to write a series of articles and blogs.

I was the first in my Toastmasters club, to complete the prescribed path in record time. Ever evolving, constantly self-improving, I have gone on to hold leadership positions in the club, like Treasurer, VP Education and Project Evaluator, and have been invited to other clubs as a guest speaker.

I have always believed that every action you take, every pursuit you follow, gives a new and fulfilling meaning to your existing persona. One of the best ways to make an impact is by breaking ground with new ideas, spearheading new concepts, and originating new proposals.

The satisfaction and gratification that I have derived from reinventing myself and forging a new path for myself in a foreign land, at this stage of my life, has come as food for the soul. Yes, I am a trailblazer, who has carved her own path and chiseled her destiny, and become an inspiration to her children.

Be a trailblazer - don't be afraid to make your own tracks. Work towards being a person who can come up with creative solutions or a solid Plan B.



AN EVERYDAY #ROLE-MODEL

By **Bhanu Ramchandran**

“Amma, why don’t you wear a nightie, it will be loose and comfy?” Getting my mother-in-law, the quintessential Tamil Brahmin *mami* (middle-aged traditional lady), to wear anything but a saree even if she has rashes from the heat and the blouse is chafing her skin, is next to impossible.

After a lot of persuasion we settle on a loose t-shirt instead of the blouse, “but only at night, ok?” Born in a small village in South India, my MIL grew up in small towns, studied only up to grade 8, got married at barely 20, and has worn sarees ever since she came of age. While marriage took her to larger towns and cities, an ultra-orthodox mother-in-law and a caring but busy husband, ensured that her world remained the size of her home. Life passed her by in a blur of raising six children, observing the daily rituals and practices of a traditional home, and pandering to family and societal conventions that saw nothing wrong in the wife being cooped up at home.

So how did that woman turn out to be the one that this modern, well-educated, liberal, outgoing, feminist daughter-in-law looks up to?

When I married into the family, I thought I was going to be like a *doughnut in a plate of vadas!*. I wondered whether my MIL would accept me as I am, and what reluctant adjustments I would need to make. Turns out, none were required. Not because she was the one to tolerate and accommodate me. Because, for her, all these were non-issues. She has this rare ability to look beyond attire, personality, lifestyle and personal choices, to perceive and

focus on a person’s nature and values. She embraced me with all my unfamiliar airs, and has loved me unconditionally ever since. #Non-judgemental is what we might call it today!

As we got to know each other, I discovered this woman who never went to high school but knows all her medicines by name and purpose, wants to go to the library the day she lands in Singapore, devours the Tamil Murasu before her breakfast, tunes in to the news on TV twice a day, and is up to date on everything from the prime minister to palazzo suits. She will hesitate to speak in her sketchy English but painstakingly read the Straits Times and shyly ask me if she didn’t understand something. Her pet possession is this aged diary, in which this expert cook has been noting down recipes and cooking tips culled from various shows/magazines over the years. #LifelongLearner?

My teenage daughters find her ‘cool’, and love to indulge her curiosity about all the new changes happening around her. I doubt if she would ever describe herself as feminist, but she never fails to advise my helper - in a hotchpotch of English and gestures and earnest expressions - to educate her daughters and make them independent. #Feminist? In fact, once, when I sought to conclude a puja by giving gifts to married women, my MIL suggested I start with my helper - a Catholic Filipina – after all she was a married woman too! #Liberal?

Some women do not step out of their homes to do what they do. Despite limited exposure, they manage to learn, evolve and adapt to the changing times. They may never trend on social media as #Trailblazers. They are unlikely to be featured in magazines (except this one!) or invited to give TED talks. Yet these everyday #Role-models, in their quiet and unassuming way, inspire and influence those in their intimate family circles. Perhaps, more subtly and deeply than the well-known women achievers we seek inspiration from.

How do I toast her and her ilk? *Shiva Shiva*, please don’t mention alcohol around her... much better to make a steaming cup of her favourite *Masala Chai* and say cheers to my inspiring MIL!



UPWARDS AND ONWARDS

By **Jolly Vatsa**

Being adventurous has been a strong part of my personality, thanks to my upbringing. I have always been an independent and self-motivated individual. To quote my dad, “Life is a mystery to be lived, not a problem to be solved”: I have taken his words as my life’s motto, which has led me to be always inclined towards all kinds of adventurous activities.

