

Bharatvani

Monthly Newsletter of the Hindu Center of Virginia December 2005

In this issue:

HCV Rental Rules & Rates	2
Hindi Classes	
Pledges - Temple Expansion	3
Membership News	
Ayyappan Puja, Geeta Jayanti	5
Puja Sponsorship News	
Diwali Celebration at	7
Children's Museum of Richmond	
Divine Forms of The Supreme in	9
Hinduism - Article	
Children's Corner	11
Gateway India	

Town Hall Meeting

Fund Raising and Expansion Committee of Hindu Center of Virginia Invites you for a presentation of Temple expansion plan, specifically temple architecture concepts and fund raising strategies. Please join us and give us your feedback. Schedule is as follows.

Sunday December 11, 2005
2.00 P.M. to 3.30 P.M.

<u>Agenda Item</u>	<u>Time</u>
Welcome	5 Min
Temple Expansion Plan	20 Min
Q and A	15 Min
Fund Raising Strategies	20 Min
Q and A	15 Min
Other items	15 Min

Puja Calendar for December & January

Dec 04, 2005 1 st Sunday	Puja & Lecture by Dr. Taleganokar, 12:15 pm - Sant Parampara	Deepti & Vikrant Sitani
Dec 11, 2005 2 nd Sunday	Ayyappan Puja Suprabhatam 9:30 AM	Malayalee Families
Dec 18, 2005 3 rd Sunday	Puja and Geeta Jayanti Suprabhatam 9:30 AM	NeilKant & Mina Bhatt
Dec 25, 2005 4 th Sunday	Puja & Bhajans	Shantha
January 01, 2006 1 st Sunday	Puja and Amritwani Paath Happy New Year	Rajendra
January 08, 2006 2 nd Sunday	Puja, Hawan, and Bhajans	Asha & Brij Mago Neela Deshpande
January 15, 2006 3 rd Sunday	Puja and Bhajans	Madhavi & Ravi Vathaluri
January 22, 2006 4 th Sunday	Puja and Bhajans	Jamuar/Malhotra
January 29, 2006 5 th Sunday	Pujs and Bhajans	Open for Sponsors

Special Pujas in December

Monday, December 12	7:00 PM	Pradosh Puja
Tuesday, December 13	5:30 PM	Karthigai Puja
Wednesday, December 14	7:00 PM	Poornmashi
Wednesday, December 28	6:00 PM	Pradosh Puja

Karthigai Deepam (Tuesday, December 13); Hanuman Jayanti (Friday, December 30)

Exciting News - Festival of India 2005

We started the year with a new milestone in hand! We realized and achieved a new record this year which could not have been possible without your help, enthusiasm, commitment and support. We are pleased to announce that we have recently issued a **Net Profit check for \$150,000** to Hindu Center from the proceedings of the bazaar this year.

Once again, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the entire bazaar committee, which functioned as one unit and team. Obviously, this mammoth task would not have been possible without the participation and support of the entire community.

We would like to thank and recognize all the support of volunteers for their dedication, time and efforts. We are in the process of collecting all the names of volunteers to be published in the next issue of Bharatvani. I would sincerely appreciate if all volunteers and food booth leaders communicate with Sanjay Singhvi (804-747-3913) for recognition in the next Bharatvani. We would also like to recognize and appreciate the support of Indian restaurants and local Indian grocery stores for their generous contributions. With God's help and your support, we were able to conclude another successful Bazaar. God Bless.

Rama Jadav, Chairperson, Festival of India 2005

Become a member of Hindu Center now and support your Temple

Pledges for the New Temple Construction

Since we published the initial list last month, the following donors have sent their pledges. We thank them once again for supporting the temple. Your pledges are very much appreciated for the construction of this project.

