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ECOTRAIL

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FOCUS ON ENVIRONMENT

Give Earth a Chance

Imagine the coastline of Mumbai near Mumbai Pune Highway, or the waters of Bay of Bengal entering Chowringhee or the Marina beach in Chennai starting near Mylapore! Imagine countries like Bangladesh, Fiji, parts of New Zealand, Florida, and the city of Venice disappearing under the sea and gone forever. In the immediate vicinity large parts of Bangladesh and hundreds and thousands of islands and island nations virtually wiped off the map. What happens to the millions of citizens from Bangladesh? Will they all perforce enter India as in the 1971 Indo - Pak war or will the situation be similar to what Europe is facing today?



This is not a scene from the next sci-fi movie. The process has begun and may take effect sooner than you think. If you are a smart person you will see opportunity in this disaster in the making. And check out real estate near the Mumbai Pune Highway or further beyond. Sell your Adyar or new Alipore property. And all this because of Climate change. The critical gas of Carbon di oxide is naturally present

in air at 0.03% of the total composition of air like oxygen, nitrogen etc. You add a toxic mixture further to it like Chloro Fluro Carbons (Chlorine, Bromine, Fluorine etc.) and Nitrous oxide and Carbon monoxide and you have a scenario where you are not letting heat escape from planet Earth and thus heating the Earth.

The melting of polar caps, rising of storms, additional rainfall resulting in floods, heat waves, wild fires, rising of sea levels are some of the effects of this increased temperatures.

The world or planet Earth will be on the edge of a precipice if we do not change our use of fossil fuels and the overall consumption way of life. The shift is urgently required, if for no one else but for our children's sake. I repeat the Earth is not ours to use but is given in trust to us, to ensure the generations of the future enjoy this planet and what it has in store for all. At the Paris Climate Conference (COP21) in December 2015, 195 countries adopted the first-ever universal, legally binding global climate deal to shift the world economy from fossil fuels to cleaner energies. The agreement set out a global action plan to put the world on track to avoid dangerous climate change by limiting global warming to well below 2°C. "The journey that lies ahead will require continued determination, ingenuity and, above all, our collective sense of humanity and purpose," said Christiana Figueres, executive secretary of the UNFCCC recently.

We all hope that what was laid down in Paris as the road map, will be adhered to.

Stay Safe

This Issue is significant as we increase the number of pages to pack in more info, more news and more inspiration.

The need of the hour is putting into practise safety norms which are not only being flouted but some are even ignorant of them. Read the safety standards on page 3, which we have been following at Trailblazers, now for the past 22 years of operation. Don't miss the inspirational story of the best teacher award winner Mr. McComb which may bring a tear to your eye or the significance of Rubrics as a method of grading performance both for teachers and students. We thank Mia, a wonderful innovative educator herself, for her brilliant infographics and constant support to us. We are your fans Mia!

Read about our globally acclaimed 7th Teachers Training Workshop, attended by 500 B.Ed. students, which was an intensive program focussing on Climate change. We also have interesting camps lined up for you and your students conducted under the careful vigil of our highly skilled & educated, well travelled, trained in First Aid, team of dedicated employees. So please join in!

Ranjan Biswas
Editor

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Zinnia blooms in Space for the first time



The Gooty Tarantula (*Poecilotheria metallica*), belonging to the family Theraphosidae is endemic to the Southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh and listed as Critically Endangered in the IUCN Red list. This species is categorized as CR because of its range, restricted to less than 100 km² in Andhra Pradesh, reserve forest between Nandyal and Giddalur, single location and continuing decline in habitat quality.

It is metallic blue in colour and quite attractive like the peacock or the blue sapphire, hence it is also called Metallic Tarantula or Peacock Tarantula.

A combination of small litter sizes and increased human pressures have made this species critically endangered. Ever since the first picture of this spider was circulated globally, it has been in great demand in the illegal pet trade.

Nothing is known of its breeding biology. The lone male in captivity lived for 2 years having matured after 18 months. This seems to be the normal among males of this genus. Longevity of the female is unknown, but if it is similar to other species, then they could survive for 10-12 years reaching maturity at the age of 5-7 years.



Photo courtesy www.indiasendangered.com

The habitat where the species occurs is completely degraded due to lopping for firewood and cutting for timber. The habitat is under intense pressure from the surrounding villages as well as from insurgents who use forest resources for their existence and operations. It is assumed that the area of habitat has decreased over the years, but there is definitely a decline in the habitat for they seek cavities and deep crevices in old growth forests.

