Beloved Readers,

Many happenings in our campus stress the need to eliminate disease, be healthy and fit. Health is not New Year hype or a one time affair, but a life long commitment. A well balanced diet & exercise has to be part of our lifestyle to develop a healthy body and a versatile mind. Let’s take good care of our body, radiate health and improve our self image.

Mother’s Day is celebrated on various days in many parts of the world, most commonly in May. It is a day for celebrating motherhood & mothers who witness us through all our pain and strife. Let us remember what our mother has gone through to bring us into this world & raise us to our entire potential and reciprocate her love in our own ways.

Our campus is not only a second home to us but also to an array of birds that have flown in from across the miles to delight in the greenery around. ‘Did you know’ in this issue highlights the whereabouts of these guests making us wonder about the secrets of their amazing navigational skills.

We invite readers to participate and review books in our monthly book reviews held during the first week of every month.

Let us stay connected...

Sheela Ravinder. S.
Editor-in-Chief

Congratulations

Sri Ramachandra Medical Center was reaccredited by Joint Commission International in Jan. 2012.
In memory of Late Prof. D. Gnanaprakasam, Depts. of General Surgery, Pediatric Surgery and Obstetrics & Gynecology organised the Ramachandra Advanced Laparoscopic Conference (RALCON) on 7th & 8th of Apr. Dr. Joel Leroy, a world renowned laparoscopic surgeon was the chief guest. Live demonstrations were performed by eminent surgeons from across the country.

World Autism Day was observed by the Dept. of Speech Language and Hearing Sciences on 2nd Apr. Handouts, posters and videos carrying information about autism were made available in the autism information desks at the medical center, out-patient block and other places to create awareness about autism among public.

Dept. of Pulmonary Medicine observed World TB Day on 24th Mar. to create public awareness about tuberculosis and its prevention. The theme was ‘Stop TB in my life time: Call for a world free of TB.’ An integrated postgraduate symposium on various topics in tuberculosis was conducted.

Dept. of Community Medicine observed the World Health Day on 7th Apr. with the theme ‘Good Health adds Life to Years’. Dr. Prasad Mathews, HOD, Dept. of Geriatrics, CMC, Vellore delivered a lecture on ‘Mild Cognitive Impairment and Dementia in the Elderly’. Competitions were conducted for MBBS students.

A Workshop on Medical Education Technologies was organized from 18th to 20th Apr. by the Medical Education Unit, an MCI recognized Nodal Center for Faculty Development Workshops. 29 members from various medical colleges in Chennai participated.

SRMC went through the final assessment by the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH) between 5th and 7th of Apr. The assessors were Dr. S. Murali (Principal Assessor) - Manipal Hospital, Ms. Meera S. Achrekar - Tata Memorial Centre, Mr. V. K. Mehta - Medanta, New Delhi, Dr. Christi Dominic Savio - CSI Hospital, Bengaluru and Gp. Capt. G. S. Sandhu - AGRAM.

Dept. of Pharmaceutics conducted a seminar on Current Research in Novel Drug Delivery Systems - NDDS 2012, on 30th & 31st Mar. It was inaugurated by Dr. G. N. Qazi, Vice-Chancellor, Jamia Hamdard University, New Delhi. 247 delegates benefited.

Career Orientation program was conducted on 28th Mar. by the Dept. of Psychiatric Nursing. 168 students from the outgoing batch of undergraduates and the Diploma in General Nursing participated.
Greetings

Prof. P. V. Vijayaraghavan,
HOD, Orthopedics and Dean-Education has assumed charge as the Director (Academic Administration), SRU

