

"Memories we weave each day, in school, we learn and play"



Your Purkal Journal May 2025

Kalataru Visual & Performing Arts Competition

"In Art, man reveals himself and not his objects" - Rabindranath Tagore



The 5th edition of the 'Kalataru' – Visual & Performing Arts Competition was held at the OASIS school on the 3rd of May. Of the wide range of engaging competitions, PYDS Learning Academy, participated in five:

i) Stirring Clay Stories: Ritik and Manvi of class VIII represented our school in this event. Participants had to mould a clay teapot within 10x10x14 inches. Our team secured the third position.

ii) Metal to Fabric: In this competition, participants had to create a maritime fauna using wire and fabric. Aditya and Bhavna of class IX built a 3D model of an octopus and bagged the third prize.

iii) Bridging Folk Art: Artists were required to create a folk art painting based on Uttarakhand's Aipan art, in combination with any one folk art of India. Our students, Vanshika and Ishika Baloni painted an attractive fusion of Aipan with the Kalighat Patachitra of West Bengal on canvas. They were awarded the third prize.

iv) Shape Shift: In this event, teams of three students each had to create a 3D architectural model out of cardboard and other biodegradable materials. The PYDS team constructed a model of the Badrinath temple.

v) Fabric Reimagined: Three of our middle school students participated in this event, and crafted a windchime out of waste materials such as cloth strips, cardboard, wire, beads, buttons etc.

The Kalataru competition gave our students an opportunity to compete in a new environment, within prescribed time and with limited resources. Seeing different art styles and techniques employed by other teams helped broaden their perspective. The art teacher praised and reviewed their performance and gave them tips for improving their performance at the next competition.

Inter House Music Competition

"Music fills the infinite between two souls" - Rabindranath Tagore



Music is a medium through which a wide variety of emotions find common expression. It relaxes the mind, provides avenues for creative expression and soothes the soul. An inter house music competition is organised annually to nurture talent and promote a healthy spirit of competition. This year, it was held on 31st May, the last day before school closed for summer vacation. The competition was divided in three categories - Primary, Middle and Senior. Beginning with the primary section, the little ones stole the show with peppy numbers like '*Nani teri morni ko mor le gaye*' and '*Lakadi ki kaathi*'. The middle school students had the audience swaying with classic English numbers such as "Heal the World" By Michael Jackson and "Count on Me" by Bruno Mars. The seniors presented a fusion of *raga* based numbers that beautifully transitioned from classical, to light classical numbers.

We were honoured with a distinguished panel of judges comprising Dr Santosh Namdev, HOD music department and Mr Tikeshwar Bisen, Music teacher from the reputed Dev Sanskriti Vishwavidyalaya, Haridwar; Ms Swati Singh, founder of Womeniya Band and Mr Puneet Negi, accomplished guitarist and Music faculty from Seven Oaks School, Dehradun.

While the judges were looking at the results, to ease the suspense, Swati Ma'am took the stage and, accompanied by Puneet Sir on the guitar, delighted the audience with two melodious numbers. She intrigued the students by asking, "Why is music important in our lives", to which the students replied, "It is a universal language that makes people happy, relaxes the mind and helps improve concentration".

The best was saved for the last; Dr Santosh, gave a 15 minute pakhawaj performance on stage. It was a proud moment, as the five boys of our school who are learning pakhawaj under his tutelage accompanied him in unison. Dr Santosh complimented our school for providing a congenial atmosphere for learning in a happy and stress free atmosphere.

Results declared Gulmohar House as the winners in the middle and senior categories, while Dhak House was the winner of the primary section. Principal, Ms Diana Luji, encouraged students to participate actively in all competitions so as to discover their latent talents. She thanked the guests and teachers for making the event memorable.



