



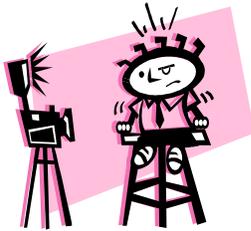
Have you heard the news ...

## Greetings from The Banyan Family!

As a welcoming shower in the middle of a scorching summer, the May month brought forth many surprises. Once again several residents have been reunited with their families; some had happy reunions whereas others revealed the overwhelming hurdles the residents had to face. A deprived life on streets doesn't necessarily stop you from having a generous soul, read on to Rita's story to find out more...

Read on...

### Movies that Educate...



Now doing a mundane thing like watching a movie can be a salutary experience. We would be screening movies that portray the lives of the people affected by mental illness like 15 Park Avenue, A Beautiful Mind and One flew over the Cuckoo's nest – All of them represent the lives of people combating schizophrenia, delusions or paranoia.

The day to day life of a person struggling with the mental illness and their families and caretakers responses are revealed through these movies.

A discussion session is arranged after the screening of each movie. So, the viewers can get to have a better understanding of the illness and the subsequent consequences.

If interested in taking part, please contact The Banyan for further details.

### Volunteers Buck Up...

*"The work of volunteers impacts on all our lives, even if we are not aware of it".*

Volunteers buck up... You have a rendezvous on 23<sup>rd</sup> of June at 4p.m. in The Banyan. Updates would be given on the past events and activities. Also upcoming events and activities that require your help would be discussed.

Volunteers who have specific interests in Adaikalam, Dial 100 or other projects of The Banyan can make their wish known.

We are looking forward to have you with us.



# Chilling Out... The Banyan Way...



To ward off the work blues The Banyan staff spent a day at a farm house in Sri Perambudur on May 13 and May 20<sup>th</sup> in two different batches. After a cool dip in the pool, a sumptuous feast, endless plays and even trying to emulate our ancestors by climbing up the trees. The team returned refreshed and ready to take on the world...

All thanks to Dr. Mohan – a longtime volunteer and friend of The Banyan who made it possible for the team to have the use of the farm house and sumptuous meals.

A comfortable bus journey was sponsored by Commander. Krishnan., another volunteer.



## A peek inside The Banyan –

Some achievements and inspiration

### A Swift Century

The Adaikalam Staff have been rescuing mentally ill homeless persons to the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) through the 'Dial 100 helpline'. Last year, we had rescued a total of 202 persons.

This year alone, a total of 100 persons have been rescued within five months.

Though this illustrates the tireless work & dedication of the team, it is a grim reality that there are abundant number of persons who are in desperate need of our help.

### Words that warm the soul

A deprived life on streets doesn't necessarily stop you from having a generous soul. One such soul is Rita...

Rita\* was rescued from the streets of Chennai a year back and has been a resident of the banyan since then. After the care and necessary rehabilitation, Rita now teaches English to the other residents and even for the local staff.

The soft spoken resident gets excited when asked about her self declared task, and says "I teach basic words and sentences that they (her students) require to converse with someone in person or on the telephone".

She aspires to teach more persons and also to make the learning process more interesting. Hats off Rita...

## Valli's Story...

Valli\* was living in Wallajapet near Vellore with her husband and two girl children. Due to the dearth of jobs near their place her husband left to Bangalore for finding better prospects. He visited their family once in six months however that stopped after a while. Her husband's desertion affected Valli intensely and she succumbed to mental illness.

She was roaming the streets of Vellore aimlessly and was rescued six months back by the District Rehabilitation officer, Vellore, when enquired about her whereabouts she was unable to respond in her deluded state. After reaching The Banyan and after the treatment she was finally able to recollect her whereabouts and her wish to be reunited with her daughters.

She was reunited with her family on 19<sup>th</sup> May but the staff who accompanied her was shocked to see that Valli's mother and her two brothers were also mentally ill and incapable of recognizing what was going on. They immediately contacted a local NGO and made sure that they underwent proper treatment without any further delay.

Valli's only wish is to meet her daughters who are at present living with her sister in Bangalore. We hope that in due course of time she will realize that dream into a reality.



## A Doctor in Need is a Doctor Indeed

The Rough life on streets combined with the very basic struggle for existence has taken its toll on our residents. Generally the women at The Banyan have low immunity and are prone to numerous diseases and illness, which requires prompt medical care. We can provide better health care by having in our team of volunteers a dermatologist and a dentist who could do regular check ups for our residents once in a week at our premises.

If you are a doctor or know any doctor who would be interested to do this service, we would be grateful to have you/them on our team.

For more chatter, Please read next month's **Grapevine**...

The Banyan Family

\* Names have been changed for privacy's sake