

SMART MOMENTS

The cream of Stella's *lifeline* - the esteemed and valued community of senior professors, meet on the college campus once in two months to "Reconnect, Relax and Revive". Members exchange 'notes', discuss issues and often put up status reports of self and dear ones at the meetings! SMART office bearers organised 'happening' events for the members and it was very encouraging to see the veterans arriving for the 'dos' eagerly and promptly.

Stress and anxiety are common problems faced by both young and old in today's fast-paced life. A certain amount of it makes life challenging and less boring - but too much can be bad both physically and mentally, said our speaker, Dr. Prema Bhatt, former Professor of Psychology and Counsellor of the College. She spoke on ways of managing it effectively and suggested the importance of positive thinking and being in the company of people who do so. Yoga, meditation, regular walking, simple exercises and pursuing hobbies of one's choice were some of the suggestions given by Prema to keep members happy and healthy. We are happy to realise that through SMART, an effective "buddy system" of emotional and social connect, is being successfully provided. Bravo to its founders!!

On the announcement of the new health insurance scheme by the Tamilnadu Government for pensioners, the Stella Unit invited Prof. Shanmugasunderam of the TANRECTA - Tamil Nadu Retired College Teachers Association - to speak on the merits of the scheme and to outline the work of the retired teachers association for the benefit of the larger body. Many SMART members are already its members and others enrolled in it on that day. Members have already received the cashless cards issued through the respective nationalised banks.

Come December, everybody gears up for "more of everything"!! More love, more laughter, get-togethers and more visits! This year, the Christmas message was shared by Fr. V V Abraham, a distinguished educationist, youth animator and reputed counsellor. Through a simple and interesting story, he explained that however small or insignificant a person may be, one can share the warmth of *HIS* presence to humanity by spreading positive energy and warmth to those around them. The celebrations ended with carols, goodies bag and prizes for the 'super seniors' and the best dressed! SMART acknowledges the presence of Sr. Helen Vincent and Sr. Annamma Phillip, former Principals of Stella Maris on that day.

SMART has been organising a series of talks by health experts on alternative and holistic medicines. Sr. Susheela, fmm gave a lecture demonstration on "*HEALTH IN YOUR HANDS*", an informative session on acupressure and its practice for a healthy life. The seniors' curious queries were all answered and many learnt new tips and exercises to begin and end the day.

SMART is unique! It has been providing '*something special*' for the group! Many plans are in the offing.....a trip abroad in summer, the release of the long-awaited, phone book - *SMART LINKS* and a yearly update called *SMART MATTERS*. Whatsapp for the retired faculty of SMC has already been launched! We endeavour to create a 'buddy system' of seniors with a positive approach to life....How's the "Sister Act"?

Dr Patricia Gabriel