

Every child comes with the  
message that God is not yet  
discouraged of man. --  
Rabindranath Tagore

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## Healthy and Happy

A child can teach an adult three things: to be happy for no reason, to always be busy with something, and to know how to demand with all his might that which he desires. --*Paulo Coelho*

Hi there,

Happy kids are always fun to be around. They are silly, cute, and guileless, and can really make your day. When a child is unhappy, especially in a group home like ours, it's quite noticeable and affects everyone, so we make an extra effort to help unhappy kids as best we can using our in-house counselor and external mental health professionals. Your support helps us do this.

Your support also helps us help kids like Vijay, who needed surgery to be able to walk again, and poor women like Swarana, a mother of two little ones who suffered serious health issues and needed months of medical care to regain most of her functioning. Their stories are also special because of the selfless help that they got from other adults in our programs.

Thank you for your continued support, and we hope that you enjoy our Spring 2018 newsletter!

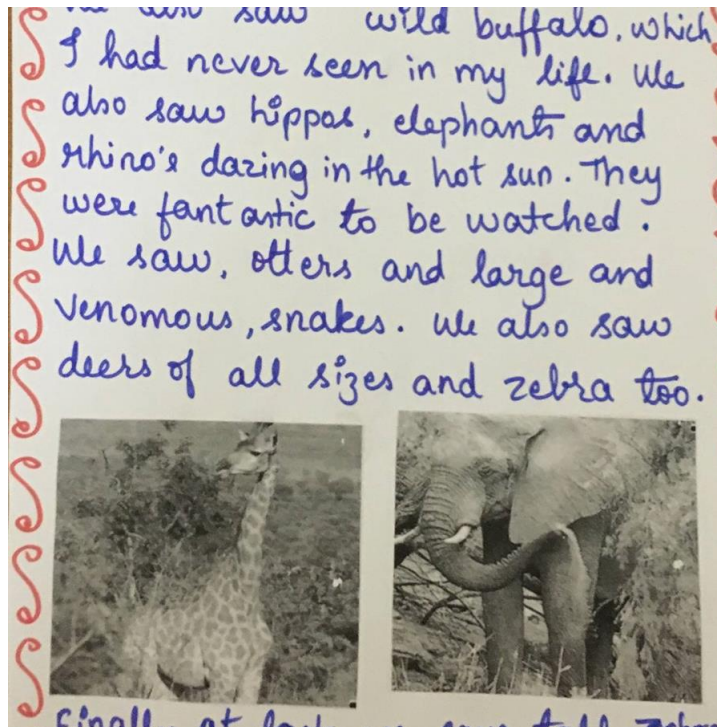
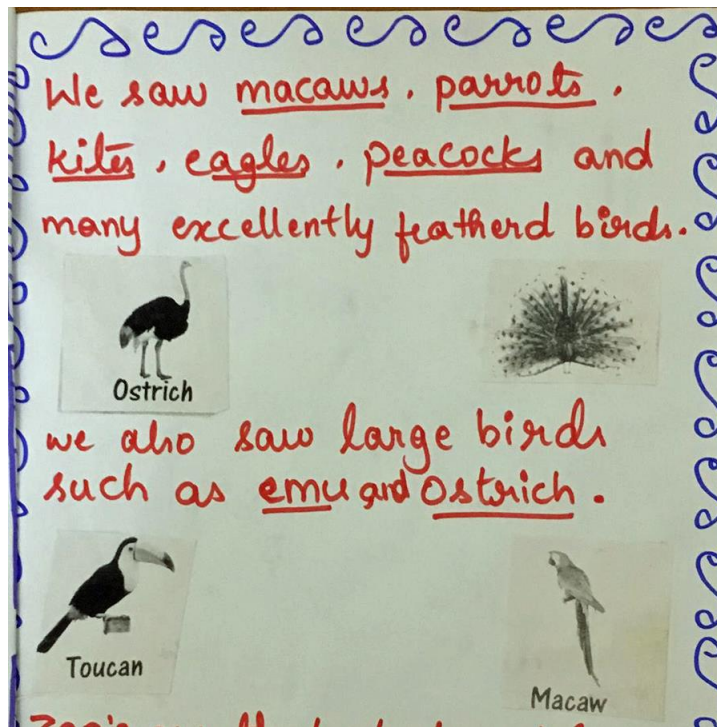
## Ugadi, the Zoo, GRS Fantasy Park, Driving Lessons, Typing Class ... Busy Kids!