Dr. N. Sanjeeva Reddy,
Professor & Head,
Dept. of Reproductive Medicine

Dr. Santhosh Joseph,
Professor & Head, Dept. of Neuro-radiology

Dr. P. M. Venkata Sai,
Professor & Head, Dept. of Radiology

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Department</th>
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<tr>
<td>27.04.’12 to</td>
<td>Ms. Shruthi V. Shankar, Intern received the best paper award at MOKSHAA’12 – South Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>Faculty of Dental Sciences</td>
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<td>29.04.’12</td>
<td>Indian UG Dental Convention at Sri Venkateswara Dental College and Hospital, Chennai</td>
<td>Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
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<td>27.04.’12</td>
<td>Guest lecture on ‘Self Assembly of Macromolecules &amp; its Role in Human Health’ by Dr. A. Gnanamani, Senior Research Scientist, Microbiology Division, CLRI</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
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<td>13.04.’12 &amp;</td>
<td>At the 2nd National Conference on Basic Medical Sciences (VINbasix medGENEtics - 2012)</td>
<td>Human Genetics</td>
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<td>14.04.’12</td>
<td>at Vinayaka Mission’s Kirupananda Variyar Medical College &amp; Hospital, Salem</td>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
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<td>• Ms. R. Selvi, Lecturer was awarded the Best Paper for Oral Presentation</td>
<td>Faculty of Dental Sciences</td>
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<td>• Dr. Vijatha A. Thomas, M.D PG II yr., received the Best Poster Award</td>
<td>Pharmacological Chemistry</td>
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<td>11.04.’12 &amp;</td>
<td>At the National Conference, ‘SPICE 2012’ at Vel’s University, faculties and final year PGs won the 1st prize in the following events:</td>
<td>Biochemistry</td>
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<td>12.04.’12</td>
<td>• Quiz - Ms. Iyer Lakshmi Subramanian, Mr. Vivek K. &amp; Mr. Sankar Ganesh</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Paper Presentation - Ms. Iyer Lakshmi Subramanian &amp; Mr. P. Antony Leo Aseer, Reader</td>
<td>Faculty of Physiotherapy</td>
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<td>• Poster Presentation - Mr. Sankar Ganesh &amp; Mr. T. Senthil Kumar, Asst. Prof.</td>
<td>Psychiatry</td>
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<td>10.04.’12</td>
<td>CME on ‘Management of Metabolic Syndrome in Schizophrenia’ by Dr. T. N. Srinivasan, Consultant Psychiatrist, Sydney, Australia</td>
<td>Oral &amp; Maxillofacial Pathology</td>
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<td>09.04.’12 to</td>
<td>Dr. T. Radhika, Senior Lecturer delivered a guest lecture titled ‘Saliva – A Potential Diagnostic Tool for Diabetes’ in the ‘First Euro-India International Conference on Diabetes (EICD - 2012)’ held at Kottayam, Kerala</td>
<td>Microbiology</td>
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<td>11.04.’12</td>
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<td>Pediatric Medicine</td>
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<td>31.03.’12 to</td>
<td>Dr. Uma Sekar, Prof. and Head &amp; Dr. M. Shanthi, Asst. Prof. presented papers at the 22nd European Congress of Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases held in London, UK</td>
<td>Faculty of Physiotherapy</td>
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<td>03.04.’12</td>
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<td>29.03.’12</td>
<td>Rotary Club of Chennai has honored Dr. J. Julius Xavier Scott, Senior Asst. Prof., with ‘Vocational Excellence Award’ in recognition for his distinguished service &amp; outstanding contribution</td>
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<td>24.03.’12</td>
<td>CPE on ‘Motor Relearning Program &amp; Evaluation of Lower Extremity Function after Hemiplegia’</td>
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Dept. of Prosthodontics along with the Rotary Club conducted the 4th Free Denture Camp at Thiruthuraipoondi from 30th Mar. to 1st Apr. The team rehabilitated 35 completely edentulous patients with free dentures.

**Did you know?**

*Feathery Folks from Far Away*

“God gives every bird his worm, but he does not throw it into his nest,” said P. D. James. Our campus served as a home away from home for many species of migratory birds this year. Some of our enthusiastic colleagues have helped us identify a few of our avian visitors like:

The **Black-crowned Night Heron** (*Nycticorax nycticorax*), commonly known as **Night Heron** is found throughout the world, except in the cold regions and Australasia. *Nycticorax* means ‘night raven’ and refers to this species' nocturnal habits and harsh crow-like call. Immature birds have dull grey-brown plumage on their heads, wings, and backs, with numerous pale spots. The young birds have orange eyes and duller yellowish-green legs. They are very noisy birds in their nesting colonies.

