

# इहरो क्रोइहना वरुण्दववना

होउडतन त्र



**ANNUAL FUNDRAISING**

**November 17, 2018**

# Program

## Fundraising Dinner – November 17, 2018

5:30 pm	Reception	
6:00 pm	Seating	
6:15 pm	Introduction of Priest Shri Raghurama Bhat	Mrs. Geetha Rama Rau
	Lighting of the Lamp	Shri Raghurama Bhat
	Introduction of the Emcee Mr. Suhas Aithal	Mrs. Geetha Rama Rau
	Invocation Song	Mrs. Jamuna Murali
	Welcome Address	Dr. B.N. Murali
	“Krishna Devotion in Raga and Rhythm”	Dr. Raja Banga Group- Prana School of Music
	Carnatic Classical Music	Krishna Gana Sudha Music Academy
	SKV Temple Improvement Projects	Dr. B.N. Murali
	Bharatanatyam Dance	Dr. Surabi Veeraragavan
	Remarks by the Priest	Shri Raghurama Bhat
8:00 pm	Vote of Thanks	Mrs. Geetha Rama Rau
	Deepa-aradhana	
8:10 pm	Udupi Dinner	

# Message from His Holiness Sri Sri Sugunendra Teertha Swamiji



॥ श्री श्रीरविद्रुलो विजयते ॥

## Sri Sri Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji

Jagadguru Srimanmadhwaachaarya moola mahaa samsthaanam

Srimad Upendra Theertha Peetham, Sri Puthige Matha, Udupi - 576 101, Karnataka, INDIA

Email : puthigeshree@gmail.com, www.sreeputhige.org



### Message From

### His Holiness Sugunendra Teertha swamiji of Puttige Matha.

We are weighed down with feelings of gratitude to God for Shri Krishna Vrindavana shrine in Huston. This centre is functioning here for the seventh year and step by step the shrine of Lord Shri Krishna in Huston has assumed magnanimity in physical and spiritual sense. This temple has grown in terms of infra structure and also is providing solace to thousands of devotees. We are overwhelmed by the tremendous enthusiasm of the devotees here for establishing this temple.

Our Guruji, His Holiness Vidyamanya Teerha Swamiji had always dreamt of taking Madhwa Philosophy to the nook and corner of the world. Today we feel his absence as he is not there to witness his dreams taking shape by way of many shrines of Lord Shri Krishna, by Shri Putige Matha in USA. Indian Vedic legacy and Madhwa Sandesha need to spread globally, as Indians devotees have spread all over the world. We take this opportunity to congratulate all devotees of Lord Krishna who donated liberally, worked tirelessly and did their level best to realize this magnificent work. Shri Krishna Vrindavana in Huston is the result of great religious fervor of many devotees here and we have been just instrumental in this success. We have full faith that they will be bestowed with choicest blessings of the Lord and they will bequeath their result of their good deed for their offspring.

This work is really great. But we are sure this is just a good beginning. In the ever changing world scenario, this is a branch of mammoth banyan tree of Madhwa philosophy and Vedic legacy of India. This will give birth to many more branches in future. Many devotees who accomplished this divine work will be remembered by future generations. Their act and sacrifice will go a long way in protecting and propagating our ancient religion and culture, which is facing many challenges in its own motherland. We hope Veda, Bhagavadgeetha and Upanishad and our spiritual legacy will overcome all the hurdles and will remain eternal guiding light to the world and the spiritual centers like Shri Krishna Vrindavana in Huston will impact and inspire future generations to peace and prosperity.

*sarve janah sukhino bhavantu*

With Narayana Smaranam

Sri Sri Suguendratheertha Swamiji

Jagadguru Sriman Madhwacharya Moola Maha Samsthana,

Sri Upendra Teertha Peetham

Sri Puthige Mutt, Udupi Karnataka

# Message from Shri Prasanna Acharya



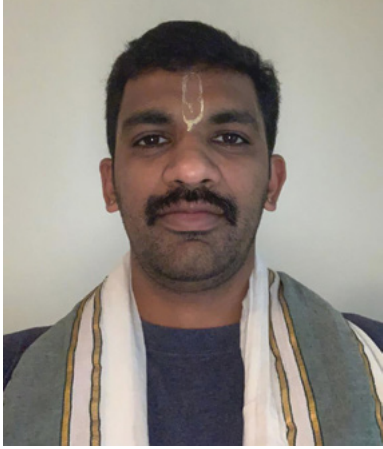
It is a great moment of celebration for the entire Madhwa Mathas and Madhwa Lineage. Shri Upendra Teertha Samasthana Puttige Matha has established Shri Krishna Vrindavana in the great city of Houston. The temple has strengthened its roots by the love and care of the devotees here. They have watered the tree, worked for its well being and toiled for its growth. In the past seven years it has progressed so much that it has acquired well-built spacious premises and has attracted thousands of devotees. His Holiness Swamiji has made it possible for all the NRIs here to perform all their pooja, rituals and customs of our tradition which they missed all these days.

The importance of this temple does not end there. His Holiness Sugunendra Teertha Swamiji has found the necessity to implant the tenets of our religion into the younger generation by constituting such religious centers. Shri Krishna Vrindavana in Houston is one such center. This is aimed at filling the cultural vacuum of the Indian devotees and of their vulnerable next generation of children.

It is our foremost duty to support and encourage this venture to protect our religious cultural identity which is respected all over the world. “Dharmo Rakhsati Rakshitaha” goes the saying. If Protected, Dharma will come to our protection says Mahabharata. In our interest and in the interest of our future generations, we have to pool up our efforts to strengthen our religious center. Shri Udipi Shri Puttige Matha takes this opportunity to urge all our well-wishers, benefactors and devotees in Houston to contribute liberally and work for the success and growth of this shrine.

# Message from Priest Shri Raghurama Manikkara

## ! 'SHRI KRISHNAM VANDE JAGADGURUM' !



In the Mahabharata Tatparya Nirnaya, Sri Madhvacharya narrates a story of Sri Vedavyasa who makes a keeta (mosquito), a King. This means anything is possible by the benevolence of the divine. Here Shripadaru (Sri Sri Sugunendra Thirtha Swamiji) became my Vidya Guru (like father) and bestowed me with knowledge in the Vedas, Jyotisha, Pourohitya and other such branches. He even bestowed me with apaarA vidyas (material knowledge) like technology and became my leading light.

Today the credit of giving the opportunity to me and many of the people living here abroad to perform our Dharma (duties) and Karma in a righteous way goes to Sri Swamiji.

I still remember the words from Sripadaru that he told me some 14 years back, that never forget what you have learned, the Guru who taught you and the place that gave you refuge and that will always protect you. Like it is said in Mahabharata:

### 'dharmo rakshati rakshitaH'

On Nov-16-2011, the 5th branch of SKV (Sri Krishna Vrundavana) was formed here in Houston by the grace of Sri Sugunendra Teertha Swamiji, the day he blessed me and all the devotees. Seven years have passed from that day and we are at the commencement of 8th year. I feel like preparing for an examination along with the devotees of Krishna Vrundavana, Texas. If I remember how the different types of devotees have been blessed by Lord Krishna and Sri Raghavendra Swamy, it is a hair-raising experience. Anyway isn't Krishna who is ever-independent, by his own wish is dependent on his devotees? The Krishna I saw is my own Guru, a Jagadguru!

I request all the devotees irrespective of caste, creed and gender, to come and worship Lord Krishna who can bestow us and free us from all fears. The biggest fear is said to be Samsara (maha-bhaya) and who else can free us from it? He himself has promised us:

sarva-dharman parityajya mam ekam saranam vraja |

aham tvam sarva-papebhyo moksayisyami ma sucah ||

Renounce all the attachments and just take refuge in me. I will remove all your sins and give you moksha and don't be sad.

**Shri Krishnaarpanamastu !**

# Message from the Event Coordinator

Dear Devotees,



It has been 7 years that Sree Krishna Vrundhavana is serving the community. This organization is set up by Sri Sugunendra Swamiji of Sri Puthige Mutt, to help us to maintain our Heritage in the new land where we have settled down to work and raise our families. He felt being a religious leader it was his Duty to establish a place where we can get inspiration and guidance to maintain our heritage. This is a service-oriented organization. The month of November is the anniversary month for SKV. This year for the first time we are holding this Fundraising Dinner. We would like it to be an annual event.

