

**PLEASE NOTE THE SCHEDULES**

Monday Through Thursday: 9 am to 12 noon
and 6 pm to 8 pm
Friday, Weekends & Holidays: 9 am to 8 pm

PASCHIMAVANI

DIRECTIONS

From Freeway 580 in Livermore:
Exit North Vasco Road, left on Scenic Ave,
Left on Arrowhead Avenue

NEWS FROM THE HINDU COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTER, LIVERMORE

VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT <http://www.livermoretemple.org>

SHIVA-VISHNU TEMPLE

OM NAMA SHIVAYA

TELEPHONE (925) 449-6255 FAX (925) 455-0404

OM NAMO NARAYANAYA

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

Dear Devotees,

We estimated that over 15,000 devotees have visited Shiva Vishnu Temple on New Year's day. Hundreds of devotee families have participated in the New Year Annadana program at HCCC. We thank all the devotees, volunteers, coordinators, and sponsors for making the functions at HCCC a grand success. In the past 3 months, HCCC has conducted several functions including New Year Celebrations, Vaikunta Ekadasi, Andal Abhishekham (daily during Dhanurmasa), Andal Thiru Kalyanautsavam, Ayyappa Makara Deepa Pooja, Ratha Saphthami, Maha Shivarathri, Shiva Brahmotsavam, Sri Sukta Homa, Maatha – Pitha Children's program, Sri Purandaradasa Aradhana Program, and Yakshagana performance. It was a great joy to witness an excellent youth and children participation in Maatha – Pitha and Sri Purandaradasa Aradhana programs.

Sri Rama Navami preparations are going on very well. We invite you to participate in several functions such as Sri Rama Navami, Panguni Uttiram, and Ugadi. There will be an Annual Grant-in Aid (HCCC provides funds to local non-profit humanitarian organizations) in April '09. Please obtain details from temple web-site, if you would like to participate in the Grant-in Aid program.

Maha Kumbhabhishekham 2010 planning and preparations have just begun, please visit temple web-site for more details.

Work on Shiva Mandapam preparation has resumed and making progress. It is expected to arrive expected within next few months for Samprokshana.

Please contact temple office to sponsor Kalyanautsavam of Lord Balaji, Goddess Mahalakshmi and Goddess Bhoodevi utsavamurthies, to be performed at your residence.

HCCC's Master Planning Committee (MPC) has submitted application for conditional use permit and received response from Livermore City asking for more details. We request devotees to maintain silence outdoors after 8 PM while leaving the temple premises and also request cautious driving resulting in a safer neighborhood for residents.

Annual Election process has been completed and new office bearers have been elected.

Volunteers and function coordinators are instrumental in conducting all HCCC functions successfully. We thank devotees, sponsors, volunteers, youth ambassadors, and youth volunteers, for a continued support to provide quality services to all devotees at HCCC facilities. Please visit temple web-site at www.livermoretemple.org for latest information.

Srinivasa Malladi
Chairman of the Board, HCCC

From Editor's Desk

Dear Devotees,

In this Newsletter, we have published few articles. One article is on Yaksha Prashna by Dr. A.V. Srinivasan. The questions asked by Yaksha and thoughtful answers of Dharamaraja inspires our children to stand firm and stand tall as they began to shape their lives in a new land. Articles contributed by youth on the occasion of Women's History Month is a testimony of increasing participation by youth. Please send your feedback to us. We would like to hear from you on the contents and what you would like to see. We would like to encourage you and your children write short articles for publishing in the Newsletter. Send your articles and feedback via email to Janakiram.kaki@gmail.com.