The **Little Egret** (*Egretta garzetta*) is a small white heron. It is the Old World counterpart to the very similar New World Snowy Egret. Little Egrets eat fish, insects, amphibians, crustaceans and reptiles. They stalk their prey in shallow water, often running with raised wings or shuffling their feet to disturb small fish. Their numbers declined throughout Europe as the plumes of the Little Egret and other egrets were in demand for decorating hats.

The **Indian Cormorant** or **Indian Shag** (*Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*) is a member of the cormorant family. It is found mainly along the inland waters of the Indian subcontinent. It is a gregarious species that can be easily distinguished from the similar-sized Little Cormorant by its blue eye, small head with a sloping forehead and a long narrow bill ending in a hooked tip. Breeding birds have a short white ear tuft.

**Courtesy:** Dr. (Maj.) S. Prasanna Kumar, Assoc. Prof., Dept. of ENT
Mr. Y. Babu, Lecturer, Dept. of Biotechnology
The water flowing through Venice’s famous canals laps at buildings a little higher every year. Although previous studies had found that Venice has stabilized, new measurements indicate that the historic city continues to slowly sink, and even to tilt slightly to the east. Given that sea level is raising in the Venetian lagoon, at 2 mm per year, the slight subsidence doubles the rate at which the heights of surrounding waters are increasing relative to the elevation of the city. In the next 20 years, if Venice and its immediate surroundings subsided steadily at the current rate, researchers would expect the land to sink up to 80 mm in that period of time, relative to the sea. The Global Positioning System (GPS) measurements provide absolute elevations, while the InSAR (Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar) data are used to calculate elevations relative to other points. By combining the two datasets from the decade between 2000 and 2010 the city of Venice was found to be subsiding at an average of 1 to 2 mm a year. The patches of land in Venice’s lagoon (117 islands) are also sinking with northern sections of the lagoon dropping at a rate of 2 to 3 mm per year, and the southern lagoon subsiding at 3 to 4 mm per year. Apart from the sinking, they also found that the area was tilting a bit by about a millimeter or two eastward per year. Prior satellite analyses did not pick up on the tilt, possibly because the scientists had been taking measurements using InSAR, which only provided the change elevation relative to other sites. The current subsidence is due to natural causes, which probably have been affecting the area for a long time. A significant part of those natural causes are plate tectonics. The Adriatic plate, which includes Venice, subducts beneath the Apennines Mountains causing the city and its environs to drop slightly in elevation. Although the groundwater pumping has stopped, the compaction of the sediments beneath Venice remains a factor. With the increase in frequency of floods due to climate change, a multi-billion-dollar effort to install flood-protection walls that can be raised to block incoming tides is nearing completion. Over the next 40 years, the natural barriers that protect the Venice lagoon and city could drop by 150-200 mm.


Hobbies can be a great way to relieve stress, make friends, exchange ideas and bring more joy into our life. It helps us to make a more interesting person, avoid feeling bored and often provides the opportunity to meet new people with similar interests. Some hobbies develop naturally, while others may take some effort to nurture them. Learning something new can be inspirational and enjoyable in its own right. We lead a hectic monotonous routine, chasing the clock, rushing from one task to the other. We don’t find time to pause for a moment and think what to do when we retire and we have never paused to think if we are doing anything that we really enjoy. It is not reasonable to wait until we have unlimited leisure time to pursue something that is pleasurable to us. We are never too old, or young to learn more & develop new hobbies in life. Let us set aside a few hours every day or in the weekend to find and express the creative side in us. Any creative activity - be it music, writing, drawing, painting, playing an instrument, photography, dancing, singing or reading books makes us lose ourselves in that world of creativity, far away from our mundane activities. Our retirement years present opportunities for us to do the things we have always dreamt of. Let us build a reservoir of interests that will stand by us when we have time on hand. Learning something new is always good for keeping the mind alert and active. They widen our outlook on life, enrich our mind and train our emotions and patience. Enduring happiness comes from finding opportunities to develop new skills.