US astronaut Scott Kelly announced the historic news that a zinnia plant had flowered on the International Space Station (ISS) on his Twitter account, along with a photograph of an orange, 13-petaled flower. "First ever flower grown in space makes its debut! #SpaceFlower #zinnia #YearInSpace," he wrote, adding: "Yes, there are other life forms in space!"

A NASA blog about the flowers, written before one had bloomed, said zinnias were chosen not for their beauty but to "help scientists understand how plants flower and grow in microgravity". Other plants,

such as lettuce and wheat, have been grown in space but never a flower that has bloomed.

In addition to helping scientists work out how to grow useful plants in space, it is thought the presence of a flower will raise spirits among the ISS crew.

"Plants can indeed enhance long-duration missions in isolated, confined and extreme environments – environments that are artificial and deprived of nature," says Alexandra Whitmire, of the NASA Human Research Programme.

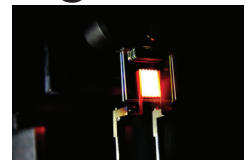
The Salim Ali Bird

A new species of bird has been described from northeastern India and adjacent parts of China by a team of scientists from Sweden, India, China, the US, and Russia. The bird has been named Himalayan Forest Thrush (*Zoothera salimalii*). The scientific name honours the great Indian ornithologist Dr Sálim Ali (1896–1987), in recognition of his huge contributions to the development of Indian ornithology and wildlife conservation. This is the first Indian bird named after **Dr. Salim Ali**. **Dr. Per Alström and Shashank Dalvi** first discovered the Himalayan Forest Thrush in May-June 2009 while studying birds at high elevations of Western Arunachal Pradesh. It was realised that what was considered a single species, the Plain-backed Thrush (*Zoothera mollissima*), was in fact 2 different species in northeastern India.



Photo courtesy Dr. Per Alstrom

Old is New again!



Researchers from MIT took a counterintuitive step in the search for energy efficient illumination. Instead of devising a new means of lighting they resurrected the old, trusty incandescent bulb. The old bulbs, known for their relative inefficiency as compared to LEDs, were upgraded with new technology that captures and recycles wasted heat, potentially reaching efficiencies four times higher than LEDs. Old bulbs are constructed with a thin filament of tungsten wire surrounded by inert gas. When you flip a light switch, electrons are packed into a very small space, which heats the wire to around 4,600 degrees Fahrenheit and gives off light across the whole spectrum. However, this process wastes most of the energy. As a result, current incandescent bulbs achieve an efficiency of only 3%. MIT created a sheath for the glowing filament, called a photonic filter, composed of many layers of metal oxides. The molecules are arranged in such a way that only visible light escapes making incandescent bulbs more effective than LED's.

Safety in Outbound Programs



Every once in a while we are faced with a grim reminder as people, as organization, as a country, that how callous are we when dealing with human life. The tragedy of young engineering students falling prey to the inviting sea near Alibaug when the college went on a "Picnic"?!!

Not far back a school kid crushed his leg in one of the rides during a school trip. A year back we saw another set of young students of engineering from Hyderabad washed away in Manali when the sluice gates of the river were opened.

We saw school children from Mumbai on a school trip, injured seriously while taking a horse cart ride in Panchgani tableland, another where the child was dragged by the horse and killed, and when a travel company took children to a high altitude camp in the Himalayas and had no clue why the child was having a headache. They gave the child crocin and the next morning the school child was no more having passed away in the night because of high altitude sickness. The company did not have a clue to the problem. Just by bringing the kid to a lower altitude or the plains would have been enough, but knowledge is not available and the school will not pay for having such a team and thus bus operators and all sundry have joined the bandwagon of this business.

These companies still continue their business either under new names or some have even the audacity to continue the reckless business since schools still patronize them as they offer cheap service. Thus the statement in the first paragraph of this article "How callous are we with human life". Little do we realise we could be the victim one day.

We often notice parents walking on the road with their young child holding their right hand

and walking on the road completely exposed to the traffic flowing from behind, despite the footpath being there. How often do we see cars, two wheelers racing above speed breakers!!! What is wrong with the collective us? While we are seeing this, one is helpless on correcting the nauseating attitude of drivers and pedestrians alike. So we can all go with the adage we are all like that only.

Safety is a culture, be it at home, school, college, work place, roads or during the use of public utilities. One can never be safe enough.