Janakiram Kaki,
Publicity Chair, EC, HCCC

PLANNED SPECIAL EVENTS

DATE/DAY	EVENTS	TIME	ACTIVITIES
Apr 3rd Friday	Sri Rama Navami		Detailed Program at the end
Apr 4th Saturday	1st Saturday of the Month	11:00AM 12:00Noon	Swarna Alamkaram for Lord Shiva Vastra Samarpana for Lord Balaji
Apr 5th Sunday	Sri Rama Navami (Week End Function) Ekadasi	5:00PM	Detailed Program at the end Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka
Apr 6th Monday	Pradosham	6:30PM	Shiva Abhisheka
Apr 7th Tuesday	Panguni Uttiram		Detailed Program at the end
Apr 8th Wednesday	Poonnima	6:30PM	Lalita Sahasranama Parayana
Apr 10th Friday	Swati	6:30PM	Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Abhisheka
Apr 11th Saturday	2nd Saturday of the Month	11:00AM 11:00AM	Muttangi Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tomala Seva for Lord Balaji
Apr 12th Sunday	Sankatahara Chathurthi	5:00PM	Ganesha Abhisheka
Apr 13th Monday	Tamil New Year, Baishaki, Vishu Virodhi Samvatsara	7:00PM	Murugan Archana and Panchanga Sravana in Tamil
Apr 18th Saturday	3rd Saturday of the Month	11:00AM 12:00Noon	Rajatha Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tiruppavadai Seva for Lord Balaji
Apr 19th Sunday	3rd Sunday of the Month Tamil New Year: weekend function	5:00PM 11:00AM 11:30AM 12:30PM 1:30PM	Lord Balaji Sahasranama Archana Lord Shiva Sahasranama Archana Karthikeya Abhisheka Poolangi Seva for Lord Murugan Panchanga Pattanam
Apr 20th Monday	Ekadasi	6:30PM	Lord Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka
Apr 22nd Wednesday	Pradosham and Masa Shivaratri	6:30PM	108 Kalasha Abhisheka for Lord Shiva
Apr 25th Saturday	4th Saturday of the Month	12:00Noon	Pushpa Seva for Lord Balaji
Apr 26th Sunday	Krittika Last Sunday of the Month	5:00PM 4:30PM	Karthikeya Abhisheka and Archana Kaala Bhairava Abhisheka and Archana
Apr 27th Monday	Rohini Akshaya Tritiya Narasimha Swamy Basava Jayanthi	6:30PM 6:30PM 6:30PM	Sri Krishna Pooja Chandana Abhisheka for Lord Lakshmi
Apr 28th Tuesday	Sri Adi Shankara Jayanthi	6:30PM	Lord Shiva Archana Sri Adi Shankara Pooja
Apr 29th Wednesday	Shukla Shashti Sri Ramanuja Jayanthi	6:30PM 6:30PM	Karthikeya Sahasranama Archana Sri Ramanuja Satmurai
Apr 30th Thursday	Punarvasu	6:30PM	Sri Rama Abhisheka
May 2nd Saturday	1st Saturday of the Month	11:00AM 12:00Noon	Swarna Alamkaram for Lord Shiva Vastra Samarpana for Lord Balaji
May 3rd Sunday	Vasavi Jayanthi	12:00Noon 12:00Noon 1:00PM	Vasavi Kanyakaparameshwari Pooja Sri Parvathi Utsava Murthy Abhisheka Archana and Theertha Prasad Viniyogam
May 4th Monday	Ekadasi	6:30PM	Lord Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka
May 6th Wednesday	Pradosham	6:30PM	Lord Shiva Abhisheka
May 7th Thursday	Narasimha Jayanthi	6:00PM	Sri Narasimha Swamy Moola Mantra Homa Sri Narasimha Swamy Abhisheka and Archana
May 8th Friday	Poonnima Swati	6:30PM 6:30PM	Sri Lalita Sahasranama Parayana Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Abhisheka
May 9th Saturday	2nd Saturday of the Month	11:00AM 11:00AM	Muttangi Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tomala Seva for Lord Balaji
May 10th Sunday	Meenakshi Kalyanam		Detailed Program at the End
May 12th Tuesday	Sankatahara Chathurthi	6:30PM	Ganesha Abhisheka
May 15th Friday	Sravana	6:30PM	Lord Balaji Sahasranama Archana
May 16th Saturday	3rd Saturday of the Month	11:00AM 12:00Noon	Rajatha Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tiruppavadai Seva for Lord Balaji

PLANNED SPECIAL EVENTS

DATE/DAY	EVENTS	TIME	ACTIVITIES
May 17th Sunday	3rd Sunday of the Month	11:00AM	Lord Shiva Sahasranama Archana
May 19th Tuesday	Hanuman Jayanthi	9:30AM 6:30PM 7:30PM 8:30PM	Sundara Kanda Homa Hanuman Abhisheka Sahasra Nagavalli and Sahasra Kadali Phala Archana Ekanta Seva
May 20th Wednesday	Ekadasi	6:30PM	Lord Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka
May 21st Thursday	Pradosham	6:30PM	Lord Shiva Abhisheka
May 22nd Friday	Masa Shivaratri	6:30PM	108 Kalasha Abhisheka for Lord Shiva
May 23rd Saturday	4th Saturday of the Month Krittika	12:00Noon 5:00PM	Pushpa Seva for Lord Balaji Karthikeya Abhisheka and Archana
May 24th Sunday	Rohini	5:00PM	Sri Krishna Pooja
May 25th Monday	Memorial Day (Weekend Timings)		Temple Open 9:00AM to 8:00PM
May 27th Wednesday	Punarvasu	6:30PM	Sri Rama Abhisheka and Archana
May 29th Friday	Shukla Shashti	6:30PM	Karthikeya Sahasranama Archana
May 30th Saturday	5th Saturday of the Month	10:00AM	108 Kalasha Abhisheka for Lord Balaji
May 31st Sunday	Last Sunday of the Month	4:30PM	Kaala Bhairava Abhisheka and Archana
June 3rd Wednesday	Ekadasi	6:30PM	Lord Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka
June 4th Thursday	Pradosham Swati	6:30PM 6:30PM	Lord Shiva Abhisheka Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Swamy Abhisheka
June 5th Friday	Vaikasi Vishakam	6:30PM 7:00PM	Shankha Pooja Shankha Abhisheka for Lord Karthikeya
June 6th Saturday	1st Saturday of the Month Poornima	11:00AM 12:00Noon 5:00PM	Swarna Alamkaram for Lord Shiva Vastra Samarpana for Lord Balaji Sri Lalita Sahasranama Parayana
June 7th Sunday	Jyestha Abhisheka for Lord Balaji	11:00AM 12:00Noon	Jyestha Abhisheka Homam Lord Balaji Utsava Murthy Abhisheka, Alankaram & Archana
June 10th Monday	Sankatahara Chathurthi	6:30PM	Ganesha Abhisheka
June 12th Friday	Sravana	6:30PM	Lord Balaji Sahasranamam Archana
June 13th Saturday	2nd Saturday of the Month	11:00AM 11:00AM	Muttangi Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tomala Seva for Lord Balaji
June 18th Thursday	Ekadasi	6:30PM	Lord Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka
June 20th Saturday	3rd Saturday of the Month	11:00AM 12:00Noon 5:00PM	Rajatha Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tiruppavadai Seva for Lord Balaji Kartikeya Abhisheka and Archana
June 21st Sunday	Pradosham and Masa Shivaratri 3rd Sunday of the Month Rohini	5:00PM 11:00AM 5:00PM	108 Kalasha Abhisheka for Lord Shiva Shiva Sahasranama Archana Sri Krishna Pooja
June 23rd Tuesday	Punarvasu	6:30PM	Sri Rama Abhisheka
June 27th Saturday	4th Saturday of the Month Shukla Shashti	12:00Noon 5:00PM	Pushpa Seva for Lord Balaji Kartikeya Sahasranama Archana
June 28th Sunday	Last Sunday of the Month	4:30PM	Kaala Bhairava Abhisheka and Archana
July 1st Wednesday	Swati	6:30PM	Sri Lakshmi Narasimam Swamy Abhisheka
July 2nd Thursday	Ekadasi	6:30PM	Lord Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka
July 4th Saturday	Independence Day (Weekend Timings) 1st Saturday of the Month		Temple Open 9:00AM to 8:00PM
		11:00AM 12:00Noon 5:00PM	Swarna Alamkaram for Lord Shiva Vastra Samarpana for Lord Balaji Lord Shiva Abhisheka
July 6th Monday	Pradosham Guru Poornima	6:30PM 6:30PM	Samohika Satyanarayana Pooja in Temple Hall Sri Lalita Sahasranama Parayana
July 9th Thursday	Sravana	6:30PM	Lord Balaji Sahasranama Archana
July 10th Friday	Sankatahara Chathurthi	6:30PM	Ganesha Abhisheka
July 11th Saturday	HCCC 23rd Anniversary- Day 1		Detailed Program at the End