Mohan Kuppusamy and Tamilselvi M. Kuppusamy

Kapil Parkhi and Manjiri parkhi

Sangeeta Sharma and Tarsem Lal

Suresh Subramaniam and Lakshmi Subramaniam

Suryanarayan Raju Venkata Chiluvuri &

Sandhya Kiran Chiluvuri

Neha Bhatnagar

BC Vaswani, Deepa Vaswani, and Sameer Vaswani

Please direct all questions regarding your pledges made by you on September 11, 2005 during the 16th anniversary celebrations to Mrs. Veena Kukreja, of the Fund raising and expansion committee. Also, please arrange to send your pledges to her directly. You may contact her via e-mail at dvkukreja@comcast.net or call her at 804-794-1594. Her mailing address is 12004 Bromwich Ct, Richmond, VA 23236.

A message from your Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees would like to thank everyone who made the two big events of the Center this past quarter a great success; the 25th anniversary of the conceptualization of Hindu Center and the 16th anniversary of the prana pratishta in September 2005, and the 24th annual Festival of India in October 2005.

The first phase of the temple expansion plan which included the site engineering and preparation for the construction of future traditional temple, classrooms, dining hall, and the parking lot is almost complete. The 16-member fund raising and expansion committee is now getting ready for the second phase of the expansion. Details and concepts on temple architecture and fund raising strategies are being formulated. These will be presented to the community in a **town hall meeting on Sunday December 11, 2005 at 2.00 P.M.** We sincerely hope all of you will come and attend this meeting and provide valuable feedback and suggestions to make this expansion project a success.

We would like to wish all of you happy holidays and a very happy and prosperous new year.

Thank you
Board of Trustees

Membership News

It is my great pleasure to welcome the following new **Life Member(s)** to the Hindu Center family.

Mr. & Mrs. Haresh & Sangeeta Patel

Mr. & Mrs. Saunak & Renu Amin

**Mr. & Mrs. Jayaraman &
Vijayalakshmi VijayaKumar**

Mr. & Mrs. Abhijit & Abhilasha Punje

Mr. & Mrs. Ashwin Mukundlal & Smita Shah

Dr. & Mrs. Yogesh & Pina Gandhi

All of you are invited to become a member or renew your membership for the year 2006 now. The Temple serves our religious, spiritual and social needs. Members get significant discounts on pujas and hall rental fees.

The membership dues are only \$51 for Annual members and \$1,001 for Life Members. For more information, please contact Rajendra Dubey (754-3242), Shashi Shankar (360-3780) or Rakesh Chug (762-8532).

Thank You,

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Ayyapan Puja

Sunday, December 11, 2005
9:30 A.M. - 1:15 P.M

Suprabhatham	9:30 AM
Abhishekam and Bhajans	10:00 AM
Archana and Mantra Pushpam	12:00 Noon
Padi Pattu	12:30 PM
Mahamangla Aarti	1:00 PM
Prasad and Food	1:15 PM

Lord Ayyappan was born as a progeny of the union of Shiva and Vishnu (Mohini, the beautiful enchantress). Hence the name **Hari Hara Putran**. Ayyappan is regarded as the third son of Shiva, after Ganesh and Murugan. Ayyappan, who was abandoned on the banks of the Pampa River, was found by king Rajasekhara of Panthalam (in Kerala). The baby had a golden bell tied around his neck and hence was named **Manikandan**. The King, who had no child of his own, took him to the palace and brought him up as his own son. The royal couple had a child later. The Queen conspired with the Chief Minister and thought out a plan to get rid of Manikandan. She assigned him to the task of milking the tigress in the forest of Sabari. Manikandan returned to the palace after accomplishing his mission. After 12 years of establishing peace in the kingdom, Manikandan sought to leave the palace. The king wished to have an abode made for him at an old temple. On the day of installation of the idol, amidst the sound of sharanam chanting and conches, pipes and drums, Ayyappan was transformed into a stroke of lightning and got absorbed in the idol of Dharma Shasta. This incidence is said to have occurred on the auspicious day of **Makara Shankranthi**, which happened to be Ayyappan's birthday. **Mandala Pooja** is observed for 41 days prior to Makara Shankranthi. The three austerities prescribed for Ayyappan devotees are: **Austerity of body** (purity and non-violence); **Austerity of mind** (tranquility, gentleness, silence, self-control and purity of thought); and **Austerity of speech** (speech that causes no annoyance to others, truthful, pleasant, beneficial, and recitation of scriptures). Vegetarianism and Brahmacharyam has been prescribed during the 41 days of vritham to help convert the physical energy to spiritual energy. Carrying of irumudi on the head and chanting of sharanam mantram symbolizes a total surrender to God.