Back home in India temples were built by the kings. Temples served as gathering places. They served as auditoriums, schools and gathering places for large festivals. Around the Temple businesses propped up. Thus Temples became an integral part of the community. Similarly we gather here at SKV for poojas, birthdays, weddings, Upanayanams, festivals, etc. SKV is not only a place of worship but also a place of comfort.

Since we don't have kings and queens to support our temples, we the Devotees have to support our temple. It helps the future generations to find their identity and heritage. Funds are always needed for maintenance and improvements. The infrastructure needs are an immediate requirement. As you all know, we do not charge membership. Everybody is welcome. Raghuram, the priest and Balanna the cook welcome us with big smiles and give us theertha and Prasaada.

So Dear Devotees the fundraising committee is requesting for your support

Thanking you,

On behalf of the fundraising committee,

***Geetha Rama Rau***

# Sri Sri Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji



His Holiness 1008 Shree Shree Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji, Pontiff of Jagadguru Shree Madhwaachaarya Moola Mahaa Samsthaanam. Shreemadupendra Theertha Peetham. Shree Puthige Matha, Udupi. India is a visionary and modern thinker steep in tradition. His Holiness took "Sanyas (renouncing worldly pleasures in exchange for service to mankind and Almighty) at the age of twelve.

A "moving encyclopedia" of Indian philosophy and religious texts, His Holiness has been a promoter and teacher of non-violence. For him religion is a tremendous source of knowledge which can be used positively to overcome violence or terrorism.

Besides being a leader of ancient Hindu philosophy. His Holiness has taken up the much needed mission- ecology and environment protection, as a part of His ascetic life. Even today He is distributing saplings for the growth of forest wealth. He has a target distributing 10 million saplings in the coming years.

In addition to the multifarious activities. His Holiness is one of the International co-Presidents of Religions for peace, a global interfaith initiative with head quarter in New York. His Holiness has been constantly delivering inspiring and enlightening discourses across the world to propagate universal brotherhood and world peace.

Being a Hindu spiritual leader, a torch bearer of Dwaitha School of Philosophy and a harbinger of world peace from India, His Holiness is the 30th pontiff in the 750 years old illustrious and everlasting Indian Vedic traditional lineage of Jagadguru Shree Madhwaachaarya who propounded the Dwaitha School of philosophy in the 12th century A.D.

As an erudite scholar, writer and orator, His Holiness has always been in the service of mankind and His multidimensional service activities are widespread across the globe.

His Holiness is having many branches for His Matha and one of them is very attractive at Puthige. on the banks of Suvarna river, near Udupi where Lord Ganapati appeared in the Pillar about 500 years ago and has been ever since fulfilling aspirations of the devotees.

His Holiness believes that spiritual education is the potential weapon to eradicate violence and preserve world peace and harmony. His Holiness has been teaching higher Vedantha scriptures, Vedas, Upanishads, Brahmasutras, Nyayasudha, Tarka, Meemamsa, Astrology, etc., at monastery in Puthige, India. His Holiness is continuing the ancient Gurukula tradition of India in which the education means the absolute blessing of Guru.

His Holiness has traveled various countries worldwide and delivered discourses at Arizona State University, Hindu University at Orlando Florida. Arsha Vidya Gurukulam Stoudsburg, Stanford University of California Hindu University at Nairobi and Other Universities. The thrust was always on international understanding, harmony and world peace.

His Holiness feels spirituality should guide the polity, in turn, polity should support spirituality. He is practicing this by inspiring the ethical and value based governance and heading various Institutions.

Always the message of His Holiness is spirituality is the driving spirit for all rituals. "If one tries to delete the spirituality from his life then his actions will be diluted." His Holiness has delivered several speeches on Philosophy, Each of which teaches how to reach the beach of knowledge.

The universal brotherhood is better understood and appreciated when we feel the presence of Almighty in every creature in the creation. Therefore, it calls for mutual respect and concern among living beings beyond frontiers. This is the cardinal underlying principle of all the holy scriptures of the world.

One has to look far beyond the horizon to understand the secrets of life namely the Atma (soul) and Paramatma (Almighty) which are Eternal, indestructible and realizable only through the study of scriptures. The physical body is the abode of Lord who is present in every being in the same quality and quantity and hence there is no base for hatred and terrorism.

His Holiness is spreading the message of Bhagavad Geetha and also as said in other Scriptures which sheds light on duty and righteousness. The truth and non-violence is the edifice of world peace and prosperity.

The favorite message of His Holiness is:

"Be a Bee on religions, religion is beyond regionalism"

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**Contact:**

His Holiness 1008 Shree Shree Sugunendra Theertha Swamiji  
Jagadguru Shree Madhwaachaarya Moola Mahaa Samsthaanam

Shreemadupendra Theertha Peetham

Shree Puthige Matha, Udupi - 576101, India

Mobile +91 9845043417

Email: pvacharya@gmail.com



# Guru Parampare

## SHRI MANMADHWAACHARYA MOOLA MAHA SAMSTHANA SHRI PUTHIGE MATHA, UDUPI

1.SHRI UPENDRA THEERTHARU	16.SHRI ANANDA NIDHI THEERTHARU
2.SHRI KAVEENDRA THEERTHARU	17.SHRI THAPONIDHI THEERTHARU
3.SHRI HAMSENDRA THEERTHARU	18.SHRI YADAVENDRA THEERTHARU
4.SHRI YADAVENDRA THEERTHARU	19.SHRI KAVEENDRA THEERTHARU
5.SHRI DHARANEEDHARA THEERTHARU	20.SHRI RAGHAVENDRA THEERTHARU
6.SHRI DAMODARA THEERTHARU	21.SHRI VIBHUDENDRA THEERTHARU
7.SHRI RAGHUNATHA THEERTHARU	22.SHRI SURENDRA THEERTHARU
8.SHRI VATSANKA THEERTHARU	23.SHRI BHUVANENDRA THEERTHARU
9.SHRI GOPINATHA THEERTHARU	24.SHRI.RAJENDRA THEERTHARU
10.SHRI RANGANATHA THEERTHARU	25.SHRI YOGEENDRA THEERTHARU
11.SHRI LOKANATHA THEERTHARU	26.SHRI SUMATHEENDRA THEERTHARU
12.SHRI RAMANATHA THEERTHARU	27.SHRI SUDHEENDRA THEERTHARU
13.SHRI LOKANATHA THEERTHARU	28.SHRI SUJNANEDRA THEERTHARU
14.SHRI SHRINIVASA THEERTHARU	29.SHRI SUGUNENDRA THEERTHARU
15.SHRI NIDHI THEERTHARU	(Present Peethaadhpathi)



ಉಡುಪಿ ಶ್ರೀಕೃಷ್ಣ ಪೂಜಾ ನಿವೃತ್ತ  
ಪುತ್ತಿಗೆ ಮಠಾಧೀಶರಾದ ಪರಮಪೂಜ್ಯ ಶ್ರೀ ಶ್ರೀ ಸುಗುಣೇಂದ್ರತೀರ್ಥ ಶ್ರೀಪಾದರು

# Shri Raghavendra Swamy

पूज्याय राघवेन्द्राय सत्य धर्म रताय च ।  
भजतां कल्पवृक्षाय नमतां कामदेनवे ॥

दुर्वादिध्वान्तरवये सज्जनेन्दीवरेन्दवे ।  
श्री राघवेन्द्र गुरवे नमः कारुण्यसिन्धवे ॥

**Sri Madhvacharya** (1238-1317 AD) was one of the three most important Acharyas in the firmament of Indian philosophy. He was born in a small village by name 'Pajaka' near the present Udupi district of Karnataka. He propounded 'Tatvavada' famously known as 'Dvaita' based on the three canons of Indian philosophy viz. The Upanishads, The Brahmasutras and The BhagavadGita. Acharya Madhva composed scholarly commentaries on almost all types of literature present in the gamut of Indian philosophy, be it the Vedas, Upanishads, Brahmasutras, Gita, Itihasas, Puranas, etc. and he was the only Acharya to do so.