Basic Outdoor Safety Tips

- Carry your First Aid Kit Always
- Check out the weather
- Dress appropriately. Wear complete safety gear during adventure activities
- Carry enough supplies
- Carry maps, torches, caps, whistle, hand sanitizer
- Plan your trip well in advance
- Keep someone informed
- Eat and drink frequently, stay hydrated
- Never leave a campfire unattended
- Never enter pools, beaches without life guards

If we depend on others for our safety then it is a big risk but sometimes it is inevitable. You hope your driver is a safe driver. When you board trains, planes, then you are outsourcing your safety concerns and here too we weigh our choice depending on our knowledge and information.

More often than not we are more responsible

for incidents that take place since we have taken safety as a given and for granted. Safety costs and we are often not prepared to pay since it is not a visible service. But a team of trained staff will ensure and minimise the risk you are exposed to or take.

Simple things like ensuring the coach drivers are well rested, do not consume alcohol prior to driving, team eats after the guests have eaten, no swimming policy, doing a fire drill, carrying a properly checked medical kit with valid dated medicines, doing an reconnaissance of the site to be visited, checking and rechecking the form of the participants for allergies or any other medical issue, blood group and type are all to ensure the trip is uneventful from the medical or safety point of view. Trailblazers even works on the customized menu to ensure that they are ideal for the guests.

There are scores of concerns specially for school or college camps that must be addressed starting from the planning stage, where and when to go, completing the procedure of enrollment at least 4 months prior to the journey, making assessments of the company they are partnering to lead them, clearly stating the aims and objectives and the learning outcomes from the trip, completing a safety briefing with accompanying teachers students and parents. These are just some of the basic protocols, there are lots more.

I can say proudly that for 22 years Trailblazers has had a completely safe experience because safety is a priority and a Trailblazers culture and we continue to learn and adopt more and more safe practices. We have inbuilt protocols which are followed zealously. We have though miles to go. -Editor

Trailblazers attends State Government's Meet on School Trips Safety

A tragic incident occurred on 1st February 2016; 14 students of the Abeda Inamdar College, Pune drowned at the Murud beach when they were on their trip. The state government in wake of this incident immediately issued a circular banning schools trips at 'risky places' like hills and water bodies like seas, rivers. After heavy criticism from various sections in the industry & the society, a meeting was scheduled for the discussion of the points mentioned in the circular. It was presided by Mr. Ramchandra Jadhav, Deputy Director of Education, Government of Maharashtra. Trailblazers participated in this meeting held on 11th Feb at Pune and raised concerns regarding various points in the circular. Trailblazers presented its views and suggestions on the circular along with the other participants of the meeting comprising of government officials, representatives of educational institutions, journalists, parents and academicians. Finally, the circular was modified based on the inputs and discussion in the meeting. Accordingly a revised circular was issued thereby removing the ban on the school trips with new guidelines. Trailblazers has always been in the forefront in contributing in the areas of education, environment, safety standards and once again was successful in the said meeting.



Left: Mr. Ramchandra Jadhav, Deputy Director of Education, Govt. of Maharashtra presented with Ecotrail

Teacher of the Year shares a heartfelt story



Teacher of The Year Awardee - Mr. Sean McComb

Article by: Sean McComb Source website: <http://aplus.com/a/teacher-of-the-year> Photo courtesy White House

Let me tell you a secret about teachers: We have favorites. You had favorite teachers growing up, and we have favorite students. My favorites tend to be the fighters — not fisticuffs, that merits no favor — but the kids with the heart of a warrior. The kids who are somehow dealt a raw hand in life, but choose to struggle against that. The kids who carry their inner demons or face their outside stressors with remarkable courage. Kids like Brittany. When I first met Brittany, I was worried. I was charged to teach her for all four years of high school in a college-prep program focused on helping “academically average” incoming students go out as excellent students, prepared to succeed in college, usually as the first generation in their family to do so. This sounds lovely enough, but takes incredible resolve, grit and growth. I wasn’t sure Brittany had it.

She was painfully shy — couldn’t hold eye-contact, mumbled when talking to teachers, quickly getting red-in-the-face. When put on the spot, if she could have melted, she would have. And her academic skills were a long way from what’s expected in college. But what wasn’t immediately apparent about Brittany was her indomitable spirit. School was not easy, but Brittany did everything asked of her to the best of her ability. She turned drafts of papers in early for additional feedback. She came to ask for help when she struggled. She never missed an assignment. It seemed she was on a mission.