PLANNED SPECIAL EVENTS

DATE/DAY	EVENTS	TIME	ACTIVITIES
July 12th Sunday	HCCC 23rd Anniversary- Day 2		Detailed Program at the End
July 15th Wednesday	Dakshinayana Punyakalam		Sun Enters Kataka 26:37
July 17th Friday	Krittika	6:30PM	Kartikeya Abhisheka and Archana
July 18th Saturday	3rd Saturday of the Month	11:00AM 12:00Noon	Rajatha Alamkara for Lord Shiva Tiruppavadai Seva for Lord Balaji
	Rohini	5:00PM	Sri Krishna Pooja
	Ekadasi	5:00PM	Lord Balaji Bhoga Murthy Abhisheka
July 19th Sunday	3rd Sunday of the Month	11:00AM	Lord Shiva Sahasranama Archana
	Pradosham	5:00PM	Lord Shiva Abhisheka
July 20th Monday	Masa Shivaratri	6:30PM	108 Kalasha Abhisheka for Lord Shiva
July 21st Tuesday	Punarvasu	6:30PM	Sri Rama Abhisheka
	Total Solar Eclipse (NOT VISIBLE IN USA)		
July 24th Friday	Thiruvadi Pooram	9:30AM 6:30PM	Sri Andal Abhisheka Nachiyar Thirumozhi and Satumorai
	Pavitrotsavam Day 1,2 & 3		Detailed Program at the End
July 26th Sunday	Shukla Shashti	5:00PM	Kartikeya Sahasranama Archana
July 28th Tuesday	Swati	6:30PM	Sri Lakshmi Narasima Swamy Abhisheka
July 31st Friday	Sri Varalakshmi Vratam		Detailed Program at the End

SRI RAMA NAVAMI CELEBRATIONS

DATE/DAY	TIME	EVENTS
Mar 27-Apr3	8 AM -12:00 Noon (daily)	Srimad Ramayana Parayana
	6:30 PM - 7:30 PM (daily)	Sri Rama Sahasranama Archana
Apr 3rd Fri	10:00AM	Sri Rama Abhisheka
	11:00AM	Sri Rama Shadakshari Homa and Namakarana Samskara Homa
	12:00Noon	Theertha Prasadam
	6:30PM	Sri Seeta Rama Kalyanotsavam
	7:00PM	Kalyana Bhojanam (Assembly Hall)

SRI RAMA NAVAMI (WEEKEND FUNCTION)

Apr 4 - 5 (Sat and Sun)		
	8AM -12:00Noon (daily)	Srimad Ramayana Parayana
	6:30 PM - 7:30PM (daily)	Sri Rama Sahasranama Archana
Apr 5th Sun	8:00AM	Lord Shiva and Lord Balaji Suprabatham
	8:30AM	Abhisheka for Lords Shiva, Ganesha, Kartikeya, and Anjaneya
	9:30AM	Seeta Rama Edurukola Utsavam
	11:00AM	Sri Seeta Rama Kalyanam
	12:00Noon	Suhamuhurtam
	12:30PM	Akshataropanam, Asheervachanam, and Theertha Prasadam
	1:30PM	Sri Seeta Rama Sankeertanam
	3:00PM	Sri Rama Pattabishekam
	6:00PM	Hanumanta Vahana Utsavam with Rama Sankeertana
	7:00PM	Maha Mangala Arati
	7:00PM	MahaPrasadam (Assembly Hall)
	8:00PM	Ekanta Seva for Lord Balaji

PANGUNI UTTIRAM

DATE/DAY	TIME	EVENTS
Apr 7th Tue	5:00PM	Sri Suktha Homam
	7:00PM	Gadya Traya Parayanam
	7:30PM	Sethi Seva
	8:00PM	Ekanta Seva for Lord Balaji

Sri Meenakshi Sundareshwara Kalyanam

May 10th Sun	8:00AM	Suprabatham for Lord Shiva and Lord Balaji
	8:30AM	Abhisheka for Lords Shiva, Ganesha, Murugan and Hanuman
	10:30AM	Sri Parvathi Abhishekal
	11:30AM	Alankaram and Archana
	1:00PM	Arathi and Theertha Prasadam
	2:00PM	Kalayana Utsavam
	3:30PM	Kanya Daanam by Lord Venkateswara
	5:30PM	Vrishabha Vahanam
	7:00PM	MahaPrasadam (Assembly Hall)
	8:00PM	Ekanta Seva

HCCC 23rd ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS - 09

July 11th Sat	10:00AM	Lord Balaji Sahasra Kalasha Abhisheka
	6:30PM	Lord Balaji Unjal and Sahasra Deepa Alamkara
July 12th Sun	10:00AM	Lord Shiva Sahasra Kalasha Abhisheka
	6:30PM	Lord Shiva Unjal and Sahasra Deepa Alamkaram
PAVITROTSAVAM July 24 - 26, 2009		
July 24th Fri	6:00PM	Sankalpam, Deeksha and Amkurarpanam
July 25th Sat	8:00AM	Suprabatham for Lord Shiva and Vishnu
	8:30AM	Lord Balaji Abhisheka
	10:00AM	Archana and Arathi
	11:00AM	Lord Balaji Utsava Murthy Abhisheka

Cont. on next page...