Ganga Dance Arts Festival

"Art is a step in the known toward the unknown" - Khalil Gibran



The "Ganga Dance Arts Festival" took place on 24th May on the banks of the river Ganga in Haridwar. Organized by the Indian Culture Foundation, Uttarakhand State, it aimed to promote cultural heritage through traditional Indian dance and music performances. 24 students (15 musicians and 9 dancers) from our school performed at this event. On reaching the venue, they found themselves amongst a large number of artistes from all over India. Students briskly set up their instruments and positioned themselves at their respective spots, looking fresh and smart in their costumes, complete with makeup and ghungroos.

The program began soon after the Chief Guest lit the lamp, with a Gharwali group dance. It was followed by an impressive dance-drama, 'Ganga Avtaran' (descent of Ganga), by a group of professional artistes. The focal performance of the day featured a large number of dancers and musicians, including our students, who performed concurrently with the *Ganga aarti*, creating a mesmerising spectacle. An announcement declared that the event had made its way to the 'High Range World Records' book with the largest number of artistes performing together in one place at the same time.

Happy, satisfied and tired, our group headed back to campus. Our teachers who attended, highlighted the benefits of participating in the event with pride: i) Students enjoyed performing with a large heterogeneous group they had never met before; ii) rehearsing through zoom meetings and video links was a first for them but they mastered the advanced level footwork within 10 days; iii) they passed the endurance test when they performed continuously for more than 20 minutes; iv) performing on the same stage with artistes of international repute boosted their confidence. All participants were awarded medals and certificates, which will enhance their eligibility for college admissions. We look forward to participating in more events of this stature, to make us more visible and to improve our networking with other institutes.

Rabindra Jayanti

*"The flowers sway in the soft breeze. The river waves and gurgles as it flows,
The birds in bowers trill a tune, I cannot fathom the yearning that fills my being" - Tagore*



The 164th birth anniversary of Rabindranath Tagore was celebrated in a special assembly on 9th May. Students remembered him as a poet, writer, painter, social reformer and philosopher, whose contribution in shaping the cultural and political history of our country is unparalleled. He was the first non-European to win a Nobel Prize in any category, and also the first lyricist to win the Nobel Prize in

Literature. Considered a guru in the ideological sense too, he advocated unfettered learning and was given the title '*Gurudev*' by Mahatma Gandhi.

To honour him, students danced to his song, '*Mor bina othe kon sure baje*'. It personifies the instrument (*Beena*) which is playing by itself, indicating that the poet's heart is overflowing with melody, emotion and a natural sense of divinity. The junior students presented a dance performance on the rendition of his famous song, '*Jodi tor daak shune keu na ashe*' and '*Bhenge mor ghorer chabi*', that translates into, breaking my locked door, who will set me free.

To commemorate the occasion, saplings of the Amla, Bakayan, Camphor and Kesiya trees were planted around the campus by primary, middle and senior students. Suitable points were identified for the saplings and pits were prepared the day before. After assembly, students were told about the significance of the trees around us. Having understood the purpose, students carried the saplings and planted them with a sense of duty and reverence. They promised to watch over the saplings and ensure that they grow into strong trees. The heavens too, were pleased and blessed us with a soothing drizzle, soon afterwards.

Mrs Swamy's Birthday

"We will carry on your legacy, with your blessings, one stitch at a time"



As they say, 'Don't leave a legacy, live the legacy'. For us, Chinni Ma'am (Mrs Swamy) is the living inspiration and guide. She moved from Mumbai to Dehradun, with her husband Mr GK Swamy, the Founder of PYDS, in the late 90s and settled down in Purkal village. She fed the needy children and taught them along with Swamy Sir, when they came to her house for gratis tuitions. When local women approached her for help, she taught them to stitch patchwork quilts. To formalise the latter effort, she set up Purkal Stree Shakti Samiti, an agglomeration of self-help groups, where hundreds of women worked to earn with dignity while their young children were

looked after by a team of staff on the premises itself.

Chinni Ma'am continues to maintain a personal touch with members of both Stree Shakti and the PYDS School. It was a matter of pride and joy that she accepted our request to celebrate her 80th birthday with us on 23rd May. She graced our campus with her charming presence and lovingly allowed herself to be led to the auditorium by primary students, where she was greeted with a birthday song and presented with a big card they had made for her. A cute dance was performed by class II and III students, which she watched with utmost interest. Manvi of class IV gave a short speech elaborating on Ma'am's role in the lives of many students and teachers who were once her students. A heartwarming song, based on PYDS' "Almost Heaven PYDS", evoking tender emotions, was presented by the school choir.