Kids that work that hard usually know what they want. They’re either chasing something — a goal, a dream, a future. Or they’re running from something — a past, an environment, a burden. When Brittany’s guardians met with me one day after school, I learned it was the latter. Brittany’s childhood would break most people. She had lived in a car for over a year, she had been abused, she had faced extended abject poverty. I have heard more

heartbreaking stories in a decade of teaching than I’d ever imagine, and Brittany’s was as difficult as any. But her aunt and uncle stepped in and adopted her out of that situation. She entered a blended family with as much love, grace and patience as any I’ve ever known. With that help at home, support at school, and her own fierce determination she moved from our school’s lowest track classes into honors. She took Chinese. She got involved in clubs. Classes continued to be very challenging for her, but her habits carried her through. At the end of her sophomore year, after spending all spring



Brittany who inspired this piece with Mr. McComb

fundraising with her family, Brittany got to spend a summer living in China through our district’s exchange program. My wife and I were chaperones. I got to see Brittany, whose childhood had been torturous, learn tai chi, hike to ancient Taoist temples, and walk on the Great Wall of China. When we got back to America, she kept plugging away in the classroom. She got a part-time job. She earned admission to a four-year college and, supported by the aunt and uncle who would make anything happen for their Brittany, she went away to college. Sometimes we slip into talking about kids from poverty like they’re hopeless and helpless. And we have to be careful — because they do need help and hope, but they’re not just victims. Equipped with hope for their future, with a village, with a skill set, they can go out into the world and contribute to the greater good. And they often do so with a superhuman will power, work-ethic and empathy unknown to many people of privilege.

A
TEACHER
Takes A Hand
OPENS
A MIND
&
TOUCHES A HEART

Last March I got a message from Brittany’s cousin asking me to call ASAP. On the phone, I learned that she had been struck by a vehicle while out for a run off campus. Brittany clung to life long enough for her family to come and see her. And then she passed away. I received that phone call 800 miles away, preparing to give a talk to teachers being honored in Georgia. I ran 10 miles that afternoon—running away from the reality of a tragedy so heart-wrenching, so cosmically unfair that it couldn’t compute. The next morning I cried my way through telling those teachers what Brittany would have said to them—that we don’t teach subjects, we teach students; that those students need to be loved before they can learn; that each of us is more than the worst thing that has ever happened to us; that we all have an opportunity and responsibility to help others believe in themselves when they can’t.

A few days later I was at her viewing, surrounded by her friends and family. We told stories, like you do. Brittany had this endearing nature that coupled frequent awkward interactions—a hello hip bump, or mistimed response — that she followed with an embarrassed giggle, which was just loveable. Friends told stories about how she would send them a stream of encouraging text messages in tough times. Teachers talked about how often we would receive notes of gratitude and kindness from her. I love teaching because students come along and leave me changed forever. Brittany showed me the remarkable resolve and power of the human spirit, and she showed me the value of helping others believe in themselves. That night I went into my own files and found a letter Brittany gave me during that year’s Christmas break. She said, in part, “You have always made me feel like I can do better things and be successful. You gave me more motivation to be successful.” I hope she knew that she’s done the same for me.

-Sean McComb



What is Rubrics?

A rubric is a scoring guide that seeks to evaluate a student's performance based on the sum of a full range of criteria rather than a single numerical score. It is an interesting scoring tool that explicitly represents the performance expectations for an assignment or piece of work. Rubrics have become popular with teachers as a means of communicating expectations for an assignment, providing focused feedback on works in progress, and grading final products. A rubric is a working guide for students and teachers, usually handed out before the assignment begins in order to get students to think about the criteria on which their work will be judged. It enhances the quality of direct instruction. Rubrics can be created for any content area including math, science, history, writing, foreign languages, drama, art, music, and even cooking! Once developed, they can be modified easily for various grade levels.

Advantages of Using Rubrics

Using a rubric provides several advantages to both instructors and students. Grading according to a precise and descriptive set of criteria that is designed to reflect the weighted importance of the objectives of the assignment helps ensure that the instructor's grading standards don't change over time. Grading consistency is difficult to maintain over time because of fatigue, shifting standards based on prior experience, or intrusion of other criteria. Furthermore, rubrics can reduce the time spent grading by reducing uncertainty and by allowing instructors to refer to the rubric description associated with a score rather than having to write long comments. Finally, grading rubrics are invaluable in large courses that have multiple graders (other instructors, teaching assistants, etc.) because they can help ensure consistency across graders and reduce the systematic bias that can be introduced between graders. Used more formatively, rubrics can help instructors get a clearer picture of the strengths and weaknesses of their class. By recording the component scores and tallying up the number of students scoring below an acceptable level on each component, instructors can identify those skills or concepts that need more instructional time and student effort. Grading rubrics are also valuable to students. A rubric can help instructors communicate to students the specific requirements and acceptable performance standards of an assignment. When rubrics are given to students with the assignment description, they can help students monitor and assess their progress as they work toward clearly indicated goals. When assignments are scored and returned with the rubric, students can more easily recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their work and direct their efforts accordingly.