PAVITROTSAVAM July 24 - 26, 2009

DATE/DAY	TIME	EVENTS
July 25th Sat	11:00AM	Lord Balaji Utsava Murthy Abhisheka
	12:00Noon	Pavitra Adhivasa and Homam
	3:30PM	Lord Balaji Sahasranama Archana by Sponsors
	5:00PM	Pavitra Mantapa Alamkaram and Meru Pooja
	6:00PM	Maha Shanti Homa
July 26th Sun	8:00PM	Ekanta Seva
	8:00AM	Suprabatham for Lord Shiva and Lord Vishnu
	8:30AM	Nitya Homa
	9:30AM	Pavitra Abhisheka
	11:00AM	Special Alamkaram, Pavitra Samarpanam and Satmurai

PAVITROTSAVAM July 24 - 26, 2009

DATE/DAY	TIME	EVENTS
July 26th Sun	12:00Noon	Maha Poornahuti
	4:00PM	Shanti Kalyanam, Deeksha Visarjanam and Asheervachanam
	8:00PM	Ekanta Seva
Sri Varalakshmi Vratam		
July 31, Fri	10:00AM	Sri Mahalakshmi Abhishekam
	12:00Noon	Theertha Prasadam
	7:00PM	Sankalpam
	7:30PM	Sri Varalakshmi Vratam Pooja by Devotees
	9:00PM	Ekanta Seva

ANNOUNCEMENTS**New and Outgoing Executive Committee and Board Members**

HCCC welcomes and congratulates the newly elected Board members; Smt. Raghavamma Gullapalli, Sri Seshagiri N., and Sri Srinivas Pyda. HCCC extends its welcome and congratulates newly elected Executive Committee members; Sri Boda Rao, Sri Ravishankar Jonnalagadda, Sri Janakiram Kaki, Sri Debasis Bagchi, and Smt. Padmaja Madhusudan.

The Board of Directors have elected Sri Peraiah Sudanguntha as Chairman, Sri Srinivas Pyda as President, and Smt. Kamala Shankar as Corporate Secretary.

HCCC acknowledges the contributions made by serving Board of Directors at HCCC during 2008-2009 year: Sri Krishna Chander, Sri Ben Venktash, and Sri Shankar Narasimhan who have completed their 3-year term; Sri Vinay Kallesh, Smt. Kamala Shankar, and Sri Srinivasa Malladi who have completed two years; Sri Prasuna Dornadula, Sri Sridar Poothari, and Sri Peraiah Sudanguntha who have completed one year. HCCC look forward to their dedicated services for the remaining period of their term on Board.

HCCC recognizes the efforts of following people for leading the organization during the 2008-2009 year: Sri Prasuna Dornadula (President), Smt. Vijaya Neelamraju (Vice-president), Smt. Kamala Shankar (Vice-chairperson), Sri Sridar Poothari (Corporate Secretary), and Sri Srinivasa Malladi (Chairman).

HCCC thank the following Steering committee members for their contributions while serving on Executive Committee during the period 2008-2009: Sri H. K. Narayan, Sri Anand Gundu, Sri Gopi Reddy, Smt. Archana Ranganathan, Sri Srinivas Pyda, Sri Srinivas Reddy Malireddy, Sri Srinivas Lingutla, Sri Guruswamy Ramdoss, Smt. Manashi Bagchi, and Sri Madan Arora who have completed two years; Sri Janakiram Kaki, Sri Ramu Malaiyandi, and Smt. Vidya Ananth, who have completed one year nominated EC term; Smt. Vijaya Neelamraju, Sri Sreeram Madabhushi, Sri Jegan Thambaiyah, and Smt. Revathi Santhanam, who have completed one year on EC.

Hundi Donations

When you visit the temple, please place your donations only in Hundi. Please do not throw or place cash (bills/coins) on or near idols.

Delivery of Newsletter

To ensure delivery of temple Newsletter to your inbox (not your spam or bulk folders); please add svtl@livermoretemple.org to your address book.

Temple Calendar for 2009

Many of you have picked up your copy of popular religious calendar for the year 2009. If you have not taken your copy, please contact temple office and pick up your copy during your next visit to temple before they go out of stock.

Need Volunteers

The HCCC is a non-profit organization and is run by many dedicated volunteers like you. Many new volunteers have joined the crew and have supported temple events. We need many more volunteers for help in the areas of publicity, cultural, religious, maintenance, administration, fund raising, youth & education, and many more areas.

If you are interested or someone you know is interested in volunteering, please contact Manashi Bagchi at manashibagchi@yahoo.com or the temple office. If you are interested in volunteering for temple publicity activities, please contact Janakiram.Kaki@gmail.com to know more.

The Yoga and Meditation Camp

HCCC is organizing The Yoga and Meditation Camp, a two-day workshop, on April 12 and April 18. Yogi Dr. Samprasad Vinod is conducting this camp. He is a well qualified medical doctor (M.D., Ph.D., and D. Sc.) and is a well-known authority on Yoga and Meditation with 30 years of experience in teaching Yoga in India and abroad. He has authored over 10 books. One of his book titled '9 Secrets of Successful Meditation' is published by the Duncan-Baird, U.K. Dr. Vinod is an eloquent speaker and has appeared on national and international TV and Radio. He has addressed numerous National and International Yoga Conferences as main speaker, chief guest, and chairperson. He is an adviser to many Indian and overseas yoga organizations like Yoga Fellowship of Northern Ireland, Yoga Therapy Ireland, Samanvay Yoga from France, Kaivalyadhama Lonavla, and Lonavla Yoga Institute.

