



# Newsletter ~ Vallabh Vidya Mandir ~



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Volume Number 5

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Date: Feb 2009

## An Expression...

On January 20<sup>th</sup> the whole world paused to celebrate the historic event of the inauguration of America's 44<sup>th</sup> president. This event is a monumental example of breaking barriers, overcoming obstacles, defeating the odds, perseverance, courage and faith.

We all face physical or conceptual barriers in life. Each barrier prevents us from moving forward or accomplishing something. The obstacles are an inevitable part of the journey. As it is said - *"If you find a path with no obstacles it probably doesn't lead anywhere"*.

In the Osho book –The joy of living dangerously it says that –

*"You cannot be truthful if you are not courageous*

*You cannot be loving if you are not courageous*

*You cannot be trusting if you are not courageous*

*You cannot inquire into reality if you are not courageous*

*Hence courage comes first and every thing else follows. The only difference between coward and courageous is, the coward listens*

*to his fears and follows them, and the courageous goes into the unknown in spite of all the fear."*

To be successful in any career or at any job, a plan of action is necessary. Without a plan it is hard to move forward with any project or in any work. The next step is to identify the actions needed to reach that goal. Courage helps us continue on the path towards our goal or objective. Anai's Nin wrote – *"Life shrinks or expands in proportion to one's courage."* President Obama showed that we can get over our stereotypes and break the barriers of race, color or prejudice. He was able to achieve this by hard work, courage, faith and perseverance. Eleanor Roosevelt has said *"You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you ... do the thing you think you cannot do."*

We do agree that racism and intolerance are hurtful and unfair. In the global society we all realize that we can't presume to understand someone based on skin color, nationality or religious orientation. Greek philosopher Heraclitus wrote 'dogs bark at a

*person whom they don't know'.* The best we can do is to know people – individuals and cultures. Once we learn to respect each other and celebrate our differences we will continue to grow and make the world a better place. We just need to keep our minds open!!

## Carnival.....!!

Fun, Games, Food

March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009

Mark your Calendars

*Pls contact VVM Front-Desk for details*

Watty Piper's book "The Little Engine that Could", first published in 1930 is a story of a train filled with toys and gifts for little boys and girls that breaks down before reaching them. After asking several passing trains for help, a little blue train agrees to help the stranded toys. Even though she is small, the blue train tries her best to bring the toys to the children on the other side of the hill with the slogan – *I think I can; I think I can.* Most people have heard these phrases at some point in their lives



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This quote can be used to demonstrate the idea of perseverance and teamwork. Perseverance is endurance, patience, and “hanging in there” in spite of obstacles, adversity, or suffering. *The Little Engine That Could* is a symbol of inspiration to children and adults everywhere. The words ***I think I can*** are as carved into our collective memory as *I have a dream..*, or *One small step for man...*

*Phalguni Kikani*

## The March is On..

Each month I go through my collection of good write-ups and select the ones I consider educational or inspirational. The purpose of educational program at VVM is to help our children build good value system and help them learn valuable lessons.

### BE A SMART DONKEY

An old donkey was dismissed from his master's house as he could no longer serve the household. Deeply hurt by his master's insensitivity, the donkey was

walking along lost in his own thoughts, when he missed his footing and fell into a dry well. As he was unable to jump out, he started braying loudly, pleading for help. Soon a bunch of kids arrived there. On seeing the donkey, the children tried to help him out of the well, but could find no rope or tools to do so. Tired, the donkey sat down quietly. After a while when they heard no sound, the children assumed donkey was dead and decided to bury him in the well itself. They started filling the well with dirt. However, the donkey still had a few breaths left in him. When he saw the dirt being thrown in, he got up and started piling it. Slowly he formed a mound that was high enough to jump out from well. And thus the donkey saved his life with his presence of mind.

Donkeys are often viewed as brainless animals who only know to work hard. This perception has led us humans to refer to each other as donkeys. Often when we come across a person who is very hard working and diligent, we tend to name him – donkey! Little do we realize that sincerity is not a sign of being meek; it is not necessary to stoop down and indulge in petty games to climb the corporate

ladder. Be a smart donkey. Instead of maligning yourself and playing politics, be honest with yourself and towards your work.

*Sureshbhai Patel*

## Parent's View...

Thank you for working so hard and offering such nice service for our children and families. We truly appreciate your effort. Raghav and Gaurav are enjoying VVM and learning a lot.