As Chinni Ma'am got up to leave, students and teachers surrounded her, each vying to wish her individually and seek her blessings. She encouraged students to study well and follow the school motto of giving back to society. She lovingly hosted a special lunch for the whole school. How do we thank you, Ma'am, for your perennial, unconditional love and guidance. May we continue to thrive in the calm shade of your presence and blessings for many years to come.

History Interactive Workshop

"The study of History is the beginning of wisdom" - Jean Bodin



An interactive workshop was conducted by Mr Ammar Yassir Naqvi for our hostel students on 3rd May. Mr Naqvi is a postgraduate in History from Jamia Millia Islamia University, New Delhi. Two enthusiastic students initiated the session by enquiring, "Who likes History?" When very few hands went up, they invited Mr Naqvi to evoke interest in the subject. He stepped in, asking children what they understood by the term, 'History' - "If it is past events, then is it something that happened yesterday? Or should it be a certain number of years old?" After hearing a few answers, he simplified it as, "Events that are documented are called history". He intrigued the students further by saying everyone has a history, urging them to research the history of their

own family.

Retracing the ancestry of man from a monkey-like creature that lived on trees, he explained how it took millions of years for it to walk upright. Gradually, they began living in evolved social structures, but their limbs and fingers were still very different from ours. To make it more interesting, Mr Naqvi invited students to walk, jump, throw sticks, etc, pretending to have limbs and curled fingers like our ancestors. Students had fun enacting, but realised how different the life of our ancestors would have been. He went on to narrate the history of the caveman and how he hunted animals and drew figures on cave walls. Over many centuries, man grew taller, smarter, crafted finer tools and, as their population increased, began migrating to Asia from Africa. Students enjoyed themselves immensely and were able to look at History with new eyes. They are now eager for more such interactions.

Inspirational Talk on Sports

“In sports lies the zest for life”



On 12th of May, Mr Ajay Mark visited our campus for a sports session with our residential scholars. Mr Mark is a veteran sportsman, who retired as the Head of Department, Sports and Student Life Coordinator from Woodstock School, after 39 years of service. In addition to his multiple achievements as a sportsperson, his contribution to promoting sports in Dehradun and Mussoorie is notable.

While interacting with students, he shared his life learnings and the pivotal moments that defined him as a person. His touching story of overcoming cancer and rejoining the school to train students portrayed his strength of character and passion for life. He spoke about the numerous sports he played, elaborating on their basic rules and crucial aspects.

Students got very excited when he introduced them to Pickleball, a new sport that is an amalgam of tennis, badminton and table tennis. The game came to India in 2008

and has been gaining in popularity, but is yet to be recognised by the Government and the Sports Authority of India. Mr Mark also conducted a brief workshop on basketball, during which he taught finer points of foot and hand movements.

By the end of the session, students had gained comfort with him and bombarded him with questions about his boyhood years, his favourite sport, his interests besides sports, etc. Calmly dousing their queries, he stoked their curiosity to discover more about the nuances of their favourite sport by themselves. Concluding a fun and action filled session, he bid an affectionate goodbye, promising to return and teach Pickleball.

The Gavel Club

“The art of communication is the language of leadership.” – James Humes



Good communication skills are an asset for all. The earlier they are learnt, the better. Keeping this perspective, Gavel club meetings are organised for the residential students on Saturdays, that are school holidays. All hostel students are required to attend these meetings, during which, they present prepared speeches. The designated panellists evaluate the speeches according to their roles. For example, the Word Master prescribes a word, which gets a thumbs up from the audience, everytime the speaker uses it. The Grammarian keeps track of grammatical mistakes. The Ah-Counter notes overused words and filler sounds used by the speaker. The duration of the speech is recorded by the Timer. After speeches, panellists present their analysis, which helps speakers and the audience understand the nuances of good communication. Votes are cast for the best speech, and the Joke Master intervenes to lighten the atmosphere while the votes are counted. The winner is congratulated, and the roles for the next meeting are assigned to students, with an objective of giving all students at least one chance.