Contact for Details

Malika Menon (364-0692)	Harindran Theruvath (744-8578)
Pt. Kannan (672-2254)	Sudhir Jain (754-2755)
Subha Sreedhar (965-1942)	Ram Gupta (781-1696)

Sponsorships

Entire Ceremony:	\$101
Ayyappan Puja:	\$51
Archana:	\$11

Puja Sponsorship News

The Hindu Center wholeheartedly appreciates the gracious efforts of the following devotees for sponsoring Sunday Puja during the month of October 2005.

- Oct 2nd: **Smita & Ashok Bankley**
- Oct 9th: **Jagadish**
- Oct 16th: **Aparna & Nickhil Gosaie**
Shalini & Satish Jajodia
- Oct 23rd: **India Bazar**
- Oct 30th: **Puneet & Mona Bhatia; Rajeev & Anjana Tomer**
Mrinal and Rashmita Chakraborty
Sandeep and Meenakshi Malhotra

To sponsor Sunday pujas please write your names on the Puja sponsorship calendar posted at the Temple or contact Sudhir Jain (754-2755); Nickhil Gosaie (360-8550); Neelu Khanna (739-4342) or Ganesh Natarajan (897-0583).

Devotionalism in Hindi Heartland

In the concluding lecture on Sant Parampara, Dr. Taleganokar will focus on the land of Hindi. Northern tradition was mainly inspired by Ramanand, a Vaishnava reformer of ShriVaishnava sect from South India. He was more liberal and worshipped Lord Rama. Out of his teachings two divergent schools of bhakti arose. First, more conservative held to bhakti of Saguna (God with a form), Ram and Sita. The greatest exponent of this group was a Tulsidas, a great poet. The second school completely rejected orthodox practices and worshipped under the name of "Ram", the Nirgum (a formless) aspect of divinity. The greatest amongst this group was Kabir. Krishna worship followed under the leadership of Vallabhacharya who founded Pushtimarg. Surdas was amongst his prominent disciples. Lecture is scheduled at 12:15 pm Sunday, December 4, 2005.

Hindu Center of VA Celebrates

Geeta Jayanti
Sunday, December 18, 2005
9:30 A.M. - 5:00 P.M

Geeta Jayanti Program

- 9:30 AM - Suprabhatam
- 10:00 AM - Geeta Chanting
- 11:30 AM - Puja
- 12:00 PM - Talks on Geeta by study group members
- 01:00 PM - Aarti, Prasad/Food
- 02:00 PM - Geeta Chanting Continues
- 04:30 - 05:00 PM- Geeta Aarti and Prasad

All community members are invited to celebrate Geeta Jayanti. Please bring your Bhagvad Geeta for chanting. There will be no separate Geeta Study and Balvihar classes on that day.

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Diwali Essays for Children's Museum of Richmond

Children's Museum of Richmond has invited all community children to submit essay on

“How you and your family celebrate Diwali”

Children are encouraged to write essay in their own handwriting and may include drawings.

Twenty selected essays will be displayed at CMOR.

Ages: All

Submission Deadline: December 10, 2005

Submit all essays to Mina Bhatt at 3712 Milshire Pl. Richmond, VA 23233

For information call 364 – 1396 or E Mail: minaneil@comcast.net

DIWALI CELEBRATION at CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF RICHMOND

Children's Museum of Richmond invites Children to celebrate Holiday Season to honor Diwali

on December 11, 2005

Place: CMOR, 2626 W. Broad St. Richmond, Va

Time: 2:00 to 4:00 PM

Activities: Cooking with children Diwali Sweets, Rangoli, Diwali Arts & Crafts, Dances.