I used to have a problem convincing Gaurav the importance of Sunday school in his life until I ran into a small book that talks about significance of Sunday school. I showed it to him and since then he understands it better. I am attaching a copy (see last page)

**Rajiv Singh**

## Senior's Tea Party..

On January 24, 2009 many of our seniors won in the game of Bingo, drank delicious tea, sang beautiful songs, and received many exciting



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gifts. Not only did VVM's administration plan for a simple and relaxing time for the seniors during the senior tea party event, but it also encouraged many young volunteers to dedicate their hours to help "bridge" the gap between the two generations.

Two of our elders Mr Gajjar and Dr Kiran Patel volunteered to share their experiences. At one point Mr. Gajjar said, "manage your time, be organized, and get your work done on time; but most importantly do today what is to be done tomorrow and do now what has to be done today" (translated from Gujarati). His words impacted many of us, because we all know what Mr. Gajjar said is absolutely true. Then Dr. Patel talked about his exciting experiences that took place in his school. He also sang one of his favorites old songs for the audience. By sharing their experiences both Mr. Gajjar and Dr. Patel showed their dedication towards VVM's program that night. And we, the VVM and youth group would like to thank them both, along with all the other senior citizens for coming that evening. To make this event more exciting, several youth group volunteers

(Mansi Mehta's idea) prepared for a surprise game. The youth decided to play "Antakshari"--youth vs. senior citizens. The main focus was to get all the elders to participate in the game (which was wonderfully successful). The afternoon came to an end with joyful dancing and laughter.

All of this would not have been possible without the help of our sponsors who provided food and gifts-- Mrs Harsha Mithani, Mrs Mita Patel, Mrs Pragna Bhalara, Mrs Priti Parikh and Mrs Phalguni Kikani. Besides our sponsors, the volunteers deserve a big thank-you as well. Bridging the gap between youth and seniors was another one of the many successful events put together by VVM. Enjoy the pictures!

## Nikita Shah





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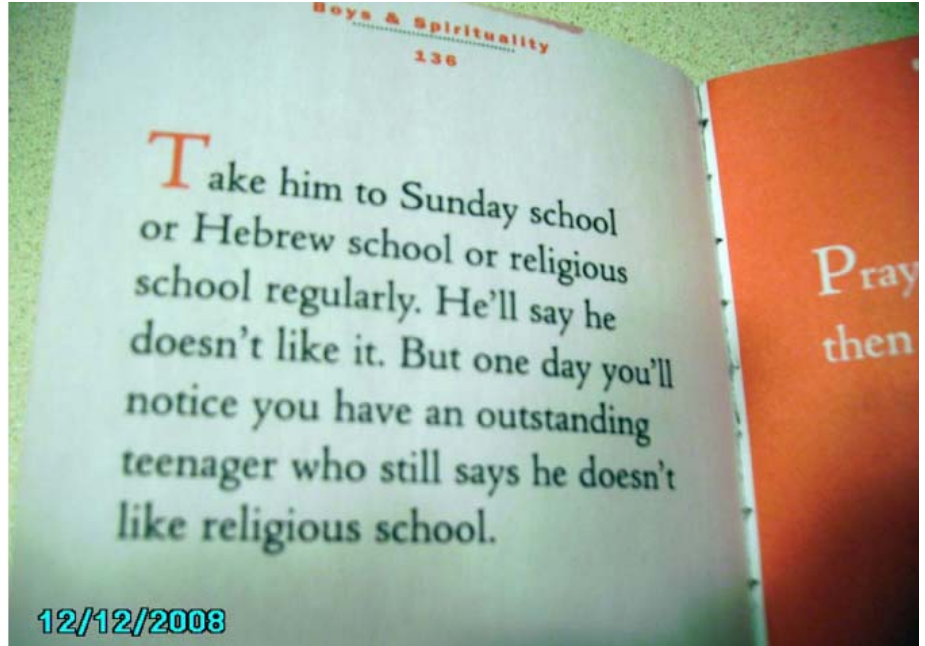


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(Courtesy – Mr Rajiv Singh)

## ..Important

If you are not receiving my e-mail or your address has changed, please send an e-mail to

[kikanis@earthlink.net](mailto:kikanis@earthlink.net)

*Phalguni Kikani*