Trekking had been on the top of my bucket list. Hence I was excited about my very first trek. Fortunately, I recently got a golden opportunity to be part of a rather challenging trek to Fansipan (Sapa valley, Vietnam) which stood at a formidable 3143 metres high. I was thrilled when I was just 143m away from the goal. In a mere 100 steps, I could wave my country’s flag with pride and feel the sheer joy and satisfaction of having checked an item ticked off my bucket list! I took those few steps to the peak, overwhelmed with joy.

This trip was a completely novel experience, from overcoming narrow pathways and fissures to staying in camps with no electricity, and having to use headlamps in the pitch darkness. Traversing the rough and rocky terrain was a real challenge as the path ahead was completely dark and unknown. Crossing the rocky route, at times like a mountain animal on all fours, was a completely unique experience. The desire and ambition to reach the summit kept me going all the time.

During the course of the trek, I came to realize how insignificant I was before the grandeur of Mother Nature. Contemplating this makes me wonder how one trek in the hills has taught me so many life lessons. I encountered a bunch of accomplished trekkers whose success stories left a mark on me. This trek marks the beginning of an infinite list of trips to come. I know I will conquer some summits but not others, but hey, isn’t that what life is all about?

This trek was a feather in my cap, giving me a sense of satisfaction in my heart, and adding a twinkle in my eye. I am now ready to go conquer my next summit!



Queen of Green

CLAIRE SANCELOT

Blazing a trail to a zero-waste lifestyle

By Sukanya Pushkarna

I met Claire Sancelot in July 2019 at the 21st Soroptimists International Convention in Kuala Lumpur and was thoroughly inspired by her words, her work, her lifestyle and her zeal. A true trailblazer in the field of sustainable lifestyle, Claire has not only broken many boundaries in her personal journey to a zero waste life, but also gone on to create a viable enterprise that embraces that change and awareness to make a huge contribution to her community. In fact, the United Nations gave her an award in 2017 for her contributions towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Here is her story:

Claire Sancelot's journey into a zero-waste life started in 2010 in Hong Kong with a simple desire to contain the plastic waste created by her newborn baby. The diapers and baby wipes, brushes, cleansers etc were only the first in line of the many things Claire and her husband decided to throw out as they became more and more educated about their long term negative impact on the environment.

She now religiously follows the 5 Rs principle: **Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Rot and Recycle.**

In a world which has become increasingly "disposable," Claire is doing her very best to get people to embrace a "zero-waste" sustainable lifestyle, the fundamental goal of which is to reduce one's own environmental impact.

Claire's first baby step included **refusing** most things that were single use (most plastic, disposable goods and packaging) and opting instead for **reusable** ones. She uses clear glass containers in her fridge and pantry and buys only what she needs from bulk food stores so there are no individual plastic wrapping. She and her husband make sure that they finish all their leftovers on Sunday to ensure no food is wasted. This is a way to **reduce** overall consumption and wastage of material. Claire also decluttered her home by **refusing** anything she didn't need, donating or selling off things she already owned but didn't use. She prefers to buy second hand furniture, toys, books and even clothes for her home and family. She now lives a very minimalistic life. I think it takes a huge amount of courage and self-confidence to do this.

Claire is most passionate about the fourth R -**rot** (compost.) All the vegetable peels, tea or coffee grinds and eggshells from her cooking go into a composting bin which she gives to a farmer to turn into fertiliser for her garden. Lastly, she **recycles** whatever is left. Claire is quick to point out that while **recycle** was the big buzz word a few years ago, it is the last of the five Rs to a zero waste lifestyle today. We **HAVE** to **reduce** what we put into the landfills to save this planet.

Claire Sancelot's journey into entrepreneurship in KL, Malaysia where she moved in 2015 is even more inspiring. Seeing the lack of sustainable products in the regular supermarkets, Claire has taken her passion for sustainable living and turned it into a viable enterprise. She launched her first organic bulk food store The Hive, in Malaysia a few years ago and has recently opened a second store in another location. She works hand in hand with local producers with the same sustainability mindset, bringing their locally grown and ethically manufactured goods to her clients. What a brilliant idea! Now one can buy organic foods in bulk, eco-friendly solid soaps and toiletries, makeup, reusable kitchen towels, reusable sanitary napkins and menstrual cups along with a variety of bamboo products, beeswax wrappers and a host of other things, under one roof in the city of Kuala Lumpur. Claire Sancelot is working relentlessly to do her bit for the world her three children will inherit.

Why we should care:

The Amazon rainforests are ablaze! They have been burning for many weeks now and this is a calamity for our planet! The glaciers have been melting faster

and faster and it is predicted that many countries like Kiriwati in the central Pacific Ocean will cease to exist in a few decades if not earlier and Venice will disappear in a hundred years, thanks to the rising sea levels! Everyday, numerous birds and animals are dying due to ingestion of toxic waste.