Cont. on next page..

Continued from page 5

He is also closely associated with the Yoga For Health Education Trust and British Wheel of Yoga. He has conducted about 100 such programs in Thermax, Krupp Industries, Alfa Laval, Sun International, USA and Govt. organizations like Yashda, Animal Husbandry Department of Maharashtra State, and Co-operative Department.

Mark your calendars for this event on April 12 and April 18 at the Assembly Hall of Livermore temple. Please visit this web-site and register at <http://sites.google.com/site/patanjalyoga/registration>

KEY EVENTS CELEBRATED

Arudra Natyanjali

The cultural committee organized two major events to start the year 2009. On Jan 18th, the 14th annual Arudra Natyanjali was conducted as homage to Lord Nataraja and Goddess Shiva Kamasundari Devi keeping the traditions of Chidambaram Dance festival. Over 15 schools participated in the annual dance festival. Per the tradition, the priest performed the puja to anklets in two batches, both in the morning and afternoon. The Assembly hall was packed with young eager students and enthralled audience.



Sri Purandara Dasa Aradhna

On February 21, third annual Sri Purandara Dasa Aradhna was conducted with an overwhelming response from the devotees at large. The troupe from Bay area's "Yaksha Ranga" gave an outstanding dance drama performance on the destruction of Kamsa (Kamsana Vade). Guest speaker, Sri Pradeep Joshi, spoke on saint composer and the largess of HCCC in providing such a wonderful infrastructure to celebrate the life and works of the father of Karnatik music. Chairman of HCCC, Sri Srinivasa Malladi spoke of the fact that these programs are an encouragement to the younger generation to participate in the richness of Hindu culture and to visit the temple with family and friends. The religious chair, Sri HK Narayan from HCCC's executive committee reminded of the long association of HCCC and KKNC and volunteers who have greatly contributed to both the organizations. KKNC's president, Smt. Pushpa Subbarao highlighted the life of Sri Purandara Dasa and expressed the willingness of KKNC to work with larger organizations like HCCC. As St Purandara Dasa said in one of his songs, it's the blessings of Krishna alone that will take humanity towards the goal with ease. With this belief so did the event conclude on a high note of obeisance to Lord Krishna

The highlight of the evening was the "Nava Ratna" Kirtana by Smt. Padmaja Kishore and students. Over 14 schools and organizations sang songs by the master composer.

We express our heart felt thanks to all the volunteers and supporters of cultural committee without whose help the year would not have such a gala start. Please visit our web site for future programs.



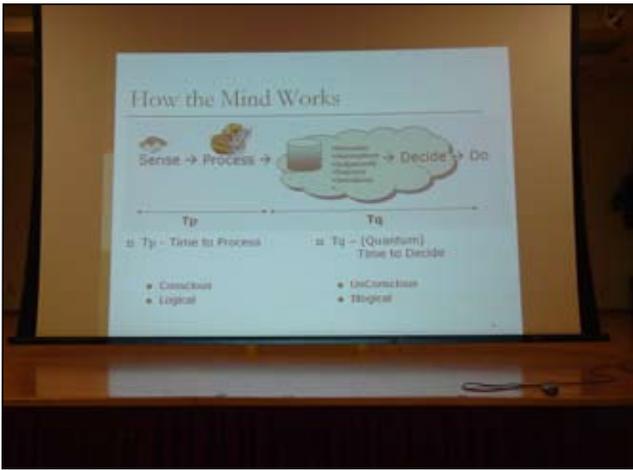
Meditation Program

Ma Nithya Kiran, a disciple of the Enlightened Master Paramahansa Nithyananda and an acharya for the Life Bliss Foundation talked about Meditation at the temple on March 1st. She talked about how the mind works, how negative emotions block our energy centers or chakras, how meditation can unblock these centers and how meditation can result in physical, mental and emotional well being.

Ma Kiran then led the group in a powerful new meditation technique - Nithya Dhyaan or Life Bliss Meditation - organized by Nithyananda for today's mind, bombarded constantly by television, radio, emails, instant messaging, cell phones and other interruptions. As more people joined in this powerful meditation, Ma Kiran repeated the presentation for those who had missed the earlier conversation.

Ma Kiran invited the audience to hear Nithyananda speak on the Yoga Sutras and experience Kalpataru, an intense full day meditation program in the presence of the Master, during the 6 day event he will be conducting at the India Community Center (ICC) in May. See yogam4u.org for more information.

Nithyananda, coronate as the youngest mahamandaleshwar in 2007 by the Nirvani akhara, the order that has organized Kumbh Mela for the last 12,000 years, is the most watched spiritual teacher on www.YouTube.com/LifeBlissFoundation and in a few short years, the Life Bliss Foundation has established over 1300 centers across the world.



Sri Lakshmi Saraswathi Puja

In recognition of economic hard times, the management of HCCC has organized Sri Suktha Homa for devotee welfare. Priests have chanted Sri Suktha 16 times during this Homa. This event was conducted per the authentic Hindu tradition of promoting prosperity and welfare of all devotees of HCCC. About 300 families registered for the Puja by email and walk-ins. The names and Gothras of the registrants have been read out during Sankalpam time.

Krishnapriya Manjulavil performed the dance and Kala Iyer sang Bhajans. Beautiful Rangoli created by Raghavamma Gullapalli was displayed. At the reception desk, our youth volunteers, Archana Ranganathan and Padmaja Madhusudan, greeted the devotees coming to the temple with Kumkum, Haldi, and Chandanam in a traditional way. Many young devotees performed their first Akshara Abhyasam along with their parents under guidance of Pt. Mukherjee. Photo laminations of the Devi prepared by Sai Rompicherla were given to devotees.