Each year, the Ugadi Festival is a celebratory day that marks the Hindu new year. The kids like to get dressed up and the cooks make holiday food, and everyone has a great time!



Some of the kids had an extra-long Christmas vacation, so in early January, they got to go to the zoo and see all of their favorite animals! After each of our outings, the kids write trip reports to help them learn how to describe their activities and experiences. Sometimes they get pretty creative with their reports!





As an update on Sitaram (below), the boy who came to us with his family in 2014 after suffering a mobile phone explosion that left him with half a face -- he is still undergoing treatment to rebuild his mouth area, and now works for us at our children's home (he's now over 18 years of age) as a security guard/handyman. Sitaram is a very diligent worker and is exceeding our expectations in his role. He is also learning to drive and spends time with our older boys, who are his good friends. His little brothers are doing well in school, dad works at our neighbor People for Animals (an animal shelter), and mom's leukemia remains in remission.



In February, two of our older kids -- Prema and Pavan -- were selected as class captains for the school's sports day. And, Shilpa (7th grader) won first place in this year's school singing competition (and, by the way, was top of her class again)!



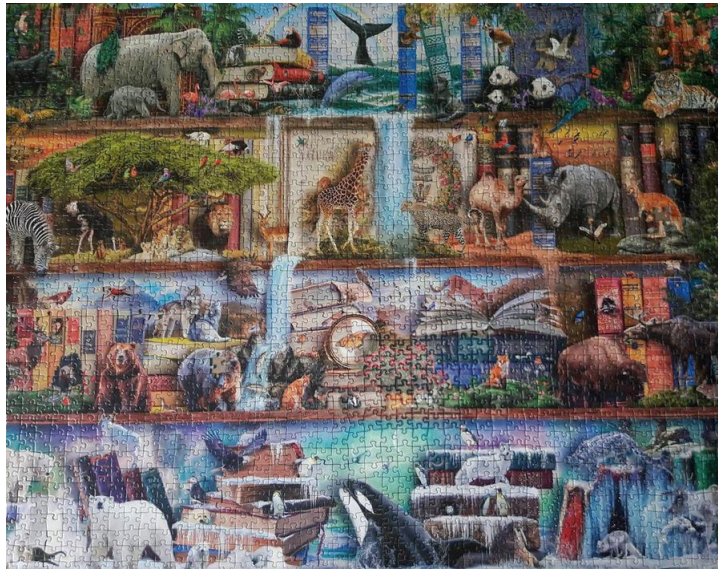
Our older kids finished up 11th grade at the end of February -- all of them did quite well, and Prema and Prajwal finishing up ranked #1 in their respective classes. As a reward, they spent a day at GRS Fantasy Park, a fun water park in Mysore before they started driving school.