To enroll your children for this field trip please call **Mina Bhatt 364 – 1396**

Parents are required to accompany their children.

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DIVINE FORMS OF THE SUPREME IN HINDUISM

Submitted by: Dr. Narasimha Chari

The Hindu tradition accepts many Gods and Goddesses as manifestations of the Absolute. They represent one or more aspects of the innumerable auspicious qualities of God and generally the evolutionary process of creation is also symbolized in the images. These images are the forms visualized by saints and seers in their communion with God. Art also has played its part in the beautification of these images. The form and adornment and every single detail of the form is expressive of some deeper universal truth. The images are the link between the Infinite and the finite, the Eternal and the transient, the Formless and the formful. “The image is a representation of one mode of Dhyana of contemplation in which the thoughts are more readily concentrated by being addressed to a sensible emblem instead of abstract truth” (Wilson, translation of the Vishnu Purana).

Vishnu is considered as the Creator of the Universe, who created Brahma and assigned him job of creating life on earth, who in turn created Siva as Destroyer so that the cycle can start all over again. So you have the Trinity of Creator, Protector and Destroyer. Hindus worship Goddesses, Feminine Forms of the Supreme as Universal Mother. They are the spouses of Gods but have the same equal status as the Supreme Deity. While they are worshipped along with the Gods they also have their own separate temples or shrines in the temple. (eg. Kamakshi temple in Kancheepuram, Meenakshi temple in Madurai in South India). THE various names of Goddesses are Mahalakshmi, Parvati, Durga, Kali, Devi, Amba etc. In Hindu belief Lord reincarnates from time to time onto earth to protect the good from evil and establish Dharma. There have been 9 such Avatars (incarnations) and one has yet to come. These Avatars have names like Narasimha, Trivikrama, Rama and Krishna etc. These Avatars are worshipped in their own temples. Of these Lord Rama and Lord Krishna are very popular Deities and have several temples. Lord Vishnu and Siva have numerous names based on their attributes and stories in Hindu mythology. Nataraja is one such name for Siva when he performed the Cosmic Dance. The name means king of Stage (the World). Similarly Lord Vishnu is known as Ranganatha in Srirangam in South India again meaning Lord of Ranga (Sanskrit for stage). One can thus understand the diversity of Divine Forms in Hindu Pantheon, but one should discern the Unity of thought in the diversity of Forms. The Hindu can equally well worship an impersonal abstract Brahman or the symbol OM or the sound OM.

When a devotee stands before his favorite Deity (Ishta Devata or Personal God) he worships Him as the God Almighty, the Supreme Reality. Due to lack of understanding or ignorance non Hindus wrongly interpret the multiple deities as polytheism. Hinduism is verily a monotheistic religion believing in one Creator who is Satyam (Reality) Jnanam (knowledge) and Anantan (Infinite) who is also known as Brahman, In Rig Veda we find a verse “*Ekam sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti*, That which exists is One: sages call it by various names.” When hymns were written in praise of these gods the Being perceived was one and the same. It was the hymnist, the sage and the poet who sang in different languages and different words the praise of one and the same Being.

In Bhagavad Gita Lord Krishna says,

*“Ye yatha mam prapadyante tam thathaiva bhajamyaham
Mama vartmanuvartante manusyah parthe sarvasah”*

“In whatever way men and women worship me in the same way I fulfill their desires. It is my path that people tread in all ways O Arjuna” (Gita IV, 11). The Lord says here “you can come by any road, I take you from whatever road you come”. Paths are many but the goal is one. By whatever name the different sects in Hindu religion, or Allah of Islam or God Almighty of Christianity people worship they all reach one and the same God There is one supreme divine Being who is the Self of all and who is also the Self of the Universe.

“That which exists is One; sages call it by various names”. We have yet to learn that all religions under whatever name they may be called, either Hindu, Buddhist, Mohammedan or Christian have the same God, and he who derides any one of these derides his own God. (Swami Vivekananda in Hinduism).

Sources: Hinduism by Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, India
Bhagavad Gita : Swami Ranganathananda Vol II , Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, India.
Hindu Symbology: Swami Swahananda, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Mylapore, India.