Yaksha Prashna: A Guide to Hindu Value System

By

Dr. A.V. Srinivasan*

This episode is found in the Aranya Parva of the epic, the Mahabharata. The Pāṇḍavās along with their wife Draupadi are nearing the end of their twelve-year exile in forests. They are due to begin the thirteenth and final year, which they are required to spend undiscovered.

In ancient days, it was the practice of certain Brahmins to perform homās and havans as part of their daily rituals and worship. One of the most essential tools needed in this practice is, of course, the device that can generate fire. This consists of two wooden pieces, a rod and a bow, the latter producing a churning action of the rod supported on a firm base of stone or wood. The churning action results in friction and heat at the support and any fibrous material at the base of the support catches fire, ready for use in a ritual. One day one such Brahmin, an agnihōtri, came rushing to the Pāṇḍavās and begged for help. He had, it seems, hung the fire-drilling sticks on a low branch of a tree. A passing stag happened to stop and rub his body on the trunk of this tree and, in the process, the sticks got entangled in the articulated horns of the animal. The stag fled, struggling in vain to rid himself of this unwanted burden; and the more he shook his head, the more firmly did the fire-sticks get wedged in his antlers. The poor Brahmin now wanted the Pāṇḍavās to pursue the fleeing animal and recover the sticks. The Pāṇḍavās believed that it was the duty of kshatriyās to provide any and all help and protection to those who practiced their dharma. Therefore they proceeded forthwith fully armed in pursuit of the stag. While they soon caught sight of the stag, their attempts to stop the animal failed and more running and more huffing and puffing ended in the tiring of the party. Not only had the quest failed, they ended up hungry, thirsty, tired, angry and frustrated.

The brothers sat down finally to rest under the cool shade of a large tree and naturally began to fret over the outcome of this relatively simple, uncomplicated task. Greater battles with their cousins lay ahead of them and yet they had not been able to help a Brahmin even in such simple circumstances. Yudhishtira instructed Nakula to climb a tree nearby to locate any sources of water in the vicinity so that they could quench their thirst. Nakula did so and informed Yudhishtira that there was indeed a cluster of trees not too far off and that he could hear the cries of water cranes. Yudhishtira suggested that Nakula go to the pond and fetch some water in a quiver. Nakula, after walking a short distance, located a beautiful spot, a crystal clear lake, surrounded by trees, flowers and birds. Nakula was overjoyed. His first instinct was to enjoy a cool drink himself, as long as he was already there. So he descended to the water's edge and prepared to scoop up some refreshing water. As he was about to do so, he heard a strong and clear voice of warning:

मा तात साहसं कार्षी मम पूर्व परिग्रहः
प्रश्नानुक्त्वातु माद्रेय पिबस्व च हरस्व च

"Do not dare to touch that water from this lake that has belonged to me, my dear child.

Son of Mādri, you must first answer my questions and then you may drink or fetch."

Nakula thought that he must be hearing things due to sheer fatigue and so he ignored the warning, drank the water and immediately fell dead. When Nakula did not return within a reasonable time, Yudhishtira suggested that Sahadeva go and take a look at what was delaying him. Sahadeva arrived on the scene and was shocked to see Nakula lying as though asleep. Before doing anything, he thought he could quench his thirst. He heard the same warning, ignored it and, upon attempting to drink, also fell dead. Now it was Arjuna's turn to determine what had happened. He proceeded with his Gandiva bow in his hand, suspecting some trouble. Upon arriving at the lake he was stunned to see his brothers lying as though dead. Again, he tried to quench his thirst and heard the same warning. But Arjuna did not ignore the warning. Instead he challenged the being to show itself and shot several arrows in the direction from which the voice came. He only received further and sterner warning. Arjuna challenged the voice by saying, "Stop me if you can," proceeded to drink the water and fell down dead. Some short time later, Bhima arrived and had the same fate.

Now Yudhishtira was clearly worried. Wondering about the possibilities of harm befalling his dear and powerful brothers, he decided to go in search of them. When he arrived at the lake, he could not believe the dreadful sight before him. All four brothers dead on the ground! Yudhishtira sat beside them and lamented. All his hopes were shattered now. How would he ever be able to recover his lost kingdom without the help of his able, powerful brothers? He grieved for a while and then began to look around to determine the reason for these deaths. He said to himself,

नैशाम् शस्त्र प्रहारोस्ति पादं नेहास्ति कस्यचित्
भूतं महदिदं मन्ये भ्रातरो येन मे हतः

There are no signs of violence from weapons on their bodies, no footprints anywhere.
The killer must be a supernatural being to have killed my brothers.

He wondered if Duryōdhana had had the pool poisoned. He ruled it out because the faces of the dead brothers looked calm and serene. Convincing himself that it must have been some supernatural being, he approached the water's edge to fetch some water to begin the last rites for his brothers. Then he heard a sudden voice: तवानुजाः मया प्रेता वशम् नीतः . . (I am the cause of your brothers' death . . . , न चेत् प्रश्नान् पृच्छतो व्याकरोशि त्वं पंचमो भवितः . . . (you shall be the fifth victim if you do not answer my questions. . . .))

Yudhishtira asked, "Who are you? Are you a rudra, vasu, or marut? You must be strong to be able to put to death these powerful brothers of mine. Your feat is remarkable because neither gods, antigods, gandharvās nor rakshasās could stand up to my brothers. But why? What do you want? Noble one! Why are you here? Who are you?"

The voice replied: "I am a Yaksha, Yudhishtira. May you prosper." As he heard these words, Yudhishtira saw before his eyes a form developing; a massive tall body with grotesque eyes, burning like the fire of the sun, and a voice like thunder: "I warned your brothers. But they would not listen to me. So now they are dead. This pool belongs to me and unless you answer my questions you shall not even touch this water." Yudhishtira replied,

न चाहं कामये यक्ष तव पूर्वं परिग्रहं (I have no desire to take what has been yours), यथा प्रज्जं तु ते प्रश्नान् प्रति वक्ष्यामि पृच्छ माम् (Ask me and I will answer as best as I can).