* A hobby a day keeps the doldrums away
  * Phyllis McGinley
More than 20 years ago Gary Zukav published his much-acclaimed book *The Seat of the Soul*. Zukav, a graduate of Harvard University is a spiritual teacher and intellectual explorer. Picking up the book one would imagine to find a description of the location of the soul in the body. But what we find instead is a highly inspiring description of what he calls ‘authentic power’ and the possibility of human evolution from the physical reality of five-sensory to multi-sensory human beings. As far as the seat of the soul is concerned, we read the numinous statement with which he concludes the book: “The impulse of creation and power authentic – the hourglass point between energy and matter: that is the seat of the soul.”

Hourglass point? Between energy and matter? That sounds mystical. Is it possible to track down the soul’s location with better precision? Will it be a worthwhile exercise? Will it help our efforts to assist our patients to get well quicker, heal better?

The answer to each of these questions is a Yes. Let’s take up the first question. With growing advances in the newer human brain imaging tools and techniques, the possibility of studying the ‘state control regulation’ systems of our brains represented mostly by the ancient emotional systems and their relationship to the evolutionarily modern ‘information processing’ systems has become a reality. An increasing number of neuroscientists today tend to agree that the more acquainted we become with the evolutionarily ancient aspects of our neural architecture the greater are the chances to develop scientific visions of what we recognize as soul.

Prof. S. Rangaswami,
Professor of Eminence in Medical Education, SRU.

(Will be continued…)

If you’re planning a trip to Africa, pack that zebra-print shirt that’s been hiding in the back of your closet. A new study finds that zebra stripes disrupt light patterns that horseflies use to find food and water.

Horseflies (tabanids) deliver nasty bites, carry disease and distract grazing animals from feeding. According to Horváth of Eötvös University, Hungary, these insects are attracted to horizontally polarized light because reflections from water are horizontally polarized and aquatic insects use this phenomenon to identify stretches of water where they can mate and lay eggs. However, blood-sucking female tabanids are also guided to victims by linearly polarized light reflected from their hides. Explaining that horseflies are more attracted to dark horses than to white horses, the team also points out that developing zebra embryos start out with a dark skin, but go on to develop white stripes before birth. The team wondered whether the zebra’s stripy hide might have evolved to disrupt their attractive dark skins and make them less appealing to voracious bloodsuckers, such as tabanids.

Travelling to a horsefly-infested horse farm near Budapest, the team tested how attractive these blood-sucking insects found black and white striped patterns by varying the width, density and angle of the stripes and the direction of polarization of the light that they reflected. Trapping attracted insects with oil and glue, the team found that the patterns attracted fewer flies as the stripes became narrower, with the narrowest stripes attracting the fewest tabanids.

The team then tested the attractiveness of white, dark and striped horse models. Suspecting that the striped model would attract an intermediate number of flies between the white and dark models, the team was surprised to find that the striped model was the least attractive of all.

Finally, when the team measured the stripe widths and polarization patterns of light reflected from real zebra hides, they found that the zebra’s pattern correlated well with the patterns that were least attractive to horseflies.

“We conclude that zebras have evolved a coat pattern in which the stripes are narrow enough to ensure minimum attractiveness to tabanid flies’, says the team and they add, ’The selection pressure for striped coat patterns as a response to blood-sucking dipteran parasites is probably high in this region’.

Colors

Camouflage

Greetings

Ms. Swarna Raman,
II yr. M.Sc. Human Genetics

Dr. Sheela Ravinder S.
Asst. Prof., Dept. of Physiology

Your Corner

Stone Marvel

The 15th Bridges Monthly Book Review was held on 03.05.’12
Book : The Meme Machine
Author : Susan Blackmore
Reviewed by : Ms. Hitha Srivatsan, I yr. M.Phil., Clinical Psychology

Forthcoming Bridges Monthly Book Review
June ’2012 – The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho
To be reviewed by Ms. A. Seethalakshmi, Reader, Faculty of Nursing

Ms. S. Jayarajini, Asst. Prof., Optometry