There are many advantages to using rubrics:

- Teachers can increase the quality of their direct instruction by providing focus, emphasis, and attention to particular details as a model for students.
- Students have explicit guidelines regarding teacher expectations.
- Students can use rubrics as a tool to develop their abilities.
- Teachers can reuse rubrics for various activities.

Rubrics Part 1

Written by: Mia MacMeekin



Rubrics, Why Use them? Why Embrace?



Rubrics are scoring charts. They display what is expected of the learner for the assignment. Rubrics are used to assess the learner on several points. Learners can use rubrics as a guide to meet all the requirements for the assignment. Learners should receive the rubric along with the assignment. Teachers should follow the rubric when creating and grading assignments.

Why Use Rubrics? What can it improve?

<p>Improves Teaching</p> <p>A rubric enables teachers to better focus each learning event to address the rubric elements.</p>	<p>Improves Assessing</p> <p>A rubric allows teachers to assess based on the expectations in the rubric.</p>	<p>Improves Performance</p> <p>A rubric lets the learner know what is expected from the beginning.</p>
<p>Improves Expectations</p> <p>Rubrics are tangible, in writing.</p>	<p>Improves Directions</p> <p>Rubrics provide teachers with a determined goal which they can more easily explain.</p>	<p>Improves Assignment Quality</p> <p>Rubrics specify each assignment element so the learner can focus.</p>
<p>Improves Self Evaluation</p> <p>Rubrics allow learners to compare their work to the rubric before submission.</p>	<p>Improves Grading Quality</p> <p>A rubric is specific and uniform for all learners, leaving little room for unfair grading.</p>	<p>Improves Feedback</p> <p>Rubrics can be used as a guide for teachers to address, and give feedback for each issue in an assignment.</p>

How to Use Rubrics? A guide for teachers

<p>Understand</p> <p>Understand the expectations that the rubric has laid out.</p>	<p>Write</p> <p>Write rubrics that make sense for your assignment.</p>	<p>Read</p> <p>Read the rubric to the students and then ask if they have questions.</p>
<p>Disclose</p> <p>Disclose that there is a rubric that will guide your grading.</p>	<p>Give</p> <p>Give out the rubric at the beginning of the unit or course.</p>	<p>Copy & Paste</p> <p>Copy and Paste the rubric at the end of the assignment and grade on the rubric.</p>
<p>Follow</p> <p>Follow the rubric.</p>	<p>Tweak</p> <p>After grading is done, tweak your rubric to meet your expectations for the next assignment.</p>	<p>Standardize</p> <p>Have a set of standard rubrics to pull out and use throughout the year.</p>



Teacher Training Workshops



Teachers are first students and this came across to me loud and clear as student teachers from various B.Ed. colleges trooped into the bus at an unearthly hour of 6 am. The atmosphere was as though we were going for a picnic. The latest Hindi songs with Marathi tones from Bajirao Mastani were on the lips and they were all joking and munching on snacks. Little did they know that precisely in a couple of hours they would be having even more fun whilst learning about their environment and innovative teaching methods. We opened the windows and sat back listening to a variety of tunes as the wintry breeze blew and the scenery changed from concrete structures to village huts, lush green fields and hillocks. The students paused to enjoy the changing scenery.

The student teachers were proceeding to participate in a globally acclaimed, award winning CSR project - "Multiply the Message"- a Dow International Initiative together with the country's leading outdoor education company, Trailblazers.



This project, now in its 7th year, has trained over 3,000 teachers from across Mumbai, Navi

Mumbai and Thane schools and B.Ed. colleges who in turn have spread the environmental message to over 1 million children, parents and communities in residential societies, common public and other public platforms. Almost all in-service teachers of Navi Mumbai Municipal Corporation schools have gone through the training, so also teachers from

school from a teacher. She began her speech with a traditional Namaste saying that it has become a habit of all the students in her school to greet that way. She mentioned that other professions are more lucrative but teaching as a profession gives you much more satisfaction than any other industry or the corporate world. Teaching requires knowledge of the



Mrs. Deepa Shetty - Principal, Gopi Birla Memorial School lighting the lamp

Thane Municipal Corporation and a significant number from the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation. This hands on training has been imbibed by teachers from a large number of Central Government schools, and state funded schools as well as the IB & IGCSE schools in Mumbai and Navi Mumbai.