The what, where, and how of our consumption of food and resources, consumer goods like cars, make-up, fashion, housing, and even travel—everything has a serious repercussion on the environment. Even organic waste go into landfills which then breakdown slowly, emitting large amounts of methane gas. Methane is one of the greenhouse gases (GHG) responsible for global warming (climate change) which is threatening the future of our planet.

Everyone has a part to play in looking after the planet but sometimes it's difficult to know what to do in our day-to-day lives beyond recycling.

It does take some effort but a few simple lifestyle changes can really help. Having a reusable metal water bottle instead of buying water in plastic bottles can reduce your waste. Bringing tote bags on shopping trips, buying clothes second-hand, and composting food waste are all wonderful ways to reduce overall waste. Eating a vegan or plant-based diet helps us reduce our carbon footprint.

Let us start today with a few small steps in the direction of a zero-waste and sustainable lifestyle by following this incredible #trailblazer, Claire Sancelot and other Green heroes like her.



LET THERE BE GREEN



I drew this picture thinking of the times when animals must have lived a peaceful life before we humans conquered everything. I feel that everything was green before and now it is not. My goal is to save the planet and save nature.

-Tvisha Agarwal, 11 years old, is a little artist with a few accolades under her belt. She is also a published author, plays badminton for her school team and is a swimmer, training for Gold level certification.



Let Nature be our future.

Of Need and Greed

Priya G Aditya

Sale! Sale! Sale!
The favourite brand beckons.
We're dressed and ready, out we run,
We have enough but again, just this once!

We buy, to show we have the money-
How about we donate that penny
To someone who has no bread, no honey?

We'll take nothing along when we die,
Our good-time friends, how many would cry?

Care for the earth, we've got only one
Reduce your possessions, they're worth none.

Only when you've conquered your greed
Have you really really won.
Alexander the Great realised this,

So did Ashoka, embracing peace;

The damage we do will haunt our kids;

It's about time we understand this!



VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

By Anushka Yadav



I was driving down the narrow, dark path in the woods and I was scared and lonely. There was absolutely no sign of people and all I could see was tall trees standing high above me. My car started to run low on gas and this made me nervous. "Nobody would want to be stuck here in the middle of nowhere at midnight," I thought to myself.

It soon started to rain. I left my car parked on the edge of the road and kept walking ahead in the hope of finding help. I was out of water and food. I barely had any charge left in my cell phone. I had no idea where I was, so I decided to take a nap.

When I woke up it was nine in the morning. I got up and continued walking ahead. I was hungry and thirsty. After a five mile walk I found some berries hanging from a tree. Their sweet taste made me forget I was lost.

After having my 'breakfast' I moved on in search of water. On my way I saw squirrels eating nuts and running up and down trees. I could soon see the sun, it lit my path. It looked like a never-ending road. I came across a lake. When I put my face in the water and opened my eyes I felt fresh and I could see many weeds and colourful fish. As I touched the water, it felt like jelly, but it felt good. I moved my hands in the water and looked at the ripples that formed. The sun shone brightly above me and its rays reflected onto the water.

In the next half hour, I had walked two miles and found a dusty cottage. I was scared but I courageously walked in. The cottage

had only two things uncovered, a chair and a black coat. The rest were covered with white cloth. I heard the sound of someone typing on a keyboard. It was a girl. The girl saw me. She asked me who I was and what I was doing there. I told her my story and how I spotted her cottage. I asked her what she was doing there and she answered that she was a scientist. She had lived there in the woods, in the same cottage, for five years.

She pulled off a white cloth to reveal a gigantic telescope. She said that she brought all the things she needed with her, and she had installed solar panels on her rooftop for energy. She had a farm and ate fruits and berries that grew nearby and she used water from the lake nearby.

Then she told me how she was tracking a star which she thought might be a planet. We talked for hours late into the night. I asked if I could live with her as I really liked her lifestyle and the work she was doing. Then she explained to me the importance of studies to become a scientist like her. I agreed. I stayed with Amanda for a few days, learning about her work.

But now, it was time for me to go back home. I felt like staying a little longer. In those few days I had become very attached to the cottage in the woods and my new friend Amanda.

Now, here I am in college finishing up my final year. I am planning to become a scientist and join my friend Amanda.

About the author: Anushka Yadav is 13 years old. She studies at NPS International school. She likes dancing, painting and fashion designing. She also likes writing stories and doing creative activities in her leisure time. She has lots of innovative ideas.