He was followed by great luminaries such as Sri Jayatirtha, Sri Vyasa-tirtha, Sri Vadiraja and Sri Raghavendra tirtha who threw enough light on the works of Acharya to make his philosophy as one of the greatest in the history of Indian philosophy. He was the one who consecrated the famous Udupi Krishna.

## **Sri Raghavendra Tirtha /Swamy (1595-1671 AD)**

Sri Raghavendra Swamy was one of the greatest saints to have blessed Bharata. He was the one who took the terse philosophy of Sri Madhvacharya to the common mass. Sri Raghavendra stotra says:

*सर्वतंत्र स्वतंत्रोऽसौ श्रीमध्वमत वर्धनः ।*

*'The one could on his own stroll in scriptures and one who expanded the tatvavada of Madhva.'*

He wrote 'teekas' and 'tippanis' on many of the works of Sri Madhva and other great masters of the Dvaita school which included works on Vedas, Upanishads, Geeta, Brahmasutras, Ramayana and Mahabharata, including one great work on 'purva mimamsa'. His most famous work being 'Parimala' on Nyaya Sudha of Sri Jayatirtha, from which he got the name 'Parimalacharya'. He is also attributed with commentaries on all the three Vedas which are non-extant.

## **Sri Raghavendra and Moola Rama:**

Sri Moola Rama is one of the idols that was worshipped by Sri Raghavendra Swamy every day. The legend of this idol goes a long way from Chaturmukha Brahma himself. It is also said that when the idol was passed on from generations and passed through the Suryavamsha in which Lord Rama was born, and when he was named Rama, the name of idol got changed to Moola-Rama and is worshipped to this day at Mantralaya.

## Devotees from all walks of life to Sri Raghavendra Swamy:

Sri Raghavendra Swamy is well known for his Kshipra-Prasada (quick mercy) quality for his devotees from all walks of life irrespective of caste, creed, gender etc. Why does he do that?

Firstly, he follows the dictum of his master Sri Madhva who said: 'नाना जनस्य शुश्रूषा कर्माख्या करवन्मितेः' meaning one must serve the people in distress and this is the duty (tax) that we pay to the God. Also, this should finally uplift them spiritually. Vedas also offer lot of benefits when one follows a spiritual path: 'रोचनार्थं फलश्रुतिः'

This is for beginners to get attracted to such a life and gradually one must move towards the path of Nishkaama Karma as preached by the BhagavadGita. This is what his life and teachings preach us.

This is the reason why Sri Raghavendra stotra eulogizes him as follows:

अपरोक्षीकृतश्रीशः समुपेक्षित भावजः ।  
अपेक्षित प्रदाताऽन्यो राघवेन्द्रान्न विद्यते ॥

*'There is none apart from Sri Raghavendra, who has directly seen the Lord and one who renounces his own desires and bestows our wishes.'*

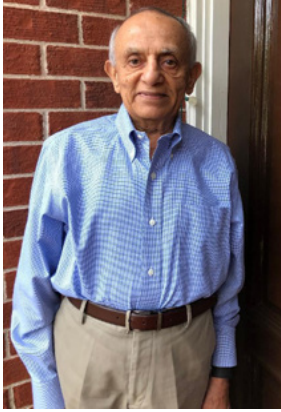
He entered the Vrundavana when he was still very much alive at a place called 'Mantralaya'. This place was given to him by a Muslim ruler who was astonished by the spiritual powers of Raghavendra Swamy because of which he has devotees even from other religions.



**Santosh Rao**

# A Brief History of Shri Puthige Matha

*By Dr. Rama Rau*



A tiny village called “Pajaka Kshetra”, west coast of Southern India in the Karnataka State was predestined to be the birth place of a sage called Shri Madhwacharya. In the history of India in the 13th century A.D., his voice became an oasis of spiritual guidance for the future generations.

His childhood ascendancy to sainthood, preaching philosophy, his speeches, walks, physical looks and everything about him showed to world that he was not a mortal but a spiritual messenger, on a mission. Such a divine spirit appeared on this earth 800 years ago. The temple of Lord Krishna in Udupi founded by him made this temple one of the most revered pilgrimage centers in India.

One among his disciples who were destined to see him, hear him and could call themselves his followers was Shri Upendra Theertha. His name is mentioned in Madhwacharya’s biography, “Sri Madhwa Vijaya”. One of the eight monasteries (mutts) that has come down to us, through him, is called Shri Puthige Matha. It is located on the banks of the river Suvarna, about 20 Km. from Udupi

The main vighrahas worshipped in the Puthige Matha are that of Upendra Vittala with Rukmini and Sathyabhama along with Shri Lakshminarasimha which were given to Shri Upendra theertha by Shri Madhwacharya.

The present pontiff, Shri Sugunendra Theertha, the 29th in his lineage, was born in 1962 and received sanyasa in 1974. He has single handedly taken on the mission to spread Krishna bhakthi and the message of Bhagavad Gita across the ocean to all parts of the world.

In addition to the pooja activities, a full-fledged Goshala was established several years ago in the moola Matha in Puthige. Every day after the main pooja, Go-pooja is carried out before theertha prasada. There are at present 50+ cows to cater to daily Abhisheka as well as provide milk and curd for the students. Swamiji also provides opportunity to do Godhana in the sacred place.



The moola matha for the last 26 years provides classes to students. The subjects taught are vedas, puranas, Madhwa shastra, astrology, priesthood to name a few. In addition, the students attend regular classes. Over 40 students are in each batch. They are trained and housed in this Vidya Peetha and are provided all facilities free of cost.

This is the heritage for our Shri Krishna Vrundhavana in Houston.

# Establishing Shri Krishna Vrundavana, Houston

*By Shoba Dasa Rao*



Shri Shri Sugunendra Thirtha Swamji has travelled around the world and has established branches of the Shri Puthige matha in North America. In October 2011 he arrived in Houston for the 4th time and visited various devotees house and was eager to start a Matha in Texas. It was a big suspense for a lot of us which city he had in mind. Eventually with the request and humble demand of devotees in Houston he established the Shri Krishna Vrundavana priest house in Houston TX on November 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011. Yes, we got the matha but it was not a easy task, the priest house was an empty place. With the help of devotees, we filled the place with groceries, vessels, bedding etc. all that you need for a house. Everything was going fine at the beginning but slowly we started facing a lot of problem from the neighbors. Especially when there were big functions parking became an issue. The Matha struggled for 4 years with an un-friendly neighborhood and was desperate for a permanent place. After an extensive search, we finally found a huge banquet hall with lots of parking. We moved to this new place on Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>, 2015. For the annual Aradhane we have 1000+ devotees come. With devotee's contributions we are slowly improving facilities like kitchen, priest housing, secure fencing etc. The Matha strongly request devotees to take advantage of all the services they are providing. So dear devotees please come and join your hands together in building Shri Krishna Vrundavana to a higher level of success.



Swamiji signing to close the present property

# Puja's Celebrated at SKV – A Year in Review

New Year day	Sri Sathyanarayana pooja, Annual pooja sponsorship
Makara Sankranthi	Sudarshana Homa, ellu bella beeru, Ranga pooja
Madhwa Navami	Hanuma Bhima Madhwa-Jayanthi, Vayustuti punascharana homa
Maha Shivaratri	Ekadasha Rudra Abhisheka
Ugadhi (Yugadi)	Samvatsara phalachintane, Subha darshana (Vishu) Panchanga Shravana
Sri Rama Navami	Akhanda Bhajana, Seetharama Kalyana
Chitra Poornima	Hanuman Jayanthi
Narasimha Jayanthi	Manuyu Suktha homa and abhisheka
Naaga Panchami	Kushta roga, sarpa dosha parihara, Ashlesha Bali pooja
Vara Mahalakshmi Pooja	Lakshmi pooja, Lakshmi Shobhana
Upakarma	Yagnopaveeta dharane
Sri Guru Raghavendra Swamiji Aradhana	Kali yugada Kamadenu Kalpavriksha
Shri Krishna Janmashtami	Jagad guru Jaya namaka Jaga paripalaka Bhaktha rakshaka Sri Krishna Jayanthi ashtami, arghya pradana at moon rise
Shri Krishna Leelotsava	Music, dance and costume dress for children, fun event
Ganesha Chaturthi	Dustara shikshaka, shistara rakshaka, Vigneshwara gana homa, modaka seva, Ranga pooja, visarjana
Sarva pitru paksha	Tharpana, shradha
Navarathri	Nava Durga aradhana, deepotsava, chandika shanthi, sangeetha utsava
Deepavali	Mahalakshmi pooja
Karthika Masa Tulasi pooja	Uthana dwadashi tulasi vivaha
Dhanur Masa	Vayustuti punascharana, madhu abhisheka
Vaikunta Ekadashi	Vaikunta darshana