The programme, held annually has led to demand from schools in Pune, Nasik, Ahmedabad, Chennai and many other cities. But due to constraints of time we have not initiated the same although plans exist.

This year Ms Deepa Shetty, Principal of Gopi Birla Memorial School inaugurated the workshop. She shared the expectations of the

subject as well as good interpersonal skills as it brings out the best and the worst in you. Also, correlating what goes on inside and outside the classroom is the best way to bring about concern for the environment. According to her, bringing the outside world into the classroom is the best way to keep the children engaged. Her insightful speech inspired all the participants.

On the second day, Ms Ruchira Ghosh, Regional Director South Asia (Cambridge International Examinations) graced the occasion as chief guest and enlightened us by giving insight into Cambridge Board. She had a very interesting and an interactive session

Teacher Training Workshops

with the student teachers. She mentioned that a teacher should have attributes like Confidence, Innovative mind, Engaging quality, Responsibility and Reflective nature. According to her, a teacher is not just one who teaches but also one who learns every day. To conclude, she said that at the end of everyday if you ask yourself "What have I learnt today, How have I grown today and what is the one thing I will do differently of what I learnt today," you will definitely be a better teacher.

This year the topic of the Workshop was "Climate Change" with specific reference to Soil. Over 600 teachers both in-service and students training to be teachers underwent this unique, hands on training programme, participating in all sessions with great vigour, discussing the science of climate change and its likely impact, the global consensus on climate change, the Paris Declaration and individual and collective action. Modules on climate, carbon cycle, alternative energy, soil as the biggest store house of carbon, and more were shared with the teachers using simple locally available and cost effective materials to send the message home. The teachers all saw and wondered in awe, how Dow International is at the forefront, using chemistry and an understanding of science, to help mitigate climate change. It always astonishes me to see the faces of the teachers when they all learn that from waking up till the time you go to bed for a good night's sleep, Dow is all pervading. The Dow-DuPont merger was



Ms. Ruchira Ghosh, Regional Director South Asia, Cambridge International Examination

also mentioned to the teachers during the discussions.

Almost every teacher participating in this workshop has given a thumbs up for the way it was conducted and the way each and every teacher is treated by Dow International and Trailblazers.

In their own words, "Thank you Dow and Trailblazers for giving us an opportunity to attend this beautiful and knowledgeable program. This program has given me a different perspective about teaching."

"This workshop has helped me in understanding my teaching process and will improve my teaching methods in future to create great students," said another participant."

"Being from a Commerce background we never think about Environment, but



definitely it was a very good learning experience and will surely implement these methods." said another.

The takeaways are many and all the teachers were unanimous in their opinion that the project should be national, include the HRD ministry and also cover SAARC country's schools.

-Editor 



Mr. Ranjan Biswas - Trustee, Trailblazers Foundation

Open Air Class



A convoy of 4 buses commenced on a winding trail into the beautiful mountains to reach a quiet and quaint hill station where we set up our Camp. The students from an International school in Chennai were thrilled at the prospect of this outdoor experience. Trailblazers had designed a fun, adventure and knowledge packed program for the students. Keeping all the safety norms in mind the program began with creative activities and environment based games. The highlight of the day was the zip line! Next was a visit to a local school where they interacted with the resident students. Throughout the programme Trailblazers ensured that the students had fun as well as learned something new. The last day called for a campfire with marshmallows and hot chocolate.

Economics Camp

It was once again time to explore the maximum city - the financial, fashion and entertainment capital of India. Students interacted with experts of various private and government entities and got exposure to various markets viz commodity and capital. They also participated in debates moderated by an expert economist. They explored agricultural, financial and commodity sectors. This was also an opportunity to know and learn more about these sectors and see if they would want to choose one of these sectors as a career option. They were mesmerized by the bright lights, cool breeze and skyline at Marine Drive and took lots of photographs. Students enjoyed shopping at a famous local market and savored local delicacies like Wada Pav, Masala Pav and Pav Bhaji during the visit. All in all it was an enriching educational and cultural experience



Tiger Trail



We set off to explore the forests of a Tiger Reserve on the southern slopes of Satpura, the ancient land of seven mountains older than the Himalayas. The focus of this camp was wildlife. The jeep safaris were exciting as the students spotted the hornbill, wild boar, sambar and pugmarks of the tiger. They had many questions on their mind related to the environment which were answered by the Trailblazers team. The importance of Mahua and Tendu trees was explained. It was now time for some fun and games like football, badminton etc. In the nearby village they learnt the art of pottery. The students also got an opportunity to see a farm growing organic vegetables and Orange trees. Meditation, to listen to the sounds of Nature, was savoured by the students. The camp was a big success.