GOURMET CORNER

POTATO STUFFED BUN

By Ruchi Bajj

Ingredients for Dough

- Maida (All Purpose Flour) - 250 grams (2 cups)
- Ghee or Oil - 2 tbsp
- Salt - 1/2 tsp
- Sugar - 1 tsp
- Oregano powder - 1/2 tsp
- Red chilli flakes - 1/4 tsp
- Warm milk - 1/2 cup (Add some warm water if needed)
- Dry yeast - 1 tsp

(For coating)

- Cream / milk
- Black / White sesame seeds - 1 tsp

Ingredients for Potato Masala

- Boiled potatoes-2
- Salt - according to taste
- Red chilli powder - 1/2 tsp
- Turmeric powder - 1/4 tsp
- Coriander powder - 1 tsp
- Mango powder (optional) - 1/4 tsp
- Cumin seeds - 1/4 tsp
- Oil - 2 tsp
- Cheese cubes(Optional)

Instructions

1. Add salt, sugar, oregano powder, Red chili flakes and instant dry active yeast into the flour.
2. Now pour in a little oil and mix everything well.
3. With the help of lukewarm milk knead a soft dough. If required, add less than 1/2 cup water.
4. Knead the dough for 5-6 minutes or till smooth and soft. Knead till gluten disappears and dough stops sticking to your hands.
5. Apply some oil on the dough. Cover and keep aside for 2-3 hours in a warm place.
6. Now, heat some oil in a pan. Add cumin seeds, stir them.
7. Add in boiled potato, salt, red chili powder, turmeric powder, coriander powder, dry mango powder.
8. Mix it well, keep aside to cool.
9. Take prepared dough, knead it again to press it down. Then divide the dough into 8 equal portions.
10. Fill the masala in the dough and make a roll (with masala you can add small cheese cubes too).
11. Place them on a greased baking dish. Keep some distance between the dough balls.
12. Apply some cream and sesame seeds on the balls.
13. Cover again and keep them aside for 2 hours. Bake them later.
14. Preheat an oven to 200 degrees centigrade and place the tray inside the oven. Bake the stuffed buns for 10-15 minutes on the middle rack.
15. Take out the tray and glaze the buns with some butter to get a smooth and soft surface.



Stuffed buns are ready to serve.

(Note: You can use Cheese / Chocolate / Paneer / Mixed Veggie to fill inside the buns. As per your choice)

SPECIAL FEATURE:

WEC GIRLS IN THE ARTS HOUSE!***Sisters are doing it for themselves - Catharsis***
Poetry festival Singapore at Arts House

On the 21st of July, three members of our WEC family presented poems in their respective mother tongues, as part of the 2019 Poetry Festival Singapore at the Arts House. This event, titled *Sisters Are Doing It For Themselves - Catharsis*, saw presenters share their emotional experiences of encountering some of life's harsh realities, such as the loss of a loved one, an empty nest, or loneliness that grows with time and age. Our WEC girls put their pain on paper in the form of poems written in their mother tongue, because nothing parallels the depth and rawness with which words in one's native language can express one's emotions.

Presenting the English translations of the poems by our three poetesses:

Loneliness

By Madhu Suri

Loneliness was what I feared the most
'How will I pass my time' was what
concerned me the most
What will I eat & cook for only myself
My existence will just go downhill like a
setting sun

Then the inevitable dreaded day arrived
When I found myself alone, lonely &
deprived
My empty home seemed to gnaw at me
My children no longer called out 'ma...
ma...' to me
The naughty little ones with antics up their
sleeves were all grown-up now, standing
tall on their feet

I learnt to appreciate loneliness and
solitude
I learnt to love my freedom at last
Cooking and eating alone was an everyday
affair now
Watching movies and travelling alone was
also a routine now

Now I feel, how ignorant was I,
To have mistaken my freedom to be
'loneliness'

So what if my nest is
empty
I realised that I too
can fly
Now my children will
build their own nests
Sometimes they will
drop in to liven up my
nest

My time is only mine
now
There are no
restrictions, no hassles
now
I have the time to
smell the flowers,
enjoy the raindrops,
fulfill my dreams, to
live my life on my
terms

What everyone craves
and dreams... I am living it
I have left loneliness far behind
Determined to march ahead...
If you wish, you can come along too
Else, I am moving on nonetheless
to a new destination, a new dawn & a new
experience

(Originally in Punjabi)

**About Madhu Suri**

Madhu Suri is a member of IWA for 8 years and is an active member of its Writing Enthusiasts' Club (WEC). A trained docent, she has guided at the Asian Civilisations Museum for 2 years. Madhu is also a freelance actor and has acted in TV serials, movies, short films and commercials. She loves painting, sketching and fabric jewellery making. Under WEC, she has discovered a love for writing and has written memoirs, short stories and poetry.