# Events at Shri Krishna Vrundavana

## Makara Sankranti



Makara Sankranti is the second festival celebrated in SKV after the first Satyanarayana pooja on Jan.1st. It comes every year on Jan.14th. Makara Sankranti is observed to celebrate the transition of Sun into the zodiac house of Capricorn. Capricorn is “Makara”. Hence this day is known as “Makara Sankranti”. Surya Narayana is worshiped. On this day Sudarshana homa is done. The Sudarshana homa helps you to take charge of your enemies and to relieve you from unexplainable sufferings and worries. On this day devotees take part in the homa . Devotees bring special foodstuff which is a mixture includes ellu (sesame seeds) mixed with groundnuts, coconut and jaggery and the mixture is known as “Ellu Bella” and the ritual is known as “Ellu Birodhu”. The plate also includes sugar candies known as Sakkare Acchu and piece of sugarcane. It is distributed to all the people by saying “ellu bella thindu olle maathadi” that roughly translates to “eat the mixture of sesame seeds and jaggery and speak only good”.

~ *By Shoba Dasa Rao*

## Ugadi



Ugadi is celebrated as the beginning of a new year. It is also known as Yugadi. According to Hindu religion, there is a cycle of 60 years and on this day a new Samvatsara begins. The festival is celebrated on the first day of the Chaitra month in the Hindu lunar-solar calendar. Since it is the new year vegetables, fruits , flowers and mirror is displayed in front of the god. On the occasion of Ugadi, people prepare a special dish that incorporates the six different and distinct flavors of life. This dish is called Bevu Bella. This dish is made from a mixture of neem flowers or buds, tamarind, chilli powder, unripe mango, salt, and jaggery. It is the first dish to be had on the Ugadi day. An important aspect of the occasion is the Panchanga Shravanam or hearing of the Panchanga. It is read by the priest. On this day, based on the moon sign, predictions and annual forecasts for the New Year are also made by the learned pundits and astrologers.

~ *By Shoba Dasa Rao*

## Rama Navami- Akhanda Bhajana

Rama Navami is a spring Hindu festival that celebrates the birthday of god Rama, an avatar of Lord Vishnu. The word “Rama” literally means one who is divinely blissful and who gives joy to others, and one in whom the sages rejoice. Rama Navami falls on the 9th day in the month of Chaitra (April/May).

In Sri Krishna Vrindavana, Rama Navami is celebrated with Akhanda Bhajana which means non-stop bhajana/Nama sankeerthana from morning 6 am to evening 6 pm. Various temples and spiritual organisations of Houston are approached and are given a time slot of one hour to render their Nama sankeerthana Seva. It is a divine experience to witness hundreds of singers arriving in groups from morning till evening and fill the entire surrounding with positive vibrations through melodious singing. Hare Rama Hare Krishna, Nama Dwara, Art of Living, Sri Krishna Gana Sudha Music Academy, Mata Amritananandamayi, Taratamyia Bhajana group and many other groups take part in this auspicious occasion every year.



Seetharama Kalyanotsava is conducted in the evening. Kalyanotsava literally means the marriage festival and is the re-depiction of the celestial wedding of Seetha and Rama. It is performed to the Utsava Murthis of Sri Rama and Seetha Devi. Various rituals like procession of the bride and the groom, nischitaatham, Kanya Dana, Mangala Sutra Dharana, Paanigrahana and the garland exchange between the Lord and his consort are performed along with the recitation of Vedic mantras.

Year by year the Akhanda Bhajana and Seetharama Kalyanotsava is attracting more devotees, enabling them to spend an entire day in divine celebrations.



~ By Meena Aithal

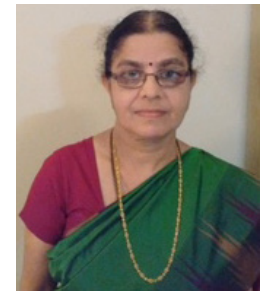
## Taratamya Bhajane

Taratamya is the distinction, gradation or difference between souls. This gradation among Gods is called Devatha Taratamya which is based on the individual devatha's qualities and capacities.

Taratamya Bhajane is the bhajane format followed in Madhwa Sampradaya wherein the Dasarapadas, Suladis, Ugabhogas are sung in a particular format as stated in shastras. The following is the order that the bhajane is done.

1. **Dasa kakshe**: Dasarapadas on Haridasas in the order of their times are sung. Usually Dasarapadas on the 4 Haridasas considered as the Dasa chathushtayaru are sung  
Jaganatha Dasaru, Gopala Dasaru, Vijaya Dasaru, Purandara Dasaru
2. **Yathi Kakshe**: Dasarapadas on the Yathigalu who came in this parampara are sung. To name a few, Raghavendra Swamygalu, Vaadirajaru, Vyasarayaru, Jayathirtharu, Madhwacharyaru
3. **Taratamya Gadya**: Dasarapada explaining the Devatha taratamya are sung
4. **Devatha Kakshe**: Dasarapadas on Devathas are sung in the following order  
Ganapathi, Parvathi, Rudra devaru, Bharathi, Vayu devaru, Mahalakshmi, Narayana
5. **Laali and Mangala**: At the end of the session Laali and Mangala songs are sung to conclude the bhajane

By the blessings of His holiness Sri Sri 1008 Sugunendra Thirtha Swamiji a group of devotees started the Taratamya Bhajane at Sri Krishna Vrundavana when the Sri Krishna Vrundavana was started in Houston in November 2011. With the support of the priests at Sri Krishna Vrundavana, devotees continue to meet once a month on every First Sunday and also on other special events to do the Taratamya Bhajane. Devotees interested are welcome to join the bhajane and get the blessings of Sri Hari, Vayu, Gurugalu.



~ By Jayashree Sathyendra Rao



## Yakshagana Bayalata (Open-air Field Drama) “Mahishasura Mardhini”

Yakshagana is a rare and unique traditional theatre of Karnataka state in India and has a recorded history of more than five centuries. It is a rich artistic blend of racy music, forceful dance, extempore speech and gorgeous costumes, this art combines the features of opera as well as drama, the characteristics of moral education and mass entertainment.

Yakshagana which was previously known as ‘Bhagavatara aaTa’ was started by Sri Narahari Tirtha , a direct disciple of Sri Madhvacharya to spread the stories and philosophy of Bhagavata, Mahabharata, Ramayana and other itihisas and Puranas.

A team of Yakshagana enthusiast from Houston brought this unique sensual experience to Houstonians on Saturday, July 28<sup>th</sup>. Under the auspices of Shri Krishna Vrundavana and Houston Kannada Vrinda. For the first time in USA, Yakshagana Bayalata (Open-air Field Drama) was presented in the parking ground of Shri Krishna Vrundavana, Sugar Land, Texas by professional artists from India touring US.



The Episode (Referred to as “Prasanga”) presented was “Mahisha Mardhini” from “Sri Devi Mahatme of Sri Durga Saptashati of Markandeya Purana. The everlasting conflict between good and evil, the fight between Gods and demons, depicting the supremacy of Mother Goddess Durga.



Beautifully set up open air stage imitating the traditional look referred to as “Rangasthala”, casual seating of the young audience on the floor fully captivated by the show, vibrant entry of Demon Mahishasura (buffalo headed demon) playing with fire from the crackle and flash of resin powder thrown into fiery torches, grand entry of Goddess Durga with 8 arms, excitement of a tiger walking on to the stage as vehicle for Goddess Durga, fierce battle between Mahishasura and Goddess Durga ending with killing of Mahisha, celebrated with magnificent fireworks made this entire performance into a spectacular show. The excitement became the true physical sensation.

More than 500 people both Kannada speaking and non-Kannada speaking including a significant number of children enjoyed the performance. Keeping up with the tradition hot snacks were distributed to the audience during the show. Depicting the street stalls, ladies prepared *churmuri* -chilli puffed rice.