Swiss Ski and Snowboarding Camp

As we hurtle ourselves into the world of technology and look at convenience in every aspect of our lives, there is also the need to evoke the passion of outdoors, sportsmanship and a healthy lifestyle amongst children and young adults. Playing a sport, being part of a team, trekking in forests and mountains, rafting on gushing rivers is also an intrinsic part that a child needs to experience besides formal education. Nothing can be compared to the exhilarating feeling of seeing a young camper who

was an absolute novice at the sport of skiing just a few days back, zip past confidently on the snowy pistes. A group of children whose first brush with snow was with Trailblazers Ski camp in Switzerland did exactly that. Trailblazers has been doing the ski/snowboarding camps for the past 16 years and has introduced thousands of children to this international sport with high standards of safety. Camps are open for school students and individual students/young adults. For more details write to kiran@trailblazersindia.com



Teachers' Day Out

Away from the maddening crowd. It was Teacher's day out. Time to switch roles, have fun and become like their students: Eat, play, Chat or chill. A well deserved break for the educators. Designed specially for teachers by Trailblazers this was an innovative way of bonding and helping them to relax and revitalise. After an icebreaker, they played a series of team games, both indoors and outdoors. They also enjoyed the beautiful view of the nearby lake dotted with myriad birdlife, lavender colored hyacinth blooms, and a sun basking crocodile! They chilled under the gazebos on lush green lawns while sipping on tea and munching cookies.

The activities kept them engaged and entertained throughout. Teachers enthusiastically participated in the team activities and the games planned for them and thanked Trailblazers for a lovely day.



French Connection



Chennai was really a warm welcome for the students from Kolkata. The day was going to get hotter but team Trailblazers had all the cool activities planned for them. After a quick bite and instructions they reached Wildlife Trust to see the different types of Maggar and other reptilians. The drive to Pondicherry was long but super scenic. Trailblazers had planned a cultural, heritage and historic trip for the students. Pondicherry and Chennai had a blend of all, from Auroville, Aurobindo Ashram to the French Lanes and the Pondicherry Museum. Students travelled back in time when they saw the UNESCO heritage site of the Shore Temple, Arjun's Penance followed by the famous Temple and Church visits. Students went back home with a happy face and a happy team Trailblazers.

Lion Kings Camp



The last haven for the majestic Asiatic Lion, an old historical temple, a Ramsar site, ancient Harappan civilization, Gandhiji's ashram and much more was part of an experiential outdoor learning camp designed by Trailblazers for an international school. The pedagogy used was hands-on learning and facilitating, reinforcing classroom learning. The group of curious, young Trailblazers campers set out on a unique journey to soak in all the varied experiences that the programme had to offer which was done through challenges, quizzes, visits and reflections. Learning about wildlife, wetland or the ancient civilization in books does have its limitation and this experience was unique as the children could connect all the aspects of the outdoor programme to what they were learning in their classroom.



International Student Exchange Program

20 Swiss students along with their teachers and 20 Indian students of a reputed International School in Mumbai set out on an interesting experiential learning module conceptualized and executed by Trailblazers. This program was customized keeping in mind the learning outcomes of the visit with the highest safety protocols followed all along the trip. The students were fascinated by the diversity of Mumbai, the temple and dargah visit, the colorful open air community Laundromat - the world's largest outdoor laundry and the Museum. On the second day, the team Trailblazers were up on their toes for a trek to the Karnala Fort along with the Swiss students. At the foothills of the fort students were briefed about the trail. Everyone in the team made it to the top of the fort with ease. Reaching the top, the panoramic view of the Western Ghats gave the students an idea about the trade routes in the ancient times. Reaching the base was hop skip and jump. They headed straight for lunch and then visited an NGO where they saw biogas plant and vermi compost plant. They also shopped for some of the cottage

industry products. The next day dawned with another exciting trip this time to the famous SG National Park and the ancient rock cut Caves situated in the middle of the metropolitan city. They were charmed by the view of the three major lakes that keep the city of Mumbai hydrated and the dense forests which acts as its green lungs. On the last day under the careful supervision of Trailblazers, the students, experienced Asia's largest slum which is actually the hub of cottage industries. In the bylanes they met a scrap dealer who shared the information about how scrap is segregated and sold, interacted with a local laundry shop owner and understood how he earns his livelihood, a potter who kindly invited the students to his factory, shared his pottery secrets and even gave them a chance at it. The day ended with a wholesome traditional Indian lunch and shopping. After a successful end of the program the students and the Teachers said their goodbyes and greatly appreciated and thanked Trailblazers for a wonderful trip.