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The Monkey and the Crocodile

Once upon a time there lived a monkey named Red-face on a tree by the side of the sea. The tree was an apple tree and the fruits it bore were sweet as nectar. Once a crocodile named Ugly-Mug swam ashore and Red-face threw apples at him and asked him to taste them. Ugly-Mug started coming everyday ashore and eat the fruits thrown by Red-face and soon they became good friends. Ugly-Mug used to take some fruits to his home to his wife.

His wife was a greedy person and asked him as to where he got such sweet, nectar filled apples. Ugly-Mug told about his friend, the monkey. She pleaded with her husband that she would like to eat the monkey's heart, as a monkey who eats such tasty fruits must have a heart filled with nectar. Ugly-Mug was angered and did not agree to deceiving his friend. But she insisted on not eating anything until he brought his friend's heart. Out of desperation, Ugly-mug started making plans for killing his friend. He came back to Red-face and entreated him with an invitation to his house for supper stating that his wife would be thrilled to have him home and also that she was very anxious to meet such a nice friend. Poor Red-face believed the story but asked how he could cross the water to reach his house, which was on the other side of the water. Ugly-mug then offered to carry him on his back and the monkey agreed. The crocodile took monkey deep into the waters to kill him. The monkey was frightened and asked the crocodile why he was doing this. Ugly-mug told him that his wife wanted to eat your nectar-filled heart. Red-face thought for-a-while, and immediately asked to take him back to the tree as he had left his other part of the heart which was full of nectar back at the tree. The foolish crocodile believed him and swam back to the tree. The terrified monkey jumped up the tree never to return. Upon being asked as to why he was not returning, the monkey answered that he had no other part of the heart and he had fooled him. He then scolded the crocodile for misusing their friendship.

The crocodile was ashamed at what happened and asked the monkey if he could make any amends. He said he was also scared that his wife would not let him back in house because he had failed to fulfill her desire. Just then he heard that a huge he-crocodile had occupied his house. The monkey advised him to fight the he-crocodile and drive him out of his home and gain his wife's confidence. His advice the crocodile followed and he was back happy with his wife.

MORAL: *Wit is superior to brute force*
(Compiled by Meera Gupta)

Since it is the end of the year, please send in all the receipts from India K' Raja restaurant to the temple. As announced in its Building Expansion Support Team program, the restaurant will contribute 10% of the receipts to the Building expansion Fund for next five years. You may give the receipts in an envelope to our assoc treasurer, Mr. Bhal Patel or to our priest, Mr. Kannan or mail them to the temple attention to the treasurer.

Thank you, Jayesh Kapadia, Treasurer

Condolences

Our condolences to these families. May God rest the departed soul in peace and give strength to the families to bear their loss.

Father of Mrs. Daisy Shankar, Sh Rameshwarnath Ambashtha, 68 yrs old passed away on October 27 in Puna, India.

Mother of Mr. Dinanath Kukreja and Mr. Rakesh Kukreja, 86 yrs old passed away in Delhi, India on the night of November 1.

Gateway India

Dec 8 from 11:00am-1:00pm at Curry House Restaurant

The event will highlight an overview of the local Indian community (cultural and business), related international trade, investment and export import resources. The goal is to encourage closer relationship between India and small companies through existing local Indian business community in the Richmond area.

Contact: aabac@comcast.net, Tel: 798-3975, www.aabac.org

Seema Singhal
1/4" page Ad

Hindu Center of Virginia
6051 Springfield Road
Glen Allen, VA 23060

Temple Hours:

Monday to Friday:
7.00 A.M. to 9.00 A.M.
5.00 P.M. to 8.00 P.M.
Saturday and Sunday:
11.00 A.M. to 1.00 P.M.

For special occasions, please
contact the Priest or any one
of the Religious Directors.

Directions:

Take Exit 49-B on I-295 West.
Turn right at first intersection
on Springfield Road. The first
driveway on your left is the
Temple.

Phone:

(804) 346-9954



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