Well know Bagawatha Patla Sathish Shetty was accompanied on Maddale by Padmanabha Upadhya and on Chende by the team leader Devananda Bhat. Prof. M.L.Samaga as Lord Vishnu, Chandrashekara Dharmasthala as Shurpashaka and Devendra, Prashant Nelyadi as Malini and Devi, Mohana Bellippady as Mahishusara and Mahesh Maniyani as Dootha were aptly supported by local artists Meena Aithala as AadiMaye, Sharath Akirekadu as Lord Brahma and Suhas Aithal as Lord Maheshwara.

Credit goes to dedicated volunteers who worked hard to make this unique event possible. From conceptualizing to building of the traditional stage – *Ragnasthala*, taking care of transportation and hospitality of the visiting artists, facilitating orderly parking for over 500 audience, cooking and serving hot snacks – *Golibaje* and chilli puffed rice – *Charmuri* to audience, managing the contribution desk and handling fireworks safely, volunteers of SriKrishna Vrundavana and Houston Kannada Vrinda worked tirelessly for the event.

Thanks to generous donations from art lovers of Houston without whose support it would be impossible to bring such cultural events to Houston.



~ By Vasu Aithal

## Carnatic Music Camp by Krishna Gana Sudha Music Academy

To nurture, cultivate, promote and propagate the rich, classical Carnatic music tradition amongst the Houston youth, under the able guidance of Vidushi Smt. Rajarajeshwary Bhat, Krishna Gana Sudha Music Academy (KGSMA) has been conducting the Carnatic music workshop for the past 3 years, in the auspicious venue of Sri Krishna Vrundavana in Sugarland, Texas. With the blessings of Lord Sri Krishna



and their beloved mother Smt. Rajarajeshwary Bhat, Vidushis Smt. Keerthana Bhat and Kumari Kruthi Bhat have helped to chisel every segment and brilliantly executed the weeklong music camp educating up to 100 music students of all ages. The divine atmosphere in Sri Krishna Vrundavana has greatly enhanced the teaching by the dedicated gurus and the learning by the sincere music students. Senior most Vidushi Smt. Krishnaveni Hebbar and eminent visiting artists including Vidwan Sri Lalgudi GJR Krishnan, Vidwan Sri Vittal Ramamurthy, and Vidwan Sri Erode Nagaraj have imparted valuable music lessons to the

students. Carnatic vocal music lessons for the beginner and advanced students form the main segment of the camp. Veena, Violin, Percussion, Sanskrit and yoga lessons, music quizzes, jeopardy and lecture demonstrations have complimented the overall artistic experience of the students. KGSMA is indebted to Sri Raghuram Bhat and Sri Balakrishna Bhat for their wholehearted support by providing the auspicious venue for the camp and the delicious food for the hard-working students. The grand finale presentation on the last day of the camp by all the students is truly a musical garland offered to Lord Sri Krishna, who silently witnesses the week-long musical journey with a blissful smile and delighted heart!



~ Smt. Rajarajeshwary Bhat

## Guru Raghavendra Swamy Aradhana

Shri Raghavendra Swamy, a 16th-century saint, and Guru, advocated Vaishnavism and popularized the Dvaita philosophy of Madhvacharya. It is widely believed that Raghavendra Swamy is an incarnation of Prahlada, one of the greatest bhaktas of Vishnu. Sri Raghavendra Swamy took up ascetism (sanyasa) based on the orders of Goddess Saraswathi herself and composed several granthas explaining the works of masters of Dvaita philosophy and he took the philosophy of Sri Madhva to the common mass beyond caste, creed and gender. Aradhana is the day when Raghavendra Swamy entered into Vrindavana.



Sri Krishna Vrindavana of Houston has been celebrating Sri Raghavendra Aradhana for last 7 years. It is one of the major events of the temple and in the recent years about 1500 devotees attend this function. Aradhana in temple is celebrated over 3 days as Poorva, Madhya and Uttara Aradhana. The day begins with Suprabhata Seva followed by Guru and Ganapathi Pooja, shuddhi punyahavachana and Maha sankalpa. Throughout various Stotras namely Raghavendra stotra, Vayustuti, Vishnu Saharanama are recited by the devotees under the guidance of the main priest Sri Raghurama Bhat. It is a great experience to those who are present to listen to these chanting as well as to witness the great alankara of the deities



and Raghavendra Swami Vrindavana. Mahapooja is performed around noon and it is followed by paada pooja and kanakabhisheka. His Holiness 1008 Sri Sri Sugunendra Teertha Swamiji of Puttige Matha Udipi delivers his Asheervachana. Annadana is a major part of Aradhana where thousands of devotees are served a scrumptious lunch prasada cooked and served in Udipi style. The devotees are then treated to a cultural program of dance recitals and music concerts. Evening pooja consists of Sri Ranga pooja, thottilu pooja and astavadhana.

An event of this magnitude is possible only with the pool of volunteers who work tirelessly. A preliminary meeting is held by Sri Raghurama Bhat with the volunteers recognizing the team leads for various teams namely Cooking, Serving, Cleaning, Garland, Decoration, Pooja help, Prasad packing, Publicity, Sound, Front desk/Contribution, Crowd control, Chanting/singing and Parking. The team leads then draft required volunteers to their teams and do all the preparations to meet their responsibilities.

A final meeting is held a week before the event to go over the readiness and contingency plans like rainy day plans are discussed. On the Aradhana day, the whole planning is meticulously executed so that devotees can have a satisfying experience of a day full of devotion and celebrations.

We thank Sri Raghurama Bhat and Sri Balakrishna Bhat for their invaluable guidance and cooperation. We pray that Raghavendra Aradhana in Sri Krishna Vrindavana continues to attract more devotees to attend and fulfill their spiritual desires.

~ By Vasu Aithal



**Serving team**

## **Shri Krishna Jayanti**

Sri Krishna Jayanti is the celebration of the birth of the most celebrated incarnation of Vishnu. Sri Madhvacharya has composed a separate work just to let us know when and how this needs to be celebrated. This shows the importance that given to the celebration of Krishna Jayanti. It is celebrated every year during the 'Rohini' nakshatra of the Simha masa irrespective of the solar or lunar calendar one follows, which is based on the dictum from Sri Madhvacharya and his most favorite disciple Sri Vishnu Tirtha.

**rohiNyaam ardharaatre tu yadA kaaLaashTami bhavet |  
jayanti naama saa proktA sarva paapa praNaaShanaM || - Jayanti Kalpa of Sri Madhvacharya**

## **Shri Krishna Leelotsava**



Every year Shri Krishna Leelotsava is celebrated at Shri Krishna Vrundavana with great fervor & joy. This is an event which celebrates the 'leela' - the playful mystic nature of Lord Shri Krishna & is usually held soon after Shri Krishna Janmashtami. Various competitions are conducted on this day for all ages and devotees whole heartedly participate in competitions with their family & friends.

The day starts with Krishna leela drawing & rangoli competitions. This is followed by the popular 'Laddu kattuwa spardhe' where adult participants need to make spherical laddus of uniform shape and size and the participant who makes the most number of laddus, wins! Laddu making competition is usually judged by the head cook/chef of SKV.



After the delicious laddu making, next comes the Fancy Dress competition - the most awaited event for parents who love to dress their children as Krishna or Radha. This competition is for children till the age of 10 years. There are prizes to be won for the best dressed child in multiple categories such as 0-2, 2-4, 4-7 and 7-10 years. This is followed by Bhagavadgeetha &

Bhaktigeetha recitation competitions which are an integral part of Shri Krishna Leelotsava



While the fancy dress event is underway in the main hall, temple volunteers gather outdoor at the parking lot & fix ropes and pots for the incredible & most popular “Pot Breaking” competition. Participants line up to be blindfolded one by one and attempt to break the pot filled with assorted variety of sweets and butter by swinging the stick given to them.

This is one of those events where everybody take part irrespective of age! Anybody & everybody who have participated in this fun event would agree that this is the best part of Shri Krishna Leelotsava!

Finally, children gather in temple main hall to participate in an audio-visual Quiz competition which is designed to be intriguing & simple at the same time, aimed at developing more interest in our Sanatana-Dharma among younger generation.