The Wait

By **Shilpa Dikshit Thapliyal**

That evening of 4th May still fazes me:
"Papa is no more" ...
Silence screamed over the phone.
Words pounded my ears,
the thud in my chest was of a thousand ton
crate, it grappled for release from grips of
those fated words.

Years have gone by... yet this pain sears
through me
And I still await a word, a touch from you.

Those childhood memories
of your stubble against my cheeks,
the pillion ride on your aqua green Bajaj
Chetak
Your request, "Bitto - a glass of water
please."

The sweet mangoes knotted in your
handkerchief, your bowed head at the holy
shrine, our animated discussion around
sacred texts and politics monthly expenses
listed in your diary, the 4am study alarms,
that fated physics paper
You, with heart arrhythmia and we, with
tear soaked cheeks.

10th March was the day when we held
you close, hugged and wished you: "happy
birthday Papa!"
There wasn't much fanfare, nor a fancy big

cake just a homemade sweet and a rasgolla
plate.

Teary eyed at lack of funds, you smiled and
said
"Situations in life are like phases of moon-
waxing and waning.
face them with grit and honesty,
in this precious but transient life,
regret shouldn't lace your actions
malice shouldn't wrap your words
love shouldn't have ledger entries
That breath of yours should free your soul."

Your words reverberate when
I sway in my path of duty,
"Bitto dear - don't forget my teachings."

My palms still hold the touch of your cold
forehead on the blazing May afternoon.
And I succumb to tears hidden in my folds.

But who has bound the flow of time
Who has sutured a wound from loss
Why does a smiling face vanish in a
moment
Are my years with you a dream all of a
sudden?

Tears flow today, like these verses on page,
I look for you, Oh Creator of this
sculpture...
Years have gone by... yet pain sears
through me
and I still await a word, a touch from you,
Papa!

(Originally in Hindi)



About Shilpa Dikshit Thapliyal

Shilpa is a computer professional turned home-maker turned writer. Her poems can be found in print anthologies and online journals in Singapore, India, USA, including 'Poetry On The Platform' (NLB Read! 2015), She has done poetry readings on the MRT and open mic events in Singapore, and self-published her debut poetry collection 'Chimes of the Soul' in 2015. Shilpa has chaired the Writing Enthusiasts' Club of IWA since 2015.

The Awakening

By **Mita Bhatt**

The roaring volcano within flickered out before eruption
The glittering dream of space-travel was grounded before launch
As the golden glow of affection enveloped my existence
The path of my life diverged unknowingly
Life rarely goes as planned the lines of fate aren't drawn by hand
Instead of gazing at the stars I kept my feet on the ground
From home to the horizon I wandered around
On the ring of fire I found my paradise
On a sunny island I chose to reside
Decades passed and time flew my life took on a new hue
Final rites were read to my long forgotten desires
From the ashes of the pyre a fiery Phoenix arose
By its blazing brilliance my mind was enchanted
New hopes grew wings art and poetry bloomed
My heart overflowed and awakened my soul

(Originally in Gujarati)



About Mita Bhatt

Mita has been writing poetry since a young age. She was the editor of her university's wall paper and later of The International Women's Club magazine published monthly in Indonesia. An engineer by training, she now devotes most of her time to teaching, with a special interest in children with learning difficulties. Mita is an enthusiastic member of the WEC, and finds inner peace though art and poetry.

Understanding your Headaches

Headaches are one of the most common medical complaints we will have. All of us will experience it at some point in our lives regardless of age, race, or gender.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), almost half of adults worldwide will suffer a headache in any year.

It could be a sign of emotional distress or a medical disorder, such as migraine or high blood pressure, anxiety, or depression. It may lead to other problems. Some even find it affects their daily life.

Categories

The International Headache Society (IHS) categorises headaches as such:

1. Primary headaches

The headache may be primary which means it is not related to any medical conditions. These include migraines, cluster headaches, and tension headaches.

2. Secondary headaches

Secondary headaches are a result of an underlying medical condition. Such as, alcohol-induced hangovers, brain tumours, panic attacks and stroke.

Types

There are different types of headaches:



1. Tension headaches

Tension headaches are the most common form of headaches. You may feel the pain in your forehead, temples, and the sides and back of your forehead. In severe cases, you may feel restless and sleepless. It could last a few hours in duration and last for several days (episodic attack) or even 15 or more days a month for a period of at least three months (chronic headaches).