Thus begins Dharmaraja's attempt to answer the Yaksha's questions. I have never read anything so beautiful, so subtle, and as deep with layers of significance as these questions and answers. Through Yudhishtira, Bhagawān Vyāsa has distilled the entire philosophy of the Hindus into an enquiry comprising some one hundred questions. The questions cover a lot of ground and a wide range, jumping from one topic to another. This question and answer session lays a firm framework for the gems of wisdom that are to come later in the epic in the teachings of the Srimadbhagavadgita. These questions and their answers are as important, as relevant and as significant today as they were when Yudhishtira stood with palms folded, by the side of his dead brothers, and attempted to do his best in meeting the Yaksha's challenge.

In the interest of space, let us review briefly just one riddle shown on page 16 of my book:

किंस्विद् गुरुतरो भूमेः	What is weightier than earth?
किंस्विद् उच्चतरं च खात्	What is taller than the sky?
किंस्विद् च्छीघ्रतरं वायोः	What is faster than the wind?
किंस्विद् बहुतरं तृणात्	What is more numerous than grass?

Yudhishtira's answers were Mother, Father, Mind, Thoughts respectively.

All such riddles and the answers have guided the lives of Hindus for thousands of years. Let us study them. Let us each become a Yudhishtira and face the questions exercising the best in us. Let the questions and the answers be the torchlight that lead us from darkness, give us peace and comfort at times of stress. Let these questions and answers be talked about, meditated and debated until each of us has had our fill, has satisfied our thirst for this ancient, eternal philosophy of the Hindus. May these questions and answers inspire our children to stand firm and stand tall as they begin to shape their lives in a new land.

**Dr. Srinivasan is the primary founder of Connecticut Valley Hindu Temple. His book 'The Vedic Wedding: Origins, Traditions and Practice' won the USA Book News 2007 Best Book Award. He taught Sanskrit to Wesleyan University graduate students. He also won Kala Seva Mani award from Cleveland Thyagaraja Festival.*



March is Women's History Month

In 1911 in Europe, March 8 was first celebrated as International Women's Day. In many European nations, as well as in the United States, women's rights was a political hot topic. Women (and men) wrote books on the contributions of women to history.

In the 1950s and 1960s, after Betty Friedan pointed to the "problem that has no name" — the boredom and isolation of the middle-class housewife who often gave up intellectual and professional aspirations — the women's movement began to revive. With "women's liberation" in the 1960s, interest in women's issues and women's history blossomed.

In 1978 in California, the Education Task Force of the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women began a "Women's History Week" celebration. The week was chosen to coincide with International Women's Day, March 8. Three years later, the United States Congress passed a resolution establishing National Women's History Week.

In 1987, at the request of the National Women's History Project, Congress expanded the week to a month, and the U.S. Congress has issued a resolution every year since then, with wide support, for Women's History Month. The U.S. President has issued each year a proclamation of Women's History Month.

The purpose of Women's History Month is to increase consciousness and knowledge of women's history: to take one month of the year to remember the contributions of notable and ordinary women, in hopes that the day will soon come when it's impossible to teach or learn history without remembering these contributions.

On the eve of Women's History Month, two young devotees; Arjun Shankar and Prerana Gundu compiled information on great women in Vedic period, from Ramayana epic, and modern era. Arjun has been visiting HCCC temple since he was four and is now a graduate student with interests in History and Education. Prerana has been volunteering for the Temple for many years. She started attending Balajyothi class and later volunteered for Youth & Education activities.

Great Women of the Vedic period

Compilation by Arjun Shankar

Women of the Vedic period (circa 1500-1200 BCE) were epitomes of intellectual and spiritual attainment. women both complemented and supplemented their male partners. Some great women of the Vedic period are Ghosha, Lopamudra, Sulabha Maitreyi, and Gargi. Rig Veda is the only scripture in which the Divine Truths are revealed to women sages. There are more than thirty women sages in Rig Veda with specific hymns associated with them.

Ghosha

Vedic wisdom is encapsulated in myriad hymns, and 27 women-seers emerge from them. But most of them are mere abstractions, except for a few, such as Ghosha, who has a definite human form. She is Granddaughter of Dirghatamas and daughter of Kakshivat, both composers of hymns. Ghosha has two entire hymns, each containing 14 verses, assigned to her name.

Lopamudra

Lopamudra is a character from the Rigveda. She was married to the sage Agastya. The story says that Agastya created Lopamudra from the most beautiful parts of various animals. In one important scene, Lopamudra chastises Agastya for his lack of attention and love. Afterwards Agastya realizes his duty to his wife and later together they spread the thousand names of the Divine Mother. Together with her husband she is credited with spreading the fame of the Lalita Sahasranama. She is also called Kaushitaki and Varaprada.

Maitreyi

An extremely important character from the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Maitreyi was one of the two wives of Yajnavalkya. When it was time for Yajnavalkya to renounce the material world in order to search for Enlightenment in the Ultimate Reality of God he divided his belongings between his two wives. While Katyayani was satisfied to live with such material belongings, Maitreyi wanted to find the key to immortality. She shunned worldly wealth and followed Yajnavalkya into the forest in order to learn the basis of immortality.

Gargi

Gargi was one of the most accomplished scholars depicted in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. King Janaka had promised one thousand cows to the sage who was the greatest Vedic scholar. In an important part of her story, she challenged the Sage Yajnavalkya when Yajnavalkya confessed his belief that he was the greatest sage of them all. Specifically, she asks important questions regarding atman (the soul) and the origin of all things. While there is continued debate as to the result of this debate, Yajnavalkya received the cows after answering Gargi's questions to the best of his ability.