By the divine grace of Lord Shri Krishna this event is getting bigger and better each year. This year of 2018 has seen record turnout for Shri Krishna Leelotsava with more than 100 children taking part in various competitions. It was a treat to our eyes watching little children dressed as Krishna, Radha, Vasudeva, Devaki & showing their leelas - definitely this has been the most memorable Fancy Dress event till date at our temple. We hope more and more children-youths-adults take part in this one of a kind, spirited & the most joyful event at Shri Krishna Vrundavana!



~ *By Suhas Aithal*

## Ganeshotsava

**ekadantAya vidmahe | vakratuNDaaya dhImahi |  
tanno danti prachodayAt ||**

Bhadrapada Shukla Chaturthi is celebrated as “Ganesha Habba” with great pomp, austerity, love, and sincerity by Indians all over the world. Lord Ganesha or Vignaharta is the destroyer of obstacles, leading one to success. He symbolizes new beginnings, and so devotees pray to Lord Ganesha at the start of ceremonies or the beginning of any venture seeking his blessings. Ganesha is the God of prosperity, good fortune and spiritual knowledge.

Ganesh Chaturthi is an auspicious 10-days Hindu festival which is celebrated as a mark of Lord Ganesha’s rebirth day. The elephant-headed God, Ganesha is Lord Shiva and Parvati’s youngest son and is known by 108 names. In Karnataka we celebrate it by performing the “Varasiddi Vinayaka Vratha”.

### **Different Sevas on Ganesha Chaturthi in SKV :**

**Gana Homa** – Ganapathi homam or Gana Homa is performed to beget happiness, prosperity and good health. Anyone desirous of praying to God to remove any obstacles in any of his plan, work, business, action and to be victorious in his deeds can pray to Lord Ganesha. Ganapathi homam can be performed to please Kethu and hence anyone who has Kethu dasa or bhukthi or wishes to appease Kethu can participate in the homam. Performing Ganapathy Homam once every year gives prosperity, health and wealth.

**Moodappa Seva** – This is a seva of offering “Appams” to Lord Ganesha. “Appam” is a sweet dish prepared from jaggery and coconut and offered to the god. This prasada is then distributed as Prasada to all the



devotees who take part in the Mahapooja and Visarjane.

**Ranga Pooje** – It is pooja were panchakajjaya is spread in a line on plaintain leaves in front of the diety and lamps are lit on either side and mangalarathi is raised to the lord. This pooja is offered in the evening on Ganesha Chathurthi.

**Ganesha Visargane** – Ganesha habba has been a festival of the masses from the pre-independnce days in India. It was Lokamanya Tilak who championed it to circumvent the colonial British Government ban on public gatherings.



Along with all the religious rituals, we witnessed a grand line up of cultural programs on Ganesha Chathurthi. 2018, was the first year of Grand Visarjana and Cultural Celebration at SKV.

The very enthusiastic volunteers put up a make-shift “Bhavi” or the well to complete the Visarjana programme.

There was an overwhelming response to the cultural event from across Greater Houston. We had a lineup of programs in different languages including Sanskrit, Kannada, Tamil, Hindi, Marathi, Odissi and more. More than 170 distinct participants performed on the stage and offered their seva in the form of music and dance.

It was truly a blissful experience of celebrating our culture and traditions for all the people who gathered in the temple. Eminent artists in the fields of Vocal music, Violin, Mrindangam, Sitar, Harmonium presented their art and dances in different genres including Bharatanatyam, Kuchupudi, and fusion dances.

The event concluded with a grand visarjane procession and immersion of the idol with the beats of drums and taala, devotees singing bhajans and hailing the lord, “Ganapathi Bappa Moraya!”



~ By Ujwala Bhat

# Navarathri

## Sharan – Navaratri

**sharatkAle mahApUjA kriyate yAcha vArShiki |  
tasyAm mamaitAnmAhAtmyaM shrutvA bhakti samanvitaH ||**

This explains that by special worship of Jagannata and by chanting Devi Mahatmya during Sharatkaala (Sharadritu), Devi becomes happy and gives all sorts of prosperity to her devotees.

Navaratri utsava is the most celebrated among the festivals all over the world. At SKV, all festivals are celebrated in strict adherence to shastras. Navaratri means the nine nights. During these auspicious nine nights the Jagannata is worshipped, who killed the cruel demons Madhu-Kaitabha, Shumbha-Nishumbha, Mahishasura and so on.

We had a grand celebration of Navaratri at Sri Krishna Vrindavana. Devotees had a blessed opportunity to witness Chandika homa, all 9 days, and Pavamana Homa on Vijayadashami, in the open yaaga mantapa.

### Significance of Chandika Homa



Chandika Homam is one of the most important homams and considered to be panacea for all ills. Chandika Homa is performed by reciting Durga Saptashathi hymns. These hymns (mantras) are 700 in number and are considered to be very potent in accomplishing the wishes of the devotee. These hymns are devoted to Maha Laxmi, Maha Saraswathi and Durga. Devotees perform Chandika Homa as preventive as well as curative or remedial measure. This is also performed to express gratefulness to Mother Goddess. Goddess Durga is worshipped in nine forms each having its own functions and purpose. Performing Chandika Homa is the best way of venerating all nine forms of Durga. Benefits of performing this homa are immense. Achieving success, success in business ventures, attainment of health and longevity are some of them.

### Dasara Gombe Habba



When it is Navaratri, people from Mysore region are reminded of the mane mane *Dasara Gombe Pradarshana*. This year we had a treat to our eyes at SKV, the gombe pradarshana at the temple brought back our childhood memories of watching the doll exhibitions back in India. Dasara doll festival is celebrated through an exhibition of various dolls and figurines arranged as per custom. The dolls are arranged and exhibited on a stepped platform having an odd number of steps or tiers (usually 7, 9 or 11). The hierarchy starts from the Gods being placed at the top tiers and ends with mortals of earth placed at the lower tiers of the platform. Many households use nine steps for

the exhibition of dolls to signify the nine nights of Navaratri. The dolls are ritually worshipped during the celebrations. The main dolls of the festival are a pair depicting a husband and a wife. This set of main dolls is handed over to a daughter by her parents during her marriage ceremony. They are presented to the new bride to start her own family and continue with the tradition of the festival. They are referred to as Pattada Gombe.

**Different Alankaras of Devi** - A quote cited by Devi in Sri Devi Mahatmyam says

“Ekaivaaham jagatyatra dviteeya kaa mamaaparaa”  
(I am the only eternal power in the world and none else the second)

Mahalakshmi takes mainly 3 forms -Sri, Bhu and Durga for participating in the Lords action of creation, sustenance and destruction. Along with these main forms, the Satvika Tantra granthas mentions many forms of Lakshmi to be worshipped. She safeguards her devotees through different names and forms. Though the forms and names of Jagadamba are numerous, the spirit is the same. Such a great philosophical truth is there in the process of making different Alankaras to Devi.

At SKV, we witnessed the below Alankaras or forms of Devi-

**Durga**



**Arya Durga**



**Bhagavathi Durga**



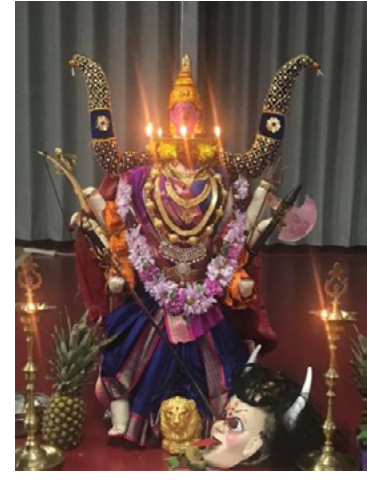
**Kumari Durga**



**Ambika Durga**



**Mahishamardini Durga**



**Chandika Durga**



**Saraswathi**



**Vageeshwari**





We gathered in the evenings for an elaborate Durga Pooja and worshipped Durga matha in different alankaras. Devotees assembled in the temple on all days both in the mornings and evenings and were overjoyed from the atmosphere created at the temple. It was a divine feeling for each one present at the temple.

~ *By Ujwala Bhat*

## Tulasi Vivaha

**Uttana Dwadashi** or **Tulasi Vivaha** is an important festival celebrated on the auspicious day of Dwadashi (12th day) of Shukla Paksha (Bright phase of moon) of the Karthika Masa. It is a day when Chaturmasya (which is considered as inauspicious for any rituals like marriages) ends and marks the auspicious opening of the marriage season for the Hindus. It is also the day when Lord Vishnu is believed to wake up after a four-month long sleep.