2. Migraines

Migraines are the second most common form of primary headaches. You may feel a pulsating, throbbing pain usually only on one side of the head accompanied by blurred vision, nausea and vomiting, or sensitivity to light or noise and lasting from a few hours to even days and can have a significant impact on the life of an individual.



3. Rebound headaches

Rebound or medication-overuse headaches stem from an excessive use of medication to treat headache symptoms. It usually begins early in the day and persists throughout the day. It also improves with pain medication, but worsen when its effects wear off.



4. Cluster headaches

Cluster headaches are intense pain, often around one eye, usually last between 15 minutes and 3 hours, and occur suddenly between one to eight times per day for a period that last weeks to months. The affected area may become red and swollen, the eyelid may droop, and the nasal passage on the affected side may become stuffy and runny.



5. Thunderclap headaches

Thunderclap headaches are sudden and severe headaches that often described as the "worst headache in life." They reach maximum intensity in less than one minute and last longer than five minutes. Most of them are secondary headaches but can be life-threatening conditions, such as intracerebral haemorrhage, cerebral venous thrombosis, and ruptured or unruptured aneurysms.

Diagnosis

A doctor will usually be able to diagnose a particular type of headache through a description of the condition, the type of pain, and the timing and pattern of attacks. If the nature of the headache appears to be complex, further tests may be carried out to eliminate more serious causes, ie. blood tests and brain scans. Most headaches do not lead to death, and they are not contagious. However, it is important to seek medical advice if they become more severe, regular, or persistent as headaches can lead to a serious condition.

For more information, please contact Deasy at 6311 1613 or email deasyb@rafflesmedical.com

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IWA - Out & About



A proud moment for IWA, Selmé Singh and Nirupa Vasudev (Vice-Presidents) handing over the cheque for 'IWA Gyan Jyoti Study Award for 2019' to Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD). A few members of the Executive Committee and Committee are seen here, at the tea ceremony hosted by SUTD to celebrate the occasion.



IWA was invited by the Singapore Malayalee Association (SMA) for the inauguration of their Care Light Wellness Centre. In the group seen with GOH : Mr. Chua Eng Leong, Advisor to Aljunaid GRC Grassroots Organisations, Monica Dovedy (Secretary, IWA), Ritu Kapoor (Chair, AOK).



Anuradha Shroff and Monica Dovedy with Tracy Ho (NIC Member) at the Engagement Series 2019 "What brings us together" Dialogue 1 organised by the National Integration Council (NIC)



IWA President Anuradha Shroff was felicitated by a group of volunteering women from Waterside condo, at 'Party with a Purpose'.



IWA was invited by the Singapore Pakistani Association for the Eid lunch. Seen here are Mrs. Sophie Shaikh, President SPA, Mrs. Anuradha Shroff, President IWA, Selmé Singh, Vice President IWA with Naureen Abid Sattar and Mahwish Zaidi, Vice President SPA.



IWA was honoured to be invited onboard 'INS Kolkata, India's leading stealth guided missile destroyer'. The Indian High Commissioner HE Mr. Jawed Ashraf hosted a reception on the 18th of May onboard the ship at the Changi Naval Base.



IWA President Anuradha Shroff and Secretary Monica Dovedy were honoured to be a part of PPIS Post Hari Raya Celebrations on 6th July 2019. The Guest of Honour was President Madam Halimah Yacob. PPIS President Madam Rahayu Mohamad and her team welcomed all guests from multicultural communities, sharing their views on a cohesive society.



IWA attended the wedding of a senior resident of Sri Narayana Mission and wished them a happy life together.



INDIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION
 As a non-profit organisation and a voluntary welfare organisation in Singapore, the Indian Women's Association (IWA) provides Indian women from overseas and Singapore with a common platform to connect with one another. As an NIWC-Community member, IWA's main objective is to help Indian women integrate and settle into Singapore society. The IWA organises various different initiatives—including social, cultural, educational and philanthropic events—to help its members adapt to life in Singapore and to foster cross-cultural friendships.
 Volunteer work is high priority for IWA members, as the organisation seeks to nurture a spirit of volunteering as a way to make a long-term positive impact in our community. Run by local and expatriate Indian women, community service and fundraising projects help VWOs like Beyond Social Services, Jamiyah Singapore and Sunshine Welfare Action Mission (SWAMI Home).