The Gavel club has helped our students immensely to: i) Overcome nervousness when speaking before an audience, ii) organise and present ideas logically and

convincingly, iii) develop listening skills, iv) participate and lead group discussions and v) improve English speaking skills. Time and again our alumni share gratitude for the Gavel club meetings they attended in school, which helped develop their communication skills and opened new vistas for them later in life.

We are Proud of...
Vaibhav Aswal PYDS batch 2021



Vaibhav joined PYDS in class XI and has recently completed B.Tech in Computer Science from DIT University, Dehradun. He has secured his first job as a Full-Stack Engineer at 'TechAtPlay', at an annual compensation of 10.2 lakhs/annum. He happily narrates his journey from PYDS to present as

"I hail from Thatyur, a village nestled in the Tehri Garhwal district. My family comprises my parents and a younger sister. My parents run a small cosmetics shop in the village, and my sister is currently in her first year of college.

When I joined PYDS, it was a completely different experience from my previous school. It wasn't just about attending classes; instead, it was filled with engaging and educational activities. For example, staying at the school hostel was a memorable experience where I made friends for a lifetime. I did not play games to begin with, but the mandatory games period grew on me and I began playing basketball, volleyball

and table tennis. The class trip to Gujarat at the end of class XI created everlasting memories. I was very fond of attending the Tinkering Lab and the Gavels Club sessions, which benefited me immensely. While the Gavels Club boosted my confidence and improved my speaking skills, the Tinkering Lab ignited my interest in technology.

PYDS helped me secure a 100% tuition fee waiver to pursue B.Tech in Computer Science at DIT University. Apart from paying full attention to academics, I joined the IEEE club that brought together people interested in hardware, robotics and software engineering. As the webmaster of the club, I managed technical projects and activities related to the web. When I volunteered as a student organiser for the IEEE International Conference on Intelligent Systems and Embedded Design, I learned about event management and about the ongoing research work in the field of electronics, intelligent systems and embedded systems.

I represented my college as a team member in three international hackathons. I was in the team for the national events too. Our team bagged the first runner up position in the hackathon organised by IIT Roorkee in 2022, and I also qualified as a national finalist in the international hackathon organised by Vodafone. By participating in these events, I learned to work as a team and under pressure. I regularly volunteered for the teams in college fests and other events, where we looked after the technical aspects. For example, in a college fest, we built the website, designed a system for online ticket booking and supported all technical details. Doing such things helped me learn, explore and face the challenges of real world projects.

Although I received two job offers before completing college, I will be joining TechAtPlay, a startup where I had interned during college. I found the energy level and fast-paced environment there resonated with me and pushed me to test my limits. I will be working full time on comprehensive, AI-orchestrated analytics and intelligent live-streaming solutions for the sports industry with them. A significant part of my role will involve researching and developing future enhancements and improving our core analytics and live-streaming technologies.

I feel blessed, and going ahead in life, I would like to use my technical skills to make education more accessible and build tools to help people with limited resources move forward. I also want to ensure a worry-free life for my parents and see that my sister can pursue her dreams in college and beyond.

PYDS holds some of the fondest memories of my life – my friends, the supportive environment, the stress-free atmosphere, together with the abundance of learning and fun, are unforgettable. I am deeply grateful to Swamy Sir, all donors and everyone associated with PYDS for their unwavering support and belief in students like me. Words cannot express the depth of my gratitude for the opportunities I received, and I am committed to making the best of them. To my juniors, I want to say - This place is something special, don't take it for granted. It's a unique gift to be in PYDS, so cherish it."

Donate to spread smiles!

As we continue to celebrate culture through various forms of art, we seek the good wishes of our patrons and friends. Take good care of yourselves, till we meet again.



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