Tulasi Vivaha is the marriage of Sri Krishna, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu with tulasi. In the Hindu mythology, tulasi is considered to have the sannidhana of Lakshmi. Harikathamrutasaara by Jagannatha Dasa says, Jambavathi who is one of the Shanmahishis of Krishna is herself Tulasi. On this day it is believed that one who gives away a Tulasi plant considering Tulasi as his /her own daughter is supposed to beget all the goodness of doing a Kanyadaana which is considered as a sacred act according to Hindu customs and traditions. Whoever worships Tulasi on this

auspicious day of Uttana Dwadashi will be freed from all the sins and shall reach Vaikunta.

At Shri Krishna Vrundavana, Houston, Tulasi Vivaha is performed according to traditions with utmost devotion. Starting from Day one of Karthika masa, for eleven days, tulasi puja is performed every evening with Deepotsava and devotees gather around the tulasi plant to perform Tulasi sankeerthana. On the twelfth day or Uttana Dwadashi, Tulasi Kayanotsava is performed by devotees with all the fanfare of the Hindu wedding ceremony followed by Tulasi Sankeerthana and Aarthi. This special ceremony is a treat to watch and devotees feel truly blessed. This year Tulasi vivaha will be celebrated on Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>.



~ *By Mangala Prasad*

## Vaikunta Ekadasi

**Vaikunta Ekadashi** is the Shukla Paksha Ekadashi which is the eleventh lunar day between the New Moon and Full Moon and occurs during the Dhanu month in the Hindu calendar (corresponding to late December - January). It is believed that the 'Vaikunta Dwaram' is opened for the devotees to reach Vaikunta (the



abode of Lord Vishnu). The Vaikunta Dwaram or gate is the passage encircling the innermost sanctum of the Lord. Thousands of people que up to pass through the gate in the temples.

Vaikunta Ekadashi fasting is an important aspect for those who observe it. People fast the whole day and keep vigil. Special prayers are offered to Vishnu and devotees engage in Japa (chanting of Vishnu's name) and Dhyana (Meditation).

~ *By Mangala Prasad*

# Developments and Improvements Shri Krishna Vrundavana

*By Dr. B.N. Murali*



We, the devotees in Houston were indeed blessed when Pujya Sri Sri Suguneendra Theertha Swamiji of Udipi Sri Puthige Matha decided to establish Shri Krishna Vrundavana in Houston. We were also very blessed when we were able secure a permanent place for our Shri Krishna Vrundavana at 10223A, Synott Road in Sugar Land, a 9000 sq. ft. facility that is conveniently located for most of us.

It is also very gratifying to see the patronage of the temple growing rapidly. Thanks go primarily to the outstanding services of our Priest Raghuram, and the hard work of Balanna, and Jayaram. We are very fortunate to have a priest of the caliber of Raghuram who is so scholarly, yet humble and very pleasant. People come from far and near to get services performed by him.

The growth of the temple would not have been possible without the support of so many devotees. They have helped the temple financially, and provided countless hours of volunteer work. Through all this the temple has become a place of religious, social and cultural gathering for people of Karnataka and other states.

We hope that by the grace of Hari sarvottamatva, Vayu Jeevottamathva, Shri Raghavendra Swamy, and our Pujya Swamiji Sri Sri Suguneendra Theertha, our temple will continue to grow in all respects. I would like to take a moment to capture some of the improvements we have made since the acquisition of the Synott property.

1. We bought the 2.45 acre property with the large party hall in October of 2015
2. Immediately after purchase, we renovated the front building by constructing a kitchen, and a temporary alter for the deities. We changed the A/C unit, and added grills for the windows and doors, and cameras for security
3. After taking possession of the main building in January of 2016, we immediately made many necessary improvements:
  - a. Painted the floor
  - b. Modified the bathrooms, and built a shower
  - c. Put up the new signs on both buildings
  - d. Built the current temple
4. We installed the Air-Wall (collapsible wall) between the two halls
5. Improved the stage by adding curtains and other decorations
6. We bought a Modular duplex home with three bedrooms each for Raghuram's family and our Pujya Swamji

7. We purchased an additional 1.2 acres of land for the modular home and the additional parking needed
8. We added a brick and iron fence in the front, a chain-link fence on the side, and a wooden fence in the back to secure our property
9. We added roads in the front and on the side so that cars could go around the building. Gates were added on the sides of the building to secure the back of the building
10. After Harvey, the front building was destroyed and had to be demolished. The electric connection to the water well was relocated and the septic tank system was decommissioned
11. We had to temporarily relocate the kitchen to inside the main building, but had to construct a fairly robust kitchen in the back until we can build a permanent one
12. We have improved the lighting in both the halls of our main building

The above list is not a comprehensive one. There have been many smaller projects that have been performed to maintain the facility. Again, all this would not have been possible without the support of our devotees, and the work of Raghuram, Balanna, and Jayaram, and the blessings of Pujya Swamiji. We thank every one immensely, and pray to Shri Krishna and our Pujya Swamiji to bless them and give them strength to continue to support us.

To conclude, I will list a few of the projects that we are currently working on, and those that will require your support:

1. We are replating (city and Fort Bend County) our property
2. Build a foundation and get the utilities for the modular home
3. Disconnect our septic tank system of the main building and connect it to the city sewer system when it becomes available around May 2019
4. Do the same with the water system
5. Add more depth to the stage, and add two dressing rooms with restrooms
6. Add a restroom in the mezzanine
7. Acquire the rest of the 2.2 acres of land in the back for future use

We thank everyone for all the support.

# Activities at Shri Krishna Vrundavana

## Spoken Sanskrit classes at SKV

Sanskrit is the language of expression and exuberance of Indian culture, and Shri Krishna Vrindavana is committed to its revival as a spoken language. Since October 2018, the temple has hosted spoken Sanskrit classes for adults in the style of Samskrita Bharati ([www.sbusa.org](http://www.sbusa.org)). The introductory classes in the last year has advanced into more advanced topics now enabling its students to converse and narrate stories of Ramayana and Panchatantra in Sanskrit. In the new year, the temple aims to begin a spoken Sanskrit class for children of age 7-10 years and simultaneously conduct an introductory level class for their parents. For more information, please contact Gururaj Naik ([SB.Houston.TX@gmail.com](mailto:SB.Houston.TX@gmail.com)).

## Yoga Class at SKV

Armin Kasnavia conducts a yoga session every Saturday morning from 8 to 9:15am at SKV temple. By profession she is a Montessori teacher. She is a trained yoga instructor from Vyasa Houston and has been teaching yoga for the past 7 years. She is also trained in yoga for Diabetes and Kids yoga. All are welcome to enjoy the benefits of yoga for personal health and well-being.

## Veda and Shloka Classes

Veda classes are being conducted for adults and Shloka classes for children. Those who are interested, please contact Shri Raghurama Manikkara for more information.



Sanskrit Class at SKV

# Cultural Program

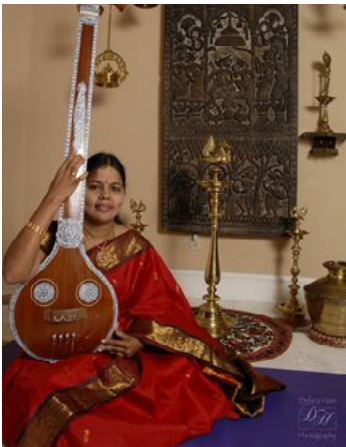
**“Krishna Devotion in Raga and Rhythm”- By Dr. Raja Banga group of Prana School of Music**



**Artists:** Dr. Raja, Shyama, Achintya, Amitabh, Vikram and Tintin

**Carnatic Classical Music by Krishna Gana Sudha Music Academy:**

**Mrs. Rajarajeshwary Bhat**



Vidushi Rajarajeshwary Bhat, an innovative teacher and versatile musician is the founder, director of Krishna Gana Sudha Music Academy in India and the USA. Over the last few years, she has devoted a substantial part of her musical knowledge into grooming many young artistes and also specially needed children. Certificate Examination in Carnatic Music which was the first of its kind was initiated, directed and designed by Vidushi Rajarajeshwary Bhat for the students of USA and Canada through Tournamatrix. She has also introduced annual music workshops in ‘Gurukulam style’ for music enthusiasts.