Anu and Nirupa attend the 10th Anniversary of the National Integration Council in August. In the book issued on that day called Notes of Gratitude, IWA has been mentioned on page 59. IWA is grateful for the recognition.



The National Day Observance Ceremony 2019 at Wisma Geylang Serai in the presence of Professor Fatima Lateef, attended by Rakhi and Anu. The celebration in red and white was a good way of renewing the Singapore pledge.



Anuradha Shroff at CMO Asia Women's Leadership Awards.

Self-Care: Deliberate, Restorative & Personal

By Rakhi Shankar



In July, IWA held a special session for its members, with a team from the WINGS Counselling Centre, on Self-Care. The interactive session was led by Ms Rita Gupta, who emphasised that our cup must be full before we can give to others. Some of the inputs were that self-care is about 'me too' and 'me time' where we, as women, need to give time to ourselves too. IWA members shared self-care tips like eating healthy, reading spiritual and other books, yoga and meditation, going for walks alone, dancing and singing, travelling without family, spending time with friends and like-minded people, etc.

The discussion then moved on to the challenges faced specifically by Indian women in Singapore, such as lack of a family support system, unreasonable expectations from family and others, our own desire to be an ideal daughter,

wife, mother etc, and the lack of opportunities to pursue careers, which could lead to a low sense of self-worth. Gender biases, loneliness, hormonal roller-coaster, dealing with an empty nest, being present for our parents in their time of need, dealing with the loss of loved ones, etc complicate the situation further.

Rita mentioned that external stress is inevitable at all stages of life but 'getting stressed' is an option. Self-reflection and spirituality are also important to feel that one is not alone and to have a sense of gratitude. One of the most underrated stress-busters is good sleep.

The moderator led the group through a brief diaphragmatic breathing exercise as the session concluded. It was indeed a restorative and personal self-care event for all present!

Celebrating Eid at Siglap South CC IAEC





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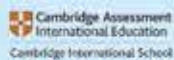
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News, Views, Events And More...

Games Club

By Miti Garg

Dhoom machale! Dhoom!

The annual 'Games Club Bash' held on 29th May 2019 was the culmination of the efforts of Ms. Manju Banka (Games Club President) and her band of enthusiastic volunteers. The bash started with the ice breaker games. The IWA members got to know each other's quirks and bonded over some exciting and well-planned team building activities. The decibel level in the room was proof that the ladies had let go of their inhibitions!

This was followed by the 'Crazy Hat Contest.' The creatively put-together ensembles were paraded around proudly by their elegant models. From

hastily assembled masterpieces to painstakingly created works-of-art, each piece spoke volumes about their creators. There were several rounds of Taboo followed by Tambola - everybody's favorite! The prizes were given out to the lucky winners by our very own lovable IWA President Ms. Anuradha, who joined in the fun wholeheartedly. To say that everybody had a whale of a time would be an understatement.

Spirits were high and everybody enjoyed each other's company. The myriad activities were put together by the IWA members along with the yummylicious food. Beautifully planned and executed by Ms. Banka, the Games Bash reminded us of the motto - 'Do what you love' and 'Love what you do'. And IWA Games Club members always love having FUN!



Movie Club

Trivia

By Neeraja Rao

- While filming Sarbjit, Randeeep Hooda became very close to Daljit Kaur, Sarbjit's real-life sister. She started considering him her lost brother and asked Hooda to promise to carry her to her death-bed, when the time came.
- In Don (1978) Pran's stunt duplicate was a woman, while Zeenat Aman's was a man.
- The sounds made by the Brachiosaurus in Jurassic Park were a combination of whale and donkey sounds.
- The pile of excreta that the young Jamal jumps into in Slumdog Millionaire was made from a combination of peanut butter and chocolate. Delicious.
- Pierce Brosnan signed a contract that he would not wear a full tuxedo in any non-James Bond movie from 1995-2002.
- In Fitoor, Katrina Kaif had to colour her hair red for the movie, which reportedly cost the producers INR 55 lakhs.



Not just trivia - we at IWA Movie Club dive deep into a movie, go behind the scenes for a top-angle view of the context and fundamentals. And of course, indulge in more trivia! So, every fourth Wednesday of the month, join us for some LIGHTS CAMERA ACTION!

Gourmet Goddess Club

A Mangolicious Gourmet Morning

By Ramanpreet Kaur Bhatia

GGC organized a potluck lunch, wherein each dish had one common ingredient- mango.

The event kick-started on a yummy note, with Chair Shaily's notes and a quiz about our mighty King of fruits "mango." Members savoured innovative dishes such as mango cake, mango puddings, mango salads, raw mango rice etc.