Mandodari: The Wife of Ravana

Compiled by Prerana Gundu

"Better to have loved and lost, than to have never loved at all." -- St. Augustine



The story begins with King Maya, the King of giants, who was married to an elf named Hema. A daughter was born to them, but Hema did not care for the King or for her daughter. She deserted the baby and went to heaven when the Gods called her. Since the baby did not have a mother anymore, King Maya cared and loved the baby. He gave her the name Mandodari and always kept her with him.

Once, Maya and his daughter were wandering the Earth. Mandodari was now 15 years of age and was very beautiful and heavenly. As they reached upon the dense forests, Ravana, the King of Lanka met Maya. As Ravana talked with Maya, he asked hand of Mandodari. Happily, King Maya agreed and soon Ravana and Mandodari were married. Thus, Mandodari became the better half of Ravana.

Even though Ravana had married many women, the one that remained the most beloved to Ravana was Mandodari. Being the good wife she was, she tried to maintain Ravana on the pious path and always wished him well. When Ravana abducted Sita, she warned him that Rama and Sita were not ordinary people, and that they were divine beings. However, Ravana did not listen to her and he just laughed at her words. Ravana must have really loved his wife, regardless of not heeding to her words because when his brother and grandfather warned him, he got angry, but with her he did not.

Sadly for Ravana, Mandodari was right. Rama killed Ravana in a very intense battle. When Rama saw Mandodari crying over Ravana's dead body, Shri Rama bestowed his full grace on Mandodari and instantly the illusion that surrounded her was gone. There was no more mourning or attachment left.

She is one of the Pancha Kanyas in Hindu mythology, the others being Ahalya, Draupadi, Sita and Tara. The Pancha Kanyas are supposed to signify the Pancha Bootha or the five elements of Nature. Legend has it that all of an individual's sins are washed off simply by uttering the name of these Pancha Kanyas.

Many people remember Ravana, but not many have heard of Mandodari, his wife. She was a woman, who was full of appreciation, vigilance, and congeniality. She loved Ravana so much and always wanted the best for him. If only he had listened to her words, she might have never lost him.

Mandodari represents purity and bravery. Her role as wife to Ravana was so pure and full of love. She was as wise as she was beautiful. She was as friendly as she was powerful. She was Mandodari

Rani Lakshmi Bai- India's Joan of Arc

Compiled by Prerana Gundu

"A woman is the full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture and transform."

-Diane Mariechild

Rani Lakshmi Bai was originally born as Manikarnika, meaning "mistress of the jewel" in Varanasi, India to a Maharashtrian Karhade Brahim family on November 19, 1835. Her mother died when Manikarnika was 4 years old, and at the age of 14, she was married to the Raja of Jhansi, Gangadhar Rao.

After her marriage, she was given the name Lakshmi Bai. The marriage ceremony took place in the temple of Lord Ganesha in Jhansi city. Then in 1851, Rani Lakshmi Bai bore a son, but sadly he died when he was about 4 months old. So she and her husband adopted Damodar Rao. Then two years later, on November 21, 1853, Rani's husband died. She was only 18 years old at the time.

The British government under Lord Dalhousie rejected Damodar Rao's claim to the throne and annexed the state of Jhansi by using the doctrine of lapse. In March 1854, Rani Lakshmi Bai was given 60,000 rupees as pension and was ordered to leave the palace at the Jhansi fort.

After the start of the Indian mutiny, Rani Lakshmi Bai strengthened Jhansi's defenses and assembled a volunteer army of rebels. Women were also given military training. Although Rani was accompanied by her brave warriors, Jhansi fell to the British forces.

Along with the young Damodar Rao, the Rani decamped to Kalpi along with her forces where she joined hands with other rebel forces, including those of Tatya Tope. The Rani and Tatya Tope moved on to Gwalior. At Gwalior, the combined rebel forces defeated the army of the Maharaja of Gwalior when his armies deserted to the rebel forces and they occupied the strategic fort at Gwalior. rebel forces, including those of Tatya Tope. The Rani and Tatya Tope moved on to Gwalior. At Gwalior, the combined rebel forces defeated the army of the

Maharaja of Gwalior when his armies deserted to the rebel forces and they occupied the strategic fort at Gwalior. However on the second day of fighting, on 17 June 1858, the Rani died.

Rani Lakshmi Bai will always be remembered for her valor and her determination to regain the lands that were taken away from her by the British after the death of her husband. She was an extremely talented stateswoman and military leader, as she gathered together a force of 15,000 people in the fight for independence.

If there are any words to describe Rani Lakshmi Bai, it would be inspiration. She fought for her country and for what she believed in. Death followed in her footsteps but she learned to always be one step ahead. One must remember that she died a courageous woman, a brave woman, a woman who fought for her country with pride, with honor, with hope.

Being a girl I am proud of Rani Lakshmi Bai for what she did. She is a true example of someone who should always fight for what they believe in, regardless of whether they are a man or woman, boy or girl, husband or wife. Even though Rani Lakshmi Bai is not here today, her inspiration still lives on and motivates people to fight for what they believe in, no matter where they are or who they are.

PICTURE GALLERY



Priests Performing Lakshmi Saraswathi Puja



Akshara Abhyasam during Lakshmi Saraswathi Puja



SHIVA-VISHNU TEMPLE

**HINDU COMMUNITY &
CULTURAL CENTER**

1232 Arrowhead Avenue
Livermore, CA 94551-6963
Phone: 925-449-6255
Fax: 925-455-0404

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LIVERMORE, CA
PERMIT 158

PASCHIMAVANI

APRIL-MAY-JUNE-2009

NEWSLETTER DESIGNED BY:
Kulvinder Kaur
PRINTED BY:
Capitol Printing