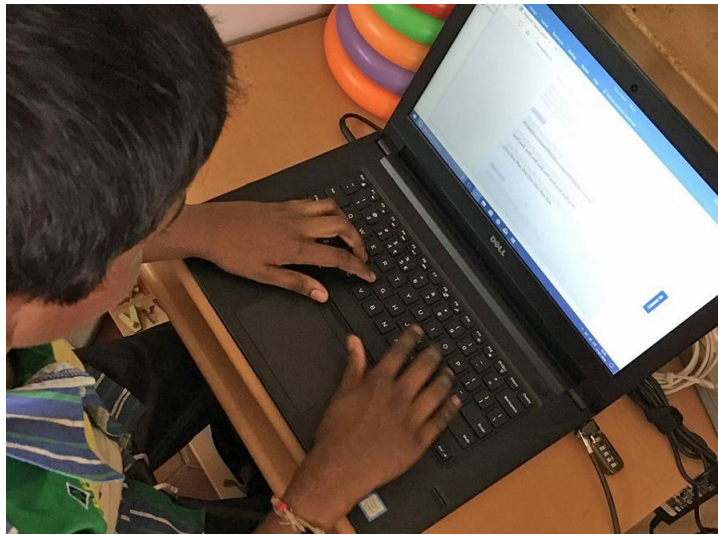
... and here they are, learning how to drive!



We also held a puzzle-making competition -- boys versus girls -- where whoever put together a 2000-piece jigsaw puzzle first got a prize! The girls won twice. Go girls!



The older kids and a few of the younger whiz kids who study in English medium also learned the basics of "ASDF" (not hunt and peck) typing -- just another life skill that we think the kids should have before eventually leaving us.



And, to better utilize online coursework as part of the education process, our 9th grader Surya is taking advantage of his two-month vacation to get a head-start on the coming year's Mathematics

NCERT syllabus that is offered in video form through Khan Academy! So far, Surya says it's "awesome!"

By the way, check out the video below, which shows Surya explaining the hydraulic robot that he built using materials that he found around our home. Hard to believe that, just a few years ago, Surya was playing on the streets.



Last but not least is our karate update! At the annual karate tournament, our kids took home SO many prizes, and three more kids -- Netra, Prajwal, and Pavan -- earned their black belts.



## Swarana\*

We're fortunate that some of the women whom we help step up and help others who really need it.

Recently, a woman new to Operation Shanti, Swarana, got very sick and the doctors were not sure what was wrong with her. They suspected toxoplasmosis, but Swarana and her husband, both HIV +, had no money to pay for the medical care that she needed.

Our mom, Kavitha, took it upon herself to take her friend to the hospital, call us for help, and stay with Swarana in the hospital for two weeks while the doctors treated her. Kavitha fed, bathed, and took care of Swaranalatha that entire time, while her husband stayed home with their two little boys.

Many times, admitting our patients to the hospital is difficult because they are alone and hospitals require someone to stay with the patient 24/7. We are grateful for Kavitha's dedication to helping others who now suffer as she once did in her life.

*\* Name changed to protect her privacy.*





Vijay is walking again!



Vijay is a 20-year-old who lives near our children's home (orphanage). One of our kids' fathers told us about Vijay, asked us to help him, and has been helping Vijay and his father.



Vijay's father has no education and earns money collecting plastic and paper. Mother died several years ago. After his mother died, Vijay went to live with his grandmother, where life was not so happy. We are told that, six months ago, Vijay's grandmother said something to Vijay and Vijay poured kerosene on himself, setting his legs on fire in an attempt to commit suicide. He survived but couldn't walk.

Vijay's dad brought Vijay back to Mysore to take care of him. Life was difficult because Vijay needed help with everything. Mostly, he sat or laid down at home all day. At least Vijay's aunty lives a few doors down and helps them with meals.

The plastic surgeon said that Vijay needed two operations to be able to walk again. In February, Vijay was discharged after his second operation and now, thanks to you, is **walking** again!

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In the next two months, we'll be paying for our school fees for the 2018-19 school year, which starts in June. We also have our monthly ongoing expenses --healthy food, good medical care, daily after-school tutoring, and support for our mothers and other destitute adults needing medical assistance. If you'd like to donate to our efforts, you may do so here:

<http://operation-shanti.org/>

Thank you for your support!

Peace,

The Operation Shanti Team

To me there is no picture so beautiful as smiling, bright-eyed,  
happy children;  
no music so sweet as their clear and ringing laughter. -- P. T.  
*Barnum*



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