**Ahi Ajayan (Vocal)**

Ahi started learning music at the age of 3. She is now a 10th grader. She started her music with Vidya Subramanian, then she has been learning from Vidushi Rajarajeshwary Bhat in Houston. She is currently training under Smt. Suguna Varadachary and Sri Palai C.K. Ramachandran.

### **Sastry Vedam (Veena)**



Sastry Vedam PhD, is currently faculty in the Department of Radiation Physics at University of Texas M D Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. He has received formal training in the Veena, initially from Smt Saroja and Smt Rama Pranesh. He is currently training under Vidushi Smt Rajarajeshwary Bhat.

### **Naga Srinidhi Kuruvada (Mridangam)**



Naga Srinidhi Kuruvada has been learning Carnatic Mridangam and Vocal since the age of five for the last ten years. He has been learning Mridangam from Guru Vidwan M Vasudeva Rao and Guru Vidwan S V Balakrishna and now from Guru Vidwan Shri Mannargudi A Easwaran. He is learning vocal from Vidushi Smt Rajarajeshwary Bhat. He is a sophomore in Tompkins High School.

### **Bharatanatyam Dance by Dr. Surabi Veeraragavan:**



Dr. Surabi Veeraragavan began her journey under the tutelage of Guru Chitra Visweswaran and after moving to the United States she continued pursuing her passion under the able guidance of Guru Padmini Chari. Surabi is a very passionate dancer who has been performing regularly and has choreographed several dance ballets including “Radhe Radhe”, “Bhakthi Sugandham” and “Krishnamrutham”. She is a dedicated teacher who absolutely enjoys working with children and spreading the joy of dance. She is the co-director of the Neurobehavior Center at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and specializes in intellectual disabilities. She hopes to channel her Bharatanatyam training in developing therapeutic tools to treat children with autism and developmental disabilities.

# Donors

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SKV would like to thank all those who have donated and supported this event.

*SKV apologies for any unintentional omission of names of sponsors. All efforts were made to compile a complete list as of November 14, 2018.*

## Acknowledgements

SKV would like to thank all its volunteers, donors and well-wishers who have continuously supported the temple.

# Photo Gallery

## Volunteers at SKV







**Kevin Sasangvala and his group doing Satsang at the temple**



**Cultural Programs at SKV**



**Kannika Pooja during Navrathri**



**Shivrathri Pooja**



**Ashlesha Bali Pooja**



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- Conducts Gurukulam style traditional Carnatic Music classes and workshops.
- Our students have performed and won state, national and international awards and scholarships.
- “HYMA - Houston Youth Music Association” - started by the students of Krishna Gana Sudha Music Academy to promote Classical music amongst the youth in the USA. HYMA provides platforms for talented youngsters, and features professional leading artists of Indian classical music from around the globe as an inspiration for all the youth.

**Founder/Director - Vidushi Smt. Rajarajeshwary Bhat**

Teaching assistants - Smt. Keerthana Bhat & Kum. Kruthi Bhat

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*“The nonpermanent appearance of happiness and distress, and their disappearance in due course, are like the appearance and disappearance of winter..*

*~ The Bhagavad Gita*



*“Without right living, right thinking will never come. Right living is performing one’s ordained duties according to one’s station in life without hankering after the fruits of the actions and on the other hand offering all one’s activities to the Lord. This is real sadachara (right living). This is real karma yoga.”*

*~ From Guru Raghavendra Swami’s speech before attaining Jeeva Samadhi.*

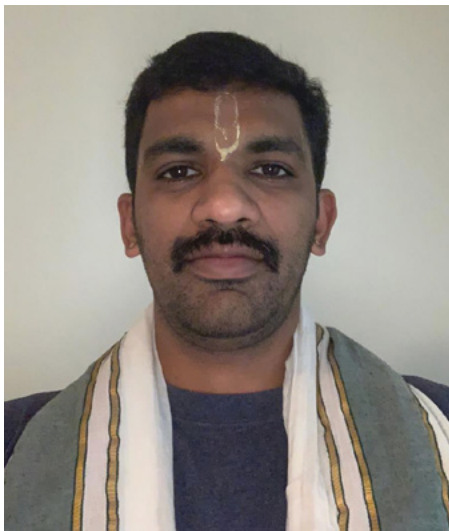


|| ಇರವು ಸಂಪತ್ತುಲ್ಲ ಇರವಿನ ಅರಿವು ಸಂಪತ್ತು ||

*“Just existence of wealth is not wealth, but the knowledge of that existence is the real wealth”.*

*Bharata bhumi is blessed with ancient wisdom like no other county in the world. However this knowledge needs to be spread in all possible ways. Such institutions like the Krishna Vrundavana, will help us to spread the invaluable wisdom of the ancients and the rich inimitable cultural heritage of Bharata. Hence, it is out prerogative to help it grow by doing our bit.*

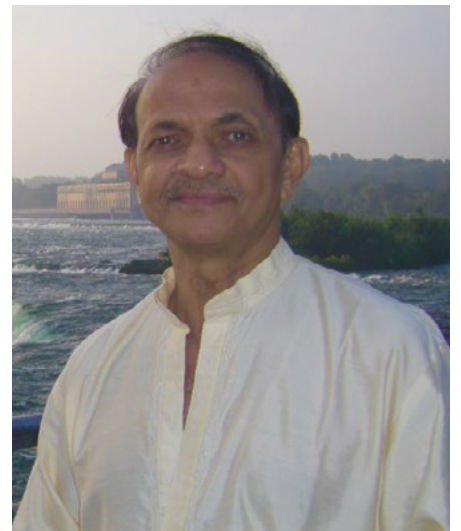
*~ Vidyavachaspati Dr. Bannanje Govindacharya*



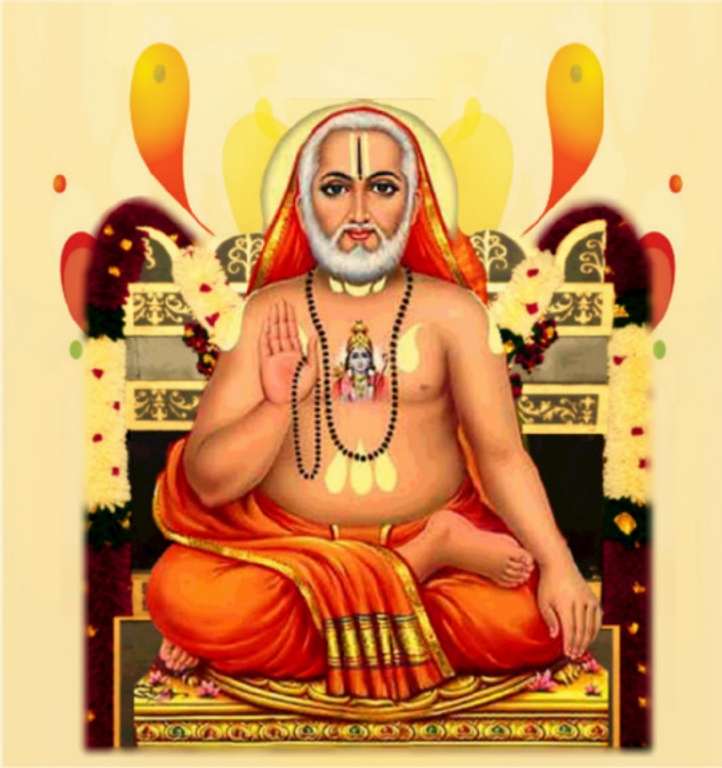
**Chief Priest  
Shri Raghurama Manikkara**



**Assistant Priest  
Shri Balakrishna Bhat**



**Assistant Priest  
Shri Jayarama Bhat**



*“Social work done for the good of worthy people should also be considered as the Lord’s worship. In short, our life itself is a worship. Every action is a puja. This life is precious. Every second of our life is precious. Not even a second that has gone will come back, Listening to the right shastras and always remembering Him is the highest duty.”*

*- From Guru Raghavendra Swami’s speech before attaining Jeeva Samadhi.*