Trailblazers Summer camps in May

TRAILBLAZERS
Footloose
Summer Camp

age group
 8 - 12 years
 4 Days - 3 Nights
 May 2016

Location
 Karnala

Activities include

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- Treasure Hunt
- Dance Workshop
- Music • Team Games
- Star Gazing
- Lots of Fun!

Features

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- Fun-filled vacation

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MAY 2016
Age group: 10-18 years
Registrations Open



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Highlights

- Fun Filled Experience
- Nutritious & Hygienic Food
- Certified Experts
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Fort Trail

Trailblazers experts guided a very enthusiastic trekker to the rugged Karnala Fort, also known as 'Funnel Hill', on a beautiful morning in the Sahyadris. They explained the biodiversity and history of the terrain. The sanctuary is very rich in avifauna and harbours 147 species of resident and 37 species of migratory birds who visit it during winters. Once at the summit, they were mesmerized by the gorgeous vistas of the valley, river and forests.



Global Perspectives Camp



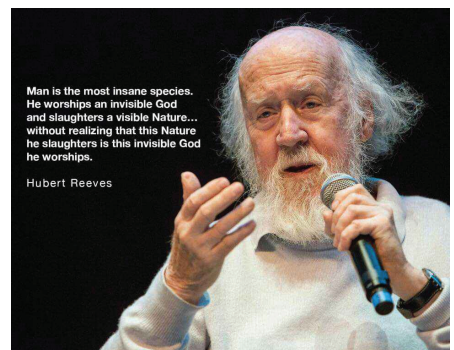
Students visited a Katkari tribal settlement, a tribal residential school and an NGO working for tribals as part of their Global Perspectives project. NGO officials and Trailblazers experts acted as translators and facilitated the interaction between students and tribals. Katkaris as the name suggests used to make "katha" but with the depletion of forests, brick making became their major occupation. Brick making is a labor intensive industry and given an opportunity, the whole Katkari village of 10-20 homes migrates to another place to work in a brick making unit. The NGO has set up a hostel and school for the tribal children which is very important as their parents move from one place to the other for work. The NGO has also set up a village industrial complex which provides employment to tribals and acts as a training center for tribal youth. During the interaction, students found out that they still follow their traditions but have adopted modern and scientific living, for e.g. if a child gets sick they still go to the temple of the village Goddess but also visit the doctor. It was satisfying to know that we are progressing towards a local inclusive society at levels where modern benefits like good houses, clean water, education, training and health facilities are available to tribals to lead a better life. The information needed for the project was collected successfully. They bid adieu after having simple Maharashtrian food.



- 3 MARCH - WORLD WILDLIFE DAY
- 8 MARCH - INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
- 20 MARCH - WORLD SPARROW DAY
- 21 MARCH - INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FORESTS & THE TREE
- 22 MARCH - WORLD WATER DAY
- 7 APRIL - WORLD HEALTH DAY
- 22 APRIL - INTERNATIONAL MOTHER EARTH DAY
- 23 APRIL - WORLD BOOK & COPYRIGHT DAY
- 23 APRIL - ENGLISH LANGUAGE DAY
- 28 APRIL - WORLD DAY FOR SAFETY & HEALTH AT WORK
- 30 APRIL - INTERNATIONAL JAZZ DAY



March 3 - World Wildlife Day



Man is the most insane species. He worships an invisible God and slaughters a visible Nature... without realizing that this Nature he slaughters is this invisible God he worships.
Hubert Reeves

Climate Action launched

In October, India had put forth to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change a document underlining its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) to reduce carbon emissions and at the same time continuing on the path of fast development and overcoming the challenges of the coming times. India launched a website that outlines its plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in a very transparent manner. The website (www.justclimateaction.org) gives a bird's eye view of the action plan to reduce carbon emissions by 35%, by 2030.

Observe Earth Hour

19th March 8:30 - 9:30 pm

Earth Hour is a worldwide movement organized by WWF uniting people to protect the planet.



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