We don't live to eat but eating does add a lot of zest to life!



Travel Club

Trip to Batam

By Rohina Singh

The scene at Harbourfront Ferry Terminal was one rich with emotions, with a group of excited ladies waiting to embark on their journey to Batam, amidst loud laughter, chatter and tasty bites.

The ladies onboard the ferry were travelling to Batam with the IWA Travel Club, deep in discussion about the array of activities they could do. The trip started with a visit to the Maha Vihara Duta Maitreya temple and Bareleng bridge, followed by some calorie-burning mid-air high jumps and crazy selfies to capture the moment.

The ladies then decided to go shopping at a batik store, and were spoilt for choice at lunch by the vegetarian options available. Post-lunch, they went to the spa and continued the shopping frenzy, while indulging in coffee and doughnuts. Back on the shuttle bus, they checked out each other's shopping. They were refreshed with fresh juice, upon arrival at the ferry terminal. The energy level of the ladies showed no signs of waning, on the journey back to Singapore and the discussion had now progressed to where their next destination would be. A two-four night trip in September, perhaps? Now, that would certainly be something to look forward to! This day trip to Batam will forever be etched in the minds of all who were part of the adventure!



Privileges & Entrepreneurs' Club



HEALTH TALK AT RAFFLES HOSPITAL

By Selmé Singh

IWA P&E Club organized a very informative session on Common Neurological Diseases, in partnership with our long standing healthcare partner, Raffles Hospital. The session was conducted by Prof Dr N V Ramani, specialist in Neurology at Raffles Neuroscience Centre. Dr Ramani spoke about common neurological diseases such as brain tumours, epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, stroke and dementia. He spoke about the complex ways in which the brain functions and the multiple factors that affect our neurological health. The time to take preventive action and the possible treatments were also touched upon.

Although many of us are aware of these diseases, we seldom talk about them. Such informative talks give us a better understanding of our health and help us to make changes in our lifestyle for prevention of such diseases.

The session was followed by a brief demonstration by our Fitness Chair Padmaja Balaji, of breathing exercises for relaxing the body and meditation for rejuvenating the nervous system.



TALK ON AYURVEDA

By Saraswathi Balakrishnan

Ayurveda is an ancient medical tradition from India and, as Indians, we have a strong and natural connect to it. The talk on Ayurveda, organised by the IWA P&E Club at Om Vedic Heritage Centre, amply demonstrated this through the enthusiastic turnout. The session began with a serving of a refreshing herbal concoction. According to Ayurveda, each person's constitution is unique and made up of the five elements of nature, earth, air, water, fire and ether. Ayurvedic techniques and medicines are meant to detoxify the body and balance the combination of elements. Simply

put, health is order and balance in our body, while disease means disorder and imbalance.

We then did a small fun activity to identify one's constitution type, amidst the enthusiastic exchange of notes! It was reassuring to know that many ailments could be treated in the most natural way possible. To quote the doctor, "The treatment to most of your ailments lies in your kitchen." Personally, this dispelled my concerns about Ayurveda. We wrapped up with Q&A, a 'Satvik' meal prepared by our members, and a tour of the treatment room and pharmacy.

All in all, an enjoyable and eye-opening session that totally demystified Ayurveda for me!

SMART FINANCE SERIES

By Vidya Dasgupta

IWA PE Club organised a two part series on Smart Finances in May 2019 and July 2019, by Ms. Fiona Chia, a business-woman and a wealth management consultant.

Smart Finances Part 1 covered various aspects of Financial Navigation to Retire In Singapore. Ms. Fiona Chia talked to our member participants about the different financial instruments to help us achieve retirement sooner rather than later. She

helped us figure out how money can work harder and passively. She also touched upon mastering tax effectiveness, understanding how banks look at assets and loanability.

Smart Finances Part 2 was women centric and discussed how men and women invest differently, the key differences and comparisons, different Insurance types, and what it means to optimize the insurance dollars.

Participants also learnt about the Basic Women's Charter rights in case it was ever needed.

The series was well received, with active participation by our IWA members.



Book Club



Creative Hands Club



Music Club



Acts of Kindness *Club*



Fitness *Club*



Writing Enthusiasts' Club



ADDA Club



BACK COVER

"Self and Environment"

My piece talks about the mutual nurturing qualities & capabilities of nature and us. Love and respect your environment, and in turn, your environment will love and respect you.

This piece is loosely based on the Indian folk art form - Madhubani.

Medium: Ink on Paper

-Ayana Chatterjee (St.ART -creating value)



